Maya Imagery, Architecture, and Activity

SPACE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS IN ART HISTORY

EDITED BY

Maline D. Werness-Rude and Kaylee R. Spencer

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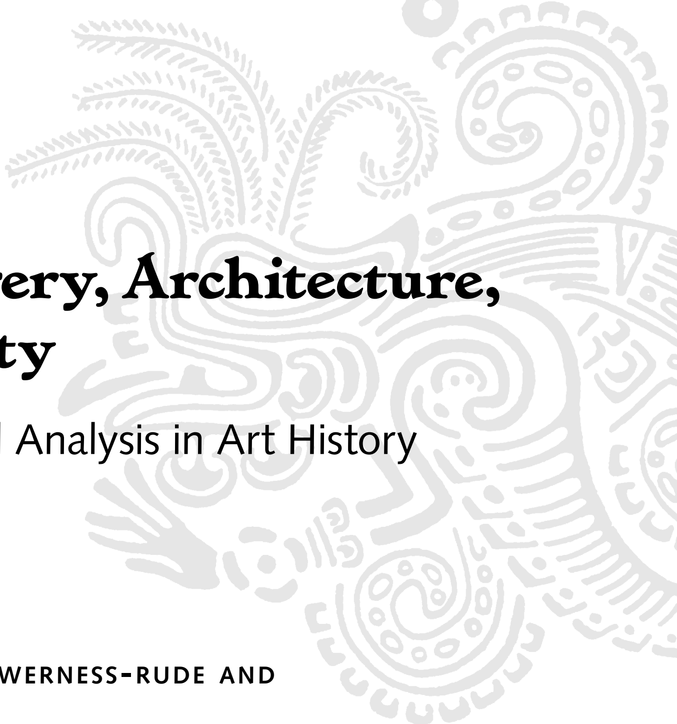

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Space and Spatial Analysis in Art History

EDITED BY MALINE D. WERNESS-RUDE AND
KAYLEE R. SPENCER

University of New Mexico Press | Albuquerque

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Printed in the United States of America
20 19 18 17 16 15 1 2 3 4 5 6

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Maya imagery, architecture, and activity : space and spatial analysis in art history / edited by Maline D. Werness-Rude and Kaylee R. Spencer.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-8263-5579-9 (cloth : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-0-8263-5580-5 (electronic)
1. Mayas—Antiquities. 2. Maya art. 3. Maya architecture. 4. Spatial analysis (Statistics) in archaeology. I. Werness-Rude, Maline D., 1977– II. Spencer, Kaylee R., 1975–
F1435.M375 2015
972.81'01—dc23
2014026615

Cover photograph: From captive presentation scene, © Justin Kerr, provided in honor of Barbara Kerr
Designed by Lila Sanchez
Composed in Sabon and Syntax

To all our mentors, past and present

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Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to thank all of the people who participated in the conference sessions that led to this volume's inception. Without hearing initial papers by Michele Bernatz, Philippe Bézy, Elizabeth Olton, and Penny Steinbach, and participating it the rich discussions that followed, we would not have had the idea to develop an edited volume revolving around space and spatial analysis in art history. We would also like to express our gratitude to those who have contributed work to this collection; we are sorry that timing prevented the participation of all of the original conference members but are delighted that several other scholars joined our ranks. Without the collective efforts and strong work of Michele Bernatz, Michael Carrasco, Flora Clancy, Travis Nygard, Elizabeth Olton, Justine Shaw, Penny Steinbach, Rhonda Taube, and Linnea Wren, and without their willingness to consider, and good grace in responding to, our editing comments, this book would not have been possible.

We would also like to thank those who helped us mold the first chapter into its present form. Initial readings and feedback by Hope Werness helped us solidify its organization, while Rina Faletti provided some important feedback regarding early art historical discussions of space. Rex Koontz and an anonymous reader, both of whom served as reviewers for the work, also deserve mention—their astute, valuable feedback helped us to fine-tune sections both within the introduction and across the volume as a whole, for which we thank them heartily. Our contributors also did us the honor of reading the first chapter—of this group, Penny Steinbach and her eagle eyes deserve special acknowledgement.

We would like to thank the University of New Mexico Press generally and our editor, John W. Byram, specifically. John's continual good cheer and his encouraging presence have been indispensable, and we also greatly appreciate the understanding he has displayed throughout this process. In our communications with the University of New Mexico Press, we also had the good fortune to work with Maya Allen-Gallegos (editorial, digital, and production manager), James Ayers (production editor), Felicia Cedillos (production editor), Elizabeth C. Hadas (director emerita), Lila Sanchez (book designer), Lisa C. Tremaine (art director and senior book designer), Marie S. Landau (production editor), and Katherine White (sales and marketing manager). Thank you to all for your tireless efforts in helping us make this a better finished product! What is more, Linda Kay Norris (Grafia Communications) lent her sharp eyes to the task of copyediting, and without her keen attention to detail the present work would contain many more flaws. As always, any remaining mistakes are the result of our blunders alone.

The various institutions—University of Wisconsin–River Falls, Wisconsin; Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi; St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas; Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic, Connecticut—with which the editors have been associated over the years have also supplied necessary financial and institutional backing. We and many of our contributors are also especially indebted to the graduate program and faculty at the University of Texas at Austin, whose research continues to influence spatial studies and whose encouragement continues to propel us forward. We would also like to acknowledge the collaborative spirit emphasized by the community of Mayanists at the University of Texas, which has influenced all of the authors involved in this volume. Thanks go to our families too, who, as always, provided the strong emotional anchors we needed to complete this project.

Last, but certainly not least, it pains us to mark the recent passing of several well-respected Mesoamericanists. Peter Harrison, Barbara Kerr, Andrea Stone, Brian Stross, and George Stuart will be sorely missed. Their spatial explorations have allowed us to image dimensionality in ever-expanding ways and we can only hope to carry on the tradition associated with their work by constantly exploring new frontiers. It is also with great sadness that we mark the passing of one of our own volume contributors, Flora Clancy. She was among the first to explicitly apply art historical methodologies to analyzing spatial patterning in Maya plazas and her absence as a scholarly, collegial model and mentor is keenly felt by contributors to this volume.

1

Imagery, Architecture, and Activity in the Maya World

AN INTRODUCTION

MALINE D. WERNESS-RUDE AND KAYLEE R. SPENCER

As a discipline, art history has long foregrounded a consideration of space. It can be associated with the inception of art historical studies dating back to the Renaissance and Georgio Vasari's effort to categorize art following the formulation of linear perspective. In the past, that "breakthrough" has been regarded as a dividing line between "primitive" ways of seeing and more "sophisticated" manners of viewing. Now largely outmoded, such value-laden terms began to be replaced, starting in the twentieth century, by more recent perspectives that privilege the agency of ancient and/or "non-Western" cultural actors and frameworks. With this change came the corresponding recognition that such agents were typically uninterested in the implication of naturalistic depth or a "Window onto the World" in the Renaissance sense. Despite this shift to a mode of scholarly inquiry that focuses on internal, culturally specific approaches, the core importance of space remains. In other words, one cannot talk meaningfully about art without touching on spatial concerns in one way or another, be it in relation to two-dimensional formatting or three-dimensional constructs.

The Maya provide a particularly strong example of the ways in which the built and imaged environment are continually and intentionally oriented relative to larger concepts of space as political, religious, economic, and so on. In this context, they developed a far-reaching engagement between space and illusion, constantly marking their surroundings with locational identifiers that created a contiguous relationship between the world of the present and that of the supernatural. The urge to constantly record spatial relationships can be seen in certain directionally significant titles—the northern *kalomte'*, for example, a still poorly understood label seemingly used to designate lineage heads—as well as site orientations and other kinds of alignments. According to Maya thought, such constructs are inherently linked with time as well, and the material record provides evidence of an enduring effort to place the individual and the community in relation to both. Recorded events have explicit spatial components that are inherently tied to the particular temporal moment of completion in addition to frequently being framed as anniversaries of similar, past events. This emphasis on the time-space continuum is most obviously demonstrated by the effort to tie particular happenings not only to a specific place but also within a multiplicity of temporal cycles—the Long Count, the 260 and 360 (+5) day counts and lunar reckonings provide but a few examples.

This volume acknowledges the core relationships that exist between space, in its various temporally specific manifestations, and art, in its widely varied forms, by addressing the ways in which the ancient Maya organized, manipulated, created, interacted with, and conceived of space from art historical perspectives. This approach builds on a growing body of cross-disciplinary literature focused on spatiality. In 1977, the humanistic geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, for instance, galvanized theoretical discussions of space as experiential in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. At the start of the twenty-first century, the personal encounter with objects in space has been and is increasingly explored by art historians in publications such as *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius* by Penelope Davies (2004), *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* by David Summers (2003), and *Sacred Shock: Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium* by Glenn Peers (2004).

On the anthropological side of things, spatial analysis has received significant attention as well. Beginning with Augustus Henry Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers's emphasis on precise stratigraphy in excavation in the mid- to late nineteenth century and filtering down through functional approaches like those championed by Gordon Willey and Lewis Binford in the 1960s and '70s, space has been a central concern in the field. In Mesoamerica, settlement patterns and social organization form constant avenues of investigation, providing the analytic core for Kent Flannery's (1976) *The Early Mesoamerican Village*, for instance. Beginning in the 1980s, landscape archaeology, as exemplified by Wendy Ashmore's extensive body of work (among others), indicates the enduring nature of spatial considerations in the field. As more and more ancient material and cultural remains come to light, efforts have been made to continually flesh out and codify the corpus of Maya art and architecture, which has allowed increasingly sophisticated analysis from a range of different perspectives. More recently, the edited volume *Space and Spatial Analysis in Archaeology* (2006) presents readers with numerous space-focused case studies in Old and New World archaeology. Also archaeological in its methods, Alexander Parmington's (2011) *Space and Sculpture in the Classic Maya City* provides an analysis of the relationships between the organization of monumental sculpture (as well as the degree of its spatial accessibility) and the audience's physical movements at Palenque.

Art historical considerations specifically addressing spatial structures have begun appearing as well. At the cusp of the twenty-first century, Flora Clancy examined the artistic aspects of stelae in *Sculpture in the Ancient Maya Plaza: The Early Classic Period*, for example, while also placing them in space by analyzing social and cultural context. Megan O'Neil (2012), in *Engaging Ancient Maya Sculpture at Piedras Negras, Guatemala*, and most recently Mary Ellen Miller and Claudia Brittenham, (2013) in *The Spectacle of the Late Maya Court, Reflections on the Murals of Bonampak*, examine carved and painted monuments as sophisticated aesthetic traditions that provide the foci of, and frame for, ritual interaction and performance.

The aforementioned works demonstrate that considerations of space retain currency in modern scholarship on the Maya while also highlighting the shortage of extensive, overtly art historical investigations into spatiality in Mesoamerica. Each of the chapters included in this volume looks at space in a slightly different way. All explore the material record from an art historical perspective in the effort to arrive at an understanding of the ways in which the Maya organize their world and the ideological import such positioning carries. What is more, just as intertextuality—the interplay and referential cues that occur both within and across texts—exists, so does interspatiality, and many of the contributions investigate how particular spaces implicate certain other spaces. Indeed, the exploration of the linkage between spatial order and cosmic order, and the possibility that such connections result in political order, acts as one of the many threads that weaves its way through this book.

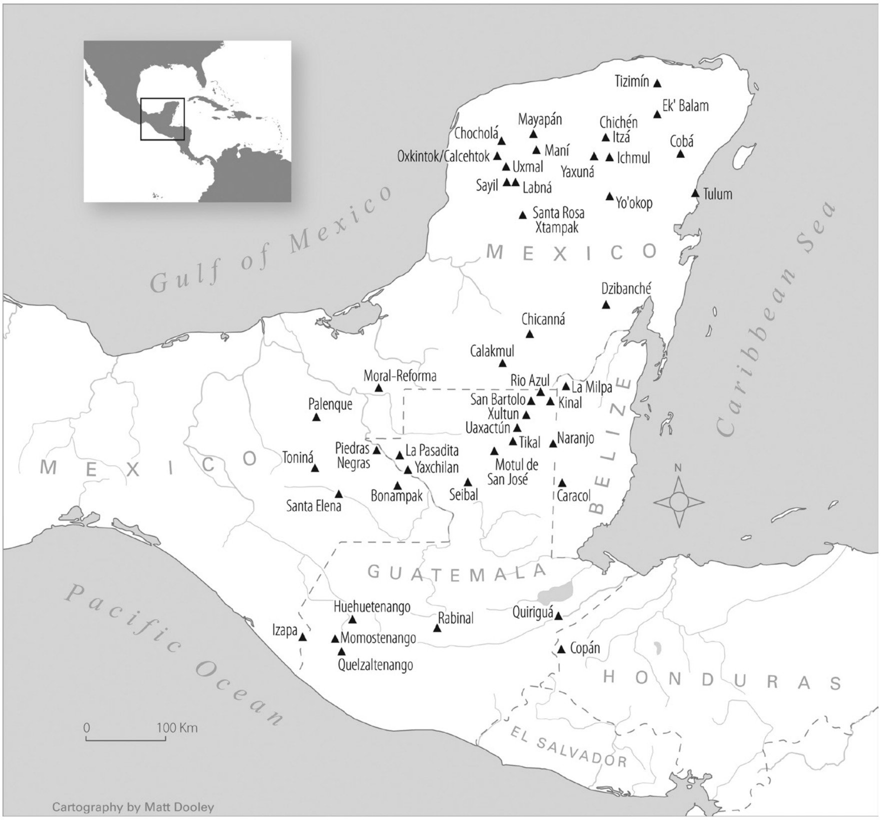
Our goals in this chapter and in the work as a whole focus on exploring inherently Maya ways of looking and we urge our readers to acknowledge how current ideas about spatiality—like the traditional modern compartmentalization of the Maya world into three semi-homogenous regions (the highlands and southern and northern lowlands)—affects these goals. It is also easy to look at Maya sites as they exist today without realizing quite how much we are missing and, furthermore, how these differences would affect the experience of place. Not only would the now basically empty plazas have been teaming with noisy activity, but many of the areas currently covered with centuries of forest and other kinds of growth would have been completely cleared and carefully cultivated for miles around the central area (see Figures 5.3, 6.3). The drab, overgrown cityscapes presented to the modern viewer originally gleamed with white stuccoed plaza floors and brightly painted facades. Add to this a host of ephemeral objects like colorful, inlaid wooden staffs; hair whisks; fans; brilliantly reflective obsidian mirrors; banners made out of paper, feathers, and other materials; and palanquins decorated with animal fur and rich carvings. Picture too the brilliance of Maya clothing, particularly the splendid appearance of elite garb, packed as it was with constantly moving elements like braids of cotton, feathers, jaguar pelts, tinkling jade beads, and other materials. Imagine all of these features brought together within the pomp and circumstance associated with Maya ceremony—something that can never be fully accurately reconstructed—and we may begin to reach an idea of how things were.

In order to pave the way for the contributions that follow in this volume, this chapter addresses a number of general issues and provides a framework for an art historical approach to Maya spatiality. We start with a brief consideration of the larger context—who created what for whom?—in the sections titled Writing and Artistry; Artists, Artistry, and Patronage; and Images of Space. We further situate readers by touching on the basic ways in which ancient and modern Maya cultural actors approach their world, in two sections titled Cosmology and Directionality; and Sight, Vision, and Visuality. We also provide overviews of the three basic classes of media that provide the backbone of any investigation into the Maya cultural use of space, in segments titled Architecture; Pathways as Connectors; Monumental Sculpture; and The Creation, Reception, and Consumption of Luxury Goods (further subdivisions may be found in each). Finally, we lay out the ways in which ancient and modern Maya artistry and performativity engage space and the spectator, in sections titled Visual Hierarchies and Conventions and The Spatiality of Images before concluding with a brief discussion of Agency and Activity.

This work rests on the premise that space is by nature experiential; it is something that we must interact with and that frames our perspective.

Given this approach, we use this chapter to set up the major mechanisms that the Maya employed in conceptualizing and making a sense of place anciently as well as how they continue to engage with space in the modern world. We compile scholarly understandings of ancient and modern ways of dealing with space, augmented by theory and additional observations regarding Maya spatiality. As such, this introductory chapter provides its own contribution in addition to laying the groundwork for the chapters that follow, and not every point or issue raised here will find elaboration in subsequent sections. Furthermore, while each chapter stands on its own, all are enriched by their position relative to each other. Indeed, commonalities appear throughout, and the individual works relate to one another in complementary, cohesive fashion, a fact that is emphasized by the frequency of cross-references. We map the arrangement of the chapters that make up the body of the volume as a way of concluding this introductory chapter, and as a way to guide readers who prefer to navigate directly to a particular section.

Thus, when seen as a unit, the book creates a diverse look at the Maya world with a strong geographic and temporal sampling covering the Petén, the Guatemalan highlands, and the northern lowlands (Figure 1.1) from the PreClassic to the modern period, complemented by analyses of representative image types, such as pottery, sculpture, and architecture. What is more, this chapter frames the discussions undertaken within and across chapters by using art historical theory and emic perspectives to understand ancient ways of looking. By including such an introduction, we have set out to explicitly develop a handbook for the ways in which the art historical strengths of contextual and formal analysis may be inserted into studies of Maya material culture. In the effort to create a primer for an internal understanding of spatiality in the Maya world, we have chosen to emphasize readability and have removed the traditional parenthetical citations, which our readers will see in all subsequent chapters, in favor of inserting a bibliographic essay at the end of this chapter. We direct our readers to this bibliographic essay for explanatory notes regarding terminology and orthography and the sources we consulted as well as for further reading on any of the topics addressed herein. On a related note, in our efforts to engage a multiplicity of audiences, we have included numerous definitions of Mayan terms for those who are just starting to explore the Maya world. We would suggest that our readers not familiar with the commonly used art historical terms we employ consult any dictionary specific to this subject area, the standard for which we have provided at the beginning of the aforementioned bibliographic essay.


Tizimín
Ek' Balam
Mayapán
Chichén Itzá
Chocholá
Maní
Cobá
Oxkintok/Calcehtok
Uxmal
Ichmul
Yaxuná
Sayil
Labná
Tulum
Yo'okop
Santa Rosa Xtampak
Gulf of Mexico
MEXICO
Caribbean Sea
Dzibanché
Chicanná
Calakmul
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Rio Azul
La Milpa
Palenque
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La Pasadita
Toniná
Yaxchilan
Motul de San José
MEXICO
N
Santa Elena
Bonampak
Seibal
Caracol
GUATEMALA
Huehuetenango
Rabinal
Quiriguá
Izapa
Momostenango
Quelzaltenango
Copán
HONDURAS
Pacific Ocean
0
100 Km
EL SALVADOR
Cartography by Matt Dooley

FIGURE 1.1 Map of the Maya world. Map created by Mathew A. Dooley.

Writing and Artistry

A consideration of the artistic process that reflects Maya ways of thinking must be preceded by an investigation into cultural concepts of artistry and writing. Throughout the Maya world (Figure 1.1), writers differentiated between two basic categories of medium-specific script. Scribes skilled in the art of painting labeled their creations *tz'ib*—writing—while those who chose a carved medium substituted the so-called **lu**-bat phrase consisting of a leaf-nosed bat head for the main sign, typically in conjunction with **yu** and **lu** syllables (see the first and second glyph blocks in the rim band in Figure 4.8a). Even though this pattern of substitution indicates a reference to carving as opposed to painting, the specific word denoted by the **lu**-bat term remains unclear; *uxul* has been suggested. In both cases, a possessive pronoun (taking the form of *y-* or *u-* prefixes) precedes the crafting statement—his carving or his writing—thereby emphasizing ownership and the act of creation itself (see also the ideological associations between artistry and creation in the section titled Artists, Artistry, and Patronage).

The fact that writing and carving are the two main written references to artistic practice reflects the basically classificatory nature of Mayan languages. Not only is the type of writing codified according to appearance, so too are the objects on which it appears, and a causative relationship occasionally exists between the two (i.e., certain materials were more frequently carved than painted and vice versa). Stelae, plates, cups, earspools, bones, and other objects receiving artistic attention also had general names. Offering additional insights into indigenous modes of categorizing the world around them, modern Mayan languages contain hundreds of classifiers that modify nouns (especially in contexts requiring counting) and denote the particular nature of groups of objects (in the Yucatec branch of the language, for example, humans receive a classifier that differentiates them from other living, breathing beings, who are further separated from flat, round things or long, thin things, etc.).

Poetic constructions emphasizing parallel passages, couplets, and other continuities across individual texts typify ancient Maya inscriptions, which some scholars now think were read aloud by ritual specialists during prescribed moments. These inscriptions were seemingly meant to be consumed at an elite level and would have been inaccessible (at least in their entirety) to the layperson, although commoners would likely have been able to pick out dates and certain oft-used, familiar phrases (e.g., emblem glyphs, connected with site identity). Even an illiterate viewer would likely have recognized the similar renditions of Tikal's site name (and the visual parallels and pauses this repetition creates) as they appear in the fifth and sixth glyph blocks (counting from top to bottom) in the second textual column from the right, the fifth glyph in the fourth column, the seventh block in the fifth column, and the eleventh glyph in the sixth column of text found on Lintel 3 from Temple 1 (Figure 7.6). Not only was literacy seemingly heavily restricted, the elevated, systematized language used in these written records across space and time (likely representing ancestral forms of Ch'orti' and Ch'olti') remained far from the standard usage of spoken language in any given location. Scribes developed localized, geographically specific sign variants as well, but such examples only highlight the general coherence of the written word across space and time.

In conjunction with the intellectual atmosphere they foster, texts display a great deal of visual variation as a result of the logo-syllabic system used in the pre-Hispanic Maya world. Scribes adhered to a plethora of rigid rules, imposed not only by the language itself, but also by patrons and intended audiences. Within this system, though, individual authors delighted in novelty and alternated sign usage, thereby adding a visual dimension to the verbal poetics that characterize elite inscriptions. In recording the same term over and over again within a single passage, the scribe would often select different ways of representing the same information in order to introduce pictorial difference (and the creator's virtuosity) while simultaneously asserting continuity. From a spatial perspective, writers could thus create semantic connections across a lengthy inscription while introducing visual distinctions or parallels in the different spaces of the text itself. Alternately, scribes could choose to develop and repeatedly use unusual glyphic forms in regional expressions of identity, as when northern Maya potters incorporated an atypical form of the initial glyph in ceramic dedicatory formulae (visible in the fourth glyph from the left in Figure 4.8b versus the second textual block from the left in Figure 1.13 or the sixth full glyph in the rim band found in Figure 3.1; for further discussion of, and definitions regarding, the Dedicatory Formula and initial glyphs, see Werness-Rude, Chapter 4). In this way, repetition of unique visual forms across geographical space creates both connections and points of distinction.

As one might expect given the logo-syllabic nature of Maya script, artists often fostered an intimate relationship between image and text. Pictorial elements comprise text strings and, conversely, iconographic groupings may act, both literally and metaphorically, as tags or labels denoting identity, location, etc. Images certainly do not simply illustrate textual statements, no more than texts record what images present pictorially. Indeed, the two work together to provide different, yet complementary views of mythical, historical, or mytho-historical moments. Both continually modify one another—a ceramic text might tell us for whom the vessel and its iconography have been created, for instance, while monumental programs can depict a particular ritual moment that the text then situates in relation to other, similar ritual moments and practitioners.

Artists could create an even more direct interplay between the written word and the pictorial representation in a number of different ways. When people are shown speaking, for instance, their words can appear attached to their speech scrolls. Personal names or captions commenting on the depicted action can float around a sitter's portrait, or a person represented in art may interrupt the surrounding linear text strings by touching his or her name and/or the verb defining the action in which he or she participates

(Figure 3.8). In general, the specific spatial relationship between text and image varies according to artist and medium (patrons and intended audiences also likely played pivotal roles in the construction of both; see the next section, Artists, Artistry, and Patronage).

Artists, Artistry, and Patronage

The artists who, at the behest of an elite clientele, created the visual and architectural forms under consideration throughout this volume likely occupied high social standing. Their chosen field, apparently heavily male dominated at this level, certainly required both visual and verbal literacy. The complexes of elements and arrangements they created further mark a deep intellectual engagement with cosmology. Artists were not always scribes and vice versa, however. The large number of vessels displaying complex iconography paired with pseudoglyphic texts demonstrates that skills in artistic depiction did not always include calligraphic prowess or a deep understanding of text. Furthermore, creators not only enjoyed elevated status; they were also usually part of or, at the very least, associated with ruling families, as shown by ceramic vessels created by a Naranjo king's relative or a Motul de San José (the Ik' site) lord's son.

In this chapter, we focus on formal properties as well as viewer-object relationships and the roles creators played in the formation of each. We should also remember that the people who crafted luxury items did so at the behest of specific patrons, necessitating priorities focused on maintaining and supporting the status quo in a dialectical fashion. Just how much any given sponsor controlled the creative process remains unknown, but artists certainly made every attempt to keep their benefactors happy. Not only did the patron commission visual projects, he or she could also have supervised ongoing work and presumably had the right to refuse anything not in accordance with his or her vision. Isolated examples indicate that kings could exert authoritarian, dictatorial power over their artists. Some objects may have been provided as a form of tribute, for example, while sites like Toniná and Bonampak also seem to have forcibly imported scribes (and scribal styles) in the signification of conquest.

The level of control suggested by the resulting artistic products cannot be connected solely with an external set of requirements decreed by the patron, however. Relationships between patrons and creators likely demonstrated greater intimacy than our present-day conception of patronage would indicate. Elite artisans may have been related to their commissioners by blood (as in the case of Naranjo or the Ik' site mentioned above) and, in rare

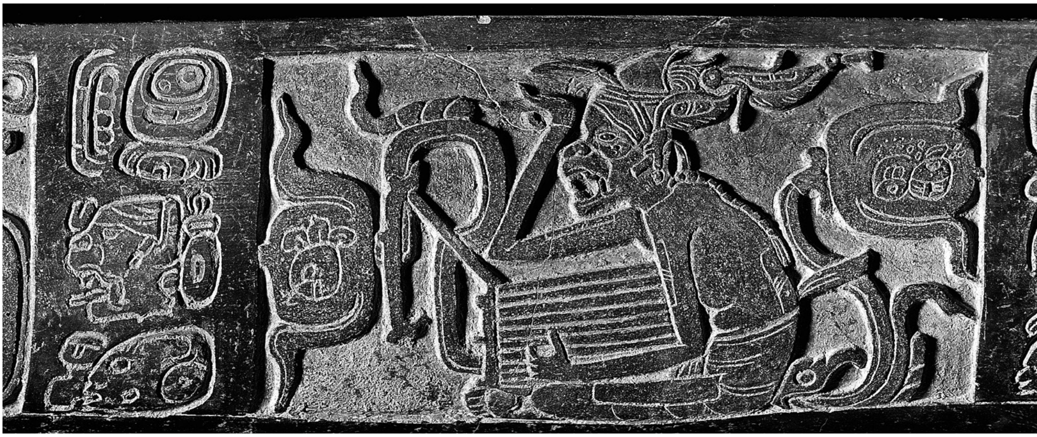
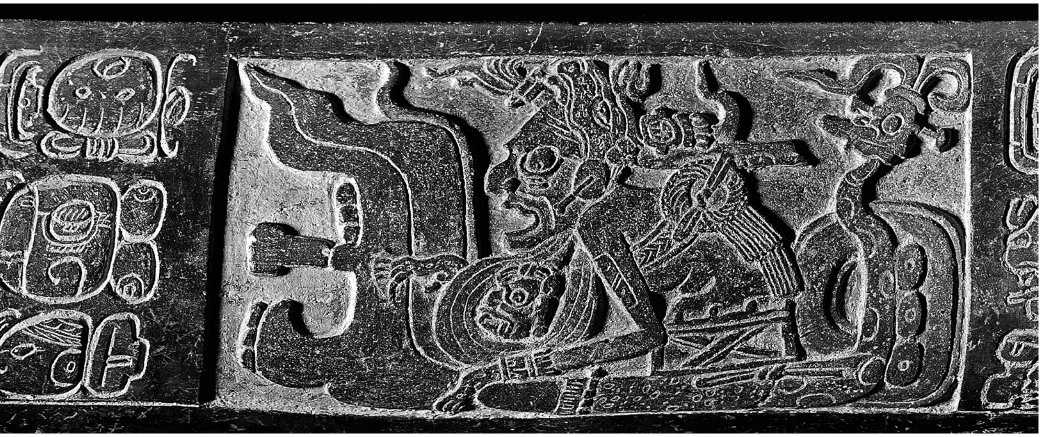


FIGURE 1.2 Old God, waterlilies, and a Monkey Scribe with deer ear and with a probable artistic tool in his headdress that overshadows his face and uplifted hand, 11 × 12.5 cm (4.33 × 4.92 in) diameter, Chocholá Style Vessel, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE. Photograph © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K954).

cases, the patron and artist seem to be one and the same. Demonstrating the complexity of linking sets of formal characteristics to individual artists or patrons, ceramic vessels indicate that a single person could work in as many as three distinct styles, thus implying a fair degree of artistic innovation, experimentation, and flexibility. The exact level of freedom enjoyed by individual artisans is uncertain and likely varied from region to region, center to center, king to king, and moment to moment. In any case, we should maintain the ghost of the patron behind the shadow of the artist/creator when looking at art objects and attempting to understand agency. The emphasis we place on the scholarly description of images should also serve to call our readers' attention to the fact that we openly acknowledge our role in the interpretive nexus that includes many actors—the patron, the artist/scribe, the object itself, the (ideal) ancient viewer, the modern interpreter, etc.

Because elite objects required knowledgeable creators and audiences, the ability to fully access the messages contained within the art objects—to completely understand their nuanced iconography and complex hieroglyphic inclusions—clearly separated lords from commoners while also seemingly encouraging a certain degree of competition among the privileged themselves. In some cases the artistic process may have been split into multiple stages with several individuals responsible for different aspects of production. Scholars who have looked carefully at the hieroglyphic stairway at Copán, for instance, have concluded that several scribal hands were at work in its



creation. In smaller-scale cases (like pottery), however, most of the creative process typically seems to have been completed by a single individual.

The Copán evidence, combined with many instances of stylistic similarity, indicates that craftsmen, especially those associated with large (and/or politically significant) centers, tended to work in groups, although the exact nature of such "workshops" or "schools" remains a topic of debate. In any case, skills were likely passed down within families as suggested by the repetition in scribal names at Palenque. Furthermore, while we would expect craftsmen to work in medium-specific contexts, the evidence suggests that individuals occasionally created objects on both small and large scales—a scribe from Xcalumkin signed the end of an inscription framing a doorway at the site in addition to naming himself on a finely carved vessel, for instance.

More often than not, artists chose not to sign their work, indicating a lack of concern with the concepts of authorship and individuality on which modern Western systems of artistic production place so much importance. When they represented themselves, scribes nonetheless demonstrated pride in the social standing their profession accorded by incorporating quill pens or carving tools into their headdresses. They also occasionally adopted the attributes of their supernatural patrons, as when artists portrayed themselves sporting a second (deer) ear above their earspools, thus mimicking the features displayed by their sacred sponsors (Figure 1.2). So-called Printout

Motifs, or strips of paper containing bar-and-dot numerals indexing the scribal arts form a part of the elite authorial regalia as well. These tags can be attached to both humans and deities. What is more, dedicatory sequences often emphasize the act of creation; on ceramics especially, the method of image/glyphic rendition—writing or carving—often finds explicit mention, as already discussed above.

Ideologically, the artistic process was one fraught with mystery. Artisans have long been connected with supernaturals, and the process of craft production has been likened to mythical acts of creation. According to the post-contact K'iche' epic, the Popol Vuh, the second set of Hero Twins (Hunahpu and Xbalanque) turned their uncles, the first set (Hun Hunahpu, the Maize [corn] God, and his brother) of Hero Twins' brothers, into monkeys, subsequently known for their dancing and artistry. These monkey gods were widely recognized as patron deities of the arts in the post-contact period and the same seems to have been true for the pre-Hispanic Maya, who created many images of anthropomorphized monkey scribes (Figure 1.2). Other figures, like a rabbit (the first entity from the left in Figure 3.8) and God N can also be connected with the scribal arts. Talented human artists alluded to the supernatural quality of their creative process in a number of different ways, as Michele Bernatz explores in Chapter 3. A hand holding a paintbrush emerges from a centipede maw on a carved bone from Tikal, for instance. The repeated selection of "conch" shells as inkpots may relate to the mystical atmosphere surrounding artists as well, given these marine mollusks' association with liminality. Maya craftsmen also frequently included waterlilies (Figure 1.2) when depicting the realms of artists engaged in calligraphic arts, likely due to their intrinsic association with watery spaces and the permeable boundary between this world and the underworld.

Images of Space: What is Represented/Contained

We have spent most of our time thus far concentrating on the ways in which images contain and/or inhabit space. But what kinds of spaces do they represent (and/or enclose, in the case of monumental constructions)? Despite modern tendencies to separate and categorize different kinds of behavior evident in the ancient record, action in space cannot be so easily segregated into discrete groupings. As we explore below, many of the authors in this volume point out that Maya ritual could be at once religious celebration, agricultural guide, social event, political tool, and economic boon. The same is true of the political sphere, with interaction often involving religious undertones combined with social and economic overtones. In subsequent sections of this introduction, we emphasize the complex, shifting web of connections that exists between objects and humans. We also suggest that observers activate items constructed by the elite in the maintenance of power.

It is important to remember that the spaces within which these monuments/luxury goods appear are often performative by nature. As Clancy points out in Chapter 5, for instance, plazas (Figures 5.1, 5.3)—with or without imagery and/or monuments—were intended to function, at least in part, as places dedicated not just to ritual but to theatricality in the presentation of a state-sanctioned sense of collective identity. Plaza stelae do not just activate the space around them, nor do they simply act as a backdrop for ongoing ritual activity. Rather, they engage with, and further modify, an already activated, multifunctional space. The fact that theatricality forms an important analytic perspective for Clancy and that it, furthermore, appears in all of the architectural discussions that follow Clancy's chapter, demonstrates that this is an emic, yet etically knowable, way of using space.

As a result of the multiplicity of purposes any given space typically has, representations frequently combine different kinds of inherently connected spatial cues or, alternately, link various ideological associations with the same place. In Chapter 2, Penny Steinbach argues that some craftsmen specifically connected the institution of kingship, for example, with three realms simultaneously, while Elizabeth Olton (Chapter 7) examines how other creators positioned the body of the dead king in space, and Kaylee Spencer (Chapter 6) suggests that yet others emphasized the militaristic and possibly religious actions of the king as a gatherer of prisoners. Bernatz (Chapter 3) further connects the realms inhabited by a particular supernatural with those of lived experience by showing that God L is most comfortable walking around on the surface of the earth or in the first layer of the underworld. Rhonda Taube (Chapter 9) investigates modern analogues for these concepts in contemporary rituals marking understandings of spaces that parallel the contiguity mentioned by Bernatz and the axiality considered by Steinbach.

The Maya imaged the world around them and so created pictures of real settings—e.g., ballcourts, courtly palaces—as well as "imagined" places visited solely through visions and dreams—the watery underworld, etc. In this context, space is often slippery and hard to pin down, especially when it is at least partly supernatural in nature. This idea is particularly evident in Maline Werness-Rude's discussion of space in flux in Chapter 4, but may also be found underpinning the changing relationships explored in almost every chapter in this volume. Indeed, the “real world” was imbued with significance as well. While certain places (e.g., the primordial waters of creation) were usually carefully separated from it, texts talk about and images symbolically refer to other supernatural locations that occur in conjunction with the lived arena. Clancy mentions plazas as watery spaces in particular, and we see just such tagging patterns in specific sites like Tikal, as Olton explores in Chapter 7, and at Yo’okop, as Linnea Wren, Travis Nygard, and Justine Shaw analyze in Chapter 8. Other cosmic references—to the world turtle, for instance—also abound, as Michael Carrasco discusses in the epilogue.

Sacred areas in the local geography include mountains and temples literally named as mountains, as has been argued regarding monuments at Piedras Negras, where a place glyphically identified as Ho Janab Witz (Five Flower Mountain) likely acted as a label for the temple-tomb of Ruler 4. In this context, it is perhaps significant to note that the Maya thought gods and ancestors lived in mountains that became sacred through association and, furthermore, that ancestors in particular resided in a flowery realm filled with precious objects. Quotidian spaces could occasionally have more explicitly mythical associations. Scholars have suggested, for instance, that the linkage between a hole/water place and the site’s toponym created on Copán Stela 10 expresses just such parallelism in the construction of place. To provide an additional example, *sajalob* (akin to regional governors) from the Yaxchilan region conducted fire-drilling events at (or over) *matawil*, another mythological space identifiable in numerous inscriptions. As a result, these locations functioned at a much more complex level than simple identity formation and maintenance, frequently participating in regional mytho-historic founding narratives.

Images both contain and encourage an intrinsic relationship with those who view them, an idea most consciously explored in the work of Werness-Rude (Chapter 4), Clancy (Chapter 5), Spencer (Chapter 6), and Olton (Chapter 7). The image exchange suggests other types of interconnections, however, that take place in both temporal and spatial continuums. Not only do representations interact with viewers, they also relate to other iconographic forms. In her contribution, for instance, Werness-Rude is able to identify and classify style and stylistic change precisely because of this dialogue. While historians are often tempted to discuss such activity in terms of chronology, it also usually has a strong spatial dimension, as when certain sites imported artistic styles in order to demonstrate conquest over the sources of those styles.

Cosmology and Directionality

Despite the regionalization and temporal specificity of artistic expression—which, at a basic level, results from particular pressures experienced at certain places and times—many core concepts demonstrate pan-Maya usage. Basic ways of understanding directionality and the positioning of the self in the world are of particular interest here, of course, and provide important avenues of investigation for Bernatz (Chapter 3), especially, as well as Clancy (Chapter 5), Wren and colleagues (Chapter 8), and Taube (Chapter 9). Like many other agrarian societies, the cyclicality of seasonal change and the directional movement of the sun heavily influenced the Maya. East and west act as the principle directions in ancient and modern Maya thought (Figure 3.2). Many different language groups in the post-contact era (and seemingly in pre-contact periods as well) treat north and south as the sky's right- and left-handed sides respective to the daily movement of the sun; these subsidiary directions are also often connected with the shifting position of the sun's course throughout the year. Directionality is thus inherently linked to movement and cyclical temporal periods. Furthermore, east and west contain ideas of entrance and egress (where the sun enters this world—rises—and then leaves it—sets—to pass through the underworld). The subsidiary directions north and south are, in turn, associated with upward and downward movement respectively. In this way, while the Maya identify four points (in conjunction with the cardinal directions) oriented around a central location these are typically not isolated points on the landscape but rather behave like "vectors," circumscribing space as well as movement within that space.

The layering of space is a core concept in Maya cosmology. In conjunction with the conceptual associations just outlined, each direction contains color-coding, for example (Figure 3.3), and the cosmos itself is made up of multiple levels. The Maya define an underworld, for instance, which is literally an under-world, accommodating not only (potentially) dangerous gods and darkness but also the path of the night sun, shown in ancient imagery as a jaguarian entity. This space finds its spatial foil and conceptual complement in the celestial, light-, and flower-filled paradise that acts as the home of ancestral figures. Especially in ancient thought, both places could be accessed through a permeable membrane signified by water or other liminal areas like caves. Many of the authors in this volume focus either on the nature of the divide itself (which can be codified in very specific ways) or the ability to break this boundary.

The ancient Maya created spatial arrangements that intentionally and expressly duplicated directional associations. First identified at Uaxactún, E-Groups (so named because of the E shape the arrangement of structures usually takes in its most traditional iteration) were frequently included at many Classic Maya sites and were generally aligned with the path of the rising sun on the solstices and equinoxes, thereby physically tracing the sun's movement along the horizon line throughout the year. Maya builders did not always maintain such careful alignment and some radial pyramids and E-Groups do not actually correspond to the location of the rising sun at particular times. The correspondence in building arrangements, however, suggests that these groups could have similar symbolic functionality, even when architects did not retain literal visual connections. Conversely, some sites demonstrate only the barest connection with radial pyramids and E-shaped groupings, while maintaining careful alignment with planetary risings. Uxmal's Palace of the Governor, for instance, displays Venus references along its facade and also creates connections with Cehtzuk/Nohpat, some three miles distant. From a vantage point in front of the Palace of the Governor at Uxmal and looking toward Cehtzuk/Nohpat at the correct moment, the rising Venus creates a sight line connecting the stela and radial structure found in front of, and on the same platform as, the Palace of the Governor. When the gaze is directed toward Venus at such important moments, the sight line extends to include Cehtzuk/Nohpat on the horizon. In more intimate constructs, Maya craftsmen could include directional markers and a central point as well. A Rio Azul tomb painter, for example, literally placed the dead in space by writing the four directions on the corresponding walls of the burial (intercardinal points may also have been indicated). Processing into the earth, ritual participants entering the cave in ancient times would similarly have been consciously aware that they were positioning the decedent into the liminal world center.

Sight, Vision, and Visuality

In ancient as well as modern times, Maya viewers take an active role in the construction of meaning. The logographs designating the verb "to see" (with *-il* as its root) in Classic-era inscriptions contain visual references to the eye. Connecting the appearance of an eye with the action of sight, one of the logographic variants of this verb shows the eye in profile, complete with an optical nerve and darkened iris from which volutes issue (Figure 1.3). These scrolls not only mark the concept of active looking, but they also suggest a directional gaze. Thus, both sides of the viewing equation are active—the viewer exerts effort in looking at the given object or element, while the item of study is also typically conceptualized as sentient in some way (see below as well as subsequent discussions of temples as animate). What is more, several versions of the word for sight actually show the volutes as beginning within the eye and wrapping around the iris similar to the U or V shapes that mark birth, thereby emphasizing the generative nature of sight (see below).

Ancient Maya modes of looking are much more complex than has been generally acknowledged. One recently proposed idea revolves around the *-ichnal* phrase (or *-iknal* in modern Yucatec). This term appears in the ancient inscriptions, where it is associated with either gods or kings, and may extend the concept of directional looking into a "field of vision." This field does not depend on a single, fixed vantage point; indeed, scholars have argued that it can move as the viewer moves his/her head/position. As Clancy (Chapter 5), Spencer (Chapter 6), Olton (Chapter 7), and Wren and colleagues (Chapter 8) demonstrate, the lines of sight dictated by most architectural arrangements seem to have been intentionally used as a way of directing, restricting, or otherwise manipulating the viewer's gaze. Ongoing research suggests that the observer's look encapsulates all of the items/people in view, each of which acts functionally, as a participant in the making of both time and space via the mechanism of the gaze. The generative aspect of vision works both ways. Not only does it mark the life-force of the seer, but it can also be connected with the act of bringing something into being, or with commemoration, which is occasionally discussed in terms of sight. Inscriptions at Machaquilá, for instance, connect stela dedication—the point at which stelae are considered complete/whole—with the ability to be seen or to have a body that is seeable.

Reference to seeing is often linked to status and hierarchy in both ancient and modern times. In the Classic period, for instance, kings oversaw their subjects and the rituals undertaken by those vassals, as when the Yaxchilan lord Yaxun Balam IV (a.k.a. Bird Jaguar) travels to witness a

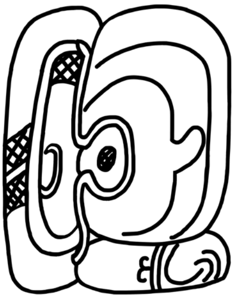


FIGURE 1.3 *-il,* logographic verb designating sight, La Corona (?) Panel, Petén, Guatemala. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude after Houston et al. (2006:Figure 4.28b).

ceremony at the subordinate site of La Pasadita. This can be indicated at a spatial level within images too, as when the king surveys his subservient lords or the captives at his feet. From a lofty position, a ruler peruses that which is under his control; he looks *down*, while everyone must look *up* to him. This basic pattern can be extended to include the relationship between viewer and stela, wherein the portrait of the king is often larger than life-size or otherwise raised up above the position of the lowly viewer. As a corollary, the exchange of gazes between human and image-bearing forms acts as an imperative that necessarily destroys the possibility of passive viewing (see The Spatiality of Images section below for further discussion). Thus, social hierarchies and other clear directional associations are incorporated into gazes internal to images as well as those that participate in the field of vision that connects observers in the lived realm with that which they see.

At least partly because of their causative associations, sight and the act of looking also have connections with abstract knowledge. A supernatural figure depicted on a Sayil lintel holds its extruded eyeballs—still functional, as indicated by the optic nerve that maintains the connection between the eye itself and the skull—facing in opposite directions and framed by volutes. Some have suggested that this motif indicates the idea of omnipotence as marked by the ability to see in both directions simultaneously. Later, the Popol Vuh (the K'iche' creation story recorded in the Post Classic) links the initial human presence in the current creation (which follows and builds upon previous creations) with omniscience as marked by the ability to see everything and everywhere, something the gods subsequently restrict.

In conjunction with such explicit ideas concerning looking, Maya thought regarding sight and vision contains nuanced concepts that tie into a cosmological understanding of the world. Representations of the sun, or the rays of the sun, could be combined with eyes and sight, while the action of seeing in and of itself connects with the ability to transcend realms. Mayan languages inherently link observing and witnessing with the act of seeing. Several Maya dictionaries further define the verb *il* as "to see," "to look," "to allow," "to hide," and finally "to visit," which thereby encapsulates visionary experiences and visitations.

The linkage between seeing in a general sense and seeing visions specifically connects with the idea that one can see not only that which is "real" or palpable but also that which is supernatural. As in the preceding discussion of stelae dedication, seeing is a completive act that somehow makes the immaterial material. This idea is further supported by the existence of an important class of beings known as *wayob* (singular: *way*, pronounced "why"). Wayob act as spirit companions that, according to Maya dictionaries, appear in dreamlike visions; while ancient images present them in clearly identifiable, corporeal forms (in animal and/or animal-human composite bodies; see Kerr n.d.:K791), they are just as clearly not constrained by gravity or other such considerations. The idea that sight, especially dreamlike vision, can make the intangible tangible is not just confined to the pre-Hispanic period. This same concept finds expression in the modern Maya poetry of Gerardo Can Pat, for instance:

> One night, while asleep,
> someone visited me.
> . . .
>
> I felt her gaze so close to me
> that I was filled with joy.
> Then I saw sadness in her eyes
> when she pleaded, "No, don't leave me."
>
> In the morning when I awoke,
> that woman was not by my side,
> and I began to accept
> that I had created her in my dreams.

The belief that looking generates palpable effects has great antiquity in Maya art and writing. The logograph that epigraphers believe specifically designates the notion of a vision represents a segment of a serpent's body. In iconographic representations of visions, entities emerge from the mouths of supernatural snakes that provide the conduit between lived space and other realms. The glyph that describes such events thus creates a beautiful link between textual records and the iconographic conceptualization of such visitations. While a problematic title that has fallen from favor, it is perhaps significant that scholars originally dubbed these snaky beings "vision serpents."

Architecture

It makes sense to begin our consideration of objects in, and as, space with two of the most obvious examples of spatial creation and manipulation: architecture and sculpture. Scholars have long recognized the importance of these forms in relation to spatial reckonings and the vast bulk of the existing literature on Maya spatiality concentrates on the built environment as a result. Such a scholarly focus means that we have a well-developed understanding of the ways in which the Maya conceptualized buildings as forms in space and as spaces in their own right.

Through its vast scale and ability to encapsulate large volumes, Maya architecture activates the imagination, offering glimpses of how an ancient viewer may have experienced his/her visual world. Paramount types of ancient Maya architecture included temples, ballcourts, and palaces. Site designers organized these structures, along with a variety of other building types, to bound and define open spaces, thus creating plazas, locations that became the focus of a host of rituals and the settings for monumental sculptural programs. While the exact uses and purposes of the spaces that Maya structures described in their interiors or engaged with their exteriors is not well understood in all cases, indigenous typologies are beginning to emerge along with a clearer understanding of their functions and spatial significance. In Chapter 5, Clancy's focus on architectural forms provides a close look at the different ways in which the Maya created and bounded areas in the built environment, and we leave explicit, extended discussion of plazas as spaces to her. In this way, Clancy's chapter bisects the volume and simultaneously ushers in the section most focused on architecture. A brief introduction to some of the most frequently represented types of structures—and their spatial configurations—assists in recognizing how their forms and designs implicate space, however. It also furnishes us the mechanisms that Clancy discusses in more depth, namely how architects endowed site centers with meaning and how viewers perceived the spaces through which they moved.

Domestic Architecture, Temples, and Administrative Structures

The built environment incorporated a number of different references, including human-made, perishable structures and features from the natural landscape. One basic design, and its associated ideology, is rooted in domestic architecture. Links between houses, temples, and other important constructions are widespread. Usually termed *naah* (which epigraphers also spell *na*, *naaj*, or *naj*) in hieroglyphic texts, houses, at least the non-elite variety, were single-room, windowless structures (Figures 1.4a–b). Their walls and internal supports were constructed of wood and topped with high-pitched, thatched roofs, a construction mode that continues into the present day. Despite their modest origins, Maya houses were conceived as containers that were charged with supernatural forces, as Carrasco discusses in more depth in the Epilogue. After all, the hearths they contain were created using a triadic arrangement of stone supports in a manner that consciously replicated the setting of the three hearthstones at creation.

Although the scale was eventually increased and perishable materials were replaced with rubble, stone, and plaster, the builders of temples retained features that evoked the appearance of houses, thus offering visual reminders that houses served as the sacred model. Within such buildings, architects employed the corbelled arch, a device that spanned distances by placing stones ever closer to one another until a single capstone could close the top. When employed to create vaults, the resulting construction resembled both the thatch roofs found in domestic architecture and at the same time introduced a cosmic metaphor in the form of a turtle. In Maya thought, turtle carapaces symbolize the surface of the earth and the crack from which the Maize God and other supernaturals emerged at the time of creation; the graceful arches and sturdy design of the corbelled vault paralleled the durable shell that protected the turtle, as Carrasco will discuss further in the Epilogue.

Laden with cosmic symbolism, architects employed corbelled vaults to support temple roofs, subterranean galleries, aqueducts, and entrances to structures and plazas. The Labná Arch, for example, includes as part of its surface decoration a pair of houses that flank the arch's corbelled opening (Figures 1.4a–b), while similar house motifs are widely employed in the iconographic program decorating Uxmal's Nunnery Quadrangle. At Palenque, builders fashioned the roof of House E with masonry shingles, which they carved to resemble thatch. Vaulting systems employed in Maya architecture, and even the names that labeled many buildings, offer additional support for links between houses, important temples, administrative buildings, and seats of power for elite lineages.

Another important type of structure that engages with the idea of Maya houses is the *popol naah*, or council house. This type of building is graphically tagged with a mat motif, an icon that resembles a woven textile or reed mat. Symbolizing royalty, the mat motif oftentimes appears on a building's frieze or on the facade more generally, almost certainly announcing its function as a council or community house. A *pib naah*, or sweatbath, on the other hand, is a structure that incorporates the house's symbolism on a smaller scale. Likely used for ritual purification, sweatbaths have been found at many sites, while some temples, such as those found in the Cross Group at Palenque, functioned as symbolic versions of this structural type.

Hieroglyphic inscriptions corroborate the strong relationship between other architectural forms and Maya houses and mark them as powerful,

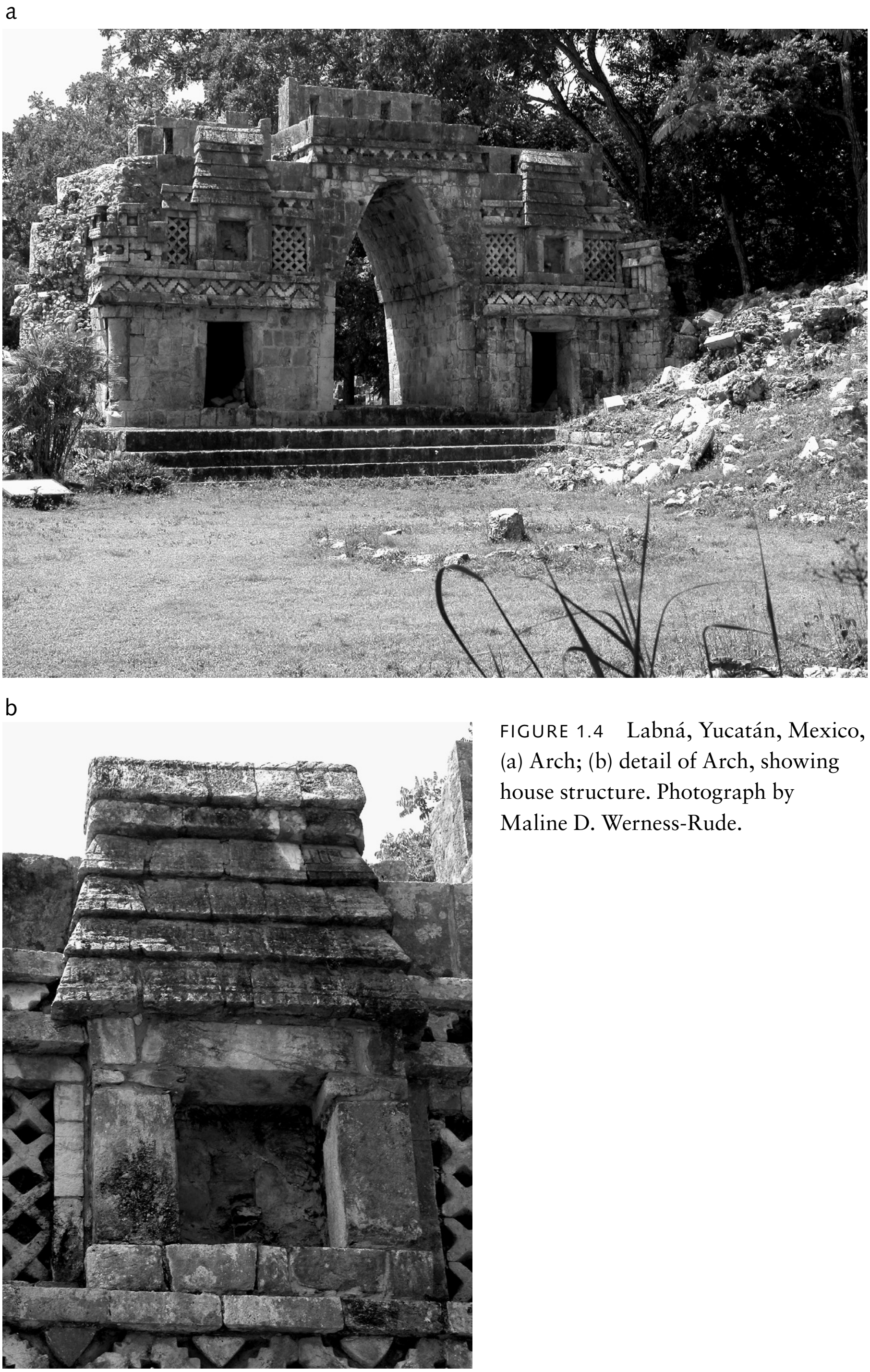


FIGURE 1.4 Labná, Yucatán, Mexico, (a) Arch; (b) detail of Arch, showing house structure. Photograph by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

and oftentimes sentient, places. Mentioned in Chapter 6 and discussed in detail in the Epilogue, House E (Figure 6.2) from Palenque, with its white painted exterior and accompanying floral imagery, was called the "White Skin House" (Sak Nuk Naah). This nominal phrase endowed the structure with one of several layers of cosmic symbolism, a point on which Carrasco will elaborate in the Epilogue. At Piedras Negras, another Usumacínta-region site, "Lightning House" (Chanuk Naah), was likely chosen as the name for one court gallery to imbue it with generative power and connect it to Maya cosmology. In the Maya creation account described below (see Ballcourts), the rain and thunder deity, Chahk, utilized lightning strikes to crack open the surface of the earth to propel creation.

While Maya architecture frequently evoked the idea of houses and the locus of creation, the widespread Mesoamerican concept of the sacred mountain was also central to Maya spirituality. Such mountains contained deities and ancestors and served as abodes for gods, as Olton (Chapter 7) indicates in exploring the ideological messages sent by Tikal's Temple 1. Maya temples replicated the natural form and conceptual essence of the mountain, which positioned them among the most important types of architecture. Hieroglyphs mark some temples, for example, as *wayib*, or "sleeping places," for patron gods. In an extension of this approach evidenced by the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, Temple 1 at Tikal (Figure 7.1), and many others, temples furnished deceased rulers turned ancestors with eternal resting places.

In addition to harboring the sacred essences of gods, these sacred places were perceived to engender an independent sentience. Architects could adopt the form of the Maya *ik'* sign—a reference to wind or the movement of air that resembles the letter *T* in either normal or inverted orientations—to mark the space defined by temple doors, courtyard entrances, and windows as portals for the passage of a sacred life-force or breath. Furthermore, Maya temples mediated relationships between the sacred and the human. These structures, along with the shrines they contained, served as a focus for ritual worship. Within the upper sanctuaries, many limestone plaques depict Maya kings and queens performing rituals in order to conjure ancestors, while texts record the details of the events and weave its performance into a matrix of time. At Yaxchilan, for instance, the carved lintels that span the doorframes of Temple 23 offer vignettes of rituals for those occupying the (presumably) private space of the inner sanctuary. The low-relief carvings present images of Lady K'abal Xook, the favorite consort of the ruler Itzamnaaj Balam II (Shield Jaguar), engaging in a bloodletting ritual. Her royal husband holds a torch that lights her actions, which result in the conjuring of a serpent/centipede whose open jaws reveal a patron god/ancestor of Yaxchilan. Given the proximity of the lintels to the darkened interior spaces of Temple 23, scholars have suggested that these very rituals took place inside the temple. As such, the design and form of Maya architecture ordered ceremonial activities and reimagined temples and plazas as spaces that engendered cosmic potential. An introduction to some of the major types of Maya buildings and a brief description of the ways in which they were typically organized assists in opening discussions about the roles that spatial constructs played in endowing meaning in Maya centers.

Temples exhibit a great deal of regional diversity, but their basic components remain the same. They consist of quadrangular masonry platforms, or pyramids, which supported relatively small superstructures. Temple bases were oftentimes filled with tons—literally—of rubble, while their exteriors were faced with cut stone. Sometimes horizontal terraces rhythmically divided the exterior of the platform's walls, while a single staircase generally allowed ascent to the structure's summit. Atop the platform, the main sanctuaries of the temples were fashioned either of stone or perishable materials. As will be discussed in the subsequent section titled Monumental Sculpture, soaring roofcombs made with masonry armatures faced with stucco extended upward from the superstructures, thereby increasing overall height and providing conspicuous places for the display of imagery (Figures 1.5, 1.10). Stucco embellishments, in the form of deity masks (frontal presentations of godly visages; Figure 5.2), abstract patterns,

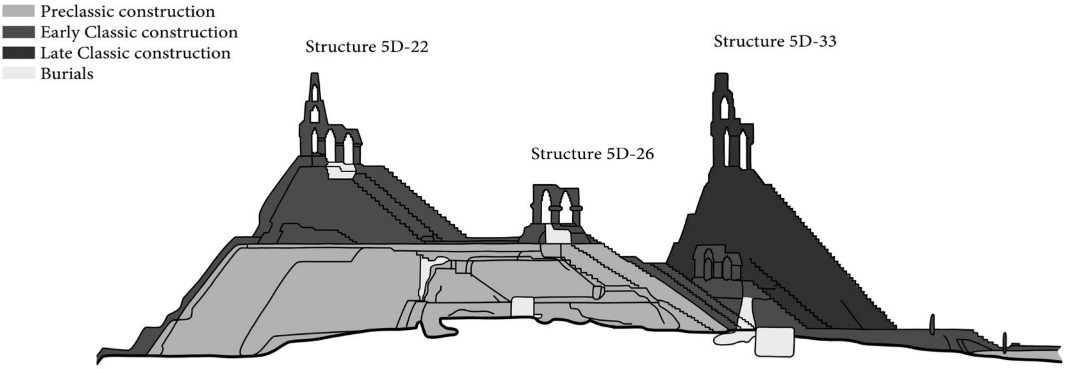


FIGURE 1.5 Cross section of the Acropolis showing multiple building phases and nested structures, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude after Harrison (2001:Figure 343).

and other icons, further enlivened temple exteriors, which were finished off with a "skin" of (usually red-painted) plaster.

Maya buildings rarely stood in isolation. By the PreClassic, sovereigns ordered the construction of structures grouped in space. As Clancy's (Chapter 5) work demonstrates, over time buildings were organized into complexes, thus creating opportunities for emergent spatial relationships that implicated the ways in which viewers experienced the areas within and between buildings. With each additional edifice, new possibilities arose in terms of spatial approaches to facades, abutments with adjoining structures, axial orientations to yet others (which generally emphasized east–west alignments), and other expansions of a site's plan.

Of the multiple temple configurations that designers created, some of the most frequently represented include complexes organized into triads and quadrangles. Within triadic complexes designers situated three structures atop platforms or terraces. Oftentimes within this system, two smaller structures flank a dominant central temple. We have already discussed one variation of a triadic configuration, known as the E-Group (see the Cosmology and Directionality section above).

Another common architectural configuration involved situating large structures around quadrangular spaces to define open plazas. A variety of building types, including temples, could create a plaza's boundaries. The Nunnery Quadrangle at Uxmal, for example, presents sweeping views of the low, yet horizontally expansive, facades of the buildings that define the plaza's four sides.

The twin-pyramid complex forms a final construction type; this configuration can be seen in Group Q at Tikal, as well as in a handful of other sites. True to the descriptive title modern archaeologists use to designate this type of space, it emphasizes nearly identical pyramids oriented directly across from one another on opposite ends of the plaza. Such places seem to have been created as environments in which to celebrate the passing of *k'atuns*, or twenty-year periods of time.

While entering a temple of any type clearly sends a simple message regarding relative social hierarchies—who is allowed and who is not—it also carries with it an ideological set of associations due to the fact that many temples contain their own spatial markings. The Puuc, Chenes, and Rio Bec areas provide some of the most overt examples of this trend, with architects incorporating iconographic tags into facade programs in order to label the temple space as a particular type of animate, supernatural mountain, as mentioned above. The spaces inside such built mountains were then understood to be cavernous. In traditional Maya thought, both natural and built caves are inherently liminal spaces that function as transitional places, linking the present creation with supernatural locations. This association is made particularly obvious at Ek’ Balam, to name one site, where leaders would have walked through doorways composed of toothy jaws in order to enter spaces metaphorically and literally associated with the supernatural “belly” of the beast/mountain. Other sites, like Uxmal, take up only slightly more restrained versions of the animated mountain (Figure 1.6).

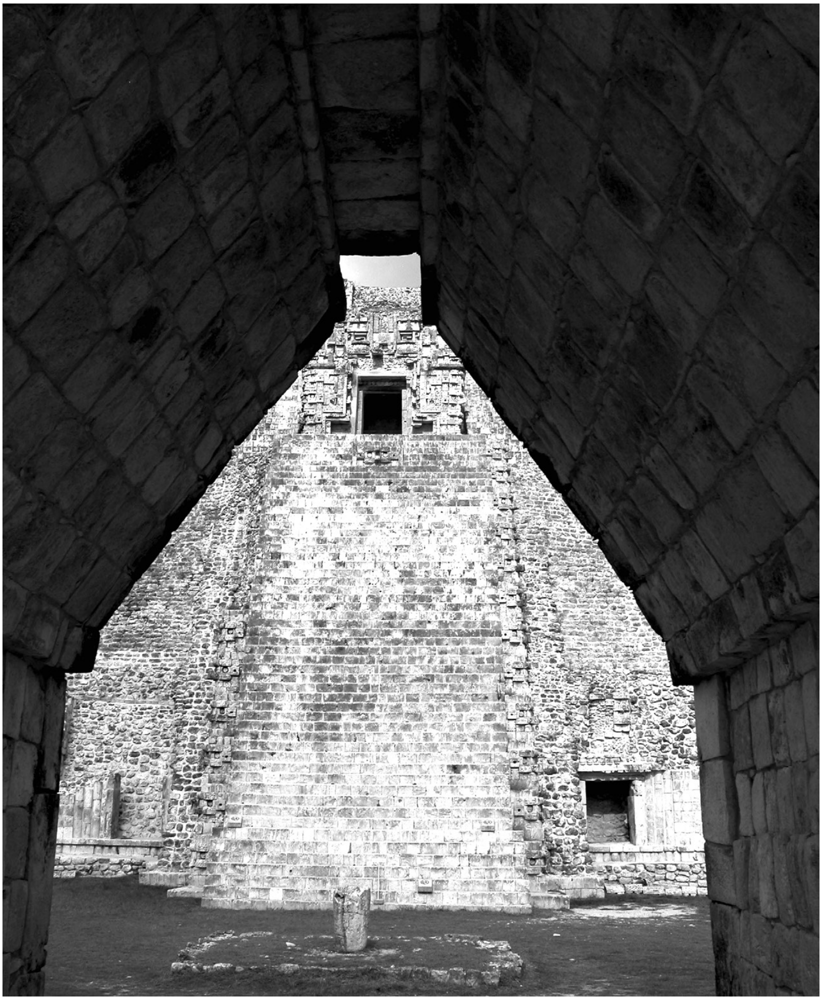


FIGURE 1.6 Vaulted entrance to the Court of the Birds and the Pyramid of the Magician, Uxmal, Yucatán, Mexico. Photograph by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

Thus, in addition to the obvious, stratified segregation of spaces, passage through the toothy maw reified the fact that the leader could access supernatural dimensions, thereby proving his legitimacy. In these restricted areas, he made contact with ancestors and other supernaturals, which further separated him from the rest of society and solidified his rightful place as ruler.

While buildings and associated plazas began to cover increasingly vast areas, height also figured prominently in the constructed environment. Just as hierarchical sets of conventions guided the creation of artworks and imagery, site designers endowed the most important buildings with the greatest height. This involved capitalizing on a site's natural topographic makeup, reserving the highest points for the most exclusive building(s), but it could also be accomplished artificially. In some cases, builders constructed complex networks of terraces to elevate select structures, while in other cases, new and larger temples were grafted directly atop preexisting ones. On a larger scale, complete groups of structures were expanded and transformed into massive platforms, thereby further increasing the height of a plaza's base or becoming another tier of a terrace. This "nesting" of structures within larger buildings furnished designers with opportunities to increase the height and scale of the new edifice while incorporating and retaining access to the memory of (and the spiritual significance associated with) the more ancient structures it subsumed (Figure 1.5). In this way, earlier structures seem to have acted as giant caches—sealed compartments filled with sacred objects commonly installed to dedicate, complete, and likely even enliven buildings—for the later structures that overtook them, and the subsequent construction phases certainly borrowed some of the "aura" from that which they encased. The North Acropolis at Tikal, for example, underwent numerous phases of expansion and modification, as Olton outlines in Chapter 7, before reaching the height at which it currently stands. The addition of roofcombs (see the section on Monumental Sculpture) furnished designers with a final option to increase the height, and amplify the visual prominence, of a temple. With the adoption of such strategies, the most important structures at Maya sites tended to tower over those of lesser importance. As such, these exteriors, platforms, and staircases became some of the most conspicuous loci, ideal for the performance of rituals and the display of lavish tribute. Conversely, people whose status was elite enough to ascend such buildings would have enjoyed privileged views of the sky as well as vistas of the activities taking place below the temple. It afforded an additional benefit of providing sight-based trajectories as a way of connecting the officiant with important buildings at neighboring sites.

Ballcourts

From very early times, ballcourts were typical features of Mesoamerican urban landscapes. These civic edifices contained and served as backdrops for the performance of important ceremonial activities and acted as arenas where Classic-period political theater played out. The number of ballcourts constructed at a given site to host such activities varied. In some cases builders fashioned a single ballcourt, while the designers of other sites incorporated several into their ceremonial centers. In addition to variety in numbers, ballcourts exhibit vast differences in terms of size, proportions, design details, and other spatial considerations. The Great Ballcourt at Chichén Itzá (Figure 1.7a), for example, measures 166 meters (545 feet) in length and is 21 meters (68 feet) wide while the small playing alley of the Great Plaza Ballcourt at Tikal (Figure 1.7b) appears to be diminutive in contrast, especially when compared with the massive pyramid (Temple 1) that borders its north side.

Size and importance were not necessarily linked; instead, form mattered most. So important was the general shape of the ballcourt that it remained the same for hundreds of years. This basic form consisted of masonry walls (or platforms) that defined a rectangular playing alley terminating in end zones on both sides of its axis. The resulting plan resembles the Roman numeral I when seen from above. The lateral structures that enclose the alley often incorporated sloping or stepped walls, creating surfaces from which the rubber ball could bounce or roll. In elaborate examples, temples or other structures share the ballcourt walls. In the case of the Great Ballcourt at Chichén Itzá, for example, the North Temple utilizes part of the ballcourt's end wall as its platform, allowing elite audiences privileged views of the court below (Figure 1.7a).

While a bird's-eye view resembles the Roman numeral I, the hieroglyph employed by Maya scribes to signify this structure presents the ballcourt from another perspective. The word designating this type of space tellingly represents a cross section of a stylized ballcourt, complete with stepped sides and centrally placed ball (Figure 1.8a). The glyphic form thus immediately relates this particular space to human experience by illustrating a view only available at ground level within the playing alley or end zones. It also emphasizes the cleft nature of such constructions, possibly in allusion to creation events as discussed below.

The views offered to spectators seated on the walls (or in "box seats" in more elaborate examples, as can be seen at Chichén Itzá) and the experiences of the participants within the court can be partially reconstructed

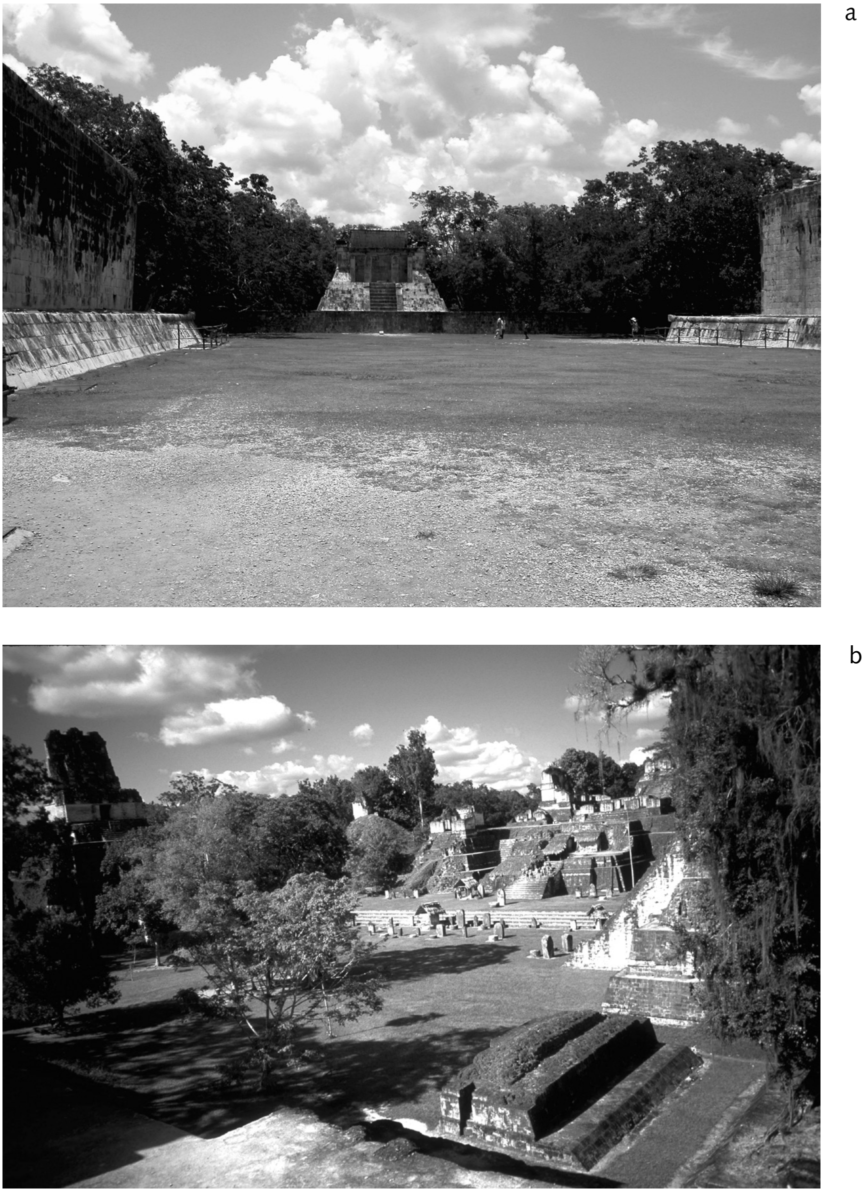


FIGURE 1.7 (a) Ballcourt, view to the north and the North Temple, Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico. Photograph by Maline D. Werness-Rude; (b) Acropolis, with the Palace, Ballcourt, and Temple 1 in the foreground, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Photo Collection:71072).

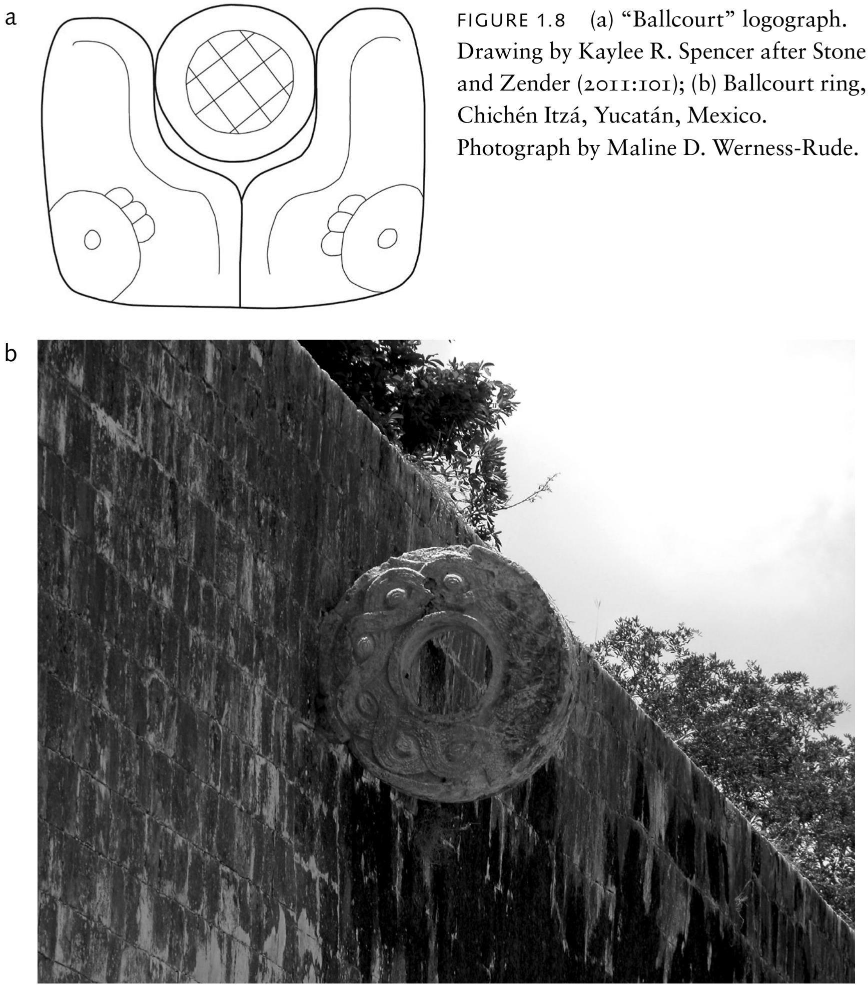


FIGURE 1.8 (a) "Ballcourt" logograph. Drawing by Kaylee R. Spencer after Stone and Zender (2011:101); (b) Ballcourt ring, Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico. Photograph by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

based on the study of remaining ballcourts, the frequent depiction of ballgame imagery painted on ceramics, and examples of ballgame scenes and players carved in other media. Such artworks offer hints as to how the game was played and how one likely scored points. In the center of the many playing alleys scattered across the southern lowlands, spectators would see groups of three circular carved stones set in the ground. Described by archaeologists as ballcourt markers, these stones probably served as indicators of boundaries or devices involved in scoring. In later northern lowland examples, pairs of relatively small ballcourt rings installed in the walls of the playing alley may have also operated as markers.

These carved masonry forms projected from the upper regions of the walls, much like (vertically oriented) basketball hoops (Figure 1.8b). While we remain uncertain as to function, these rings marked the midpoint of the playing arena, and it is even possible that launching the ball through the center of a ring resulted in earning points (although evidence suggests that some common ball sizes would have been too big to fit through these rings).

Donning feather-bedecked helmets, wide protective belts, chest plates, and even kneepads (oftentimes only worn on one knee), groups of two to five lords formed teams. Several polychrome vessels describe the space dedicated to their combat/play. In some cases, series of painted horizontal lines suggest the steps that line the alleys. Before the steps players kneel, bend, lunge, or otherwise use their bodies to strike a large rubber ball (Figure 8.8). The great variety and types of poses represented suggest the high degree of exertion the game required. In addition to the physical demands, it was dangerous. In some cases players clutch objects in their hands, which may have been employed as tools to propel the ball. Recent work suggests that ballcourts may even have been loci for ritual boxing matches, with such handheld implements functioning as knuckle-dusters used to increase the impact of a blow. The glyph reading *jatz'*, or "strike," oftentimes accompanies such imagery. It is uncertain whether this action relates to the aim of striking the ball, striking the opponent, or both. Regardless, ballcourts were places where a variety of entertainment and ritual activities took place. What is more, the frequency of ballgame scenes that depict human sacrifice make it clear that participants paid a grave price for losing.

In conjunction with the drama and import of the activities that took place in ballcourts, they were also locations of great artistic investment. Carved masonry surfaces embellished their interiors and qualified the nature of their environment through various categories of imagery. Markers and rings, basal panels, and other reliefs offer scenes that celebrated the themes of sacrifice, death, and regeneration as well as access to liminal spaces. Appearing on the slanting bases of the benches that line the walls of the playing alley at the Great Ballcourt at Chichén Itzá, a bellicose narrative plays out across a program of six bas-relief panels. These registers portray a series of players clad in regalia befitting ballgame activity. Swirling foliage, symbolic of new life, wraps throughout the tightly packed scene, as the players rhythmically seem to move toward the court's center. In the central panels, what seems to be the climax of the K'iche' Maya creation narrative, the Popol Vuh, unfolds (Figure 1.9). A player holds a knife in one hand and a severed head in the other. Before him kneels a decapitated player. Blood, symbolically indicated by a series of serpents, spurts from the victim's severed neck, making his sacrifice clear. Between the protagonists, a rubber ball is shown with a human skull at its center. Along with the imagery presented on the other panels, this act calls to the viewer's mind the sacrifice of the Maize God in the underworld (Xibalba) and the defeat of the underworld lords by the Hero Twins in order to cultivate new life. Liminality and possibly the Maize God story can also be seen on the other side of the Maya world in the Copán markers that show a historical king playing alongside a supernatural in a quatrefoil space. Significantly, these markers were placed in the floor of the playing alley itself, which means that the viewer literally looks down, through the cleft ballcourt, and the quatrefoil inscribed at its heart, into the underworld scene of analogous play.

This class of imagery demonstrates that ballcourts hosted events that were far more important than mere entertainment or political posturing. Instead, ballcourts became the sacred locations where the events of creation materialized; they were arenas where players retraced the steps of deities. In the liminal space of the ballcourt, human blood was sometimes spilled in supplication to the gods, and, at least by the Post Classic, although likely earlier, the characters from the Popol Vuh battled underworld denizens.

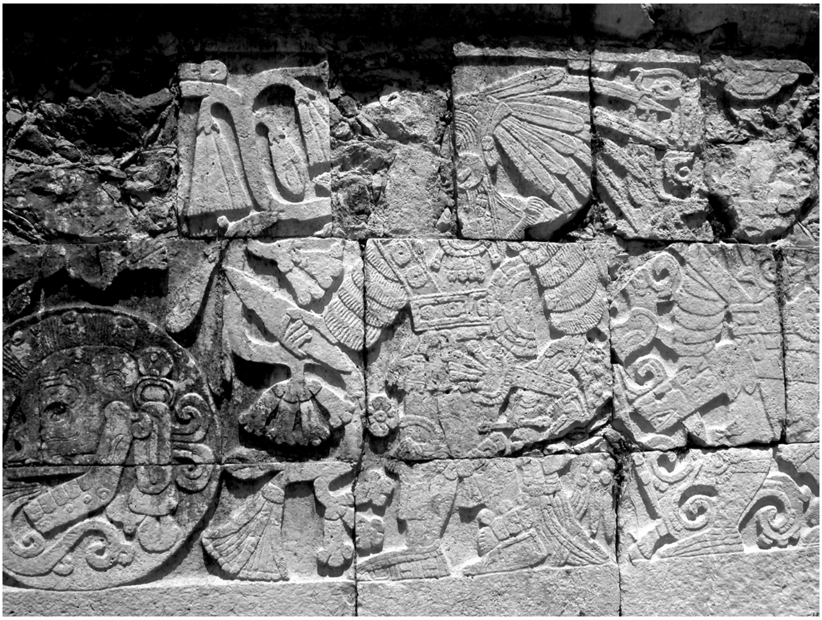


FIGURE 1.9 Ballcourt relief showing a sacrifice scene, Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico. Photograph by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

In this context, Maya ballplayers battled to the death, acting as analogs for the actions of the Hero Twins in the underworld ballcourt as they conquered death and resurrected maize. At a metaphoric level, the sacrifice of (presumably losing) ballplayers avenged the sacrifice of the Hero Twins' father, the Maize God, and promulgated the growth of new maize, which, as something that was brought from the underworld and that symbolizes the complete life cycle, sustained cosmic order.

The space defined by the ballcourt symbolically overlaps with that bounded by house vaults in that both utilize the powerful metaphor embodied by the crack in a turtle's carapace in Maya cosmology. In ancient thought, the turtle represented the surface of the earth floating in primordial waters. Many ceramic vessels portray the youthful Maize God in the act of arising from the underworld through a crack in the turtle's back, inflicted by the blow of Chahk, the Maya storm god (Chahk emerging from the primordial waters with his ax receives a great deal of attention and elaboration in the so-called Cosmic Plate [Figure 2.7], although the artist elected to focus entirely on the supernatural realm—and a different point in the narrative—instead of including reference to the terrestrial world in the form of the turtle).

An example of a ballcourt that metaphorically facilitated the transition between underworldly and terrestrial realms, while physically linking two segments of the ceremonial center, can be seen at Tikal. At that site, the North Acropolis functioned as a necropolis. As Olton richly describes in Chapter 7, it contained a concentration of funerary structures and royal tombs, including the soaring Temple 1, the final resting place of the famed king Jasaw Chan K'awiil. South of this group of buildings, Tikal's Central Acropolis accommodated a series of sprawling administrative and residential structures and courtyards. The Great Plaza Ballcourt (Figure 1.7b), a diminutive example compared to most others, served as a spatial segue aligning the space of the living, or the Central Acropolis, and the space of the dead, the North Acropolis. With its narrow playing alley and gently sloping sides, the Great Plaza Ballcourt connected two of the site's most important locations by being a transitional space, made visible, between the realm of the living—the palace—and the realm of the dead—the necropolis.

The space of Maya ballcourts served as places where underworld abodes were reconstituted and where some of creation's most critical events could be manifested through the activities of its players. As such, ballcourts must be viewed as charged spaces that could be activated through human presence. While actual ballcourts are identifiable due to their sloping sides, there are many visual references to the game as played in a stepped location. Even though physical ballcourts tend to incorporate only a few (if any) risers near the bases of alley walls, the stepped nature of ballcourts, when named or depicted on ceramic vases, are exaggerated in scale and number, suggesting that steps played important symbolic roles. The confluence of quintessentially different types of space—the stepped ritual/sacrificial arena and the smooth-sided playing alley—probably indicates a collapsing of space and time in which the ballgame is inherently connected with its outcome, the blood sacrifice. This equation is made evident through the emphasis placed on stepped locations in the iconography when almost all known archaeological examples contain smooth sloping sides—it is at the stepped location that sacrifice occurs, as several scholars have noted. As a result, the sacrifice associated with the ballgame, but commonly conducted subsequently in stepped locations, is alluded to even during game play. This helps explain the collapsing of both time and space in the many images of the king playing ball in a stepped location where the ball doubles as a sacrificial victim bouncing down the stairs (as at Yaxchilan, for example).

Palaces

The palace, as an architectural type, also contributed to the unique spatial characteristics of Maya sites. First described as *palacios* by Spaniards in the eighteenth century, the European idea of palaces, and attendant Western assumptions, shaped how early scholars defined and imagined elite residential architecture. While our knowledge regarding Maya ways of building, and thinking about, royal residential space far surpasses the Spaniards' first stumbling attempts at description, palaces remain difficult to describe because they followed no set templates. Indeed, elite dwellings exhibit wide regional variation, but now researchers generally agree that they consist of multi-room structures oriented around at least one internal courtyard. Curtains suspended from rods served as room dividers and doors, offering a modicum of privacy. Palaces usually had more than one point of access, yet were relatively restricted, regularly opening up to other elite spaces. Compared to other residential buildings in Maya cities, palaces were created on a larger scale, and builders employed costly, permanent materials in their construction. Despite the fact that many royal abodes appear to be expansive when seen from the outside, an effect that was enhanced by exterior coats of dazzling lime plaster and ornamental sculpture, their interiors tended to be small, narrow, and windowless, with low roofs contributing to

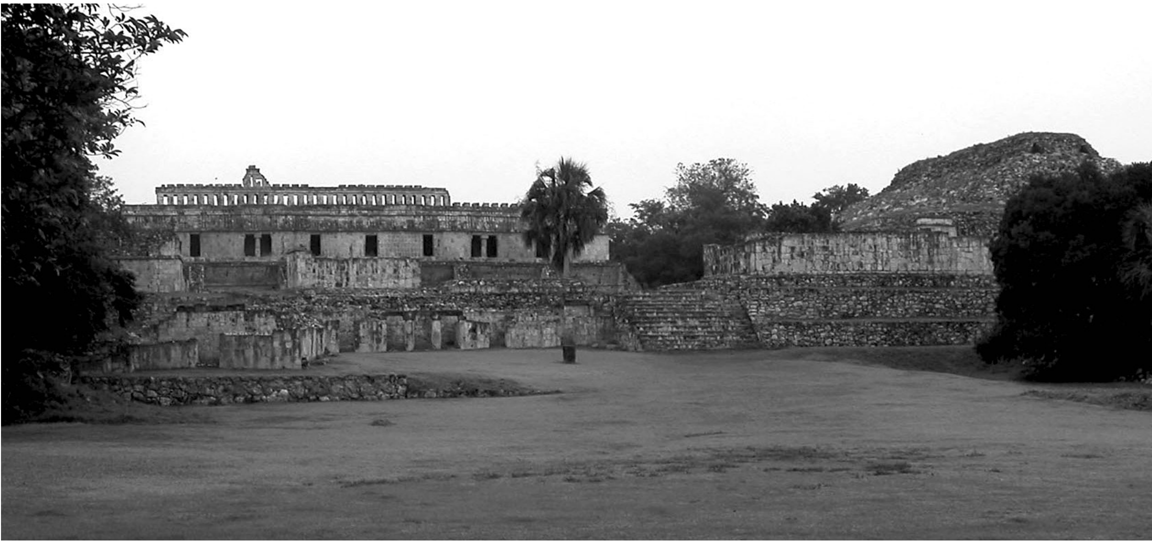


FIGURE 1.10 Palace, Kabah, Yucatán, Mexico. Photograph by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

their intimate atmosphere. Unlike temples, which visually stretched upward from the tops of massive terraces and were augmented over time to soar increasingly higher, most palaces rested atop more modest platforms and were gradually expanded through the addition of adjacent structures and courtyards. This practice resulted in a complex of structures that emphasized a palace's horizontal appearance as in the Kabah Palace (Figure 1.10). The Palace at Palenque, as another example, began as a single, small building, which is now known as House E, but during the reigns of a series of ambitious kings, the Palace grew to encompass multiple corbel-vaulted houses, several courtyards, subterranean galleries, a tower, and even bathrooms (Figure 6.2).

As is the case in attempting to define the functions of temples, describing the myriad activities that must have taken place in palaces is a formidable task. Within palace walls, the principal ruler and his (or in a few cases her) extended family probably lived alongside a host of servants, who attended to his/her comfort and needs. We can easily imagine a palace's occupants needing to eat, sleep, and attend to administrative tasks, but depictions of court scenes painted on vases and carved in relief panels, along with hieroglyphic texts, allow us to envision with greater specificity what kinds of things royals did in palaces. Low masonry benches, which in some cases were found intact, served as resting places and thrones.

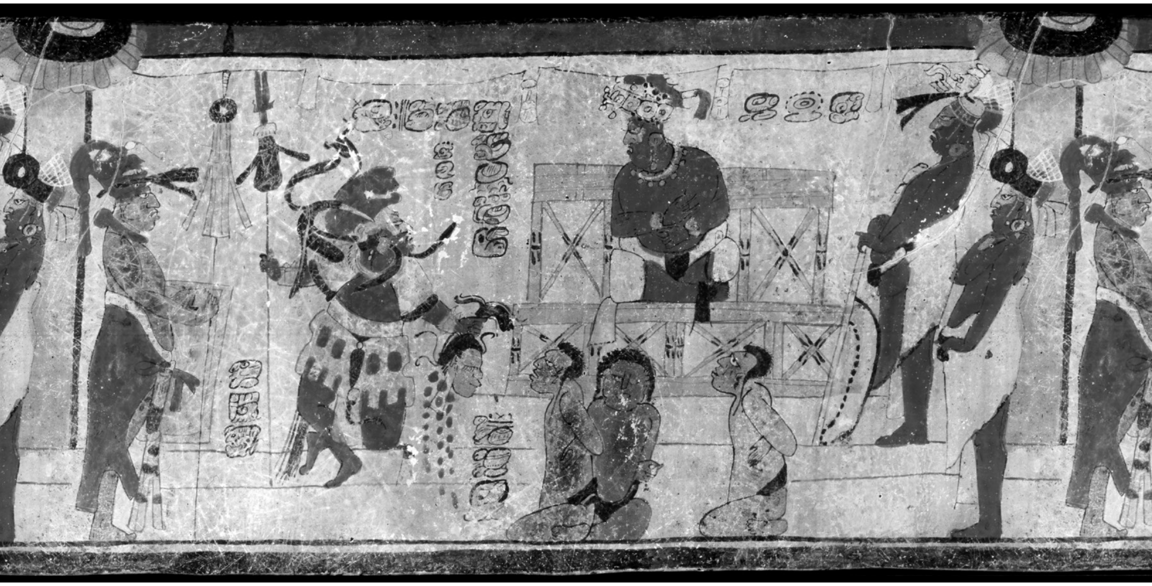


FIGURE 1.11 Captive presentation scene, 18 × 9.8 cm (7 × 3.9 in) diameter, polychrome ceramic vessel, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K680).

Postholes found nearby reveal where curtains hung to shield the sovereign from unwanted sights and sounds as he/she relaxed. Many polychrome vases depict such drapery hanging in swags directly over the tops of thrones, in its bound-up and open position, as kings receive guests and tribute (Figure 1.11). Often appearing as framing figures, musicians and performers entertained or standard bearers stood as solemn guards while servants and guests proffered food (including tamales and cacao). Visiting elite lords presented luxurious tribute items, such as bundles of textiles or even prisoners of war (as in Figure 1.11), placing them on the dais's edge, or on the floor below the ruler's feet. Some polychrome vases feature folded paper manuscripts, along with other sumptuary goods, and a recently excavated mural from Xultun presents what appear to be mathematical tables, suggesting that palaces may have been places of study, or places where scribes practiced calligraphic arts. At the very least, the presence of such materials implies that careful records of elite interaction were kept while also indicating just how much has been lost due to time and the violent episodes of auto-da-fé or book burnings effected during the Spanish Conquest and conversion of the Maya world.

Not surprisingly, at most Maya sites palaces are nestled in close spatial proximity to major groups of ceremonial architecture. This contiguity of spaces can be seen at Tikal, as just mentioned. At Palenque, the pattern is slightly different (no ballcourt links the various areas) but the overarching effect is the same. K'inich Janab Pakal directed his builders to construct his funerary temple, the Temple of the Inscriptions, adjacent to his main residence, while his heir, K'inich K'an Balam II, completed his own shrine-based complex in the form of a triadic grouping of structures southeast of both the Palace and his father's mortuary tomb (which he was also responsible for completing). Situating palaces in close proximity to tombs, and their accompanying shrines, facilitated rulers' requisite acts of ancestral veneration and ritual performance. Palenque is clearly not the only site to incorporate such an approach, which is exhibited throughout the Maya region. Tikal provides yet another example of this basic formula, as mentioned above (see the section devoted to ballcourts) and in Olton's (Chapter 7) work on the Tikal Acropolis.

Despite the vivid visual testimony to sumptuous interiors presented by Maya vases, significant gaps remain in our understanding of how palaces were used, the roles they played, and even the fundamental differences between palaces and other types of elite buildings. What remains clear is that their functions merged with those of some temples, at least in part, and the activities carried out in both were not mutually exclusive. Imagery and texts from palaces frequently recount the conjuring of deities, re-creation of sacred space, and other spiritual matters, while inscriptions carved on temple walls, staircases, or other surfaces oftentimes address subject matter that modern audiences might consider purely secular. To view palaces from perspectives that uphold strict oppositions between these spheres introduces filters and biases from our culture that limit our potential to understand the Maya and their architectural achievements.

Pathways as Connectors

Roads form the final category of monumental construction used by the Maya to create space and place. Built from at least the Middle PreClassic on, stone causeways called *sacbeob* (singular: *sacbe*) in Yucatec Maya, were important human-made features that connected some cities to outlying neighbors and circumscribed routes that ordered and linked spaces within a site. Upon the arrival of the Spanish, a matrix of sacbeob spanned much of the Yucatán Peninsula, connecting major and minor centers in a vast web. Most of these roads consisted of large rock- and rubble-filled beds covered with layers of lime plaster. The term *sacbe* itself literally means "white way," in Yucatec, reflecting their white, and therefore conspicuous, appearance. Ranging in width from 3 to over 20 meters (just over 65 feet), and extending in length from a few meters to over 99 kilometers (roughly 61.5 miles), sacbeob exhibited tremendous variety in scale as well as in appearance. In the northern Maya area, for example, sacbeob were slightly higher in the center than at the lower edges. Visually emphasizing their linear quality in another way, the sacbe systems of Cobá commonly featured a thin line of rectangular stones that ran down the road's center. In some areas sacbeob were incorporated into ditches and culverts. In other cases builders integrated ramps into their designs, oftentimes increasing the elevation of the causeways where they intersected with architectural edifices or where two roads intersected, thus creating a prominent four-way road. This orientation, as will be discussed below, took on added significance when considered in conjunction with indigenous views of cosmic shape and time, as Wren and colleagues suggest in Chapter 8. Whether they followed the landscape's natural topographic character or documented builders' manipulations of the earth's surfaces, sacbeob serve as artifacts that embody ancient perceptions of location and connection. In other words, their use in the networking of spaces within and/or between sites means that sacbeob serve as de facto maps or models of human movement and connection.

Functionally, sacbe systems furnished the ancient Maya with paved paths to travel within sites, linking administrative, ceremonial, and residential precincts, while more extensive roadways connected established centers to their secondary and tertiary neighbors. Such feats of engineering obviously served many pragmatic purposes. They facilitated communication and movement of people from place to place, promoted the exchange of trade goods and agricultural products, provided efficient means for military deployment, and even assisted in water management by channeling this precious resource into catchment systems (Figures 8.1–8.3). Inhabitants likely had many ways of moving around within or between sites anciently. Using an analysis of the spatial complexities that sacbe systems implicate—combined with linguistic, epigraphic, and iconographic investigations—offers insights into some of the meanings that undergird and travel parallel to these roadways and the spaces they engage.

Within Maya sites, sacbeob linked, and provided access to, discrete zones. Prominent ceremonial precincts containing temples, plazas, and platforms; palaces and other administrative groups; and residential zones were thus connected and brought into alignment with one another (consider the sacbeob at Labná and Oxkintok, which also demonstrate variation in construction techniques and resultant profiles; see Figures 1.12a–b, or on a larger scale, Figure 8.1 for the ways in which Yo'okop uses sacbeob to lead out of, and into, the site center). While no single pattern dominates, standard delineations of spaces are well documented in the Maya area. At some locations, raised roads linked several structures, or architectural groups, to one another in a relatively linear fashion, as Wren and colleagues (Chapter 8) observe at Yo'okop, while also carrying directional affiliations. Joining a series of precincts and structures at Sayil, "like beads on a string," the major north–south roadway at that center connected the Great Palace, Mirador, Double Court, Big Hill, Ballcourt, and other complexes, while another road oriented three major ceremonial zones along a clearly expressed north–south axis.

Sacbeob could also be organized in a radial fashion, joining a primary center to outlying secondary and tertiary regions of the site. At Cobá, mentioned earlier, archaeologists have encountered what they believe to be an ancient radial sacbe system, for example, that joined peripheral clusters of structures to the center in an immense network of roads encompassing an area of 23 square kilometers. At other sites, such as Caracol, builders seem to have constructed dendritic systems, or configurations where large concentrations of architectural groups were organized in rings around an inner core. Along with radial orientations, dendritic plans ascribed spatial hierarchical prominence to the center.

Cruciform orientations were also employed with frequency. Ek' Balam's cruciform layout, for instance, imparts hierarchical significance to the location where the axial alignments of sacbeob (and related architectural groups) intersect. In such systems, four roads extended from a central location, thus creating a cross-shaped locus that referenced indigenous philosophies surrounding the concept of the quincunx (Figure 3.4b), or quadripartite scheme. The practice of constructing four-road ramps, as discussed above, also participated in physically inscribing this important concept into the landscape. In pre-Columbian worldviews, cross-shaped motifs symbolized completion through the reference to the position of the sun and the cardinal directions. In addition, the cruciform site plan likely implied the notion of the World Tree as cosmic metaphor by evoking the pattern through the tree's trunk and two main branches (Figure 2.8, especially a and c). Repeated in the organization of burial offerings and in the physical movements undertaken by ritual participants (see discussion of Colonial-era processions below), the quincuncial form of many sacbeob infused Maya sites with ground-level models of the cosmos. Not only did sacbeob endow discrete centers with sacredness, but their ordered design,

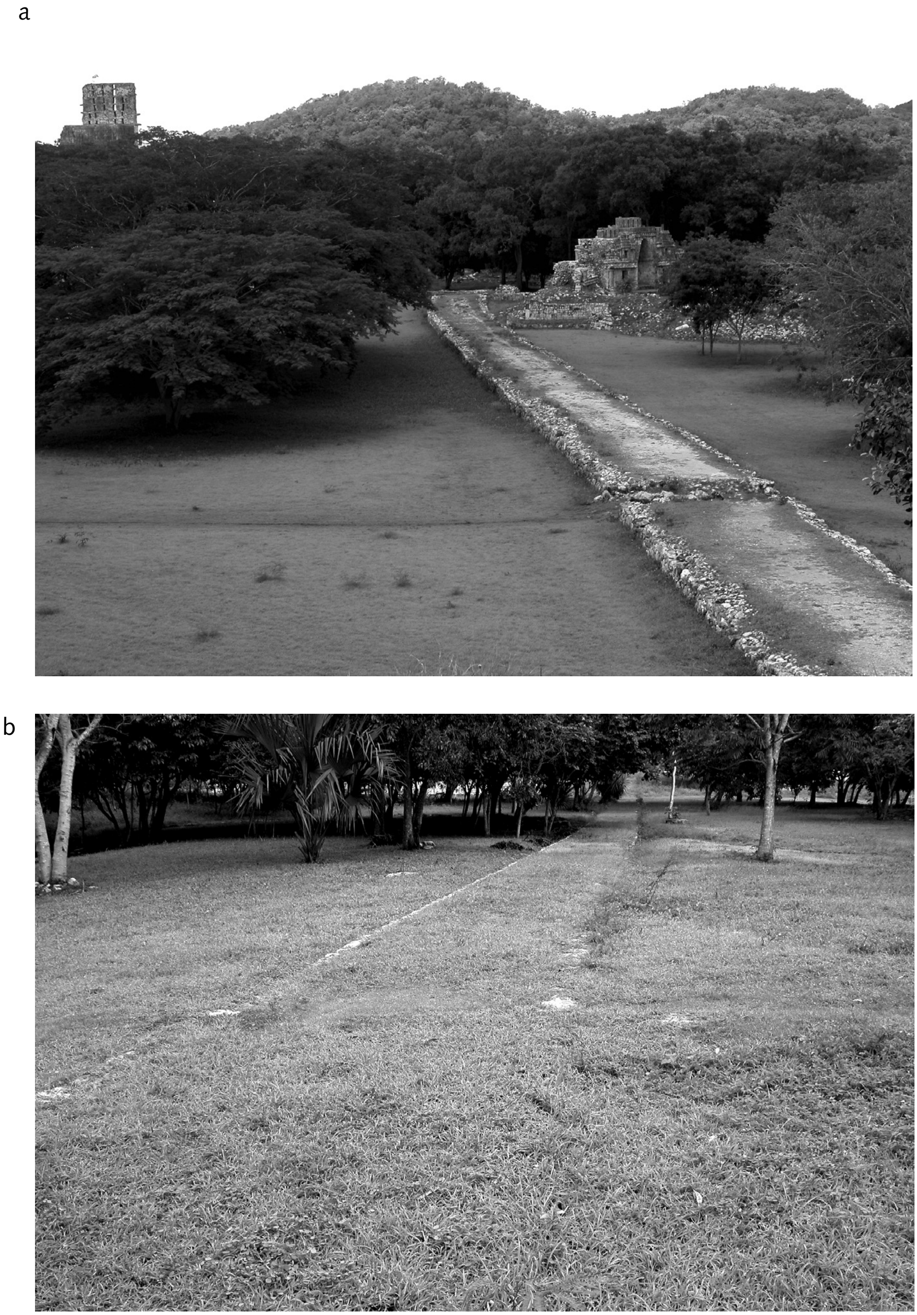


FIGURE 1.12 Sacbeob, (a) Labná, Yucatán, Mexico; (b) Oxkintok, Yucatán, Mexico. Photographs by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

generally adhering to straight lines and right angles, demarked civilized, socially constructed spaces, which contrasted sharply with the dangerous, unordered, and wild spaces beyond a site's boundaries. It is likely that such places, and their contingent associations, had to be actively renewed on a regular, possibly even an annual basis, which probably took both pragmatic and ideological tracks.

At a pragmatic level, roads required maintenance, including the resource-costly action of re-stuccoing. Conversely, alterations made to create connections with previously under-acknowledged areas carried ideological associations. That this pattern did not die out at the time of Spanish invasion is evidenced by a multiplicity of studies demonstrating continuity in tradition despite such moments of disjunction and rupture. In Chapter 9, for instance, Taube describes a related process in the acknowledgement and demarcation of just these kinds of locations in the ritual renewal of identity in a modern Maya community.

Hieroglyphic characters employed to indicate the word for sacbe in Mayan frequently exhibit visual characteristics that mirror the sacred configurations of some causeway plans. For example, the Cholan Mayan variation of the term for road, *sakbih* (**SAK-BIH**), includes the **bi** sign, a hieroglyphic symbol that scribes frequently denoted in quincuncial form (Figure 3.4b). As described above, in Maya thought the quincunx serves as an important cosmic marker because of its ability to graphically define a center though the demarcation of four corners (Figures 3.4b, 9.2, 9.3). By inscribing boundaries, the sacred center, or *axis mundi*, is thus established, as are the world directions. As has been recently noted, glyphic collocations employing the quincuncial form of the **bi** syllable appear on stones incorporated into the vast Cobá-Yaxuná Causeway, where they were used in texts that serve as dedication markers. These inscriptions, along with stela fragments and remnants of shrines, attest to the ceremonial importance Cobá's roadways engendered. In such texts sacbeob are often described as the "Four Roads," a phrase that serves as a metaphor for the world directions, and by extension, an allusion to the sun's appearance and disappearance on the solstices (see the Cosmology and Directionality section above). Descriptions of ceremonies recorded in seventeenth-century Yucatán reveal the quincuncial foundation of ritual activity, as participants processed to each of the cardinal directions, thereby articulating a sacred center.

Considering sacbeob from perspectives informed by indigenous languages and hieroglyphic writing opens further arenas for understanding Maya philosophies of space. The word *sac* (which may also be written as *zac*, or *sak*), refers to "white," "clean," "intensity," and "fiction," to name a few (it seems significant in this context that white is the chosen color for laying out a quadripartite, ordering image in contemporary ritual; Figure 9.2). Some English translations for the Mayan word *be* (or *beh*) include "road," while "street," "trail," "path," "route," "course," "transit," and "destiny" are also signified. Some of these meanings could be seen as straightforward descriptions of roads; others, such as "clean," "intensity," and "fiction" for *sac* and "destiny," "course," and "transit" for *be*, introduce more agentive meanings that engage with spatial concepts of Maya cosmology and locate sacbeob as liminal and/or moral spaces. Supporting this view, recent scholarship posits that sacbeob could, in some circumstances, assist in piercing cosmic strata. Epigraphers interpret the term *bi* in such contexts as denoting changes in condition. In classic texts, a common death expression *och bih*, literally "enter the path/road" incorporates a variation of the *bi* sign. Similarly, it has been recently argued that the term *bix*, or "go away" connotes a journey, either to the underworld or to another geographic location. In the cases of the och bi and bix expressions, roads forge links that catalyze the passage between disparate spatial realms.

While death was seen as one way to traverse the boundaries of space and time, ritual activity could also facilitate access to alternate cosmic spheres. Sacbeob could effectively facilitate the movement of a large group of people in prescribed ways, thereby endowing them with vital roles in ordering ritual activities. At Chichén Itzá, a sacbe starts at the plaza anchored by the massive radial bulk of the Castillo and extends to the north, where it terminates at the site's largest cenote, the Sacred Well. The white road thereby creates a strong north–south axis linking two of the most important ritual loci at the site.

One idea that has currency at the present moment suggests that sacbeob were inscribed on ceramic vessels and temple walls using an icon resembling twisted cords. Known as the *k'uxan suum*, or "the living cord," in Colonial Yucatec, this motif consists of intertwining ropes (or in some cases serpents). The twisted cord motif connotes the cosmic umbilicus that connects all of creation and provides an axis mundi for the model of space. Closely related to acts of binding, or wrapping, this motif conceptually linked stone monuments, temples, and sacbeob to sacred rituals that marked the passage of time and reactivated connections between the past and present.

Colonial accounts from Yucatán explicitly describe the vast web of sacbeob (which wove together the roads linking Chichén Itzá to many of its neighbors) as the small-scale terrestrial version of the cosmic model. The notion that roads, described iconographically as twisting cords, themselves operate as sites of rituals in addition to serving as conduits to otherworldly realms is long-standing in Mesoamerica. In Structure 5 at Tulum, the same motif constitutes the vertical sections of a rectangular framework that encloses a ritual scene. It has been suggested that the location of this symbol, which appears directly beneath the feet of two seated deities, thereby provides them with a pathway. The structural and liminal nature of the twisted cord motif endows similar meanings to the terrestrial sacbeob that delineate spaces within and between Maya sites.

Monumental Sculpture

Maya architecture operated in conjunction with sculpture to create specific visual experiences, and the two are often inseparable. While ceramic sculptures undoubtedly played paramount roles in the spatial contexts that will be described below, their portable nature introduces great challenges in understanding the specific ways in which they were used. Many examples of limestone and stucco sculpture, however, remain in situ, allowing us to consider their designs, locations, and imagery for hints regarding the operation of spatial constructs.

Roofcombs

When viewing a Maya center from a distance, roofcombs would have been among the most conspicuous pieces of architectural sculpture (consider the armature that tops the Mirador at Labná, visible from behind in Figure 1.12a). These extensions, which were added to the roofs of select palaces and temples, cued viewers' awareness of a building's importance by increasing its vertical silhouette. The large-scale, elevated position, and vibrantly painted programs of relief sculpture situated roofcombs as instruments to convey information about the nature of the spaces over which they towered. Indeed, in their visibility and location relative to viewers, they behaved not so differently from the modern billboards of today, although they functioned rather differently in that they advertised a building's purpose, patron, etc., rather than trying to overtly create desire for or otherwise sell a commoditized good. The subjects they exhibited, while poorly preserved or missing altogether, originally consisted of portraits of rulers; cosmic imagery, including stacked monster masks; and a variety of sacred icons. At Tikal, for example, roofcombs assisted in asserting the dominance and memory of celebrated rulers. Olton analyzes Temple 1 in Chapter 7 as an active memorial linking multiple generations of rulers with the person it contained. This message was made particularly publically visible in the form of a supplemental roofcomb portraying a massive portrait of the seated ruler. From the Great Plaza below, viewers encountered an arresting reminder of the Classic-period king's power and the revival of the site's fortunes that he ushered in as well as his continued connection with the later rulers who physically passed beneath his image. In Chapter 7, Olton demonstrates that the master designer responsible for Temple 1 incorporated more private, nuanced versions of this same message in all the spaces with which the temple was associated, be they its interior locations or its interspatial relationships with other buildings. That this technique was pan-Maya is demonstrated by the appearance of roofcombs throughout the Maya world.

Facade Sculpture

In order to heighten the experiential impact of select sacred spaces and to guide viewers in forging connections between spaces and ideas, relief sculptures frequently embellished portals and doors. While such visual adornment reflects a pan-Maya impulse, the Puuc region, with its mosaic stonework and stacked "monster" masks (which, much like the deity masks referred to above, cover or "mask" a building with elaborate, symbolically abstracted supernatural forms), provides one of the most overt examples of the union between facade decoration and architectural feature. One corbelled entryway at Uxmal is located right next to the Nunnery Quadrangle and serves as the entrance to the Court of the Birds (Figure 1.6). It establishes a vantage point that aligns the arch's corridor with the massive staircase that ascends the Pyramid of the Magician. At the same time, the profile of the arch perfectly frames the sculpted monster-face facade of the temple that rests on the pyramidal summit, thus signifying the dual role played by the temple's door: it allows entrance, which it marks as liminal. Ek' Balam's toothy threshold has been mentioned above, and a similar portal at the site of Chicanná, which bears sculpture in the form of zoomorphic eyes, teeth, and nose, invites viewers to enter through the open maws of an earth monster, while the ik'-shaped entryway and carved surface of Copán Structure 22, consisting of scrolling skyband Witz mountain imagery and skulls near the base, becomes a conduit to the underworld.

At Palenque too, doors both frame and set up select locations as important. In some cases they specifically qualify the space as royal. When standing in the Palenque Palace facing House E, for example, the sides of the door perfectly frame the Oval Palace Tablet, which was attached to the back wall. In this way House E's architectural design emphasizes the significance of the space where coronations took place, one instance of which is recorded on the Oval Palace Tablet's carved surface, a point upon which Carrasco expands in the Epilogue. Niche-style stela formats, which will be discussed below, incorporate a similar framing mechanism in the freestanding sculpture medium.

In other cases Maya sculpture operated in conjunction with a viewer's movements and, in some situations, even prescribed specific relationships between spectator and artwork. Sculpted imagery and hieroglyphic texts that appear on the risers of staircases, for example, encourage viewers to recall particular people and events while they process up or down the steps. At Copán, the great Hieroglyphic Stairway embellishes the dominant facade of Temple 26, a large pyramid near the Acropolis. Its risers bear a lengthy inscription—consisting of over 2,200 individual glyph blocks!—recounting the history of the site. Six life-size stone sculptures of enthroned Copán kings appear in a line that bisects the vertical height of the staircase. A portrait of K'ahk' Yipyaj Chan K'awiil, who was responsible for the temple's completion, appears on Stela M, a monument that was erected at the base of the temple on the same axis created by the series of ruler portraits rising above and behind. Ascending and descending the staircase would then become an act of retracing, rewriting, and reactivating Copán's dynastic history.

Although modest by comparison, the hieroglyphic inscription that appears on the risers of the House C staircase, located within the East Court of the Palace at Palenque, recounts a different, more specific form of history. As Spencer demonstrates in Chapter 6, the Palace's East Court details episodes of war with Palenque's enemy, Toniná, and the capture of prisoners, captives whose images might be represented in the reliefs decorating the interior patio (Figures 6.3–6.6). At other sites, staircases position viewers as surrogates who re-create specific actions. At places like Toniná and Dzibanché, for instance, staircase risers present relief carvings portraying prisoners captured in battle. In these cases, the literal act of stepping upon a captive's image catalyzed a process of re-conquest and subsequent humiliation that played out in perpetuity.

Stelae

An important category of sculpture at many sites in the Maya world is the stela (Figures 8.6–8.8). In some cases marked as a *lakam tuun*, with a suggested reading of "big stone," stelae are prismatic stone slabs, generally of limestone, that were "planted" vertically into plaza floors, resulting in a freestanding sculpture with an upright orientation. They were usually carved and painted on all sides (although much of the paint is now lost due to the effects of time). Dedication texts inscribed on their surfaces, which sometimes employ the phrase *k'al tuun*, or "stone binding," testify to their sacred function. Stelae most often depict the visages of a king or, less frequently, a queen. Through their upright orientation, human subject matter, and scale, which often approximates or exceeds the stature of the viewer, stelae are some of the most engaging types of carving to appear in ceremonial precincts. As Clancy suggests in Chapter 5, they are a Classic-era development and are seen as one of the most overt expressions of political and religious power known in the Maya world. While most stelae present rulers in the act of standing upright—a placement that corresponds to the orientation of the viewer—at select sites such as Piedras Negras, artists favored a format that presented the sovereign seated within an elevated niche. This approach required spectators to gaze upward at the ruler from below, forming a mode of looking that continually reasserts the ruler's superior status.

Part of a stela's power derives from the emic perception that stelae embodied the spiritual essence of the individual(s) that they portray. On one level, stelae served as ruler portraits. The frequent use of the glyphic collocation *ubaah*, which translates as "it is the image of," specifically labels the individual depicted, since a personal name routinely follows this expression. On another level, a stela documented the sitter's dutiful performance in a set of ritual activities. Inscriptions carved on the sides and often the backs of the sculptures specifically anchor the ruler's actions within time and space. They also often name particular gods and ancestors and describe the contexts where they were conjured. On some occasions, texts indicate that rulers undertook such performances in the persona, or guise, of important deities. Both text and iconography create parallels between the sitter's actions and those of past kings and queens—ancestors whose activities other stelae (oftentimes erected in the same plaza) recount.

Like altars, stelae became the recipients of blood, fire, and other types of ceremonial offerings. As sites that continued to act as the focus of ritual activity long after the initial dedicatory moment, stelae must be seen both as historical records of past activities and as monuments that embodied the potential to be activated again (or even to be ever active), either as a vehicle to commune with the individual portrayed, or as a potent location to re-create the ritual activity described on the stela's surfaces. The activation of these freestanding stone monuments seems to be physically indicated. Many were erected over buried caches, which, as mentioned in conjunction with architecture, sanctified the area.

The Creation, Reception, and Consumption of Luxury Goods

Luxury goods are also spatial objects and each type has its own set of spatial concerns. These are often less overt than those associated with architecture, roads, and sculpture but they can share many of the same ideological functions. Like sacbeob, for instance, the dissemination of visually related objects creates a subtler but still visible web of social (and frequently political, religious, and economic) interconnections. Ceramics in particular, like temples, were thought of in architectonic terms while also displaying spatial concerns relative to internal image construction. In the Epilogue, Carrasco mentions the idea of micro-architecture, a term developed in the study of reliquaries and other medieval items but which can be equally applied to small-scale objects in the Maya world, like house models, etc. It can be used to describe exactly this phenomenon of portable objects whose purpose it was to visually mimic buildings, often in the pursuit of their primary function "housing" other items. The fact that a ceramic container could be glyphically named as an *otoot*, "house," and that some drinking vessels were made to look like actual buildings makes this parallel particularly explicit in Maya thought.

We would like to make a few comments about the various spatial and conceptual associations carried by the numerous classes of portable luxury items (e.g., micro-architecture, jade celts, jade pectorals, shell pectorals, shell trumpets, staffs of all kinds, and ceramic vessels of all types, to name but a few), while leaving the more specific discussions regarding the spatiality of such objects to our individual contributors. In Chapter 4, Werness-Rude focuses on how a particular group of carved ceramics alludes to, and engages with, spatiality in at least three different ways. In Chapter 7, Olton provides the converse approach: instead of subjecting a particular type of object (or subject, as with Steinbach's examination of the Jester God in Chapter 2) to direct analysis, she investigates the offerings of Temple 1 at Tikal. As a result, she spends considerable energy describing, contextualizing, and interpreting not only the burial, temple, and lintels, but also other offerings like lithics and ceramic sherds. As a matter of fact, almost all of the chapters that follow focus at least some analysis on portable luxury goods alongside monumental constructions.

Moveable elite items, like those named above, functioned in a variety of ways. As with most things they made, scribes delighted in labeling or "tagging" luxury items with names that also typically marked their material reality as possessed items. Such verbal labeling highlights the visual and functional differences between distinct classes of portable objects.

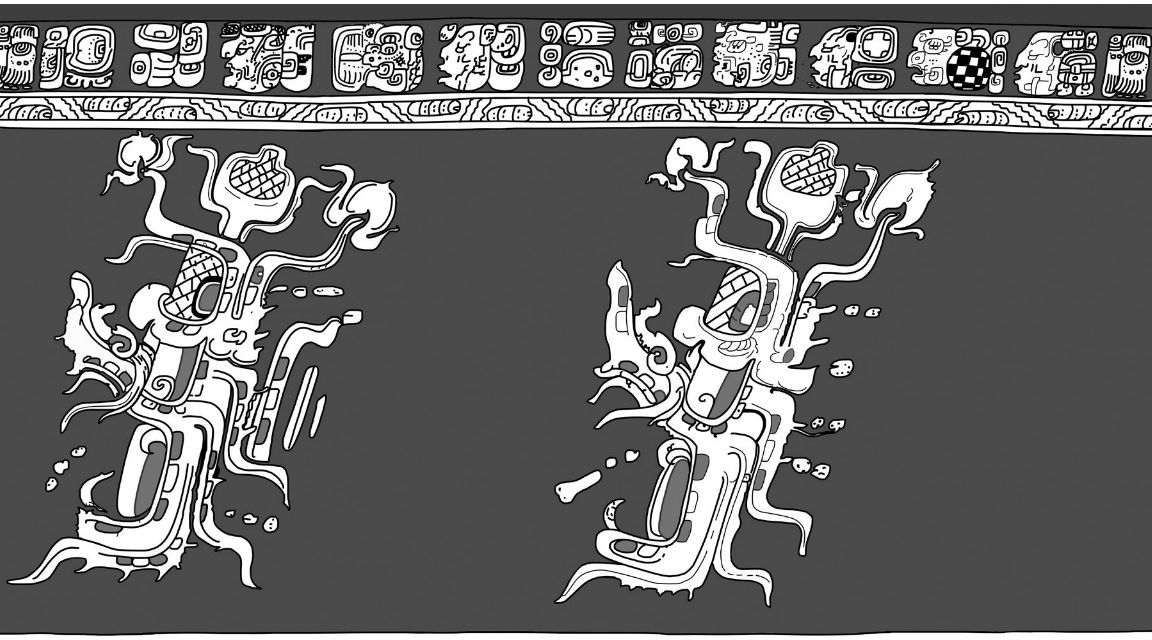


FIGURE 1.13 Disembodied deity heads, 20 × 11.5 cm (7.8 × 4.5 in) diameter, polychrome ceramic vessel, Petén, Guatemala. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude of vessel from Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K1941).

Ulak distinguishes his/her/its plate from *y-uk'ib*, his/her/its drinking vessel (Figure 1.13), both of which are further separated from *utuup*, his/her/its earspool, for instance.

Rulers could commission such objects with the intention of giving them out as gifts. Largesse was a highly visible way of solidifying alliances while also creating an unequal exchange of power wherein the receiver held the lesser position. Thus, the creative process often entailed a minimum of three distinct components—the patron, the artist, and the receiver of the resulting gift, not to mention the audience who might witness the gift giving or to whom the proud owner might show his/her possession. As a result, the distribution of luxury items has the potential to make visible a network of social interconnections.

Just as spatial constructs are at work in the formatting of imagery and the making of the object itself, so too are they evident in the object's placement and circulation. These two different ways of thinking about space are not necessarily as mutually exclusive as they may at first seem. Particular artistic styles, which analysts now group into distinct types and varieties in the case of ceramics, often entail a specific kind of spatiality in the sphere of image creation and can be associated with individual locations and/or people as a result. In moving throughout the landscape, they signaled their original association through such stylistic signing, thus connecting subsequent owners back to the place (and/or time, as in the reuse of ancestral Olmec or Olmec-style jades) of production.

As with sculptural and architectural forms, portable objects certainly participated in a series of ritualized behaviors. Unfortunately, many of these actions remain shadowy, but a few words may be said regarding their existence and use. Most rituals can be associated with important, and particularized, ritual paraphernalia. The famous dances of the aforementioned kings of Yaxchilan, Shield Jaguar and Bird Jaguar, for instance, incorporated staffs that received specific designations in the textual accounts accompanying their images (for staffs as a part of ritual ceremony at Yaxchilan, see Figures 1.18a–b).

In politically interactive group settings, the display of fancy goods also marked status and affiliation in less overtly religious contexts as well. Feasting events likely provided the backdrop for the gifting rituals discussed above and were, in themselves, excuses to parade high-end articles. Some ceramic vessels, for example, pictorially record just this kind of interactive feasting. In a wonderful case of self-reference, they show beautiful young lords with food such as tamales presented on well-made plates and frothy beverages overflowing from delicate vessels (for examples, see Kerr [n.d.:K5492 and K6418]). Gifts used in this context demonstrate a top-down affiliation between overlord and underling. The feasts also allowed the politically inferior individual to assert and project his own status to others by displaying serving ware and other objects connected, stylistically, to his lord's craftsmen or, potentially, to foreign and/or exotic powers.

Visual Hierarchies and Conventions

No art historical handbook would be complete without an extended discussion of imagery. In addition to the subject-based interpretations relating to space that are found throughout this volume, the analysis of formal elements and their placement or arrangement also provides the backbone for many of the contributions. In Chapter 2, for example, it is of paramount importance that Steinbach takes into account the Jester Gods within the internal spatial logic of their framing images. Werness-Rude's examination of ceramics in Chapter 4 devotes much of the discussion to different types of image space, including placement, arrangement, and external relationships. Spencer uses a large portion of Chapter 6 to examine the formal properties of captive portraits and their ideological implications as objects in space, while the formatting of images traditionally, contrasted with the layout found in one particular example, provides a major point of focus for Olton in Chapter 7.

Despite the wide variety of media and the diverse functions of the resulting objects and monuments, a series of conventions connects the forms just discussed by dictating spatial relationships within as well as across images. The ancient Maya, like many other civilizations the world over, employed a hierarchical set of formal relationships in the creation of images. Maya artisans typically used centrality, in conjunction with greater height and size, to indicate importance. Occasionally, constraints required the creator to modify this basic approach, as when the paramount figure is placed to one side in a palace scene. In these cases, he (and, with rare exceptions, it is invariably a he) typically retains a lofty, raised position toward which everyone else is linearly oriented, as when an underling kneels on the ground before his superior, seated elegantly on a throne (Figure 4.2). The secondary subject looks at his high-status companion, turning his whole body in that direction. In contrast, the body of the lord in this particular example is torqued, so that his legs face to the left, away from his attendant, and his chest has been rendered frontally, while he looks backward at his helper. This visual device asserts the primacy of the main figure—his body, which faces all directions simultaneously, becomes the fulcrum around which the scene (and the vessel) rotates. Such a hierarchical approach functions most obviously at a formal level, with different parts of pictorial compositions receiving different weights and social significance (defined broadly to include political and economic components) indicated through access and proximity to an enthroned character or other significant entity/location.

Craftsmen also adhered to certain conventions while other aspects of image creation remained open to regional development and modification. In order to discuss two basic kinds of viewing patterns, we differentiate between images on surfaces and images in the round. By using the phrase "images on surfaces," however, we do not wish to limit ourselves to representations, like those found on polychrome vases, which have no actual depth, though they certainly form one part of this larger category; we instead use such terminology to refer to more generally two-dimensional media. Bas-relief scenes on lintels or stelae along with carved vase panels qualify as images on surfaces, as does anything that creates a viewing plane with no corresponding image back. These forms are contrasted with objects in the round, like the Puuc mosaic facades with their masks that jut out into space (Figure 1.6) or the three-dimensional kingly stelae from Copán (Figure 5.2), which have clearly defined and interconnected sides and fronts and usually backs as well.

From a formal perspective, artists working on surfaces favored profile facial views. In contrast, those working in the round could choose to emphasize frontality. Specific approaches to body position, scale, format, etc. are often medium- as well as region-specific. Despite such variety, however, Maya craftsmen generally selected a lifelike set of proportions combined with a limited range of poses. Pose itself can also indicate importance. The ability to remain seated while others stand, for instance, often indicates higher social status. The reverse can also be true; prisoners often appear as seated or reclining supplicants before, or literally under, their captors' feet.

In images containing three or more individuals, the observer is often instructed on proper viewing order by the directional movement and/or gazes of the participants as well as their deposition throughout the scene. Simply consider the myriad palace scenes rendered two-dimensionally on ceramic vessel walls (Figure 1.11)—the admiring gazes of the court constantly redirect the viewer away from the sides of the room to focus on the body of the young lord; when the actors hold ritual implements, their positioning usually implies a directional trajectory that solidifies this type of formal progression.

Even iconography that seems to modify such loose viewing parameters must acknowledge these kinds of conventions at the same time. Thus, in contrast to the attendant and lord's conversation seen on the vessel discussed above (Figure 4.2), where the observer ends his or her linear movement with the image of the youthful elite figure, other images rotate around the king. In the case of the polychrome palace scene just mentioned (Figure 1.11), the rotation is both metaphorical and literal. Not only do curtain tassels frame the principal figure's face, he sits above everyone and the non-captive elites on either side all look in his direction. Indeed, the only characters who do not look at the lord are positioned below him and clearly fulfill the roles of humiliated captives. In a subtle, if macabre, interchange, one of the two prisoners not looking at the king directs his gaze to the disembodied head of a sacrificial victim, which another, dancing figure appears to be unintentionally waving in his face while in the act of presenting it to the seated elite above. The other of the two victims not oriented toward the paramount lord looks out at us in a rare frontal portrait. His wild hair and dour expression indicate his awareness of what lies in store for him while also acting as a direct foil to the beautiful, profile visage of his conqueror, appearing above and on the same axis.

This kind of composition presents a complicated set of viewing practices, yet it retains many of the same visual cues found elsewhere. It is in the presentation of captives—obviously subservient figures—that the standard conventions have been tweaked. Spencer explores captive portraits further in Chapter 6, wherein she demonstrates that such manipulation of pictorial conventions was standard practice. To return to the polychrome example, if we follow the gaze of the first captive, we are immediately redirected to the king through that interchange between living and dead victims: The living prisoner looks at the disembodied head and so encourages us to do the same. After we briefly move back and forth between these two, we follow the line of the arm that holds the decapitated head. That arm attaches to the dancing figure, whose pose—leaning in slightly toward the king—as well as the fact that his eyes are evidently focused on his lord's visage, refocus our attention where it belongs, on the most important, seated figure in the composition. Such a progression is by no means specific to ceramic vessels; murals direct the viewer's movement through the image in similar ways, as do panels, stelae, and other media.

Medium

Medium choice clearly reflected particularized sets of needs. A viewer faces large objects in the round, like the Copán stelae or the Puuc monster masks, and, in doing so, is aware of that facing and of the corporeality of the observed. Smaller objects that incorporate images on surfaces (like jade pectorals or ceramic vessels) participate in a very different set of viewing relationships. The onlooker who sees such objects is typically aware of them only inasmuch as they form part of a larger set of activities or assemblages. As serving ware, the elite vessel acts as a backdrop to feasting events, and the jade pectoral is most visible when worn as part of elite regalia. While the same may be true of the larger sculptural forms just mentioned, given their participation in rituals, their creators intended such monuments to be widely visible and indeed to literally stand on their own in the absence of ritual. That is not to say that the smaller objects were less important or that their makers or users thought of them as functioning solely at utilitarian levels. Rather, just the opposite is true; these constructs, so closely associated with the elite body and meant to be viewed in close-up, often sent more finely tuned, directed messages. As these observations demonstrate, the impact of medium selections resides outside the objects themselves, in the context of, and exchange between, viewed and viewer.

In tandem with such considerations, medium selection dictated certain artistic choices and conventions. Images on surfaces rarely contain the frontal glance seen in the captive vase mentioned earlier (Figure 1.11). While the intersection of our gaze and the captive's solidifies our awareness of his conqueror's power and simultaneously enlivens the scene, avoiding the exchange of gazes, in turn, negates a direct address in the interchange between viewer and object. We do not see the depicted elites looking back at us in most cases, which suggests that their bodies are presented for our perusal by some third person: a distanced, omniscient narrator. Textual captions often emphasize the sense of impartiality in representation by stating, in third-person voice, "it is his image" (ubaah; see the previous discussion of this phrase in the Monumental Sculpture section). The profile portrait also, by avoiding one-to-one contact with viewers, remains apart from us in an ideologically weighted interchange; in other words, it (and the artists who created it presumably at the behest of the person represented) is the one that denies (and thus maintains the power to deny) direct exchange. The creation itself thus encourages perceptions of naturalness and neutrality in relation to the depicted event. This kind of distancing combines with the third-person voice found in the vast majority of textual accounts to emphasize the higher status of the elite lord while also creating a sense of timelessness and objectivity; the whole complex of image and word presents "just the facts, ma'am."

Such clear, intuitively grasped scene progression indicates that the Maya often created images that unfold for the viewer and, in doing so, reflect certain spatial and temporal relationships among the depicted elements. In the example of the polychrome captive vase, we are able to take in the scene all in one glance thanks to Justin Kerr's revolutionary rollout photographic technique. Anciently, viewers would have only been able to fully appreciate the scene by turning the vessel, although, due to the various gazes, poses, and lines of axial alignment, such observers are also encouraged to stop turning upon reaching the main seated figure. Again, while this intimate relationship between viewer and vase is specific to the ceramic medium, images found on other surfaces and in other forms partake in similar approaches to the interaction between viewer and viewed and, as a result, the relationship between the two is of central concern to many of the authors collected in this volume.

Murals reverse the intimate relationship between the person who sees the imagery and the ceramic medium itself by surrounding the observer.

In spacious contexts, they encourage him or her to walk around the rooms they adorn while in more intimate settings, they still require the viewer to turn on an axis in a reversal of the viewer-vase relationship just discussed. Mural programs, like ceramic vessels, also incorporate visual pauses. In the Room 1, Structure 1 murals at Bonampak, the narrative—the presentation of an heir—becomes an occasion for monumental ceremony. The complexity of this mural does not allow full consideration here, but suffice it to say that the large, ritualized procession takes on a clear directional flow, helped along by the gazes and striding stances of the participants as well as the upward-angled trumpets, staffs, etc. The Bonampak murals provide some visual stops, as when the drummer's torso is rendered frontally while he looks back at his other band members instead of forward in the direction of the procession. Even in this case, though, a strong rightward directionality is maintained through the positioning of the musician directly to the viewer's right of the drummer. The two headdresses overlap and the observer's eye is thus redirected, after a slight pause, through the headgear, back to the processional flow (Figures 1.14a–b). Because these murals reach all the way from the ground to the ceiling in three registers (or levels), they also literally make the viewer into a ritual participant. Hierarchical spatial orientation continues as well, not just within the image, where the musicians are at a lower register than the king, but also with respect to the viewer's position, which, as level with the band, is also subservient to the king and his heir.

Stelae, lintels, and relief panels, on the other hand, require a different kind of interaction, in which one faces the image instead of moving around within it or moving it around. As a result, these types of images typically present a reduced cast of characters engaged in clear narrative moments. Such narratives need not be constrained by the dictates of reality, as when, in the Temple of the Foliated Cross at Palenque, K'inich K'an Balam II apparently presents two versions of himself, simultaneously appearing as a boy and as a young man.

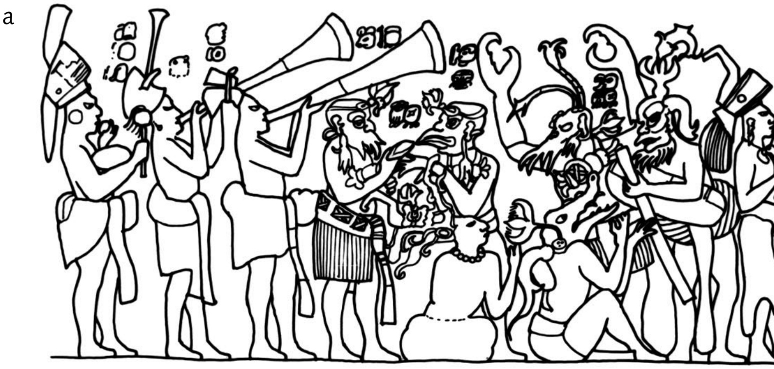
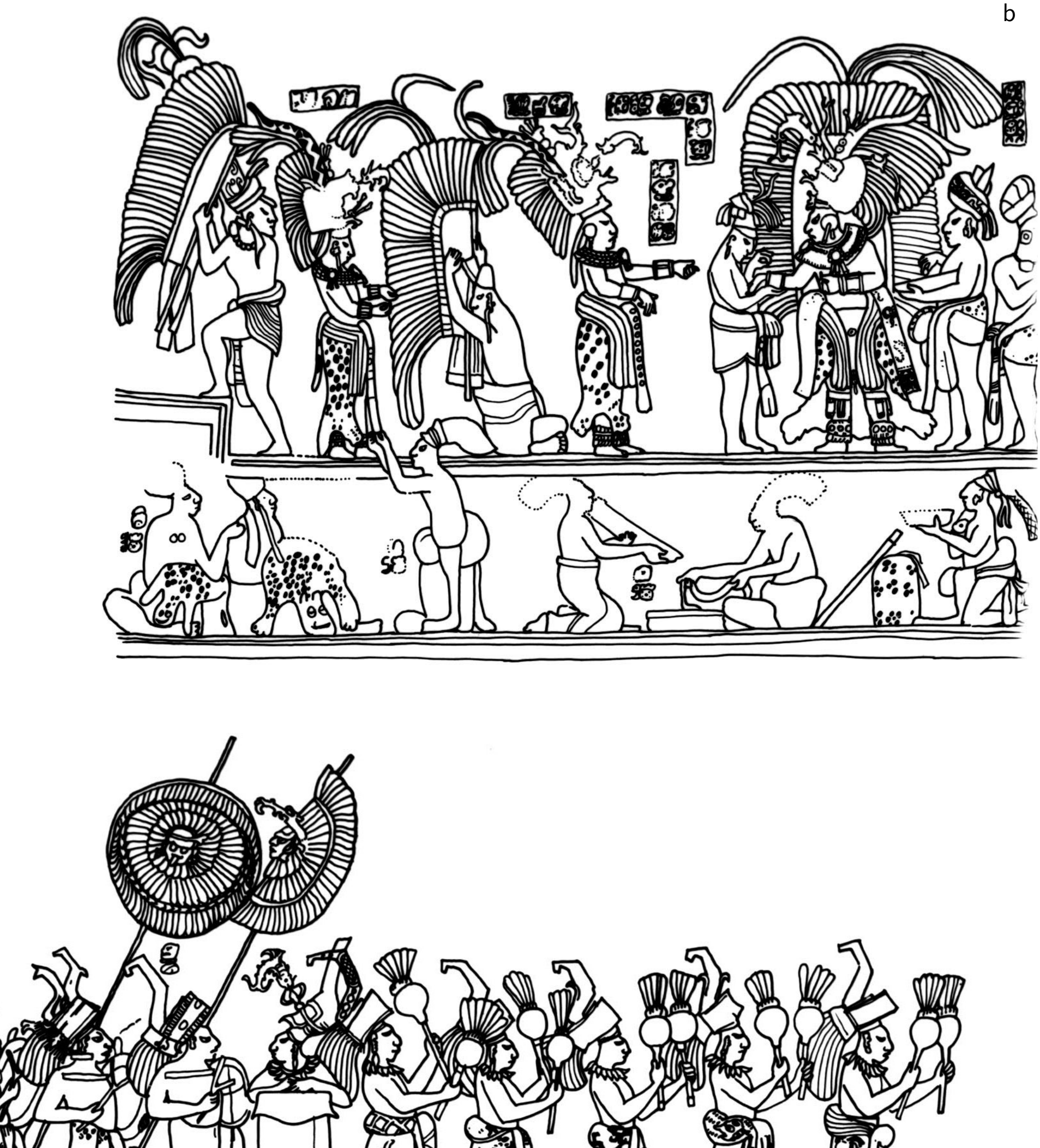


FIGURE 1.14 Murals, Room 1, Temple 1, Bonampak, Petén, Guatemala, (a) Musicians, lower register, West Wall; (b) Elites, dual registers, North Wall. Drawings by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of the Foundation of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Drawing Collection:6004 and 6005).



Text and Image, Space and Time

Despite their narrative components, images are not texts and cannot be "read" as such, yet both text and image have the potential to rest on complementary principles regarding temporal and spatial development. A description clearly does not exhaust all an image has to offer, yet in order to talk about the art object in any meaningful way, we must put the image into words, as it were. When formal attributes like lines of sight and implied movement work together to suggest directionality and spatial relationships, narrative often unfolds. Many images require us to immediately create a series of assumptions regarding the moment depicted—when describing the first palace scene mentioned above (Figure 4.2), we are immediately tempted to construct a story: the attendant has gained audience with his lord and assists him in some action. Even in its barest form, this description suggests a temporal continuum in which we automatically recognize that the secondary individual does not always kneel before the young lord, just as his behavior also serves to highlight the elevated status of his companion. In Chapter 4, Werness-Rude contrasts this traditional approach to images in space with other, stylistically related examples whose iconography emphasizes flux and movement in contrast to the quiet distance of the palace scene.

In all cases, space and time are inherently interconnected, although the exact nature of that link and the particular quality of time involved is often a shifting, slippery concept. Time, like its partner, space (and their progeny, place), can be analyzed from a variety of different perspectives, the least of which is the actual representation of the passage of time. Analyzing the moment of occurrence in stela narrative, which combines text and image in public program, requires a different approach to temporality than a consideration of the viewer's time-based relationship with ceramic objects, for instance, while time literally wraps around the viewer in the newly discovered calendrical murals at Xultun. Thus, while our focus resides in locational space (and the hows and the whys behind such approaches to spatiality), many of the individual papers collected here explicitly or implicitly investigate temporal positioning as well, either by considering changes across time, as Bernatz, Clancy, Olton, and Wren and colleagues do in Chapters 3, 5, 7, and 8; by exploring one moment in time, as Werness-Rude and Spencer do in Chapters 4 and 6; or by investigating continuities across time as well as points within it, as Steinbach and Taube do in Chapters 2 and 9. We return to an explicit examination of the connection between time and space in Carrasco's Epilogue, in which he discusses the Wayeb, a time referent that, as Carrasco points out, has spatial associations as well.

Our experience of space is dictated not just by visual and temporal understandings; our other senses also generate input. As we have already suggested, like mountains, caves form another charged liminal space for the Maya and thereby receive extensive modification (in the form of murals painted onto or pictographs carved into walls, the smoothing of outcroppings, the placement of ceramics and other objects, etc.). Because of their importance in Maya thought, entrances to caves typically demarcate differences in place—between social and supernatural, for instance—and the participant feels the change in spaces at the same time that he/she experiences a drop in temperature in moving from outside to inside. A change in temperature and in the quality of the air can also often be felt as one moves from exterior spaces into small temple rooms. Such changes may have been seen as demonstrating the links between mountains and temples and caves and temple interiors, conceptual associations Olton explores further in Chapter 7.

The Spatiality of Images

Thus far we have discussed how the Maya approached their world and conceptualized the functionality of objects in space. There is an entirely separate way of thinking about space, however, that at once parallels the meta-discussions introduced above while also containing its own set of specific concerns and conventions. Not only do objects and images reside in space, but images in particular create space too. While this is a seemingly obvious point, it is one that is often overlooked, a lacuna our authors rectify throughout this volume by consciously reinserting objects into their spaces and exploring the dialectical dialogues that result. Some of the formal ways in which artists dealt with making place have already been discussed above, but we would now like to turn to the analysis of space from a perspective that focuses on the process of image creation.

Formatting and Layout

Specific media can imply an expanded set of viewing constructs, based in part on location and the arrangement and layout of images and text upon a ground, or the placement, location, and orientation of images in three-dimensional media. Through such formatting, lintels, for instance, often develop several distinct, sequential viewing moments. Lintels from Xcalumkin, Itzimte, and many other sites contain carving on both their frontal and underside faces. The deposition of words and images means that an ancient viewer would first read the glyphic text upon approaching the entrance and then crane his or her neck in order to see the main imagery/text on the undersurface of the stone as he or she passed under it. As Olton demonstrates in her analysis of the carved lintels employed in the tomb of Jasaw Chan K'awiil at Tikal (Figures 7.5, 7.6), a full understanding of the glyphs and/or images covering the doorway would require prolonged, uncomfortable viewing moments and may thus suggest an unequal power relationship between creator/patron and viewer or, conversely, a different kind of viewer entirely (i.e., a supernatural one not confined to a weak, mortal body). In some cases, the artist seemed to further incorporate entrance and exit views within the same image. In the so-called Water Trough Lintel from Chichén Itzá (Figure 1.15), for instance, an image of a seated king is surrounded on two sides by glyph blocks that are readable as one looks at the sovereign. This lintel also incorporates a larger glyphic string that wraps completely around both the lord and his partial textual frame. This secondary text, which is both physically larger in terms of the size of the individual glyph blocks in addition to incorporating more words, is most easily read when the viewer is in the process of moving in the opposite direction; thus, either a major portion of the text is upside down when the image is righted or vice versa, as in Figure 1.15, suggesting sequential viewing moments at entrance and exit.

Formatting carries important spatial cues for other media as well. Artists developed complex relationships between the type of object with which they worked and the images and texts they created. The internal spaces of an image (such as its layout) could have important effects on message transmission and the formation and/or continuation of widely held cosmologies. In other words, laying out an image creates a visual order, which then may reflect other kinds of ordering. Alternately, distinguishing images from their backgrounds through the use of distinct framing elements employs advanced formatting techniques while often suggesting a series of sequential spaces beginning with that of the viewer. This kind of interchange not only suggests contiguous spaces, it must also necessarily define and categorize those regions relative to our own. The clear encircling or delimiting of a labeled location in depiction may also indicate a particularized kind of control. Frames, in the act of framing, mark a center; we, as lookers, may see and understand that center but are necessarily outside of it at the same time.

The ways in which artists chose to arrange and place images produces a core point of departure for many of the authors contained within this volume. Steinbach (Chapter 2), Werness-Rude (Chapter 4), Spencer (Chapter 6), and Olton (Chapter 7) all examine how formatting concerns impacted the meaning conveyed by select images. In doing so, these authors demonstrate

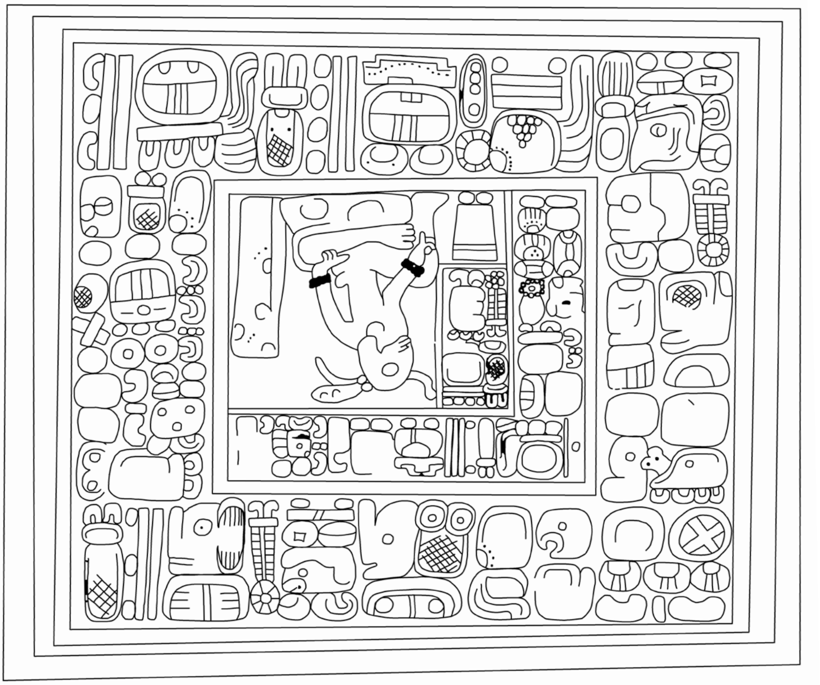


FIGURE 1.15 Water Trough Lintel, Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico. Drawing by Kaylee R. Spencer after Daniel Graña-Behrens, in Grube and Krochock (2011:Figure 18).

that a great deal of ideological weight could result from the conscious arrangement of objects in space. For Steinbach, it is the consistent sequencing of Jester God heads that is of interest. For Werness-Rude, on the other hand, the isolation of imagery focuses attention on it through framing devices, thereby creating a clearly identifiable style. Spencer considers the formatting of captive portraits as a way of expressing domination, and Olton interprets the shift from an image of ancestor-with-king to just that of the ancestor as one that implicates the space of the viewer and his or her resultant connection with the past.

Ways of thinking about image and viewer are thus quintessentially different for different media, as architectural spaces can do just the opposite—they envelop space, thereby defining a center and placing the viewer within it instead of necessarily outside. In any case, the overarching point remains the same: spaces can nest within one another. Furthermore, the ability to move through a multiplicity of spaces that are otherwise restricted—either socially (private versus semipublic versus public) and/or conceptually (the underworld or other supernatural locations in contrast to the present creation)—speaks to hegemonic and/or supernatural power. In representation as well as in textual accounts and active ritual, the king's ability to access the temples and palace spaces as well as travel through the dangerous wilds surrounding his community via networks of paved roads (see the discussion of sacbeob in the Pathways as Connectors section of this chapter) clearly distinguished him from others. In addition to legitimization, this kind of centering carries with it some very real responsibilities. As the center, the king is the only one who can conduct prescribed rituals, engage in sociopolitical and socioeconomic interaction with lords from surrounding areas both within and across polities, lead armies, etc., and there is no guarantee of his success in any of these arenas or in the myriad others with which he could be faced in the course of his reign.

As such statements imply, every site is both connected to its surrounding environment, through a network of sociopolitical, economic, and religious ties, and isolated from it through conceptualizations that contrast ordered civilization with chaotic wilds. Identifying a center also inherently defines another non-center, away from which everything is oriented in both actual and ideological terms. As a result of efforts to mark boundaries, actual spaces can often be transitional by nature; in the north, for example, sites often incorporated freestanding arches into their plans as a way of marking such boundaries and the transition between different kinds of place. What is more, for both ancient and modern Maya, each center acts as a nexus. In other words, spatial awareness is defined relative to the individual and the individual polity, with each major site center functioning as the center of the world. Modern Zinacantecos conceptualize their center in just this way, for example, and link it to a small area of raised ground understood to be the "navel of the world." The ancient Maya expressed the effects of this conceptualization of space—and identity formation—in a number of different ways, including but not limited to the extensive use of both horizontal and vertical spatial cues, as Steinbach's (Chapter 2) contribution to this volume demonstrates.

Elites emphasized their connection with space in yet other ways. Titles demonstrate special character in a spatial sense, for instance (as with the northern kalomte' mentioned at the outset of this chapter), inherently linked to the four corners. The kingly emblem glyph provides another example, naming the ruler as divine and inextricably connecting him to his site (i.e., Bird Jaguar—the K'uhul Yaxchilan Ajaw or Divine Yaxchilan Lord; witness the last glyph in the column in Figure 1.18a). In fact, sometimes the titles of

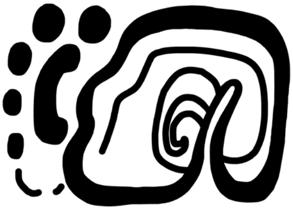


FIGURE 1.16 *T'abaay*, dedicatory logograph referring to ascension by showing as a stylized combination of a foot and pyramid. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude after Macri and Looper (2003:ZY1).

the non-royal elite were more important than individual identity, as indicated when a scribe only chose to mark the person by mentioning his/her office.

The emphasis we place on the interrelationship between viewer and object/monument/building is not just a modern conceit. Textual accounts found on each of the media under consideration here actively create spatial relationships. In a wealth of self-referential statements, buildings, stelae, and ceramics are "stood up" at installment, a concept directly related to ascension just as one must climb upward to reach a sanctuary (dedicatory statements reading *t'abaay* are often shown hieroglyphically as a foot positioned over the steps of a pyramid; Figure 1.16). Conversely, the creation and dedication of roads seem to have been described as "road-striking," an action that implies direct physical interaction. Ceramics and other portable objects record direct spatial ties to particular people (owners and/or creators—"it is the cup/bone/earring of"), in addition to having spatial realities as containers (or "houses," see above).

Formatting is as much responsible for defining our relationship with what is depicted as are iconographic choices. Organizing and laying out an image so that it includes the entirety of the represented entity can serve to further distance him/her/it from the viewer, both literally and metaphorically. Artists also created different effects and focal points through repetition. Using the same (or similar) element multiple times could underscore and compartmentalize the scene itself, as when standing figures take similar poses and bracket the main action. Alternately, it could create connections between different entities (the group identity of the captives in the Bonampak murals or in the captive vase derives in part from the repetition of certain core aspects of appearance—lack of clothing, wild hair, etc.). Finally, it could signal significance and durability, in the repetition of a king's visage across multiple stelae in a single plaza (Figure 5.3) or the repetition of semantic structures in lists of rulers, for example. An emphasis on specific features or an even dispersal of minute details throughout can, conversely, draw observers in by requiring focus and slower, more in-depth viewing patterns. In these cases, we may be inclined to ignore our own corporality briefly and appropriate the view that has been presented for us by the distanced, omniscient narrator. When frontal views occur in these contexts (Figure 1.11), they surprise the onlooker out of such self-distancing—they engage us, encouraging us to pause, to stop progressing through the image, and to regain awareness of our position as subject in what has just become a subject-subject interchange. As we saw in the frontal prisoner example, the formal selections of arrangement and pose are ploys used to create visual emphasis on one part of the narrative, that which ultimately focuses on the principal individual.

Intentionally three-dimensional items, like the aforementioned Copán stelae (Figure 5.3), on the other hand, often create a direct address between the looker and that which is seen, even as they too relate a third-person narrative in the textual accounts they contain. In this atmosphere, the young king directs his gaze at (or over) us, thereby creating a level of interaction suggesting that our space is somehow contiguous with his. We both inhabit the same space in a very literal sense, while the depicted body is often also marked to indicate its participation in other spaces (i.e., the spaces of creation alluded to in framing representations of maize mountains in Copán, etc.). When the artistic program enfolds the viewer in its grasp, as when one walks through a Puuc mosaic–facade doorway, enters a mural room at San Bartolo or Bonampak, or stands in the center of the palace courtyard at Palenque, the implications for the observer's position relative to those in power become even more pronounced.

While many visual programs display a narrative structure, Maya artists could choose to deny such a spatiotemporal progression. In contrast to most of the images considered above, iconographic forms could be used to suggest eternal immutability. Some of the most obvious examples of this practice appear on vases where deity heads float disembodied over blank backgrounds (Figure 1.13). Their repetition destroys any sense of progression or narrative development. The emphasis resides instead on the ideological associations connected with the depicted entity.

The viewer-object relationship in large part operates in connection with the medium selected for image production. While the Maya undoubtedly produced some representations meant for supernatural audiences, the works they made were largely based in the culturally specific cardinality of human creators and observers. Thus, images on surfaces entail a flat spatial construct that lies perpendicular to the viewer's line of sight. The ideal viewpoint is located in front of the object, requiring a fixed frontal position for the spectator. In many cases, craftsmen employed formatting and standard illustrative tropes to form a plane that corresponds with the surface of the image. This plane defines the space of the picture and separates it from that of the viewer. Artists frequently indicated a highly dimensional interior space beyond that surface plane (e.g., Figure 1.11, where we understand that the captives are closest to us while the king, who appears above them at the top of the steps, must be further back in space). Furthermore, surfaces could be presented as highly permeable go-betweens that explicitly divide the space of the viewer from that of the depicted, as many of the authors in this volume investigate. In some cases, however (Figure 1.13), three-dimensionality is rejected and the plane itself is emphasized instead.

In all instances, the image reproduces that which is absent—the stela image represents the sentient body of the king, in other words, even when the actual flesh-and-bone body may be elsewhere—hereby preserving it in conjunction with the concrete spatial relationships existing between the represented and the viewer. The viewer completes the image by recognizing the signs indicating spatial positioning. The exact manner in which surface images indicate dimensionality is inherently culturally specific as well as media and class specific (as suggested by the fact that out of the entire Maya population, only some elites were literate). Images on surfaces thus require an initiated observer who interprets spatial cues and transforms them into a sense of place.

Images in the round, on the other hand, entail an entirely different set of spatial relationships and cannot be said to be completed by the viewer in the same way. While the flat, surface images just considered usually create a sense of separation between the iconography and the viewer, three-dimensional programs conversely emphasize continuity, at least in spatial terms. While the viewer's experience is always in the now, Maya constructs seem to have encouraged an awareness of a longer, even mythical time depth in a number of different ways.

Artists centered locations within the surrounding sacred landscape, often explicitly connected with mytho-historical founding events. At Palenque, for instance, deep inside the Temple of the Inscriptions, the body of the dead king Pakal was covered with a sarcophagus lid that repositioned the body in space (Figure 1.17). The now famous image depicts the king dressed as the Maize God on his way through the deathly underworld while a jewel-filled realm awaits him above. The Principal Bird Deity, an avian god featured in the creation story, perches on the top of the World Tree that connects the two locations, thereby marking the upper space as celestial; this spatiality is literally demonstrated in contemporary practice,

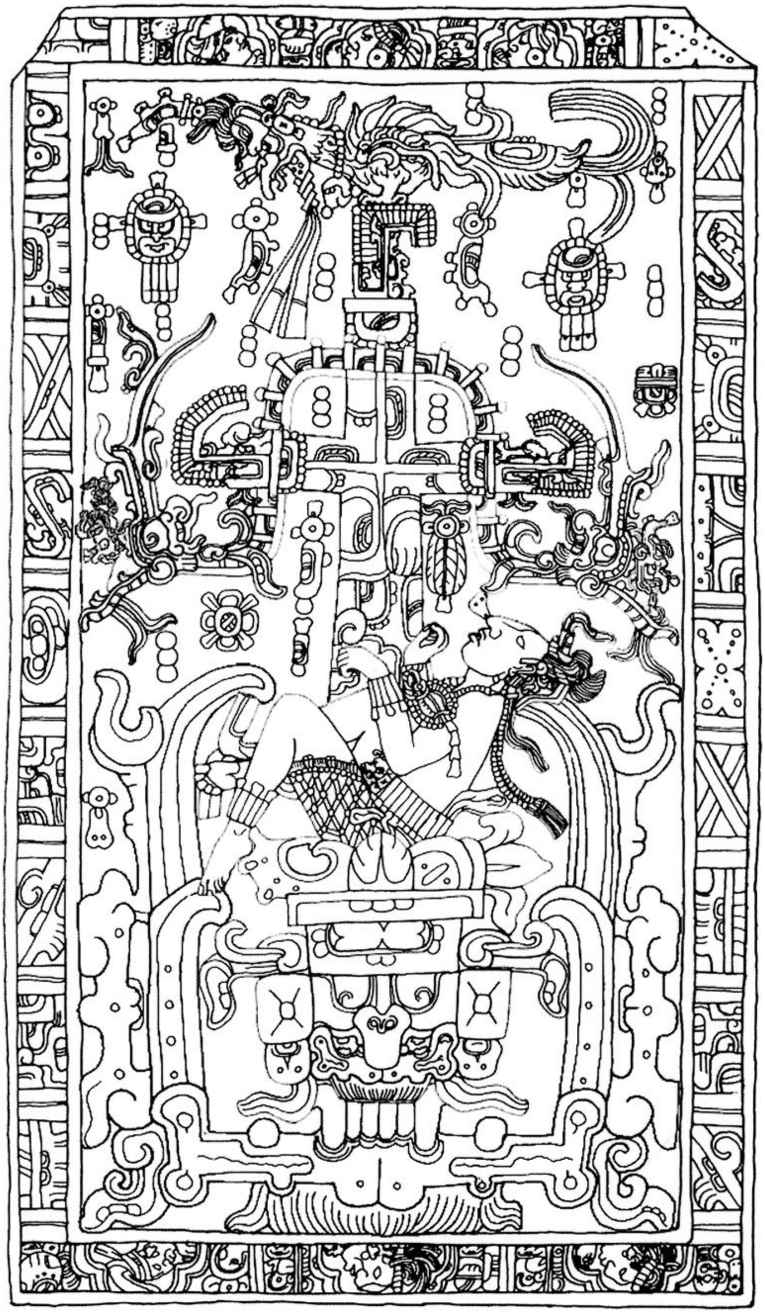


FIGURE 1.17 K'inich Janab Pakal's Sarcophagus Lid, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. Drawing by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Drawing Collection:7619).

wherein the height of symbolic trees, combined with dancers' gravity-defying feats, only serves to emphasize the difference between the celestial and terrestrial realms (Figure 9.12). Pakal's bicephalic serpent bar—a common marker of royalty—hovers over him, wrapped around the branches of the axis mundi, suggesting that he can indeed take it (and his status and wealth) with him. Pakal's illustrious ancestors appear on the sides of the coffin itself, while other named individuals peer through quincuncial portals surrounding Pakal's image on the surface of the lid. The location of these figures in the frame and as further separated by partial quincunxes suggests that they inhabit a location distinct from that of Pakal, likely the world of the here and now, as several scholars have suggested. This image at once alludes to creation events by including references to the Maize God (from the myth of the Hero Twins) and the Principal Bird Deity, thereby situating the burial in deep time as well as in supernatural space. The iconography itself also likely connects this illustrious ruler with the present, through the onlookers, while also looking to the future—the Maize God is, after all, reborn continually according to Maya thought—and certain Palenque inscriptions have even been interpreted as looking toward Pakal's return to power in 4772 CE.

When not only the spaces of the image itself but also the image in space is considered, these connections become even more directed. In an exceedingly rare construction effort, the builders who made the Temple of the Inscriptions encasing Pakal and his sarcophagus incorporated a staircase that allowed repeat contact with the body of the dead king. Before the tomb was carefully sealed to protect it from foreign invaders as Palenque's fortunes waned, evidence suggests that Pakal's heirs repeatedly accessed the burial, ritually painting the bones with cinnabar and even removing some parts of the skeleton in a demonstration of ancestral veneration.

Our awareness of the multiplicity of spaces within and around the image requires a positioning of the self relative to the already positioned object/body. In other words, the image itself makes supernatural space by creating a location inhabited by the Maize God/Pakal while simultaneously inscribing at least two that are not. Furthermore, it is housed in a built mountain that then can be understood as its residence, which therefore becomes divine space not only in reimaging the natural sacred mountain behind it, but also because it itself houses an actual historical ancestor. This space is tied to, and complements, that of the Palace and its attendant images through more than just proximity and the basic orientation of the two buildings—the Palace is filled with images of Pakal that, after his death, cannot help but redirect the viewer to, and remind the onlooker of, that lord's constant presence in the massive construction right next door. These images (of Pakal's accession and that of his sons) are then echoed elsewhere at the site and/or in relation to other people (as on the Tablet of the Slaves; Figure 6.1).

Pakal's immediate successor, K'inich K'an Balam II, was responsible for completing the Temple of the Inscriptions. He emphasizes this fact in the texts and images that hover several stories over the deceased ancestor in the temple superstructure (and for which the temple is named); in doing so, he extends the emphasis on axiality and the connectivity between realms begun within the image on the sarcophagus lid deep below, in the depths of the pyramid. He then adds to this program by constructing adjacent god houses that contained statues of the deities as well as lengthy inscriptions and images in what is now known as the Cross Group.

Cross Group images of K'an Balam II not only incorporate the same World Tree and Principal Bird Deity combination found on Pakal's burial container (Figures 2.8a, 2.8c), but they do so in a way that acts as a direct visual mirror of the motif found on the sarcophagus lid itself. Pakal's successor also emphasized the clothing and re-clothing of the Palenque patron deities through time. Indeed, the acts of wrapping, obscuring, and revealing objects and entities in space seem to command great importance in ritual performances. Inscriptions surrounding the figures of the gods make a point of their antiquity as entities, dating in some cases to before the start of known time. They also marked the new king's actions on the gods' behalf as but one set in a long line of human behavior focused on caring for these patron supernaturals. Thus, in addition to the immediacy of the bodily interactions with the objects surrounding them and the implications of socially active space, Maya observers were often also literally walking through an animated history filled with still present/sentient beings. These entities simultaneously linked sites to a sense of deep time (at least one of the Palenque patron deities was born before the start of the present creation) as well as recent history. They did so through the connections between themselves, the present king and his court, and Pakal, the ancestor that immediately predeceased him. Furthermore, Maya concepts of cyclicality suggested that the patterns laid out in these historical representations would be repeated continuously through time.

Some artistic products can participate in both two- and three-dimensional viewing constructs. Stelae, for example, can present low-relief images rendered in profile, which thus do not directly address the viewer. This distancing of the representation coincides with the separation of spaces. Conversely, some stelae take a more three-dimensional appearance, as at Copán (Figure 5.3), Quiriguá, and Piedras Negras, to name a few. In these cases, the looker is caught up in a direct address with that which is seen, although the interchange still involves a heavily weighted power balance favoring the elite and/or divine representation, given that these monuments are often larger than the average onlooker. Stelae can look out over observers, toward other monuments, buildings, or sites in the landscape, while their positioning and corporality simultaneously serves to involve the viewer in the exchange. Such interaction partakes of the continuity of spaces just mentioned, and the stela can further define the basic nature of that space by situating it in mythical and/or geographical terms.

The stela's placement in space carries other ideological implications. Kings could erect stelae along important thoroughfares or in the surrounding countryside, for example, as a way of indicating the extent of their dominion. Conversely, stelae could be "chopped," "axed," or stolen by conquering powers in the effort to literally erase the control the vanquished originally exerted over their landscape. In any case, bounding, stamping, or otherwise marking space makes it into place. By thus defining place, monuments typically link it not only with the body of the ruler specifically and kingly power generally, but also with certain kinds of activities. Rituals could become immortalized not only as a record of a specific moment in time, but also as an illustration of continuing activity in previous and/or subsequent times as well as into the future.

Yaxchilan provides a clear example of such patterns; to name but one case, on the Temple 33 step risers, Bird Jaguar mimicked previous ritual actions when he framed his own ritual ballgame with references to those played by his father and grandfather. What is more, one side of Stela 11 demonstrates that Bird Jaguar also manipulated history in duplicating a flapstaff ritual that his father, Shield Jaguar, had conducted (and commemorated) at several different times in his life. Bird Jaguar shows both himself and his father together, as active ritual participants, despite the fact that this version of the ritual took place several years after Shield Jaguar had died (Figure 1.18). Similar to the Palenque king K'inich K'an Balam II's efforts, Bird Jaguar connects himself with his illustrious father and predecessor while also showing his adherence to proscribed ceremonial activity. He does so not only by presenting a literal impossibility—his and his dead father's simultaneous actions—but also in a clear visual parallel with other monuments of his father's that show similar behavior and accoutrements. He stands up his own image in the likeness and mimicry of Shield Jaguar's to demonstrate his legitimacy. That he refers to supernatural spaces and deeper time than just the earlier reign of Shield Jaguar is clearly indicated through the inclusion of the ancestral cartouches and supernatural monster heads that frame the top of the flapstaff scene. What is more, Bird Jaguar also maintains the cyclicality of the ritual and ensures its continuation in perpetuity. In doing so, his goal goes beyond just showing that he does the same things his predecessor did or that he can actually come into contact with that ancestor. On the opposite side of Stela 11, the viewer sees Bird Jaguar wearing a deity mask and standing triumphantly over three degraded prisoners so that the king at once indicates his supernatural connections, his relationship with the ancestors, his continuance of their ceremonies, and his role as a political entity and a warrior and a taker of prisoners. In this context, it is interesting to note that the flapstaff side faces the Usumacínta River while the prisoner-presentation scene faces Structure 40. Thus, the flapstaff event greeted visitors to the site coming from the Usumacínta, while those using the structure to which the stela is anchored would have been reminded of the king's physical prowess and military presence.

The idea of ritualized (social) action continuing in perpetuity was a concept both familiar and explicit in Maya thought, given the historical and cyclical approaches to time that define the culture. Furthermore, as actual constructions, public monuments and buildings react in some way to their surroundings. They were never created in a vacuum but rather built over, covered up, paid homage to, rejected, reoriented, aligned with, or otherwise made to acknowledge the preexisting spaces around them. Such spatial interaction can never be neutral, although it may present a veneer of naturalness just as it must inherently fulfill an inclusionary/exclusionary function.

Agency and Activity

Throughout this chapter we have been discussing agency in the nexus of interactions between viewer and object, but we can take such concepts of activity further. Particularly important for considerations of agency is the fact that an object (or building) forms a record of action. Most obviously, the work of art or the architectural program stands as an index of its making, which can be further connected to ideological import in many cases—the producer's/patron's access to resources, etc. Typically, though, if the resulting creation contains iconography, it also makes permanent another kind of activity, one that is associated with the mythic or historical event depicted: if a king is shown performing an important bloodletting ritual he does so not only at a specific moment in time, but also in perpetuity precisely because of the (relative) durability of the representation (which constantly re-presents). As a result, the visual program (including its medium)

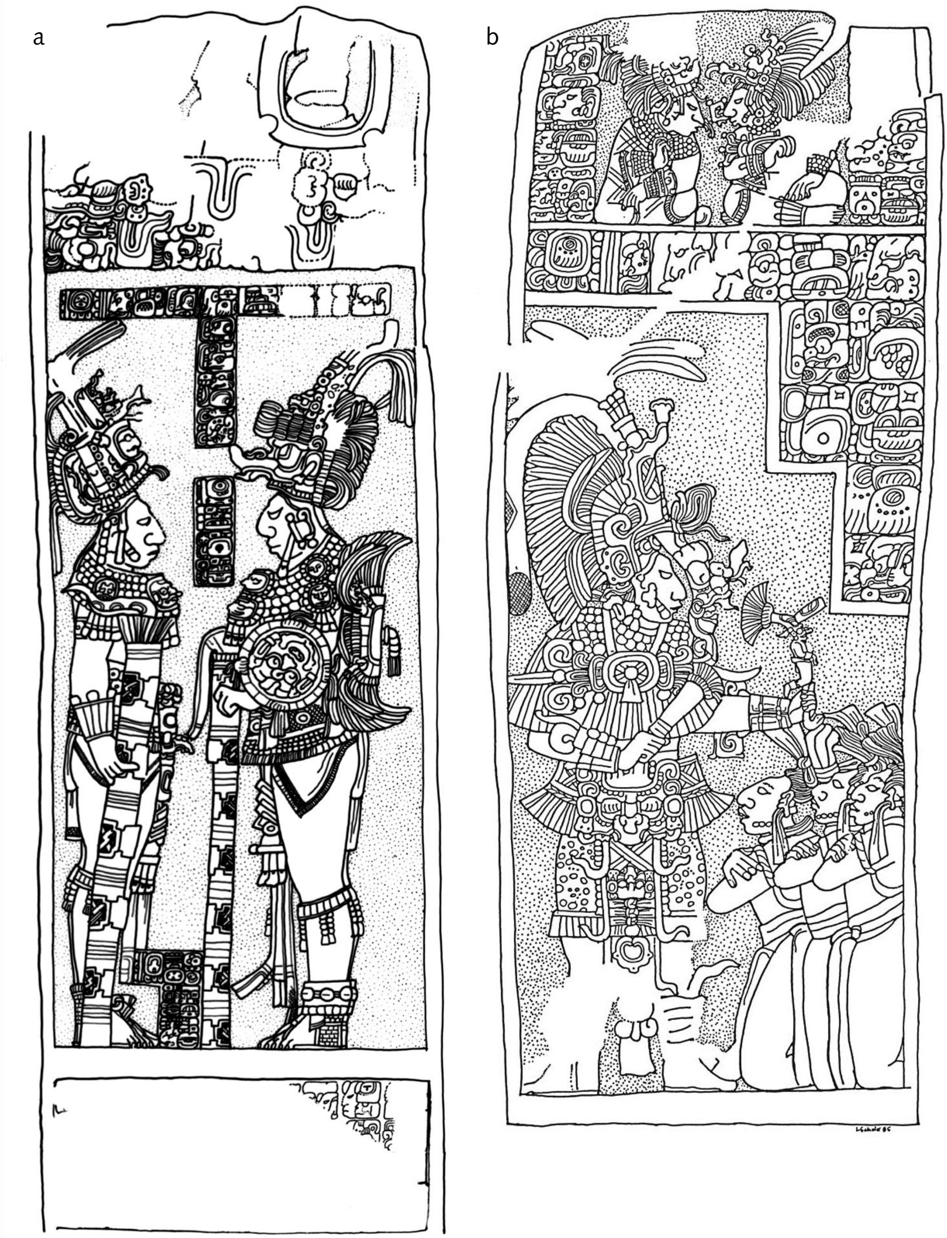


FIGURE 1.18 Stela 11, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, (a) Usumacínta Side; (b) Structure 40 Side. Drawings by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Drawing Collection:6222 and 6218).

obviates neutrality, just as it can never be "natural," even though it usually presents a veneer of neutrality and naturalness. It is constructed and thereby contains hints of the creator's/patron's intentions, but it also takes on a life of its own once it enters into the domain of reception. Indeed, the idea of activity (and the related concept of agency) does not necessarily just concern the creation of a representational program; it can also be extended to a multiplicity of subsequent viewing events.

The authors in this volume typically assume an ideal viewership. Certainly many who visited Tikal during its heyday, for example, would not have been able to read the texts in their entirety or understand all of the intricate iconographic detail seen on the stelae that dot the central plaza. Nor could they have accessed the temples surrounding those stelae, yet only a full awareness of Temple 1 in its entirety, including interior spaces, and offerings, can express the fullest complexity of message construction in this case. The restriction of spaces and/or knowledge of those places certainly functioned as its own form of power maintenance. Not only did it act as a visual reminder of class separations (and the need for the upper crust), it also created an elite language (visual and written) embedded among more readily understood forms. There is every reason to assume that different levels of knowledge and access existed within the elite body politic as well. Certain objects or assemblages may have been intended for one viewing moment (e.g., at interment), for viewing to link generations, or for no viewing moment at all but rather for the rightful organization of space.

Our interpretations aim to provide as complete a picture as possible so that we might more fully access the messages projected by such features of the built environment and the material record. At the same time, however, we would like to acknowledge the possibility of a multiplicity of viewers with a range of backgrounds and literacy (visual or otherwise) as well as the potential for specific, even isolated viewing moments. If the assemblage continues to exist, out of sight, unseen after the initial viewing period, as with caches and burials, memory and the desire to remember (often also linked to identity formation and maintenance) may dictate the preservation of the space that contains it. Given that caches and centralized elite interments play a part in pan-Maya and, indeed, pan-Mesoamerican ways of treating space, they seem to demonstrate a conscious interest, through repetition, in creating a sense of identity based in memory and pride of place. Furthermore, recognizing the possibility of multiple observers encourages awareness that some images seem to address the human viewer (Figure 1.11) while others maintain a distanced separation (Figure 4.2), and yet others seem to have been constructed mainly for supernatural contexts of consumption.

Unfortunately, in most cases we remain ignorant of the exact nature of the pageantry and spectacle that would have further affected viewers' perception in the Classic period. That such festivities were richly preformed, however, is directly attested to by the elaborate nature of modern ritual activity (Figures 9.4–9.12). Ritual activity and/or sociopolitical interaction certainly activated many of the constructs considered throughout this volume although we can only reconstruct such behavior based on the tools at our disposal. Clearly we do not fall into original categories of Classic-era viewers on which most of our authors focus; those groups of Maya are long gone, and no modern population can fully replicate ancient experience. We have consciously tried to foster emic viewing practices and have based our approach on the idea that—like style and tradition—viewing patterns, while culturally specific, are knowable. We also acknowledge and embrace our own modern, subjective perspectives as twenty-first century observers.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have brought together many of the diverse concerns that affect the spatiality of imagery construction and dissemination. In doing so, we intentionally created an overview of many of the basic conventions and image-based concerns that affected artistry. As such, this material provides background and a springboard for the detailed case studies that follow.

Overtly iconographic considerations open the volume. Penny Steinbach clearly identifies three variants of the Jester God in Chapter 2 and explores the ideological implications of their spatial arrangement in images. In Chapter 3, Michele Bernatz examines the different visual contexts in which God L appears and is able to precisely locate his domain as close to, and overlapping with, the point of transition between the terrestrial and the underworldly. In Maline D. Werness-Rude's contribution, Chapter 4, she analyzes the young-lord motif on Chocholá-style ceramic vessels and interprets how framing and formatting information can convey ideological messages. She also considers how the distribution of style sends such messages across geographic space.

Flora Clancy's consideration of the development of the ancient Maya plaza in Chapter 5 provides an overview of the importance of such places and their contents, as well as the ways in which they vary across both space and time. In doing so, she provides the perfect transition between the preceding considerations that focus on iconography (and its distribution) as a way of exploring spatial concerns and those that follow, which contain an overt focus on specific architectural forms. Kaylee Spencer, for example, explores in Chapter 6 how the Palenque Palace incorporates a message of domination at its very core. She also analyzes the Palace from an experiential perspective, finding that it manipulates viewer perspective as a way of further extending concepts of control, legitimacy, and political power. Elizabeth Olton, in contrast, concentrates on a series of locations ostensibly linked with the dead by discussing Tikal's Temple 1, a mortuary temple dedicated to Jasaw Chan K'awiil. Her work in Chapter 7 shows that Temple 1, like the Palenque Palace (though in a very different way), created legitimacy as well as intergenerational and interspatial dialectical relationships that placed viewer and present king in position relative to Jasaw. In Chapter 8, Linnea Wren, Travis Nygard, and Justine Shaw consider yet another way of dealing with space in relation to master site planning by discussing the use of causeways and stelae placement at Yo'okop. Like the other approaches to space detailed in this chapter, as well as those applied in the chapters that follow, Wren and colleagues emphasize the intentionality inherent in such modification, ordering, and marking of the landscape.

Despite the violent rupture caused by the Spanish Conquest of the Americas, the Maya continue to consciously create, maintain, and modify the spaces around them in ways that are often similar to those of their ancestors, as Rhonda Taube demonstrates in Chapter 9. Her work clearly indicates the necessity of observing prescribed ceremonies and dances in modern community maintenance. Furthermore, those ceremonies have strong ties with ancient ways of establishing and preserving identity, and Taube's analysis complements those found in other chapters. Michael Carrasco expressly returns to theory in the Epilogue and augments the meta-discussion begun in this chapter by introducing two additional ways in which Maya concepts of space intermeshed with ideas about time and power.

The sequencing of chapters that follows allows readers to explore Maya spatial constructs in a logical progression. First using discrete icons and images portrayed on artworks as launching points to engage with concepts of ordering, envisioning, and creating space, the case studies are anchored in progressively larger complexes—including plazas, architectural groups, site plans, and present-day ritual practices that traverse several communities—to extend the analysis to other features of the built and lived world. At the same time, discrete themes explored by the volume's authors encourage dialogues that zigzag throughout the chapters, often informing one another in revealing and complementary ways. Just to name a few examples, notions of cosmic boundary breaking and maintenance, and their concomitant political ramifications, thread across several chapters, as

Bernatz, Werness-Rude, Spencer, Olton, and Taube's contributions demonstrate. Similarly, an exploration of natural spaces (e.g., topography and natural features) versus the human-constructed environment underpin the essays authored by Clancy; Olton; and Wren, Nygard, and Shaw. Audience participation in sacralizing, creating, and ordering space through a spectator's physical movements, emotional responses, or physical interactions with artworks are topics taken up by Clancy, Werness-Rude, Spencer, and Taube. Throughout all the contributions in this volume, time, space, place, and the experiential nature of each provide core focal points, just as they did, and still do, for the Maya of the past and of today.

Commentary, Sources, and Suggested Reading

In the introductory section of this chapter we spend some time laying out basic disciplinary approaches. For sample art historical publications that deal with space while also discussing viewing constructs (and their concomitant spatiality) in one way or another, see:

Berger, John
1972 *Ways of Seeing.* British Broadcasting Corp., Penguin Books, London.
Clancy, Flora Simmons
1999 *Sculpture in the Ancient Maya Plaza: The Early Classic Period.* University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.
Davies, Penelope J. E.
2004 *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius.* University of Texas Press, Austin.
Elkins, James
1996 *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing.* Simon & Schuster, New York.
Gombrich, Ernst
1960 *Art and Illusion, a Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation.* Pantheon Books, New York.
Maynard, Patrick
2005 *Drawing Distinctions: The Varieties of Graphic Expression.* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.
Miller, Mary Ellen, and Claudia Brittenham
2013 *The Spectacle of the Late Maya Court: Reflections on the Murals of Bonampak.* University of Texas Press, Austin.
Nelson, Robert S., and Richard Shiff (editors)
2003 *Critical Terms for Art History.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

O'Neil, Megan E.
2012 *Engaging Ancient Maya Sculpture at Piedras Negras, Guatemala.* University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
Peers, Glenn
2004 *Sacred Shock: Framing Visual Experience in Byzantium.* Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park.
Summers, David
2003 *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism.* Phaidon Press, London.
Wollheim, Richard
1987 *Painting as an Art.* Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.

Many sources discuss the beginnings of art history as a discipline, which is commonly traced back to three important figures: Vasari, Hegel, and Winckelmann. We provide two (Haskell and Nelson) here, as well as key sources in the oeuvres of each of the three "grandfathers" of the discipline just mentioned. For those not familiar with common art historical terms, we would also recommend *The Dictionary of Art*, popularly called *Grove's Dictionary of Art*, listed below, as an excellent resource. Grove's is now available online, through Oxford Art Online. Two other points warrant further clarification—we employ the term *Maya* for all singular, plural, and possessive contexts, following the standards established in Maya Studies; the term *Mayan* is used solely when discussing languages. Second, also in accordance with field-specific spelling practices, we give preference to *stela* over *stele*; regardless, both spellings of this word pluralize as *stelae*.

n.d. *Grove Art Online.* Online resource: http://www.oxfordartonline.com/public/book/oao_gao.
Haskell, Francis
1993 *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past.* Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich
1975 *Aesthetics; Lectures on Fine Arts by G. W. F. Hegel.* Translated by T. M. Knox. Clarendon Press, Oxford.
Nelson, Robert S.
1997 The Map of Art History. *The Art Bulletin* 79(1):28–40. Oxford University Press, New York
Vasari, Georgio, Julia Conaway Bondanella, and Peter Bondanella
1998 [16th century] *Lives of the Artists.* World's Classics, Oxford University Press, New York.

Winckelmann, Johann Joachim, and Alex Potts
2006 *The History of the Art of Antiquity.* Getty Research Institute, Los
[1764] Angeles, California.

For the concepts of the primitive, Western illusionism, perspective, etc., including sample critical reactions, see Maynard (2005) above as well as:

Antliff, Mark, and Patricia Leighten
2003 Primitive. In *Critical Terms for Art History*, edited by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, pp. 217–233. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

Damisch, Hubert
1995 *The Origin of Perspective.* Translated by J. Goodman. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Hsu, Francis L. K.
1964 Rethinking the Concept "Primitive." *Current Anthropology* 5(3):169–178.

Panofsky, Erwin
1991 *Perspective as Symbolic Form.* Zone Books, New York.

For a discussion of the north kalomte', see:

Houston, Stephen, and Takeshi Inomata
2009 *The Classic Maya.* Cambridge University Press, New York.

Lacadena García-Gallo, Alfonso
2004 The Glyphic Corpus from Ek' Balam, Yucatán, México. Report to FAMSI, http://www.famsi.org/reports/01057/index.html, accessed June 7, 2012.

Many of the discussions found in other sections acknowledge the importance of space and time—see particularly the readings listed under Cosmology and Directionality below. While many more sources are relevant to this discussion, the following works provide a good starting point and relate directly to ideas expressed throughout this chapter.

León-Portilla, Miguel
1988 *Time and Reality in the Thought of the Maya.* 2nd ed. The Civilization of the American Indian. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Lounsbury, Floyd G.
1991 Distinguished Lecture: Recent Work in the Decipherment of Palenque's Hieroglyphic Inscriptions. *American Anthropologist* 93:809–825.

Stuart, David.

2011 *The Order of Days: The Maya World and the Truth About 2012.* Harmony Books, New York.

Tuan, Yi-Fu

1977 *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience.* University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

For an excellent overview of the use of space as an analytic tool in archaeological and anthropological circles, see:

Robertson, Elizabeth C., Jeffrey D. Seibert, Deepika C. Fernandez, and Marc U. Zender (editors)

2006 *Space and Spatial Analysis in Archaeology.* University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

For sample archaeological and anthropological publications dealing with space, see the following; for specific consideration of Pitt-Rivers's work, see Trigger (1989):

Ashmore, Wendy

1981 *Lowland Maya Settlement Patterns.* University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

1989 Construction and Cosmology: Politics and Ideology in Lowland Maya Settlement Patterns. In *Word and Image in Maya Culture: Explorations in Language, Writing, and Representation*, edited by William F. Hanks and Don S. Rice, pp. 272–286. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Binford, Lewis R.

1969 Archaeological Perspectives. In *New Perspectives in Archaeology*, edited by Sally Binford, pp. 5–32. Aldine, Chicago, Illinois.

Flannery, Kent (editor)

1976 *The Early Mesoamerican Village.* Academic Press, Toronto.

Hull, Kerry M., and Michael D. Carrasco (editors)

2012 *Parallel Worlds: Genre, Discourse, and Poetics in Contemporary, Colonial, and Classic Maya Literature.* University Press of Colorado, Boulder.

Parmington, Alexander

2011 *Space and Sculpture in the Classic Maya City.* Cambridge University Press, New York.

Sanders, William T., Jeffrey R. Parsons, and Robert S. Santley

1976 *The Basin of Mexico: Ecological Processes in the Evolution of Civilization.* Academic Press, New York.

Siebert, Jeffrey

2006 Introduction. In *Space and Spatial Analysis in Archaeology*, edited by Elizabeth C. Robertson, Jeffrey D. Seibert, Deepika C. Fernandez, and Marc U. Zender, pp. xiii–xxiv. University of Calgary, Calgary.

Taylor, Walter W.

1948 *A Study of Archaeology*. American Anthropological Association Memoir 69. American Anthropological Association, Menasha, Wisconsin.

Trigger, Bruce G.

1989 *A History of Archaeological Thought*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

2003 *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

Willey, Gordon R.

1948 A Functional Analysis of "Horizon Styles" in Peruvian Archaeology. *Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology* 4:8–15.

Willey, Gordon R., and Jeremy A. Sabloff

1993 *A History of American Archaeology*. 3rd ed. Thames and Hudson, London.

General Sources for the Study of Ancient Maya Art

Some of the most significant sources for the study of ancient Maya art, architecture, and hieroglyphic writing consist of collections of photographs and drawings compiled and published by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century explorers and archaeologists. Some of the most salient include the following:

Maler, Teobert

1901–1903 *Researches in the Central Portion of the Usumatsintla Valley: Report of Explorations for the Museum, 1898–1900*. Memoirs, Vol. 2. Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1908 *Researches in the Upper Ususmatsintla and Adjacent Region*. Memoirs, Vol. 4, No. 1. Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

1910 *Explorations in the Department of Peten, Guatemala, and Adjacent Regions*. Memoirs, Vol. 4, No. 3. Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Maudslay, Alfred P.

1889–1902 *Biologia Centrali-Americana: Archaeology*. 4 vols. R. H. Porter and Dulau & Co., London.

Morley, Sylvanus

1920 *Inscriptions at Copán. Publication No. 219.* Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.

1937–1938 *Inscriptions of Petén.* 5 vols. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Pub. 437. Washington, D.C.

Tozzer, Alfred M.

1911 *A Preliminary Study of the Prehistoric Ruins of Tikal, Guatemala.* Memoirs, Vol. 5, No. 3. Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

More recent campaigns to record hieroglyphic writing and sculpture take the form of online databases. The *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions* by Ian Graham and collaborators is available (in part) online through the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University. The Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute furnishes scholars with Merle Greene Robertson's rubbings of relief sculpture on mesoweb.com, while Justin Kerr's corpus of photographs documenting ceramic objects can be accessed at mayavase.com. The Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc. (FAMSI) houses databases of drawings and photographs of Maya monuments including the important collections of Linda Schele and John Montgomery. In addition, FAMSI provides online dictionaries for Mayan languages and hieroglyphic writing.

Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions (CMHI)

1975–2006 9 Volumes. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Online database at https://www.peabody.harvard.edu/cmhi/.

Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc. (FAMSI)

n.d. http://www.famsi.org/.

Kerr, Justin

n.d. Maya Vase Database. Electronic database, http://www.mayavase.com.

Robertson, Merle Greene

n.d. Merle Greene Robertson's Rubbings of Maya Sculpture. http://www.mesoweb.com/rubbings/.

Other imperative resources that form the foundation for the study of ancient Maya art include the following:

Baudez, Claude

1994 *Maya Sculpture of Copan: The Iconography:* University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Miller, Mary Ellen
1999 *Maya Art and Architecture.* Thames and Hudson, London.
Pollock, Harry E. D.
1980 *The Puuc: An Architectural Survey of the Hill Country of Yucatán and Northern Campeche, Mexico.* Memoirs, Vol. 19. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Proskouriakoff, Tatiana
1946 *An Album of Maya Architecture.* Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.
1950 *A Study of Classic Maya Sculpture.* Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.
Reents-Budet, Dorie (editor)
1994 *Painting the Maya Universe: Royal Ceramics of the Classic Period.* Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina.
Robertson, Merle Greene
1983–1991 *The Sculpture of Palenque.* 4 vols. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.
Schele, Linda, and Mary E. Miller
1986 *Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art.* Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas.
Spinden, Herbert J.
1913 *A Study of Maya Art: Its Subject Matter and Historical Development.* Memoirs, Vol. 6. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Tate, Carolyn
1992 *Yaxchilán: Design of a Maya Ceremonial City.* University of Texas Press, Austin.

For texts relevant to passages throughout, see Inomata (2006), listed below in the section Images of Space: What is Represented/Contained, as well as:

Appadurai, Arjun (editor)
1986 *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective.* Cambridge University Press, New York.
Bal, Mieke
2001 *Looking In: The Art of Viewing.* G and B Arts International, Amsterdam.
Bryson, Norman
2001 Introduction: Art and Intersubjectivity. In *Looking In: The Art of Viewing*, by Mieke Bal, pp. 1–39. Critical Voices in Art, Theory and Culture. G and B Arts International, Amsterdam.

Freidel, David, Linda Schele, and Joy Parker
1993 *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path.* William Morrow, New York.

Gell, Alfred
1998 *Art and Agency, an Anthropological Theory.* Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

Koontz, Rex, Kathryn Reese-Taylor, and Annabeth Headrick (editors)
2001 *Landscape and Power in Ancient Mesoamerica.* Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.

Taube, Karl A.
2003 Ancient and Contemporary Maya Conceptions about Field and Forest. In *The Lowland Maya Area: Three Millennia at the Human-Wildland Interface*, edited by Arturo Gómez-Pompa, Michael F. Allen, Scott L. Fedick, and Juan J. Jiménez-Osornio, pp. 461–492. Food Products Press / Haworth Press, New York.

Writing and Artistry

Note: Maya writing is logo-syllabic, which means that Maya words are written either as a string of syllables, as a logograph that represents the idea of the word, or as some combination of the two. The word for jaguar—*balam*—can either be written logographically as a large cat's head, syllabically as **ba-la-ma**, or as a combination of the two, in which a large cat's head appears with a **ma** syllabic complement assuring the reader that the word ends with an "m" sound. In all cases, the different possibilities would all be grouped together to form what is called a glyph block. Glyph blocks typically conform to individual words in Mayan languages, but the novice epigrapher should beware, as multiple words can sometimes be contained within the same block or a single word can be spread out over multiple blocks. As the foregoing implies, the Maya alphabet is made up mostly of syllables rather than single letters: **ka**, **ba** and **tz'a** are but three examples of such syllables. As the last—**tz'a**—indicates, the Maya also employ glottals (marked by the apostrophe) in their speech and writing. In an exception to this general rule, the vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u* can stand by themselves; indeed, **u** is one of the most often used syllables, due, in part, to the fact that it acts as a pronoun indicating ownership (his/her/its; **y-** can also fulfill a pronoun role when the modified word begins with a vowel)

In the decipherment of Maya hieroglyphs, epigraphers have developed several standards for phonetically writing the words the glyphs represent. Syllables are identified using lowercase bold type, and logographs are written in uppercase bold font, while full words are rendered in italics. What is more, scholars frequently first transcribe the original syllabic spelling of the word followed by a transliteration in which the grammatical cues provided by the Maya scribe are normalized. In the syllabic spelling of *jaguar* just mentioned, the Maya word would be transcribed first as **ba-la-ma** and then transliterated as *balam* before it is translated as *jaguar.* Had the scribe used a logogram for balam, complemented by **ba** and **ma** syllables, it would first be transcribed as **ba-BALAM-ma**, with transliteration and translation following as above. The many linguistic details important in the transliteration process get quite complicated (as when vowel disharmony results in a long vowel or an infixed *h*, for instance) and are beyond the scope of this book; we encourage our readers to refer to the following sources for more in-depth discussions of Maya writing:

Coe, Michael D.
1999 *Breaking the Maya Code.* Revised ed. Thames and Hudson, New York.
Coe, Michael D., and Mark Van Stone.
2001 *Reading the Maya Glyphs.* Thames and Hudson, New York.
Montgomery, John
2002 *How to Read Maya Hieroglyphs.* Hippocrene Books, New York.
Stuart, David
2005 *Sourcebook for the 29th Maya Hieroglyphic Forum.* Maya Meetings, University of Texas at Austin.

For additional sources relevant to the various issues raised throughout the Writing and Artistry section, see:

Boone, Elizabeth Hill, and Walter D. Mignolo (editors)
1994 *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes.* Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina.
Grube, Nikolai
1990 The Primary Standard Sequence in Chochola Style Ceramics. In *The Maya Vase Book, A Corpus of Rollout Photographs of Maya Vases*, Vol. 2, edited by Justin Kerr, pp. 320–330. Kerr Associates, New York.
Houston, Stephen, Oswaldo F. Chichilla Mazariegos, and David Stuart
2001 *The Decipherment of Ancient Maya Writing.* University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
Houston, Stephen, John Robertson, and David Stuart
2000 The Language of Classic Maya Inscriptions (with comments). *Current Anthropology* 51(3):321–356.
Houston, Stephen, and David Stuart
1992 On Maya Hieroglyphic Literacy. *Current Anthropology* 33(5):589–593.

Houston, Stephen, David Stuart, and Karl A. Taube.

1989 Folk Classifications of Classic Maya Pottery. *American Anthropologist* 91(3):720–726.

Houston, Stephen, and Karl A. Taube

1987 "Name-Tagging" in Classic Mayan Script: Implications for Native Classifications of Ceramics and Jade Ornament. *Mexicon* 9(2):38–41.

Hull, Kerry M.

2001 A Comparative Analysis of Ch'orti' Verbal Art and Poetic Discourse Structures of Maya Hieroglyphic Writing. Electronic document, http://www.famsi.org/reports/00048/index.html, accessed 2011.

Hull, Kerry M., and Michael D. Carrasco

2012 *Parallel Worlds: Genre, Discourse, and Poetics in Contemporary, Colonial, and Classic Maya Literature.* University Press of Colorado, Boulder.

MacLeod, Barbara, and Dorie Reents-Budet

1994 The Art of Calligraphy: Image and Meaning. In *Painting the Maya Universe: Royal Ceramics of the Classic Period*, edited by Dorie Reents-Budet, pp. 106–163. Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina.

Macri, Martha J., and Matthew G. Looper

2003 *The New Catalogue of Maya Hieroglyphs, The Classic Period Inscriptions*, Vol. 1. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Mathews, Peter

1979 The Glyphs on the Ear Ornaments from Tomb A-1/1. In *Excavations at Altun Ha, Belize, 1964–1970*, Vol. 1, edited by David Pendergast, pp. 70–80. Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario.

Miller, Arthur G.

1989 Comparing Maya Image and Text. In *Word and Image in Maya Culture: Explorations in Language, Writing, and Representation*, edited by William F. Hanks and Don S. Rice, pp. 176–188. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Stuart, David

1987 *Ten Phonetic Syllables*. Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing, No. 14. Center for Maya Research, Washington, D.C.

1989 Hieroglyphs on Maya Vessels. In *The Maya Vase Book*, Vol. 1, edited by Justin Kerr, pp. 149–160. Kerr Associates, New York.

Artists, Artistry, and Patronage

For the specific examples mentioned in this section, see Kerr (n.d.) and Reents-Budet (1994) at the outset, and Grube (1990), Houston and Stuart (1992), and Stuart (1987, 1989) under the Writing and Artistry section above as well as the following authors:

Ames, Kenneth M.

1995 Chiefly Power and Household Production on the Northwest Coast. In *Foundations of Social Inequality*, edited by T. Douglas Price and Gary M. Feinman, pp. 155–187. Plenum Press, New York.

Arnold, Dean E.

2008 *Social Change and the Evolution of Ceramic Production and Distribution in a Maya Community*. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.

Bey, George J., III

2006 Changing Archaeological Perspectives on the Northern Maya Lowlands. In *Lifeways in the Northern Maya Lowlands: New Approaches to Archaeology in the Yucatan Peninsula*, edited by Jennifer P. Mathews and Bethany A. Morrison, pp. 13–37. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Christenson, Allen J.

2003 *Popol Vuh: The Sacred Book of the Maya*. O Books, New York.

Clark, John E., and Stephen Houston

1998 Craft Specialization, Gender, and Personhood among the Post-Conquest Maya of Yucatán, Mexico. In *Craft and Social Identity*, edited by Cathy L. Costin and Rita P. Wright, pp. 31–46. Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association, No. 8. American Anthropological Association, Arlington, Virginia.

Coe, Michael D.

1977 Supernatural Patrons of Maya Scribes and Artists. In *Social Process in Maya Prehistory: Essays in Honor of Sir Eric Thompson*, edited by Norman Hammond, pp. 327–349. Academic Press, London.

Costin, Cathy Lynne

2001 Craft Production Systems. In *Archaeology at the Millennium*, edited by Gary Feinman and T. Douglas Price, pp. 273–327. Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers, New York.

Foias, Antonia E., and Ronald L. Bishop

2007 Pots, Sherds, and Glyphs: Pottery Production and Exchange in the Petexbatun Polity, Petén, Guatemala. In *Pottery Economics in Mesoamerica*, edited by Christopher A. Pool and George J. Bey III, pp. 212–236. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Houston, Stephen

2000 Into the Minds of Ancients: Advances in Maya Glyph Studies. *Journal of World Prehistory* 14:121–201.

2008 The Hand of the Master: Evaluating the Production of Sculpture and Text at Copan, Honduras. Paper presented at the Maya Meetings, University of Texas at Austin.

Inomata, Takeshi

2001 The Power and Ideology of Artistic Creation: Elite Craft Specialists in Classic Maya Society. *Current Anthropology* 42(3):321–349.

Just, Bryan

2012 *Dancing into Dreams: Maya Vase Painting of the Ik' Kingdom Princeton University Art* Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, New Jersey.

Pasztory, Esther

1989 Identity and Difference: The Uses and Meanings of Ethnic Styles. In *Cultural Differentiation and Cultural Identity in the Visual Arts*, edited by Susan J. Barnes and Walter S. Melion, pp. 15–38. Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, Symposium Papers XII; Studies in the History of Art 27. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Reents-Budet, Dorie

1987 The Discovery of a Ceramic Artist and Royal Patron Among the Classic Maya. *Mexicon* 9(6):123–126.

Reents-Budet, Dorie, Ronald L. Bishop, Jennifer T. Taschek, and Joseph W. Ball

2000 Out of the Palace Dumps, Ceramic Production and Use at Buenavista del Cayo. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 11:99–121.

Reina, Ruben, and Robert M. Hill, II

1978 *The Traditional Pottery of Guatemala*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Schele, Linda

1988 The Xibalba Shuffle: A Dance after Death. In *Maya Iconography*, edited by Elizabeth P. Benson and Gillett G. Griffin, pp. 294–317. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.

For semiotics (signifiers, indexes, indexical signs, etc.) see:

Hardwick, Charles S. (editor)

1977 *Semiotic and Significs: The Correspondence Between Charles S. Peirce and Victoria Lady Welby*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Peirce, Charles S.

1931–1958 *Collected Papers*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss. 6 vols. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Saussure, Ferdinand de

1959 *Course in General Linguistics*. Translated by Wade Baskin. McGraw-Hill, New York.

Post-Conquest accounts give us some understanding of just how poor the material record is for ancient craft production. Alfred Tozzer, for example, indicates that the idols that once graced the temple interiors at many Maya sites were made out of a certain type of wood. The vicissitudes of time and the ravages of the Conquest combine to ensure that only the barest fraction of those objects made from materials less resistant to change remain available to the modern researcher.

Tozzer, Alfred M. (translator and editor)
1941 *Landa's Relación de las cosas de Yucatan: A Translation*. Papers, Vol. 18. Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Images of Space: What is Represented/Contained

Inomata, Takeshi
2006 Plazas, Performers, and Spectators: Political Theaters of the Classic Maya (with commentary). *Current Anthropology* 47(5):805–842.
Stuart, David, and Stephen Houston
1994 *Classic Maya Place Names*. Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology, No. 33. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.
Wagner, Logan, Hal Box, and Susan Kline Morehead
2013 *Ancient Origins of the Mexican Plaza: From Primordial Sea to Public Space*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Cosmology and Directionality

The following authors provide representative examples of discussions of directionality among the modern and ancient Maya:

Finamore, Daniel, and Stephen Houston
2010 *Fiery Pool: The Maya and the Mythic Sea*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.
Girard, Rafael
1962 *Los Mayas Eternos*. Antigua Librería Robredo, de Jose Porrua e Hijos, México, D.F.
Gossen, Gary H.
1972 Temporal and Spatial Equivalents in Chamula Ritual Symbolism. In *Reader in Comparative Religion, An Anthropological Approach*, edited by William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt, pp. 135–149. Harper and Row, New York.

1974 *Chamulas in the World of the Sun: Time and Space in a Maya Oral Tradition.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Hanks, William F.

1990 *Referential Practice: Language and Lived Space among the Maya.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

Taube, Karl A.

1992 *The Major Gods of Ancient Yucatan.* Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology, No. 32. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

2004a Flower Mountain: Concepts of Life, Beauty, and Paradise Among the Classic Maya. *RES* 45(Spring):69–98.

Tedlock, Barbara

1992 The Road of Light: Theory and Practice of Mayan Skywatching. In *The Sky in Mayan Literature*, edited by Anthony F. Aveni, pp. 18–42. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Vogt, Evon Z.

1976 *Tortillas for the Gods: A Symbolic Analysis of Zinacanteco Rituals.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Watanabe, John M.

1983 In the World of the Sun: A Cognitive Model of Mayan Cosmology. *Man* 18(4):710–728.

Basic directional concepts and ritualistic patterns of movement (often counterclockwise, probably according to the idea that the vertically conceptualized direction of north could be rotated to obtain a horizontal orientation located on the right hand of east and the sun's rising) share similarities across all Mayan language groups, both ancient and modern. Individual groups demonstrate small differences in conception and approach (see also Gossen [1972] above):

Edmonson, Munro S.

1965 *Quiche-English Dictionary.* Middle American Research Institute, Pub. 30. Tulane University Press, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Considerations of the directionality, cosmology, and orientation to the natural environment:

Bassie-Sweet, Karen

1996 *At the Edge of the World: Caves and Late Classic Maya World View.* University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Brady, James E., and Wendy Ashmore

1999 Mountains, Caves, Water: Ideational Landscapes of the Ancient Maya. In *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Wendy Ashmore and A. Bernard Knapp, pp. 124–145. Blackwell Publishers, Malden, Massachusetts.

The mention of particular examples has been drawn from the following authors:

Aveni, Anthony F.

2001 *Skywatchers*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Coggins, Clemency

1980 The Shape of Time: Some Political Implications of a Four-Part Figure. *American Antiquity* 45:727–739.

Stuart, David

1987a Paintings of Tomb 12, Rio Azul. In *Rio Azul Project Reports, the 1985 Season*, Vol. 3, edited by Richard E. W. Adams, pp. 161–167. University of Texas at San Antonio, Center for Archaeological Research, San Antonio.

For a discussion of E-Groups, radial pyramids, etc., see:

Cohodas, Marvin

1980 Radial Pyramids and Radial-Associated Assemblages of the Central Maya Area. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 39(3):208–223.

In relation to E-Groups, Aimers and Rice (2006) have recently shown that the architectural arrangements do not always present rigid directional alignment and have suggested that variations in orientation were introduced to accommodate other concerns, including additional solar cycles and points in the surrounding natural geography:

Aimers, James J., and Prudence M. Rice

2006 Astronomy, Ritual, and the Interpretation of Maya "E-Group" Architectural Assemblages. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 17(1):79–96.

Sight, Vision, and Visuality

See Stuart (1987, 2011) in the Writing and Artistry section as well as in our initial comments. Also refer to Hanks (1990) and Vogt (1976), cited in the Cosmology and Directionality section above, as well as the following works. Houston, Stuart, and Taube (2006) in particular discuss the eye as an organ of sight, the *-ichnal/-iknal* phrase, fields of vision, and birth symbolism:

Benjamin, Walter

1968 The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. In *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt, pp. 219–253. Translated by H. Zohn. Schocken Books, New York.

Gibson, James J.

1979 *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception.* Erlbaum, Boston, Massachusetts.

Grube, Nikolai, and Werner Nahm

1994 A Census of Xibalba: A Complete Inventory of *Way* Characters on Maya Ceramics. In *The Maya Vase Gook: A Corpus of Rollout Photographs of Maya Vases*, Vol. 4, edited by Justin Kerr, pp. 686–715. Kerr Associates, New York.

Houston, Stephen, David Stuart, and Karl A. Taube

2006 *The Memory of Bones: Body, Being, and Experience among the Classic Maya.* University of Texas Press, Austin.

Stuart, David

1996 Kings of Stone: A Consideration of Stelae in Ancient Maya Ritual and Representation. *RES* 29 and 30:149–171.

According to the Popol Vuh, sight was originally connected with omniscience: "Thus their knowledge became Full. Their vision passed beyond the trees and rocks, beyond the lakes and the seas, beyond the mountains and the valleys." The gods later restricted vision by obscuring the initial all-seeing nature of sight "like breath upon the face of a mirror" (see Christenson [2003:131, 134] cited above under Artists, Artistry, and Patronage). For this and for the Popol Vuh generally, see also:

Tedlock, Denis

1985 *Popol Vuh: The Definitive Edition of the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life and the Glories of Gods and Kings.* Simon & Schuster, New York.

The reclamation and emphasis of poetics and other literary traditions is an important aspect of culture for many Maya living today. The poetry of

Gerardo Can Pat is particularly relevant to issues introduced in this chapter (Montemayor and Frischmann 2005: 200–201). Not only does Can Pat discuss seeing while in a dream state, he also uses *wayak* for dream in the section of his poem "Kin wilik tin wenel" (I See Her in My Dreams): "ti' le je'elo' ka'a tek k'a'ajtene,' / wayak'bil tin beete ko'olele,'" which, as quoted above, translates as "and I began to accept / that I had created her in my dreams." The authors (Montemayor and Frischmann 2005: 200) who collected the anthology of poems in which Can Pat's work appears gloss *wayak*/dream in the following way:

> In Mayan *wayak* is a "dream" of someone who may be awake or asleep—a type of voluntary dream, akin to the French concept of *rêverie*. *Wayak* contrasts with *naay*, "vision," "dream of revelation" [used earlier in the poem]. Therefore the poem literally states he "made" or "formed" (*tin beete*) the woman with his dreams. This is a feasible dream, in contrast to an involuntary or illusory one.

For Can Pat's work as well as that of other authors writing in indigenous languages, see:

Montemayor, Carlos, and Donald Frischmann (editors)
2005 *Words of the True Peoples (Palabras de los Seres Verdaderos), Anthology of Contemporary Mexican Indigenous-Language Writers*, Vol. 2. University of Texas Press, Austin.

For the use of "vision serpent" see Schele and Miller (1986) from the introductory section above as well as:

Schele, Linda, and David Freidel
1990 *A Forest of Kings: The Untold Story of the Ancient Maya.* William Morrow, New York.

Dictionaries

For various discussions regarding, and dictionaries of, Mayan languages, see Macri and Looper (2003), listed under the Writing and Artistry section as well as:

Aulie, H. Wilbur, and Evelyn W. de Aulie
1978 *Diccionario Ch'ol-Español, Español-Ch'ol.* Serie de Vocabularios Indígenas, n. 21. Instituto Lingüístico de Verano, México, D.F.

Barrera Vásquez, Alfredo

1980 *Diccionario Maya Cordemex: Maya-Español, Español-Maya*. Ediciones Cordemex, Mérida, Yucatán.

Bricker, Victoria R., Eleuterio Po'ot Yah, and Ofelia Dzul de Po'ot

1998 *A Dictionary of the Maya Language as Spoken in Hocabá, Yucatán*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Justeson, John S., and Lyle Campbell (editors)

1984 *Phoneticism in Mayan Hieroglyphic Writing*. Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, State University of New York, Albany.

Laughlin, Robert M., and John B. Haviland

1988 *The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of Santo Domingo Zinacantán with Grammatical and Historical Commentary, Volume 1: Tzotzil-English*. Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology, No. 31. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

Architecture

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE, TEMPLES, AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

The following offer general characterizations of Maya architecture (see also Miller [1999] and Proskouriakoff [1943] cited in the introductory section above):

Garza Tarzana de González, Silvia G., and Edward Barna Kurjack

1980 *Atlas arquelógico de estado de Yucatán*. 2 vols. INAH Centro Regional del Sureste, México, D.F.

Houston, Stephen, and Takeski Inomata

2009 *The Classic Maya*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

Kowalski, Jeff Karl (editor)

1999 *Mesoamerican Architecture as a Cultural Symbol*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

Kubler, George

1958 The Design of Space in Maya Architecture in *Miscellanea Paul Rivet Octogenario Dicata I*, pp. 514–531. XXXI Congreso Internacional de Americanistas. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, D.F.

1962 *The Art and Architecture of Ancient America*. Penguin Books, New York.

Miller, Mary Ellen

1998 A Design for Meaning in Maya Architecture. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by Stephen Houston, pp. 187–222. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Miller, Mary Ellen, Simon Martin, and Kathleen Berrin
2004 *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. Thames and Hudson, New York.
Pollock, Harry E. D.
1940 Sources and Methods in the Study of Maya Architecture. In *The Maya and Their Neighbors: Essays on Middle American Anthropology and Archaeology*, edited by Clarence Hay, Ralph Linton, Samuel Lothrop, Harry Shapiro, and George Vaillant, pp. 179–201. Appleton-Century, New York.
Tate, Carolyn
1992 *Yaxchilán: Design of a Maya Ceremonial City*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

A number of excellent works characterize the formal qualities of architecture at specific Maya sites. A few consulted in writing this section include (see also Robertson [1983–1991] above in the introductory section):

Coe, William R.
1990 *Excavations in the Great Plaza, North Terrace, and North Acropolis of Tikal*. Tikal Report No. 14. 5 vols. Museum Monograph 61. University Museum. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
Fash, William
1991 *Scribes, Warriors and Kings: The City of Copan and the Ancient Maya*. Thames and Hudson, New York.
Harrison, Peter
2001 Maya Architecture at Tikal, Guatemala. In *Maya: Divine Kings of the Rain Forest*, edited by Nikolai Grube, pp. 218–231. Könemann, Cologne.
1999 *The Lords of Tikal: Rulers of an Ancient Maya City*. Thames and Hudson, New York.
Kowalski, Jeff Karl
1987 *The House of the Governor: A Palace at Uxmal, Yucatan, Mexico*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
Ruppert, Karl
1935 *The Caracol at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.
1952 *Chichen Itza, Architectural Notes and Plans*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.

For more information regarding the relationships between Maya houses and temples see:

Carrasco, Michael, and Kerry Hull

2002 The Cosmogonic Symbolism of the Corbeled Vault in Maya Architecture, *Mexicon*, 24(2):26–32.

Houston, Stephen

1998 Classic Maya Depictions of the Built Environment. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by Stephen Houston, pp. 333–372. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Stuart, David

1998 "The Fire Enters His House": Architecture and Ritual in Classic Maya Texts. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by Stephen Houston, pp. 373–425. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Thompson, Edward

1911 The Genesis of the Maya Arch. *American Anthropologist* 13:501–516.

Trigger, Bruce

1990 Monumental Architecture: A Thermodynamic Explanation of Symbolic Behavior. *World Archaeology* 22:119–132.

Wauchope, Robert

1938 *Modern Maya Houses: A Study of Their Archaeological Significance.* Carnegie Institution of Washington, Pub. 502. Washington, D.C.

The following sources address the functions that Maya architecture served, and aim to offer clearer views of the activities that Maya buildings facilitated (see also Miller [1998] and Pollock [1940] cited just above):

Houston, Stephen

1996 Symbolic Sweatbaths of the Maya: Architectural Meaning in the Cross Group at Palenque, Mexico. *Latin American Antiquity* 7(2):132–151.

1998 Classic Maya Depictions of the Built Environment. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by Stephen Houston, pp. 333–372. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Inomata, Takeshi, and Stephen Houston (editors)

2001 *Royal Courts of the Ancient Maya.* 2 vols. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.

The belief that Maya architecture functioned like a stage set can be found in the following:

Thompson, J. Eric S.
1954 *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization.* University of Oklahoma, Norman.

In discussing the relationships between architecture and cosmology, the following sources were consulted (see also Ashmore [1989] in the Writing and Artistry section, Brady and Ashmore [1999] in the Cosmology and Directionality section, and Freidel et al. [1993] in the introductory section above):

Aveni, Anthony F.
1982 *Archaeoastronomy in the New World.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Cohodas, Marvin
1978 *The Great Ball Court at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico.* Garland Publishing, London.

A number of linguists and epigraphers have made strides in better understanding the nomenclature used to describe buildings in the Maya world and the ways in which they were ritually activated. Alfredo Berrera Vázquez and colleagues (1980:423), for example, note that the term for temple is *k'u na*, meaning "god house," while David Stuart (1987:33–39, mentioned above in the Writing and Artistry section) suggests that temples are often referred to as *otoch* or *otoot*, a term denoting "house" in many Mayan languages. Nikolai Grube and Linda Schele (1990) note that the temples were described as "sleeping places for the god" or *waybil k'u*. See also Berrera Vásquez et al. (1980), Houston (1998) and Stuart (1998) referenced above, as well as:

Grube, Nikolai, and Linda Schele
1990 *Royal Gifts to Subordinate Lords.* Copan Note 87. Copan Acropolis Archaeological Project and the Instituto Hondureño de Antropología, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
Taube, Karl A.
1998 The Jade Hearth: Centrality, Rulership, and the Classic Maya Temple. In *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*, edited by Stephen Houston, pp. 427–478. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

BALLCOURTS

See Cohodas (1978), cited in the section on Cosmology and Directionality, and Schele and Miller (1986) in the introductory section above, as well as:

Kowalski, Jeff Karl, and William L. Fash

1991 Symbolism of the Maya Ball Game at Copan: Synthesis and New Aspects. In *Sixth Palenque Round Table, 1986*, edited by Merle G. Robertson and Virginia Fields, pp. 59–67. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Miller, Mary Ellen, and Stephen Houston

1987 The Classic Maya Ballgame and Its Architectural Setting: A Study of Relations between Text and Image. *RES* 33:46–65.

Scarborough, Vernon L., and David R. Wilcox

1991 *The Mesoamerican Ballgame*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Schele, Linda, and Peter Mathews

1998 *The Code of Kings: The Language of Seven Sacred Maya Temples and Tombs*. Scribner, New York.

Stone, Andrea, and Marc U. Zender

2011 *Reading Maya Art: A Hieroglyphic Guide to Ancient Maya Painting and Sculpture*. Thames and Hudson, London.

Taube, Karl A., and Marc U. Zender

2009 American Gladiators: Ritual Boxing in Ancient Mesoamerica. In *Blood and Beauty: Organized Violence in the Art and Archaeology of Mesoamerica and Central America*, edited by Heather Orr and Rex Koontz, pp. 161–220. Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, Los Angeles, California.

Wittington, Michael E.

2001 *The Sport of Life and Death: The Mesoamerican Ballgame*. Thames and Hudson, New York.

Zender, Mark U.

2004a Glyphs for “Handspan” and “Strike” in Classic Maya Ballgame Texts. *The PARI Journal* 14(4):1–9.

2004b Sport, Spectacle, and Political Theater. *The PARI Journal* 4(4):10–12.

PALACES

See Inomata and Houston (2001) and Miller et al. (2004) as cited in the Architecture section, and Miller (1999), Parmington (2011), Reents-Budet (1994), and Robertson (1983–1991) as cited in the introduction above, as well as Tozzer (1966) in Artists, Artistry, and Patronage; also consider the following sources particularly:

Christie, Jessica Joyce (editor)

2003 *Maya Palaces and Elite Residences: An Interdisciplinary Approach.* University of Texas Press, Austin.

Evans, Susan Toby, and Joanne Pillsbury (editors)

2004 *Palaces of the Ancient New World: A Symposium at Dumbarton Oaks, 10th and 11th October 1998.* Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Saturno, William A., David Stuart, Anthony F. Aveni, and Franco Rossi

2012 Ancient Maya Astronomical Tables from Xultun, Guatemala. *Science* 336(6082):714–717.

Pathways as Connectors

In addition to Coggins (1980) in Cosmology and Directionality above and Freidel et al. (1993) and Taube (2003) in the introduction, the following sources were consulted in the writing of this section:

Cobos, Rafael, and Terance L. Winemiller

2001 The Late Terminal Classic-Period Causeway Systems of Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 12(2):283–292.

Coggins, Clemency

1992 *Artifacts from the Cenote of Sacrifice, Chichen Itza, Yucatan.* Memoirs, Vol. 10, No. 3. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Dunning, Nicholas P.

1992 *Lord of the Hills: Ancient Maya Settlement in the Puuc Region, Yucatán, Mexico.* Monographs in World Archaeology, No. 15. Prehistory Press, Madison, Wisconsin.

Eberl, Markus

2001 Processions, Pilgrims and Load Carriers: The Ceremonial Roads. In *Maya: Divine Kings of the Rainforest*, edited by Nikolai Grube, pp. 232–233. Könemann, Cologne.

Follan, William J., Ellen R. Kintz, and Laraine A. Fletcher (editors)
1983 *Coba: A Classic Metropolis.* Academic Press, New York.

Kurjack, Edward B., and Silvia Garza Tarazona de González
1981 Pre-Columbian Community Form and Distribution in the Northern Maya Area. In *Lowland Maya Settlement Patterns*, edited by Wendy Ashmore, pp. 287–309. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Mathews, Jennifer, and James F. Garber
2004 Models of Cosmic Order: Physical Expressions of Sacred Space among the Ancient Maya. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 15(1):49–59.

Millbrath, Susan
1999 *Star Gods of the Maya: Astronomy in Art, Folklore, and Calendars.* University of Texas Press, Austin.

Miller, Arthur
1974 The Iconography of the Painting in the Temple of the Diving God, Tulum, Quintana Roo: The Twisted Cords. In *Mesoamerican Archaeology: New Approaches*, edited by Norman Hammond, pp. 67–186. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Shaw, Justine
2001 Maya Sacbeob: Form and Function. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 12(2):261–272.
2008 *White Roads of Yucatán: Changing Social Landscapes of the Yucatec Maya.* University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Tourtellot, Gair, Francisco Estrada Belli, John J. Rose, and Norman Hammond
2003 Late Classic Maya Heterarchy, Hierarchy, and Landscape at La Milpa, Belize. In *Heterarchy, Political Economy, and the Ancient Maya*, edited by Vernon L. Scarborough, Fred Valdez, Jr., and Nicholas Dunning, pp. 7–51. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Tozzer, Alfred M.
1978 A Comparative Study of the Mayas and the Lacandones. Reprinted AMS Press, New York. Originally published in 1907, Archaeological Institute of America/Macmillan, New York.

For the source of the specific translations and meanings of the term *sacbe* favored here, see:

Stuart, David
2006 The Inscribed Markers of the Coba-Yaxuna Causeway and the Glyph for Sakbih. *David Stuart's Notes*, pp. 1–3. Electronic document, http://www.mesoweb.com/stuart/notes/Sacbe.pdf, accessed 2011.
2012 The Verb Bix, "Go, Go Away." *Maya Decipherment: A Weblog on the Ancient Maya Script.* Electronic document, http://decipherment.wordpress.com/2012/01/23/the-verb-bix-go-go-away/, accessed February 28, 2011.

For more information on the significance and iconography surrounding the concept of k'uxan suum see Freidel and Schele (1993), A. Miller (1974), and Stone and Zender (2011) above.

Monumental Sculpture

For the Uxmal interpretations, especially regarding the arch on the south building as a frame of the north building and Governors Palace, see Schele and Mathews (1998) under Architecture (Ballcourts) above. Other works consulted in the preparation of this section include Clancy (1999), Houston and Inomata (2009), M. Miller (1999), O'Neil (2012), Proskouriakoff (1950), Robertson (1983–1991), Schele and Miller (1986), and Tate (1992) in the introduction; Schele and Freidel (1990) and Stuart (1996) in Sight, Vision, and Visuality; and the following:

Clancy, Flora Simmons

2009 *The Monuments of Piedras Negras, an Ancient Maya City.* University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Herring, Adam

2005 *Art and Writing in the Maya Cities, AD 600–800: A Poetics of Line.* Cambridge University Press, New York.

Houston, Stephen, and David Stuart

1998 The Ancient Maya Self: Personhood and Portraiture in the Classic Period. *RES* 33:72–101

Miller, Mary Ellen

1993 On the Eve of the Collapse: Maya Art of the Eighth Century. In *Lowland Maya Civilization in the Eighth Century A.D.*, edited by Jeremy A. Sabloff and John S. Henderson, pp. 335–413. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

1999 *Maya Art and Architecture.* Thames and Hudson, London.

O'Neil, Megan E.

2011 Object, Memory, and Materiality at Yaxchilán: The Reset Lintels of Structures 12 and 22. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 22:245–69.

Proskouriakoff, Tatiana

1960 Historical Implications of a Pattern of Dates at Piedras Negras, Guatemala. *American Antiquity* 25(4):454–75.

In Maya hieroglyphic writing the term *lakam tuun* is generally understood to mean "stela," although epigraphic discussions are ongoing surrounding the exact transliteration and translation. Montgomery (2002: 238; see citation above, in the Writing and Artistry section) notes that *lakam tun* or "banner stone" refers to a stela or upright stone monument, while Coe and Van Stone (2001:133; see citation above, in the Writing and Artistry section) translate *lakam tuun* as "great stone." The reader is invited to review Stone and Zender (2011:169; see citation above, in the Ballcourts section) for information concerning the term *tuun*, "stone" and other phrases used to describe the erection and wrapping of stones and stelae.

The Creation, Reception, and Consumption of Luxury Goods

For an overview of the names different classes of objects receive, see Coe and Van Stone (2001) cited above in the Writing and Artistry section. For images of specific examples shown in monumental carvings, especially see the volumes dedicated to Itzimte, Xcalumkin, and Yaxchilan in the *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions* cited in the introductory section, in conjunction with databases and source material.

Modern classificatory systems have been developed to sort and identify portable objects when they appear in the ancient material record. This is particularly true for ceramics, which have been subdivided with a great deal of precision. Archaeologists have grouped ceramics together into types based on paste, form, and surface decoration. Slight variations within types are further separated into varieties, hence the type-variety system of classification. Types can then be grouped together to define larger production spheres. For a careful discussion of, and potential problems with, such terminology, see:

Culbert, T. Patrick, and Robert L. Rands
2007 Multiple Classifications: An Alternative Approach to the Investigation of Maya Ceramics. *Latin American Antiquity* 18(2):181–190.
Gifford, James C.
1976 *Prehistoric Pottery Analysis and the Ceramics of Barton Ramie in the Belize Valley*. Memoirs, Vol. 18., Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

For other sources particularly relevant to the discussion of portable luxury goods, see Houston, Stuart, and Taube (2006) in Sight, Vision, and Visuality; Reents-Budet (1994) in the introductory section; Reents-Budet et al. (2000) in Artists, Artistry, and Patronage; Schele and Miller (1986) in the introductory section; Mathews (1979), Houston and Taube (1987), and Houston and Taube (1987); as well as:

Andrews, E. Wyllys, V

1986 Olmec Jades from Chacsinkin, Yucatan, and Maya Ceramics from La Venta, Tabasco. In *Research and Reflections in Archaeology and History, Essays in Honor of Doris Stone*, edited by E. Wyllys Andrews V, pp. 11–47. Middle American Research Institute, Pub. 57. Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Houston, Stephen, and David Stuart

2001 Peopling the Classic Maya Court. In *Royal Courts of the Classic Maya, Volume One: Theory, Comparison, and Synthesis*, edited by Takeshi Inomata and Stephen Houston, pp. 54–83. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.

Looper, Matthew G.

2003 The Meaning of the Maya Flapstaff Dance. *Glyph Dwellers* 17:1–4.

Looper, Matthew G., Dorie Reents-Budet, and Ronald L. Bishop

2009 Dance on Classic Maya Ceramics. In *To Be Like Gods, Dance in Ancient Maya Civilization*, by Matthew G. Looper, pp. 113–150. University of Texas Press, Austin.

McEwan, Colin

1994 *Ancient Mexico in the British Museum*. British Museum Press, London.

Pohl, John M. D.

1994 *The Politics of Symbolism in the Mixtec Codices*. Vanderbilt University Publications in Anthropology, Nashville, Tennessee.

Tate, Carolyn

1992a Appendix 3. In *Yaxchilan: The Design of a Maya Ceremonial City*, by Carolyn Tate, pp. 275–280. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Taube, Karl A.

2004b *Olmec Art at Dumbarton Oaks*. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Yaeger, Jason

2000 The Social Construction of Communities in the Classic Maya Countryside: Strategies of Affiliation in Western Belize. In *The Archaeology of Communities, a New World Perspective*, edited by Marcello A. Canuto and Jason Yaeger, pp. 123–142. Routledge, London.

2004 Untangling the Ties that Bind: The City, the Countryside, and the Nature of Maya Urbanism at Xunantunich, Belize. In *The Social Construction of Ancient Cities*. Monica L. Smith, pp. 121–155. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

See the following for the introduction of Micro-Architecture in the context of medieval studies:

Bucher, François

1976 Micro-Architecture as the "Idea" of Gothic Theory and Style. *Gesta* 15(1/2):71–89.

Visual Hierarchies and Conventions

We have sketched out basic approaches to narrative imagery and will leave the more in-depth discussions, including citation, to our contributors. In general, though, Western approaches to the issue of narrative have been historically immersed in rigid separations between image and text, which are then inherently linked to separations between space and time—images are primarily spatial at the expense of temporality, while texts are temporal at the expense of spatiality or so the argument goes—a series of disjunctions we find problematic to say the least. Please see Mitchell's cogent discussion of these very issues.

Mitchell, W. J. T.

1986 *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

For discussion of Maya viewing constructs as well as specific analysis of the Bonampak murals, see Houston (1998) from the section on Architecture (Domestic Architecture, Temples, and Administrative Structures) and Miller and Brittenham (2013) in the introductory section above, as well as:

Miller, Mary Ellen

1988 Boys in the Bonampak Band. In *Maya Iconography*, edited by Elizabeth P. Benson and Gillett G. Griffin, pp. 318–330. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.

The restriction of pose can be seen in Proskouriakoff's (1950; cited above in the introductory section) ability to identify and codify different gestures, body positions, etc.

For cave symbolism and ritual activity, as well as sources noting temperature changes in buildings, see Bassie-Sweet (1996) under Cosmology and Directionality, Martin and Miller (2004) under Architecture (Palaces) above, and:

Graham, Elizabeth, Logan McNatt, and Mark A. Gutchen
1980 Excavations at Footprint Cave, Caves Branch, Belize. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 7(2):153–172.
Rue, David J., AnnCorinne Freter, and Diane A. Ballinger
1989 The Caverns of Copán Revisited: Preclassic Sites in the Sesesmil River Valley, Copan, Honduras. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 16(4):395–404.
Satterthwaite, Linton
1933 *Description of the Site with Short Notes on the Excavations of 1931–1932*. Piedras Negras Preliminary Papers, No. 1. University of Pennsylvania and the University Museum, Philadelphia.
Stone, Andrea J.
1995 *Images from the Underworld, Naj Tunich and the Tradition of Maya Cave Paintings*. University of Texas Press, Austin.
Thompson, J. Eric S.
1954 *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
1963 *Maya Archaeologist*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

For other sources relevant to this section, see Houston (1998) in Architecture (Domestic Architecture, Temples, and Administrative Structures); Houston and Stuart (1998) in Monumental Sculpture; Houston, Stuart, and Taube (2006) in Sight, Vision, and Visuality; and Saturno et al. (2012) in Architecture (Palaces).

The Spatiality of Images

For a definition and explicit examination of formatting, see Summers (2003) cited above in the introductory section. Taube (2004a), cited above in the section regarding Cosmology and Directionality, deals with mountains, and the tagging of buildings as maize mountains can be seen in the Linda Schele Drawing Collection (see Schele #3532 for instance) cited below. For images of lintels from Xcalumkin and Itzimte with carving on multiple sides, as well as some of the steps from Yaxchilan, see the *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions* (Peabody Museum), also cited above in the introductory section. For the Chichén Itzá so-called Water Trough Lintel see:

Grube, Nikolai, and Ruth M. Krochock
2011 Reading Between the Lines: Hieroglyphic Texts From Chichén Itzá and Its Neighbors. In *Twin Tollans: Chichén Itzá, Tula, and the Epiclassic to Early Postclassic Mesoamerican World*, edited by Jeff Karl Kowalski and Cynthia Kristan-Graham, pp. 157–193. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

Schele, Linda.
The Linda Schele Drawing Collection. Online database, http://www.famsi.org/research/schele/index.html.

The literature investigating ancient and modern Maya towns as centers (foci, nexuses, quadripartite orientation, etc.) is extensive. In addition to Freidel et al. (1993) and Taube (2003) in the introductory section above and Gossen (1972) and Hanks (1990) in Cosmology and Directionality above, please find below a sampling of authors who investigate the centralized versus the peripheral in both ancient and modern contexts. For Setha Low (2000:101–123), see particularly Chapter 5 ("The Indigenous History of the Plaza, The Contested Terrain of Architectural Representations"); for the Zinacantan example from Vogt (1969:157–160), see especially "Zinacantan Center." See also Andrews (1975) for a broad overview and illustrations of northern sites.

Andrews, George F.
1975 *Maya Cities: Placemaking and Urbanization.* University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
Collins, Wesley M.
2010 The Center as Cultural and Grammatical Theme in Mam (Maya). *Space and Culture* 13(1):17–31.
Demarest, Arthur, Kim Morgan, Claudia Wolley, and Hector Escobedo
2003 The Political Acquisition of Sacred Geography: The Murciélagos Complex at Dos Pilas. In *Maya Palaces and Elite Residences: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, edited by Jessica J. Christie, pp. 120–183. University of Texas Press, Austin.
Golden, Charles, Andrew K. Scherer, A. René Muñoz, and Rosaura Vasquez
2008 Piedras Negras and Yaxchilan: Divergent Political Trajectories in Adjacent Maya Polities. *Latin American Antiquity* 9(3):249–274.
Góngora-Biachi, Renán A., and Pedro González-Martínez
1995 El culto de la Santísima Cruz Tun de Xocén y su influencia en la medicina mágica de los Mayas en Yucatán. *Revista Biomédica* 6:47–51.
Holland, William R.
1964 Contemporary Tzotzil Cosmological Concepts as a Basis for Interpreting Prehistoric Maya Civilization. *American Antiquity* 29(3):301–305.
Low, Setha M.
2000 *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture.* University of Texas Press, Austin.
Vogt, Evon Z.
1969 *Zinacantan: A Maya community in the highlands of Chiapas.* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

See Coe and Van Stone (2001) and Montgomery (2002) above, in the Writing and Artistry section, as well as Houston and Stuart (2001) in the Creation, Reception, and Consumption of Luxury Goods section, regarding the identification and meaning of emblem glyphs and various titles. For discussions of *t'ab* (the root of *t'abaay*) relating to blessing or ascension connected with the erecting of a structure, in addition to Barrera Vásquez (1980) and Laughlin (1988) listed under Dictionaries in the Sight, Vision, and Visuality section, and Stuart (1998) found under Architecture, see:

Schele, Linda, and Matthew G. Looper

1996 *Notebook for the XXth Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop at Texas, March 9–10, 1996: Quiriguá and Copán*. Department of Art and Art History, College of Fine Arts and Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, Austin.

Stuart, David

2007 "White Owl Jaguar": A Tikal Royal Ancestor. *Maya Decipherment: A Weblog on the Ancient Maya Script*. Electronic Document, http://decipherment.wordpress.com/2007/11/04/white-owl-jaguar-a-tikal-royal-ancestor/, accessed June 7, 2012.

For an example of a vessel labeled as a house (*otoot*) and the latest in a long line of *otoot* as "house" readings see Stuart's (1998) discussion, listed under Architecture (Domestic Architecture, Temples, and Administrative Structures), as well as:

Grube, Nikolai, and Maria Gaida

2006 *Die Maya Schrift und Kunst: Der Katalog beschreibt 42 Objekte der Maya-Kultur aus der ständigen Ausstellung des Ethnologischen Museums, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin—Preussischer Kulturbesitz*. SMB DuMont, Berlin.

Our understanding of Maya viewership is woefully inadequate. We have only the barest hint of literacy rates (see the Writing and Artistry section above) and lack any of the eyewitness reports known in the ancient Greco-Roman world. Most images seem to have been addressed to particular audiences, however, and there are enticing indications that both humans and supernaturals composed ancient Maya viewing groups. Some of the Yaxchilan lintels contain texts that are mirror images of the correct reading order, for example, which may indicate a supernatural readership "seeing" the lintels from "the other side" as it were (alternately, it simply reflects a desire to position the glyphs so that anthropomorphic glyph blocks faced the entering viewer, as Houston [1998:342; cited above under Architecture—Domestic Architecture, Temples, and Administrative Structures] suggests). See Schele and Miller (1986) in the introductory section, as well as:

Steiger, Kirsten Rachelle
2010 Crosses, Flowers, and Toads: Maya Bloodletting Iconography in Yaxchilan Lintels 24, 25, and 26. Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

For a discussion of the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque and the sarcophagus contained therein see:

Guenter, Stanley
2007 The Tomb of K'inich Janaab Pakal: The Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque. Mesoweb. Electronic document, http://www.mesoweb.com/articles/guenter/TI.pdf, accessed October 14, 2013.

For further discussion of Yaxchilan's Stela 11, including placement and iconography, see Schele and Freidel (1990) cited above under Sight, Vision, and Visuality. For specific discussion of flapstaff usage at Yaxchilan, refer to Looper (2003) cited above under the Creation, Reception, and Consumption of Luxury Goods.

For the placement of stelae and the destruction of stelae during conquest, see:

Martin, Simon
2000 At the Periphery: The Movement, Modification and Reuse of Early Monuments in the Environs of Tikal. In *The Sacred and the Profane: Architecture and Identity in the Southern Maya Lowlands*, edited by Pierre R. Colas, Kai Delvendahl, Marcus Kuhnert, and Annette Schubart, pp. 51–62. Acta Mesoamericana Vol. 10. Verlag Anton Sauerwein, Markt Schwaben, Germany.

Matthews, Paul H.
1994 *Ch'akah U Tz'ibal:* The Axing of History at Seibal. *Texas Notes on Precolumbian Art, Writing, and Culture* (65):1–5.

Sharer, Robert J.
2004 External Interaction at Early Classic Copan. In *Understanding Early Classic Copan*, edited by Ellen E. Bell, Marcello A. Canuto, and Robert J. Sharer, pp. 297–317. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia.

For a discussion of the animation of objects, see Stuart (2011) referenced in the introductory section above.

For semiotics (signifiers, indexical signs, etc.) see Hardwick (1977), Peirce (1931–1935, 1958), Saussure (1959) above, in the Artists, Artistry, and Patronage section.

Agency and Activity

See Gell (1998) in the introductory section above as well as:

Elsner, Jas

2003 Style. In *Critical Terms for Art History*, edited by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, pp. 98–109. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

Gombrich, Ernst

1968 Style. In *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. Macmillan, New York. Schapiro, M.

1953 Style. In *Anthropology Today: An Encyclopedic Inventory*, edited by A. L. Krober, pp. 287–312. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

2

Aligning the Jester God

THE IMPLICATIONS OF HORIZONTALITY AND VERTICALITY IN THE ICONOGRAPHY OF A CLASSIC MAYA EMBLEM

PENNY STEINBACH

The Jester God is a Classic Maya emblem of sovereignty symbolizing the *axis mundi* (Taube 1998:454). Carved from stones that are primarily green, it depicts a foliated head and owes its moniker to a chance resemblance between its stylized leaves and a tri-pronged jester's cap (Schele 1974:42, 61, 1976:14; Schele and Miller 1983:37).[1] Although their frequent blending has made them difficult to distinguish, there are three categorically distinct manifestations of the Jester God: one is anthropomorphic (Fields 1991; Schele 1979:51), one is piscine (Hellmuth 1987a:127–129; Taube 1995:99–100), and one is avian (Hansen 1992:146–148; Taube 1998:454–459).[2] The vulture that serves as the iconic component of a logogram signifying *ajaw* wears each of the three Jester Gods as the jewel on its headband (Figure 2.1). *Ajaw* means "lord" or "ruler" (Boot 2009:13; Kaufman 2003:84), and the interchangeable use of the three variants in this hieroglyphic context explicitly confirms that they are coequal emblems of sovereignty.

As I will argue, each of the three distinct Jester Gods has a characteristic foliage and is indicative of a particular cosmological realm. Moreover, when a ruler wore multiple Jester Gods simultaneously, the jewels were arrayed to parallel the configuration of the cosmos. Thus, they were worn in a horizontal alignment if the jewels were alike, and in a vertical alignment if they were not, to match, respectively, the horizontality of a single domain or the verticality of the corresponding realms that lie one above the other (Steinbach 2009, 2011).

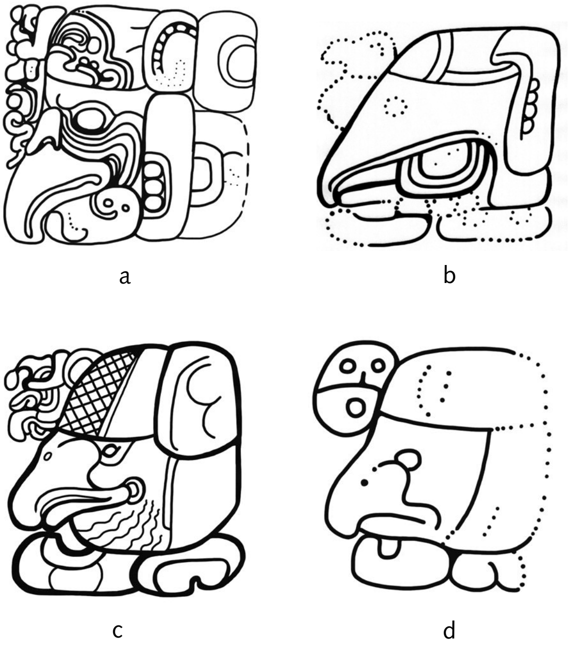


FIGURE 2.1 The Jester God jewel on the *ajaw* vulture's headband. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Piscine Jester God jewel, Stela 5 (left side), Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, detail, after Jones and Satterthwaite (1982:Fiugre 7a); (b) Anthropomorphic Jester God jewel (naturalistic face), Stela 23 (left side), Naranjo, Petén, Guatemala, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 2:60); (c) avian Jester God jewel, Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele and Freidel (1990:Figure 3:14); (d) Anthropomorphic Jester God jewel (stylized face), Monument 8 (side 4), Toniná, Chiapas, Mexico, after Peter Mathews (CMHI vol. 6:31).

The Anthropomorphic Jester God

There are two forms of the anthropomorphic Jester God. One appears as a humanized ear of maize with a relatively naturalistic visage (Figures 2.1b, d; 2.2a, c), while the other is an anthropomorphized corn kernel with the highly stylized face (Figures 2.2.b, f) of the logogram listed as number 533 in Eric Thompson's *A Catalog of Maya Hieroglyphs* (1991:452).[3] The foliage each head sprouts is identifiable as the leaves of a maize plant since it has the same long and flowing lines as the leafage enclosing a naturalistic corncob depicted in the Temple of the Sun at Palenque (Figure 2.2e). In most cases, the vegetation includes a sprig of maize that is part of the iconic component of a logogram read as *nal* (Figure 2.2d). Nal literally means "young ear of maize," but more often serves as a locative suffix (Stuart and Houston 1994:20–21) translated as "place" (Boot 2009:134; Kettunen and Helmke 2011:118).

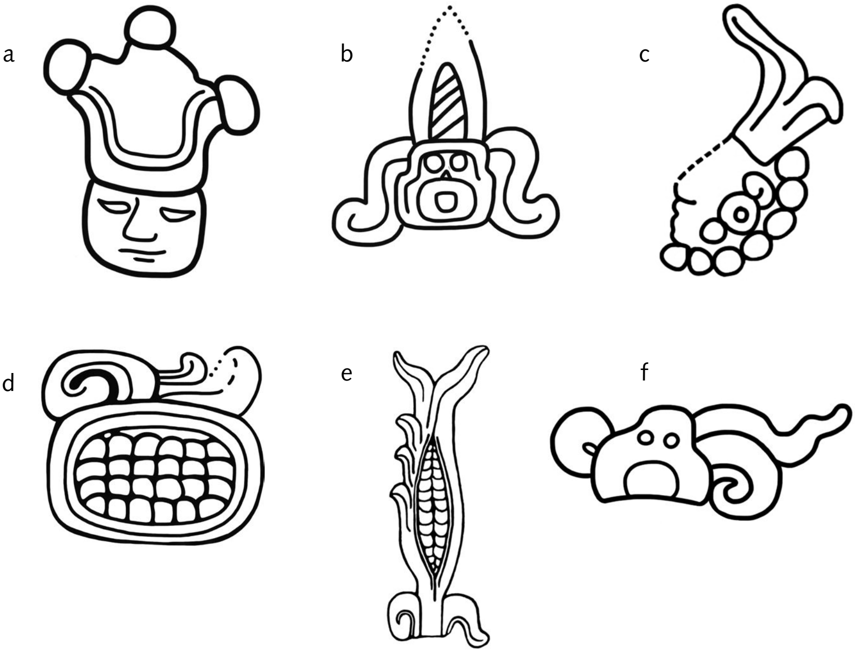


FIGURE 2.2 The anthropomorphic Jester God and relevant motifs. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Anthropomorphic Jester God (naturalistic face), Oval Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele and Freidel (1990:Figure 3:14); (b) Anthropomorphic Jester God (stylized face), Monument 26 (front), Quiriguá, Izabal, Guatemala, detail, after Looper (2003:Figure 1.6); (c) Anthropomorphic Jester God (naturalistic face), Lintel 4, Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection: 6007); (d) *Nal* logogram depicting ear of maize with "sprig," Stela 31 (back), Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, detail, after Jones and Satterthwaite (1982:Figure 52b); (e) Naturalistic ear of maize with leaves, Temple of the Sun (south jamb), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:178); (f) Anthropomorphic Jester God (stylized face), Lintel 48, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 3:105).

The Piscine Jester God

Jester Gods were sometimes named individually and their nominal phrases usually included *xook* (Miller and Martin 2004:68). Xook is a Maya word for "shark" (Boot 2009:204; Jones 1991:246; Kettunen and Helmke 2011:125), and the piscine Jester God (Figures 2.1a, 2.3a–f) clearly owes some of its fishiness to that fearsome creature. Indeed, in its purest form (Figure 2.3c), the piscine Jester God appears as a flowering shark. It has the same tail-over-head posture as the flowering reptile of the Crocodile Tree (Figure 2.3h). The crocodilian plant is a highly distinctive motif that also occurs at Izapa. Located above the Pacific coastal plain, in what is now the modern Mexican state of Chiapas, Izapa was an exceptionally large center of commerce that prospered during the Late PreClassic era. Its artists created a signature style of sculpture (Guernsey 2006:70) that heavily influenced the art of its trading partners, including the Maya. Pre-Hispanic Maya depictions of sharks or, rather, non-shark fish with sharkish traits (e.g., Figure 2.3j), seldom look sharklike to someone unfamiliar with the formal and iconographic conventions of ancient Maya art. However, Izapa Stela 1 bears a fish depicted with enough naturalism to be more recognizably sharkish, at least in the rendering of its fins and tail (Figure 2.3i). A comparison of the piscine Jester God to the fish from Stela 1 makes the fearsome heritage of the royal emblem easier to perceive.

The identifying characteristics of the piscine Jester God include short "face fins" near its cheek or on its chin (Figures 2.3a, c).[4] It also has a straight (Figures 2.3b–d, 2.3f) or upturned snout (Figures 2.3a, e; 2.9c) with ample nostrils, and a mouth with serrated teeth (Figures 2.3a–c) or at least one triangular tooth (Figure 2.3f). Most notably, it has spiral pupils (Figure 2.3a, d–f) and a bifurcated forehead (Figures 2.3a–f) that derives its peculiar shape from the shark's tail (Hellmuth 1987a:125, 1987b:150), which the piscine Jester God has in its most sharklike form (Figure 2.3c). The formal similarity between its forehead and its tail is all but nonexistent, however, whenever its bifurcated shape is simplified into a volute-like form resembling the upper half of an inverted question mark (Figures 2.3d–e). This simplification is especially common on Late Classic Maya pottery, and is much more likely to end in a floral element (Figure 2.3d).

The piscine Jester God's characteristic foliation terminates in a roughly tripartite shape (Figures 2.3c–d) with contours similar to those of a waterlily bud. Its resemblance to the nascent flower that usually accompanies the waterlily pad in depictions of the plant growing from a split skull is readily apparent (Figure 2.3g). Given the piscine variant's aquatic nature, it is

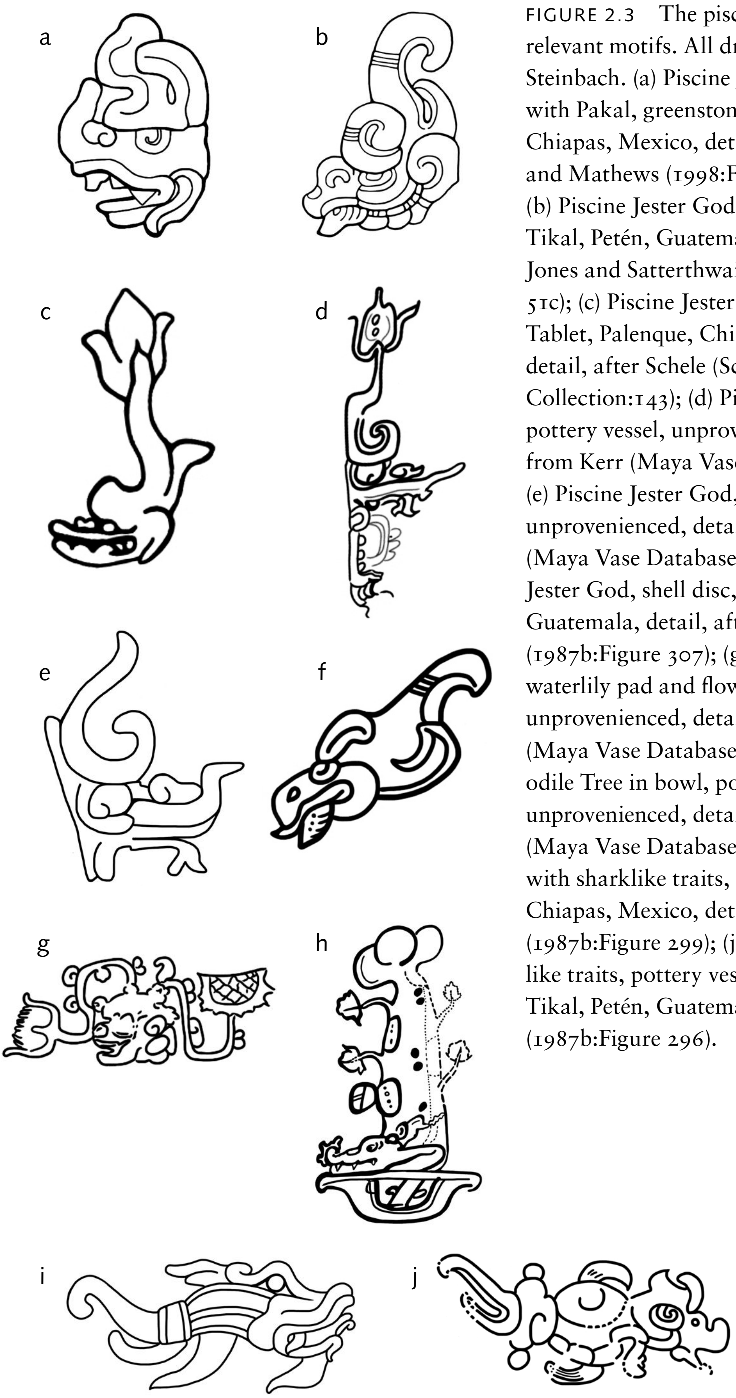


FIGURE 2.3 The piscine Jester God and relevant motifs. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Piscine Jester God buried with Pakal, greenstone jewel, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele and Mathews (1998:Figure 3.29); (b) Piscine Jester God, Stela 31 (front), Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, detail, after Jones and Satterthwaite (1982:Figure 51c); (c) Piscine Jester God, Oval Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:143); (d) Piscine Jester God, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, from Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K760); (e) Piscine Jester God, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K2796); (f) Piscine Jester God, shell disc, Holmul, Petén, Guatemala, detail, after Hellmuth (1987b:Figure 307); (g) Skull sprouting waterlily pad and flower, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K7980); (h) Crocodile Tree in bowl, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K1607); (i) Fish with sharklike traits, Stela 1, Izapa, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Hellmuth (1987b:Figure 299); (j) Fish with sharklike traits, pottery vessel, Burial 10, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, after Hellmuth (1987b:Figure 296).

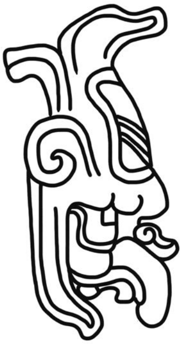
entirely appropriate that its foliation derives from a waterlily, especially since waterlilies were sometimes portrayed as trees. A crypto-zoomorphic head known as the Pax God (Taube 1988:336–338) serves as the iconic component of a logogram signifying *te'*, a common Maya word for "tree" (Stuart 2007a). It also functions iconographically to mark floral forms as trees. On a polychrome vessel designated as K555 in the photographic archives of Justin Kerr, the Pax God adorns a waterlily.[5] Standing on top of the plant, between its flowers, is a white heron or an egret. Each of the blooms flanking the bird is a bud with a pair of sepals curling away from it, but one is partly open while the other is tightly closed (Figure 2.8f).

The Avian Jester God

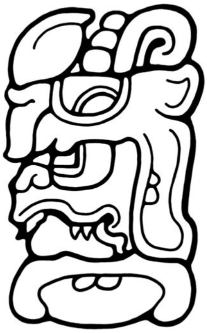
The avian Jester God typically has a big beak-snout (Figures 2.1c; 2.4a, c, h; 2.5d–e) with large, fleshy nostrils (Figures 2.1c; 2.4a–c, h; 2.5d–e) and oddly shaped teeth that are sometimes fang-like (Figures 2.4a–c, h). Its eyes and pupils are typically more or less square (Figures 2.4a–c, h; 2.5d), and there is usually a mirror on its forehead that is flush with its skin and follows the contours of its skull (Figures 2.1c; 2.4a–c, h; 2.5d).[6] The characteristic plant of the avian Jester God is a ficus, and most pre-Hispanic Maya paper was made from the inner bark of ficus trees (Coe and Kerr 1997:143; von Hagen 1999:41).[7] Presumably, that is why the avian Jester God is the iconic component of a logogram signifying *huun*, the Classic Maya word that means "paper" and is also a term for "headband" and "book" (Boot 2009:77; Kettunen and Helmke 2011:110; Macri and Looper 2003:169).

Instead of selecting a single plant to stand for every type of wild ficus native to the Maya area, the scribes depicted more than one kind. Thus, the ficus leaves they represented vary considerably, and some have lobes and veins (e.g., Figures 2.5c–d) while others are more lancelike and veinless (e.g., Figures 2.5e–f). The scribes were also inconsistent about marking the plants with numbers (e.g., Figures 2.4e–f; 2.5c, f) to characterize them as a source of paper used to bear notations (numerical or otherwise).[8] On one Late Classic polychrome vase (K501), for example, the plant rising up from the Quadripartite Badge is a ficus with a bar and two dots on its leaves signifying the number seven (Figure 2.4f).[9] An anthropomorphic scribe near the tree has a so-called Printout Motif emerging from under his arm (Coe 1978:106). It is a long banner with ficus leaves along its edge and a variable mix of numbers across its surface. The leaves distinguish it as deriving from the bark of a plant rather than the skin of an animal, and the numbers characterize it as something to be written upon (Figure 2.4e).

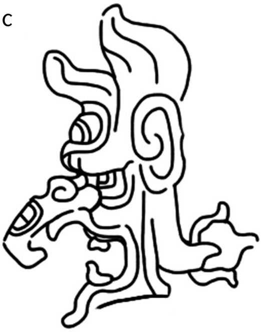
a



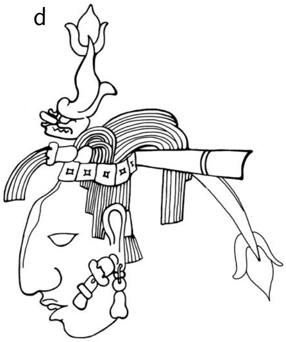
b



c



d



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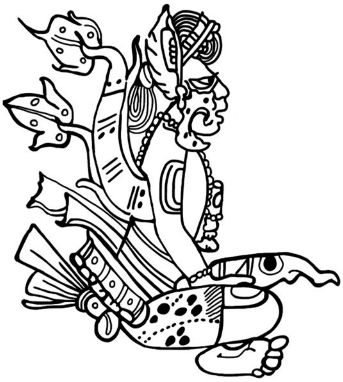

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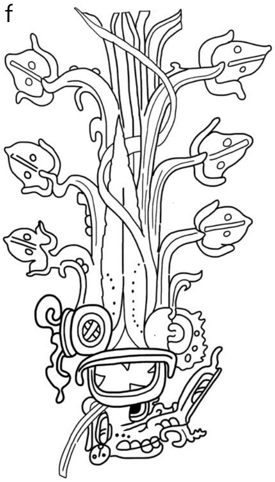

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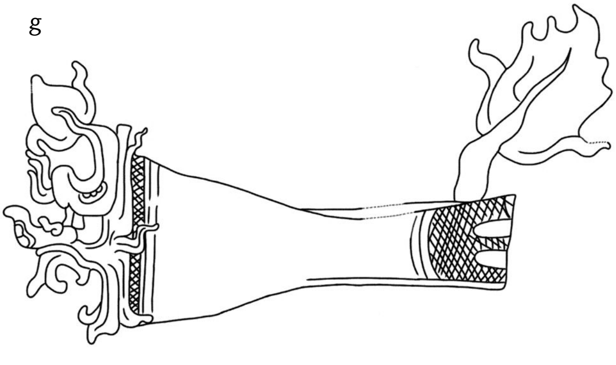

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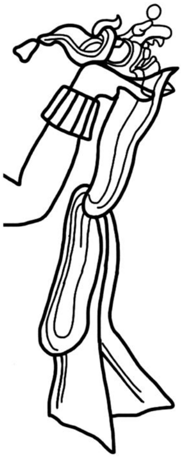

Occasionally, the appearance of a ficus leaf (Figures 2.4c; 2.4d, g [back]; 2.6b; 2.6d) is confusingly similar to the appearance of a waterlily bud (Figures 2.3c–d; 2.3g; 2.4d, g [front, top]; 2.10f). In most instances, however, context makes it clear which is which. On the platform in Temple 19 at Palenque, for example, there is a depiction of a headband with a waterlily bud on its front and a ficus leaf on its back (Figure 2.4g). The bud is part of the (almost entirely) piscine jewel on the front of the headband, and the leaf is part of the band itself to indicate it is paper, not pelt. Moreover, even though their shapes are substantially similar—they both have tendril-like elements flanking a board form with a narrow tip and central stem—they are also significantly different since only the leaf has a jagged edge and traces of veining.

In the Classic period, the avian Jester God (e.g., Figure 2.4a) and the Principal Bird Deity (e.g., Figure 2.12a) have facial features that are largely the same. That is, each is likely to have a mirrored forehead, square eyes with square pupils, and a beak-snout with fleshy nostrils and strange teeth. The Principal Bird Deity, however, typically has a carved shell ornament surmounting its head (e.g., Figures 2.12a) and/or an embellished *ak'bal* medallion adorning its brow (Figure 2.5b). Both the shell and the medallion are among its diagnostic traits. They are also hieroglyphic elements referring to its name (David Stuart, personal communication 2007), and without one or the other, the identification of an avian head as the Principal Bird Deity remains uncertain without additional corroboration.

Karl A. Taube (1998:454) identified the avian Jester God as a conflation

FIGURE 2.4 The avian Jester God and relevant motifs. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) avian Jester God, Temple of the Inscriptions Sarcophagus (lid), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:162); (b) *Huun* logogram depicting avian Jester God, after Coe and Van Stone (2001:50); (c) avian Jester God jewel, Temple 19 Platform (south face), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Stuart (2005); (d) Ficus leaf on back of headband, Oval Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:143); (e) Anthropomorphic scribe with Printout Motif, pottery vessel (K501), unprovenienced, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:3535); (f) Ficus as the World Tree in Quadripartite Badge, pottery vessel (K501), unprovenienced, detail, after Coe (1978:110); (g) Ficus leaf on back of headband, Temple 19 Platform (south face), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Stuart (2005); (h) avian Jester God jewel on headband, Panel 1, Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:6006).

of the Principal Bird Deity with a growing tree, and noted two Late PreClassic examples of this amalgam, one from Kaminaljuyu Stela 11 (Figure 2.5c) and one from a greenstone plaque at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, D.C. (Figure 2.5f). The two are quite similar. Both have inconspicuous eyes and short beak-snouts with fleshy nostrils. Each also sprouts a three-leafed plant with numerical markings on its trunk. It is debatable, however, whether the facial features of the trees are sufficiently similar to the Principal Bird Deity's to warrant identifying it as

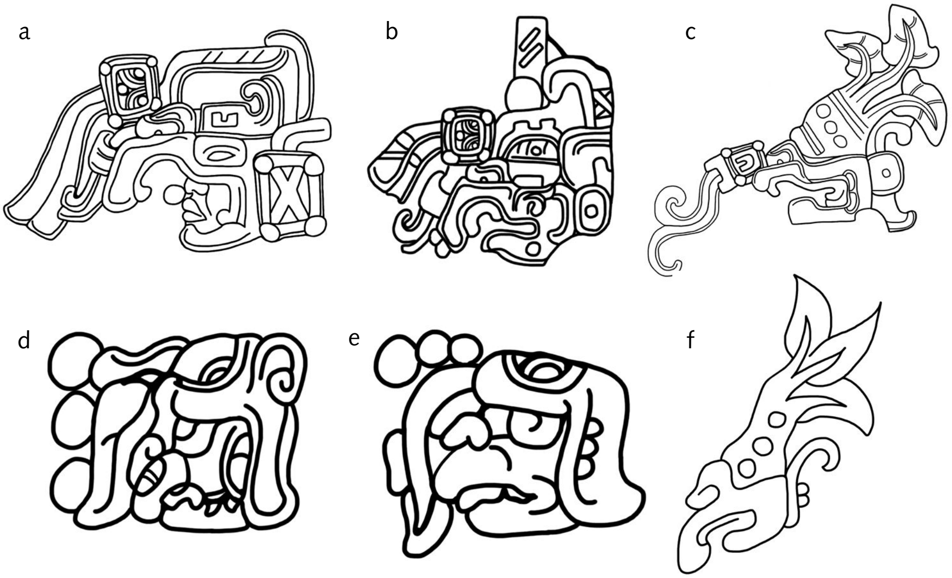

FIGURE 2.5 PreClassic precursors to the avian Jester God and differing ficus leaves. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Ruler wearing a helmetlike mask in the form of Principal Bird Deity's head, Stela 11, Kaminaljuyu, Guatemala, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:7322); (b) Head of Principal Bird Deity, Stela 11, Kaminaljuyu, Guatemala, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:7322); (c) PreClassic precursor to avian Jester God, Stela 11, Kaminaljuyu, Guatemala, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:7322); (d) Classic logogram depicting avian Jester God in *ux yop huun* ("three leaf headband") collocation, Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, after Taube (1998:Figure 16d); (e) Classic logogram depicting avian Jester God in "three leaf headband" collocation, Stela J (east side) Copán, Honduras, detail, after Taube (1998:Figure 16c); (f) PreClassic precursor to avian Jester God, greenstone plaque, unprovenienced, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:7632).

the source of their avian traits. The example from Kaminaljuyu makes this especially evident. It is proximal to two representations of the Principal Bird Deity's head, but closely resembles neither; the first is on the flying creature itself, while the other is a helmetlike mask on the head of ruler. Both the bird and the face of the mask have prominent eyes and long beak-snouts with fleshy nostrils. Each one also wears the ak'bal medallion that is an identifying attribute of the Principal Bird Deity. In contrast, the face of the bird-tree conflation has a relatively small eye and a beak-snout that is much shorter. It does not wear an ak'bal medallion, but it does have a tasseled breath marker in front of its nostril.

Iconographic Evidence of the Symbolic Equivalency of the Jester Gods

In Classic Maya iconography, the equivalency of motifs is evident when artists used symbols interchangeably in the same context, and when they combined two or more symbols into one. That is, just as patterns of substitution and/or phonetic complementation help to decipher the reading of a hieroglyphic sign, patterns of using symbols interchangeably, and of blending them together, help to decrypt the meaning of an iconographic motif.[10] Thus, the parity of the three distinct Jester Gods is apparent in that each can serve as the crown jewel Maya rulers wore on a headband (e.g., Figures 2.4h, 2.9a–b [piscine], 2.9d–e) or a headdress (e.g., Figures 2.9b–c), if not directly on top of the head (e.g., Figures 2.4d, 2.9a [anthropomorphic]). Likewise, the frequency with which the scribes mixed the three into composite forms further confirms their equivalency as symbols. The thoroughness of the mixing ranges from minimal merging to seamless blending, and the variability of the resulting integration is especially evident in the monumental art of Palenque during the Late Classic period.[11]

In the Temple of the Inscriptions, for example, a carving known as Stucco Figure 5 wears a Jester God on his headdress that has maize foliation and a naturalistic face as well as a mirrored forehead and a veined ficus leaf (Figure 2.6b). There is little blending in this composite since it simply presents the foliated and mirrored brow of the avian Jester God surmounting the head of its humanoid counterpart. A seemingly similar lack of integration is evident on the anthropomorphic Jester God adorning Lady Yohl Ik'nal (Martin and Grube 2008:159–160) on the western side of Pakal's sarcophagus. The mirror on the maize leaf rising upward from its stylized face (Figure 2.6c) could derive from the avian Jester God. Alternatively, it could be innate to the leaf itself since the scribes frequently depicted mirrors on maize leaves to suggest the vital sheen of a lush plant, as opposed to the dullness of a dry one.

In comparison to its counterpart on Stucco Figure 5, the Jester God on Stucco Figure 8 shows a somewhat smoother blend of characteristics (Figure 2.6d). Its purely zoomorphic face is a melding of the beak-snout and mirrored forehead of the avian variant with the chin fins and spiral pupils of its piscine equivalent. The foliation on the back of its head, in turn, is a sprig of maize tipped with a veiny ficus leaf comparable to the one on its forehead. On the platform in Temple 19, the zoomorphic jewel on the headband being presented to Pakal's grandson, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb III (Martin and Grube 2008:172–173), has a commingling of traits that is far more subtle (Figure 2.6a).[12] Aside from its avian eyes and teeth, this Jester God is almost entirely piscine. More specifically, it has an upturned snout, a face fin on its brow, and a volute-shaped forehead tipped with a waterlily bud. It also has a small fin on the side of its cheek and a pair of maize leaves extending up and down the back of its head.

On the Tablet of the Foliated Cross, Pakal's older son, K'inich K'an Balam II, holds a Jester God (Figure 2.6e) as he stands beside a cruciform maize tree sprouting anthropomorphized corncobs. The Jester God K'an Balam holds is one of several at Palenque that has a body as well as a head. From the neck down, the figurine is humanoid and has mirror "god-markings" on its limbs and back to indicate that it is a supernatural being with resplendent skin (Coe 1973:13; Houston et al. 2006:16–17; Schele and Miller 1986:43). In keeping with the humanness of its body, it has a bead dangling from its earlobe and strings of beads encircling its neck and waist. Yet, from the chin up, despite having a mirrored forehead and an upswept crest of maize leaves, it is neither avian nor anthropomorphic. Instead it is primarily piscine and has spiral pupils, fins on its cheeks, and a straight snout with triangular teeth.

A limestone panel now at Dumbarton Oaks depicts Pakal holding a Jester God on his lap as his younger son, K'inich K'an Joy Chitam II, dances.[13] Like its counterpart on the Tablet of the Foliated Cross, the Jester God on the Dumbarton Oaks panel (Figure 2.6f) has a humanoid body with resplendent skin and bead jewelry. From the chin above, however, the figurine is a seamless mélange of avian, anthropomorphic, and piscine traits. The square pupils in its square eyes, the mirror on its forehead, and the misshapen teeth in its mouth are all traits of the birdlike variant. Yet, it also has a bejeweled ear that is anthropomorphic, and an upturned snout that is piscine, as are the face fins between its eyes and beside its mouth. The sprig of maize above its ear is still intact, but the floral forms on top of its head are not and could represent a ficus leaf or a waterlily bud.

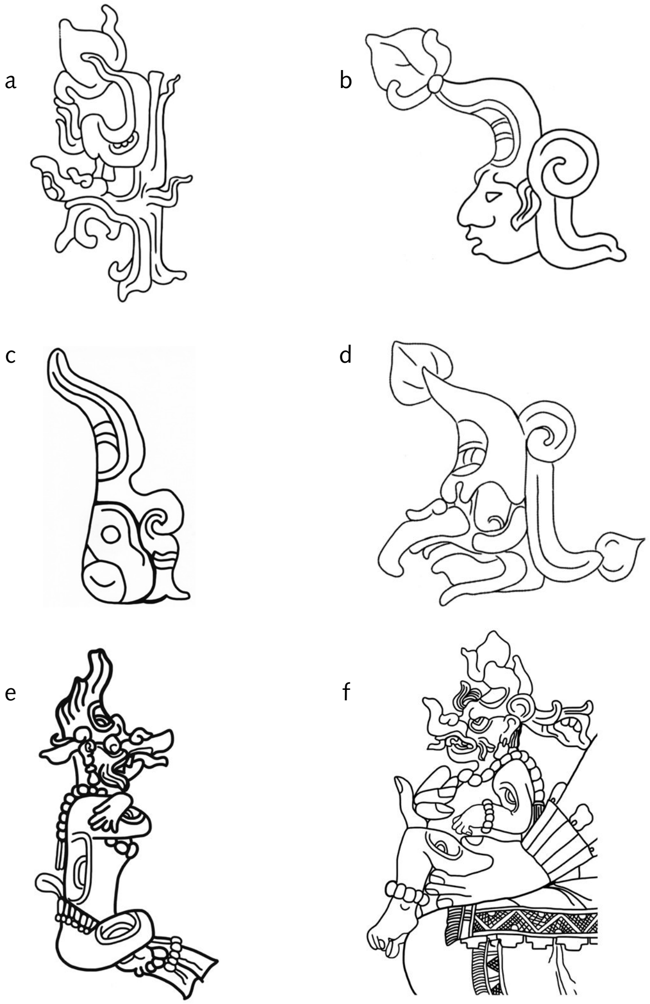

FIGURE 2.6 The blending of Jester God variants into composite forms. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Composite Jester God, Temple 19 Platform (south face), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Stuart (2005); (b) Composite Jester God, Temple of the Inscriptions Stucco Figure 5, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Robertson (1983:Figure 282); (c) Composite Jester God, Temple of the Inscriptions Sarcophagus (western side), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Robertson (1983:Figure 199); (d) Composite Jester God, Temple of the Inscriptions Stucco Figure 8, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Robertson (1983:Figure 323); (e) Composite Jester God, Temple of the Foliated Cross Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:3538); (f) Composite Jester God, limestone panel, unprovenienced, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., detail, after Schele and Miller (1986:Figure VII.3).

The Three Realms, the World Tree, and the Jade Hearth

In traditional Maya cosmology, the world has three domains: the terrestrial realm where humans live, the celestial realm above, and the aquatic realm below (Sosa 1986:188). The axis mundi is a connecting corridor that passes through the center of each realm and thereby allows passage from one domain to another. It also serves as the central point from which the world directions, including the zenith and the nadir, radiate (Schele and Freidel 1990:66–70). The so-called Cosmic Plate (K1609, Figure 2.7a) is one of several Codex-style vessels bearing imagery on more than one surface. Its interior bears a representation of the three realms, with the arc of the Starry Deer Crocodile enclosing the heavens above, and the crescent of the Maw of the Underworld bounding the waters below.[14] In the middle, where a bird flies and a jaguar roars, the World Tree grows upward and outward from the head of a rain deity.

On the vessel's exterior, there is a water band containing a pair of alternating motifs, one resembling a waterlily pad, and the other, a shell (Figure 2.7b). Given that there are four evenly spaced examples of each design, it is tempting to see them as denoting the cardinal and intercardinal points, especially in light of the overtly cosmological imagery on the vessel's interior. If this view is correct, then the Cosmic Plate is an exceptionally thorough portrayal of Maya cosmology that conveys both the verticality of the three realms and the horizontality of the eight directions. It should be noted, however, that the ancient Maya were less interested in absolute and highly abstract demarcations of space than in how the world directions seem to coincide with key moments in the sun's daily or annual movement. In other words, east (*elk'in*) and west (*ochk'in*) were of paramount interest, not because each one is 90 degrees from north (*xaman*) and south (*nohol*), but because the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.[15] Similarly, the appeal of the points in between the primary directions is not their intermediacy, but their correspondence to the rising (northeast, southeast) and setting (northwest, southwest) of the sun in the moment of its maximum declination at the summer and winter solstices (Villa Rojas 1988:127–134).

For many scholars, the most familiar symbol of the axis mundi in Classic Maya art is the World Tree rising up from the Quadripartite Badge (Figure 2.8a) but, as Taube (1998:454–462) has demonstrated, the Jade Hearth with its three hearthstones symbolizes the cosmic core as well (Figure 2.8d). Indeed, in at least one instance (e.g., Figure 2.12d), the symbolism of the World Tree and the Jade Hearth were blended together to create an

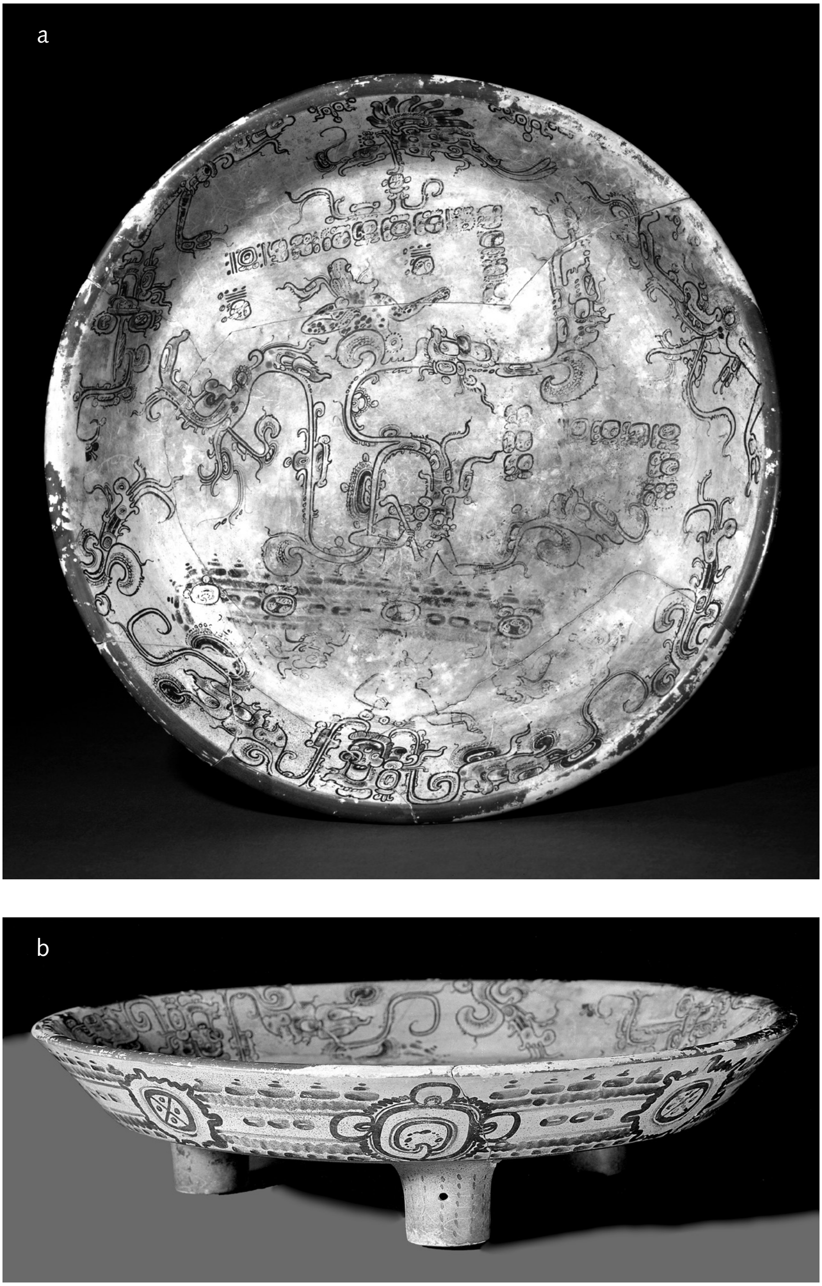

FIGURE 2.7 The Cosmic Plate, ceramic vessel, ca. 31 cm (ca. 12 in) diameter, unprovenienced, (a) interior; (b) exterior. Photographs © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K1609).

iconographic motif that conveys the omnidirectional nature of the axis mundi more thoroughly than either motif does independently. Individually, the Jade Hearth with its trio of hearthstones strongly emphasizes the centrality and horizontality of the core but gives little indication of its verticality, whereas the World Tree—in its typically cruciform shape—strongly emphasizes the verticality and horizontality of the axis, but does not emphasize its centrality as much as the Jade Hearth does. Moreover, neither a trio of stones nor a cruciform tree readily conveys the existence of distinct cosmological realms or the controlling influence (i.e., sovereignty) inherent in the axis mundi without receiving additional visual elaboration or alteration. On a potsherd from Buenavista del Cayo (Figure 2.8b), for example, the depiction of an enthroned World Tree emphasizes the dominion of the cosmic core, whereas the depiction of the World Tree as a maize plant (Figure 2.8c) on the Tablet of the Foliated Cross at Palenque celebrates its connection to the terrestrial domain. Similarly, the inscription on Quiriguá Stela C describes the setting of the hearthstones (Freidel et al. 1993:65–67; Looper 1995, 2003:158–160) and names each one in a manner identifying it with sovereignty and implicitly linking it to a given realm; thus, "Jaguar Throne Stone" implies power in the terrestrial sphere, "Snake Throne Stone" implies preeminence in the celestial plane, and "Water Throne Stone" implies rule in the aquatic domain (Figure 2.8e, left to right).[16]

FIGURE 2.8 The World Tree, the Jade Hearth, and relevant motifs. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Ceiba World Tree in Quadripartite Badge, Temple of the Inscriptions Sarcophagus (lid), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:512); (b) World Tree on a throne, potsherd, Buenavista del Cayo, Belize, detail, after Houston, Stuart, and Taube (1992:Figure 12); (c) Maize World Tree, Temple of the Foliated Cross Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:510); (d) Jade Hearth with three hearthstones, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Taube (1998:Figure 9b); (e) The names of the three hearthstones, Stela C (east side), Quiriguá, Izabal, Guatemala, detail, after Looper (2003:Figure 5.1); (f) Water bird standing on waterlily tree, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K555); (g) Ear of maize as World Tree in Quadripartite Badge, Temple of the Cross Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Robertson (1991:Figure 9); (h) Ficus World Tree in Quadripartite Badge, pottery vessel after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K501), unprovenienced, detail, after Coe (1978:110).

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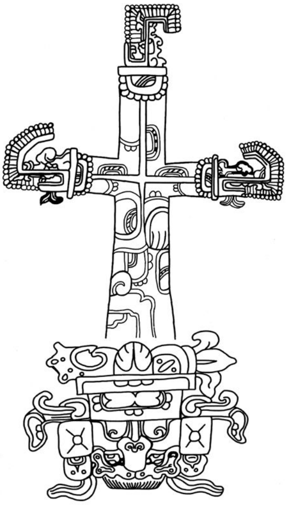

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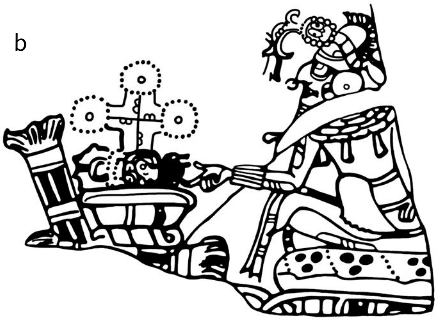

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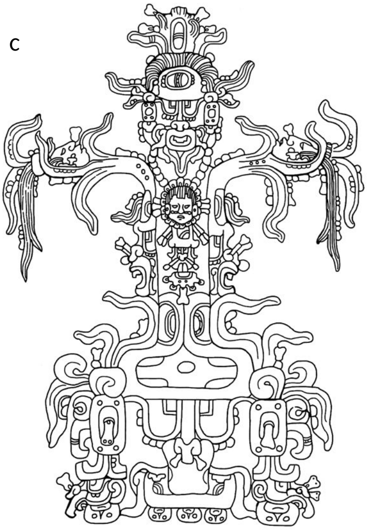

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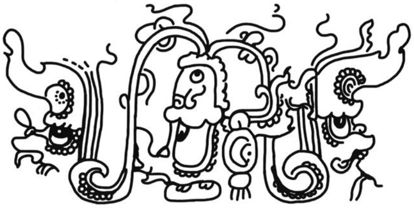

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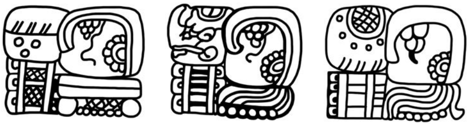

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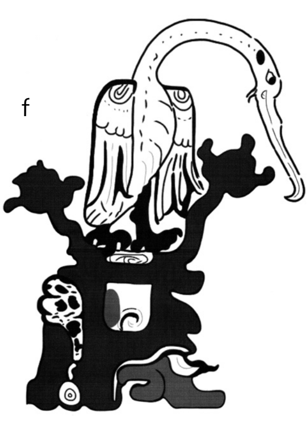

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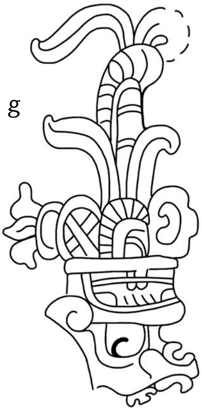

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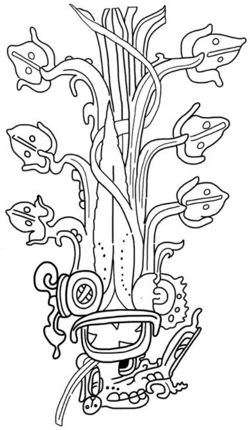

Horizontality, Verticality, and the Cosmological Significance of Jester God Triads

In its purest form, each of the three distinct Jester Gods derives from a plant and an animal that are indicative of a specific domain. That is, the waterlily and the fish are of the water, the maize and the anthropomorph are of the earth, and the bird and ficus are of the sky. Maya lords often wore more than one Jester God at once. If they wore three Jester Gods of the same variant, they wore the matching jewels arranged horizontally across the front of a headband (Figures 2.9d–e) or headdress (Figure 2.9c [piscine]), with the flanking jewels placed equidistant from the central one. Taube has convincingly interpreted such horizontal arrangements as a reference to the three hearthstones of the Jade Hearth (1998:456). However, when Maya rulers wore more than one variant of the jewel simultaneously, they customarily wore the differing Jester Gods one above the other in a vertical configuration (Figures 2.9a–c), rather than side by side. Moreover, the organization of the different jewels adhered to a rigid order, ascending from piscine to anthropomorphic to avian. This sequencing applied equally to two variants or three; thus, the piscine variant, if present, occupied the lowest position (Figures 2.9a–c), and the avian variant, if present, occupied the highest (Figures 2.9b–c).[17] Accordingly, it is my inference that each variant of the Jester God denotes a specific cosmological realm, and that the ascending order of the vertically arranged Jester Gods (piscine, anthropomorphic, avian) follows the ascending order of the corresponding realms (aquatic, terrestrial, celestial), just as the horizontal arrangement of identical Jester Gods reflects their correspondence to a single domain.

More specifically, I regard each of the three distinct variants of the Jester God as a miniature World Tree that denotes the axis mundi in a particular domain. Depictions of an ear of maize (Figure 2.8g) or a ficus (Figure 2.8h) in the Quadripartite Badge confirm that either plant could embody the World Tree. The waterlily plant was not depicted in a comparable manner. Nonetheless, given the iconographic equivalency of the three Jester Gods, the plant of the piscine variant was surely eligible to embody the World Tree as well. Otherwise, the three variants would not be fully coequal, as they evidently are.

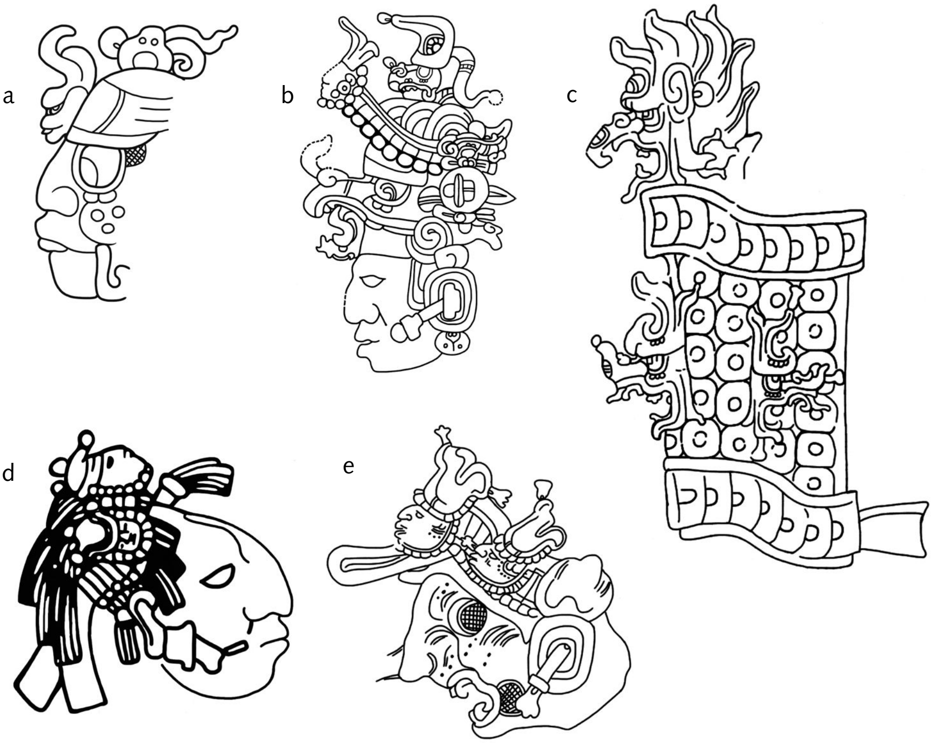

FIGURE 2.9 Differing Jester Gods arranged vertically, matching Jester Gods arranged horizontally. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Piscine and anthropomorphic Jester Gods arranged vertically, Lintel 48, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 3:105); (b) Piscine, anthropomorphic, and avian Jester Gods arranged vertically, Lintel 4, Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:6007); (c) Piscine and avian Jester Gods arranged vertically, matching piscine Jester Gods arranged horizontally, Temple 19 Platform (south face), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Stuart (2005); (d) Three anthropomorphic Jester Gods arranged horizontally, Oval Palace Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Taube (1998:Figure 16f); (e) Three anthropomorphic Jester Gods arranged horizontally, Temple 21 Platform, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after photograph courtesy of the Maya Portrait Project.

The Principal Bird Deity, the Avian Jester God, and the World Tree

The Tomb of the Sun God at Altun Ha' contained a 4.42-kilogram (9.74-pound) greenstone carving (Pendergast 1969:11–14) in the form of an avian head (Figure 2.10f). Taube (1998:458) noted that it was readily recognizable as the head of the Principal Bird Deity topped by a World Tree, and credited Stephen Houston as the first to identify it as a Jester God. The Altun Ha' carving, however, is not a Jester God. Instead, it exemplifies a motif I call the Principal Bird Deity Trophy. As such, it depicts the head of the divine raptor wearing an anthropomorphic Jester God and commemorates its subjugation, most likely by Jun Ajaw.

In an earlier study, Taube (1993:64–66) drew parallels between a pre-Hispanic depiction of Jun Ajaw using a blowgun against the Principal Bird Deity and the description of Hunahpu shooting Seven Macaw in the sixteenth-century manuscript known as the Popol Vuh.[18] As he was careful to note, the two events are not identical but are fundamentally similar nonetheless. There is, accordingly, a strong probability that the shooting of the raptor, like the use of a blowgun against the parrot, was a punishment for the bird's self-aggrandizement. More specifically, Seven Macaw was punished for claiming to be the light of the world, which entailed the assumption of a throne (Christenson 2003:91–100). In all likelihood, the Principal Bird Deity committed a similar offense against the Classic Maya Sun God (Taube 1992a:50–56) when it wore the anthropomorphic Jester God that was both a reference to his name—K'inich Ajaw (Great Sun Lord) (Kettunen and Helmke 2011:115)—and an emblem of his sovereignty.

Aside from the Altun Ha' carving (Figure 2.10f), the Principal Bird Deity Trophy occurs exclusively as a piece of royal headgear. An incised bone in the Dallas Museum of Art, for example, portrays a young divinity seated on a canopied throne (Stuart 2007b). He is waiting to receive a headdress in the form of the avian trophy from the hands of an ancient god. As he waits, the Principal Bird Deity itself stands on the canopy above his throne. A comparison between the faces of the feathery crown and the living raptor verifies their correspondence and confirms a correlation between the crests of the headdress and the serpent wings of the fowl. Yet, it also reveals a key distinction, namely that the trophy bears an anthropomorphic Jester God evincing the bird's misappropriation of the Sun God's jewel, whereas the creature itself is wearing the shell ornament and ak'bal medallion that refer to its name.[19]

Lintel 4 in Structure 6 at Bonampak (Figure 2.10b) bears an image of a lord wearing an avian Jester God on top of a headdress in the form of the

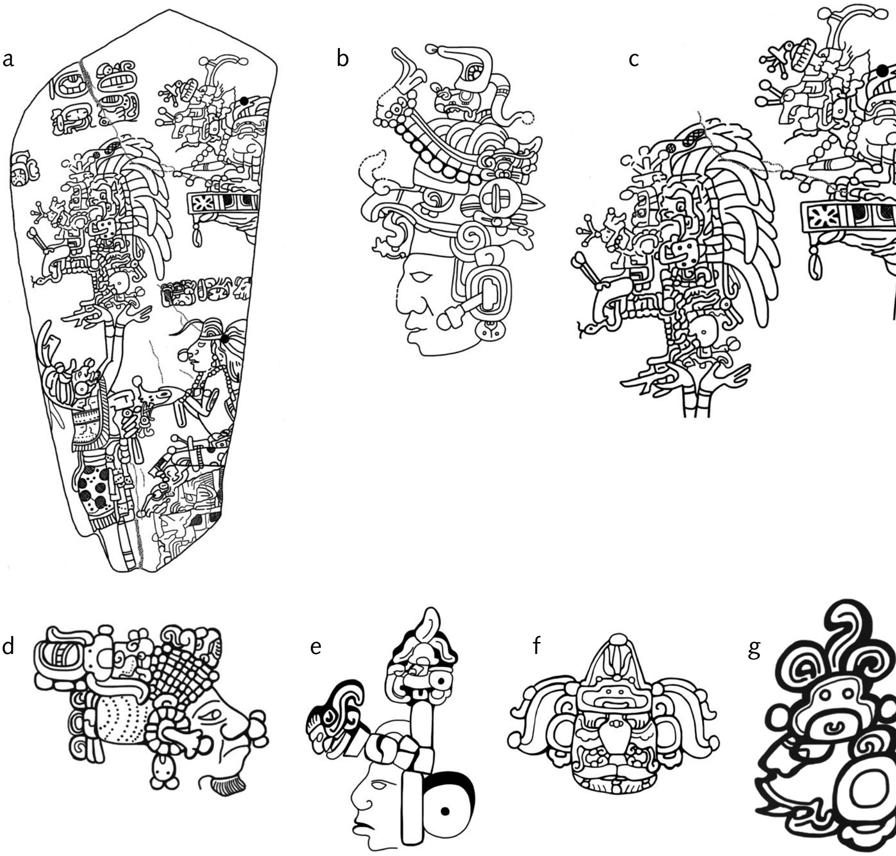

FIGURE 2.10 The Principal Bird Deity Trophy and relevant motifs. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Piscine and avian Jester Gods added to Principal Bird Deity Trophy headdress, incised bone, unprovenienced, Dallas Museum of Art, after photograph; (b) Piscine and avian Jester Gods worn in conjunction with Principal Bird Deity Trophy headdress, Lintel 4, Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:6007); (c) Principal Deity Trophy headdress and Principal Bird Deity, incised bone, unprovenienced, Dallas Museum of Art, detail, after photograph; (d) Principal Bird Deity Trophy jewel worn on headdress above piscine Jester God, limestone panel, unprovenienced, detail, after Safronov (Wayeb Drawing Archive); (e) Principal Bird Deity Trophy jewel worn on top of head above piscine Jester God, shell pectoral, Templo del Buho, Dzibanché, Quintana Roo, Mexico, detail, after Fields and Reents-Budet (2005:168); (f) Principal Bird Deity Trophy boulder, greenstone carving, Tomb B-4/7, Altun Ha', Belize, after Taube (1998:Figure 17b); (g) K'inich Ajaw, the Sun God, wearing anthropomorphic Jester God (stylized face), pottery vessel, unprovenienced, Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin, Germany, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K6547).

Principal Bird Deity Trophy. He also sports a piscine Jester God attached to the front of the headband he has on under his headdress. Thus, he wears the three distinct forms of the sovereign emblem simultaneously and in a vertical arrangement (piscine, anthropomorphic, avian) that coincides with the vertical alignment of the three corresponding world realms (aquatic, terrestrial, celestial). The youthful deity on the bone in Dallas does not have a royal emblem on his headband (Figure 2.10a). There is, however, a piscine Jester God on the lower part of the avian trophy headdress he will receive. It has a long snout and is visible just above the hand of the old god who is performing the coronation (Figure 2.10c). Therefore, once the young divinity dons his crown he, too, will be wearing each of the three Jester Gods, vertically aligned and in the same sequence.

A shell pectoral from El Templo del Buho at Dzibanché (Fields and Reents-Budet 2005:168) portrays a lord with a Principal Bird Deity Trophy jewel strapped to the top of his head and a piscine Jester jewel attached to the front of his headband (Figure 2.10e). On the so-called Po Panel, an unprovenienced stone sculpture, the same pair of emblems in the same relative positions adorn the beaded headdress of an ajaw (Figure 2.10d). The avian Jester God that surmounts the trophy on the lintel and the bone is absent from the pectoral and the panel because neither it nor its piscine equivalent is integral to the memento. Instead, both zoomorphic jewels are supplemental elements that enrich it iconographically, and when paired with their anthropomorphic counterpart, they symbolize the cosmic coherence the axis mundi provides. In other words, they expand the purpose of the Principal Bird Deity Trophy from commemorating defeat and valorizing its wearer to expressing the universal import of the victory as well.

Among the Maya, the World Tree is traditionally identified as a ceiba (Girard 1995:33–34; Thompson 1990:195).[20] The Classic Maya frequently portrayed it as one, but they did not render the plant naturalistically. Instead, they typically placed it in the bowl of the Quadripartite Badge and gave it a cross-like shape (e.g., Figures 2.8a–b). They also tipped the end of each branch with a stylized blossom that was often embellished with a "square-nosed serpent" representing its pistil (Schele 1992:222, 226). The distinctiveness of the serpentine flower made it an excellent *pars pro toto* substitute for the sacred plant. On a panel in Temple 14 at Palenque, for example, a flower with a square-nosed serpent emerging from it stands in for the cruciform World Tree as the central element amid the components of the Quadripartite Badge (Figure 2.11c).

A similar substitution occurs on Lintel 14 at Yaxchilan. However, the pistil of the flower replacing the tree among the components of the badge is different. Instead of being a square-nosed serpent, it is a carved shell ornament (Figure 2.11b). At Yaxchilan, both the serpentine head and the shell ornament appear as the central element in floral earflares (Figures 2.11d–e) and, in one instance, they are blended into a composite form in which the serpent's snout curves into the shape of the shell (Figure 2.11f). The interchangeable use of these motifs and the blending of their forms confirms that they are iconographically equivalent as pars pro toto symbols of the ceiba as a World Tree. Their coequality, however, is not complete. Unlike the square-nosed serpent, the carved shell ornament can function as a hieroglyphic element signifying *yax*, the word that designates the blue-green color assigned to the central direction in pre-Hispanic Maya iconography

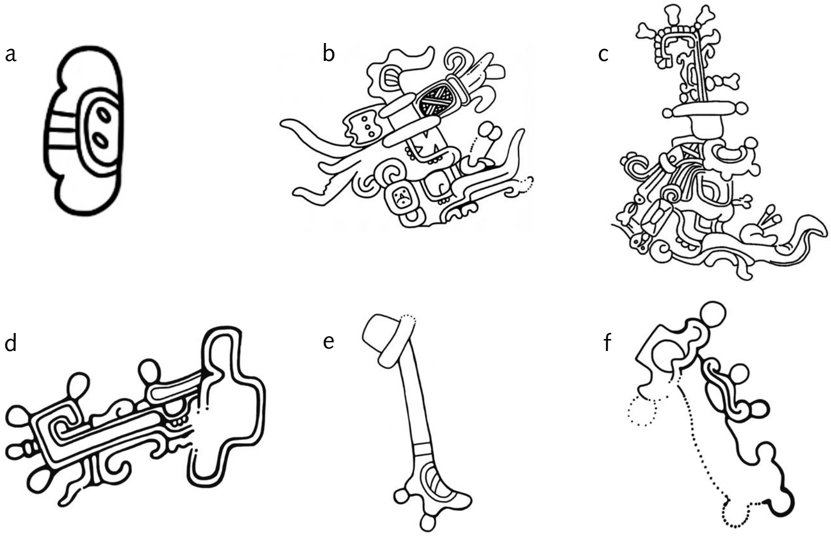

FIGURE 2.11 The carved shell ornament, serpents with square snouts, and the *yax* logogram. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) *Yax* logogram, Stela A (north side), Copán, Honduras, detail, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:1002); (b) Carved shell ornament in Quadripartite Badge, Lintel 14, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 3:37); (c) Square-nosed serpent in Quadripartite Badge, Temple 14 Tablet, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Schele and Miller (1986:Figure VII.2); (d) Square-nosed serpent in floral ear flare, Lintel 24, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 3:53); (e) Carved shell ornament in floral ear flare, Lintel 42, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 3:93); (f) Composite of square-nosed serpent and carved shell ornament in floral ear flare, Lintel 24, Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico, detail, after Ian Graham (CMHI vol. 3:53).

(Schele and Freidel 1990:66). It is possible for the ornament to serve as reference to the word because it portrays a different version of the same thing the *yax* logogram portrays. That is, they both depict the valve of a spondylus shell, but one represents it carved (e.g., Figures 2.11b, e) and the other shows it whole (Figure 2.11a). The Classic Maya word for *ceiba* is *yax-te'* (Boot 2009:209; Kaufman 2003:1114; Kettunen and Helmke 2011:126), and the appeal of using the ornament to symbolize the plant surely derives, at least in part, from its ability to signify the first half of the tree's name.[21]

In addition to the ak'bal medallion that is an iconic component of the logograms read as Itzamnaaj (Stuart 2007c), God D and the Principal Bird Deity commonly wear the same carved shell ornament (Figures 2.12a, c) as a hieroglyphic reference to Yax Itzamnaaj, the name they share as different manifestations of the same being (David Stuart, personal communication 2007; see also Stuart 2007a). It is evident that the carved shell they wear acts as an iconographic reference to the tree as well. A Late Classic polychrome vessel of unknown archaeological origin depicts a partially avian God D wearing a green-and-white knobby tree (Taube 1998:454–456) with four curved branches on top of his head (Figure 2.12b) in lieu of the carved shell ornament he typically wears (Figure 2.12c). For such a substitution to be permissible, there must be some semantic or symbolic overlap between the two motifs and, since only the shell can function hieroglyphically, their equivalency must be as symbols of the World Tree.

The walls of Tomb 19 at Rio Azul bear a trio of World Trees that corresponds in number and alignment to the three hearthstones of the Jade Hearth (Taube 1998:456).[22] Each of the floral forms arises from the top of an avian head with the facial features of the Principal Bird Deity (Figure 2.12d). The head in the middle wears an anthropomorphic Jester God that confirms it is, indeed, the head of the divine raptor from which the cosmic plants grow. Otherwise, the trees are alike and very similar to the miniature ceiba God D wears on the polychrome vessel (2.12b); that is, each one has a quartet of branches that curve down and end in a globular tip. The trunk of every plant also originally had a set of linear reflection marks (Grube and Schele 1991:2) and a te' marking (Schele and Miller 1983:16) to delineate it as a lustrous tree, but few of these details remain on the ceiba in the middle.[23]

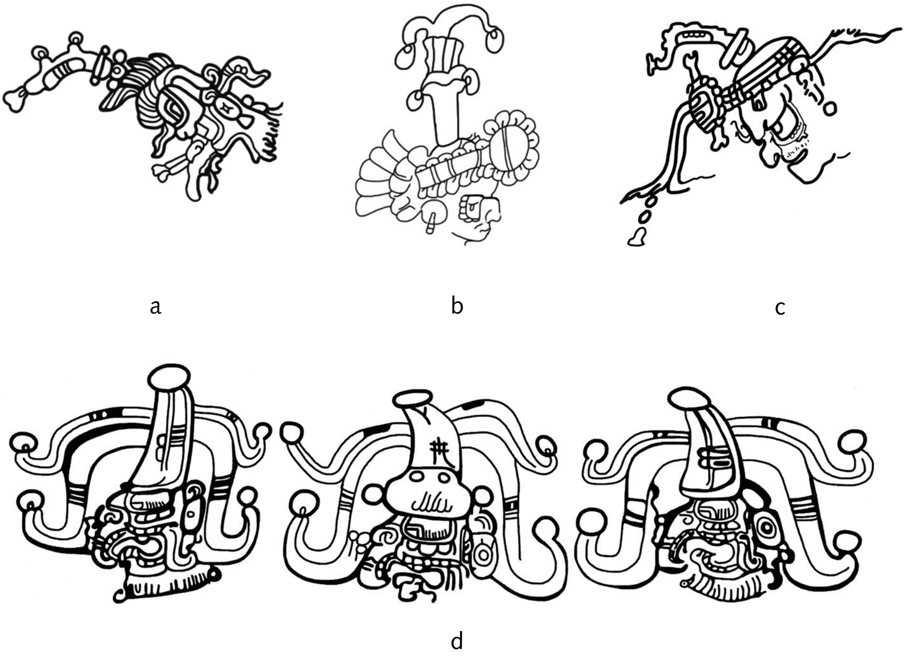

FIGURE 2.12 The Principal Bird Deity and God D. All drawings by Penny Steinbach. (a) Head of Principal Bird Deity, Temple of the Inscriptions Sarcophagus (lid), Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, after Schele (Schele Drawing Collection:509); (b) Head of God D, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K3413); (c) Head of God D, pottery vessel, unprovenienced, detail, after Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K1991); (d) World Trees sprouting from Principal Bird Deity heads, note anthropomorphic Jester God on middle head, Tomb 19, Rio Azul, Petén, Guatemala, detail, after Taube (1998:Figure 16j).

Conclusions

The symbolism of the Jester God exemplifies the complex interconnectedness of word and image that is integral to Classic Maya iconography. There are three variants of the Jester God that are categorically distinct, and each one is a synthesis of plant and animal that is diagnostic of a particular cosmic plane. If more than one Jester God jewel is worn, those that match are aligned horizontally to indicate they are of the same domain, while those that differ are aligned vertically to replicate the layering of the corresponding world realms. The Principal Bird Deity Trophy is not a Jester God, but a separate piece of regalia that commemorates the bird's subjugation and celebrates the wearer as the one who vanquished it. An anthropomorphic Jester God is integral to it, but only as evidence of the bird's impropriety. The World Tree that grows from the severed head of the divine raptor is the ceiba, the yax-te'. Each of the Jester Gods is a manifestation of the World Tree as well but, unlike the yax-te', they manifest it in a manner that is localized to each domain.

Given the risk of confusion that such intricacy entails, it is fair to question why the Classic Maya utilized multiple symbols to represent the same thing as often as they did, especially since a similar multiplicity of signs is evident in their epigraphy as well. There are, for example, no fewer than twelve hieroglyphs signifying the vowel *u*, and this abundance of syllabograms is attributable to both the long development of the script and to a desire to avoid the tedium of repeating the same few signs again and again (Houston 1989:42). In contrast, the plurality of iconographic motifs symbolizing the same concept is more than a matter of passively accruing different symbols diachronically or of simply seeking aesthetic variety. It is also a means of adding emphasis or a nuance of meaning. The Jester God, the Jade Hearth, and the yax-te', for example, all symbolize the axis mundi. Each one, however, has a different emphasis. The royal jewel, with its three variants, highlights the relevancy of the cosmic core to every realm, while the stony hearth foregrounds its centrality, and the growing ceiba plays up its unifying nature. Maya rulers wore the Jester God to denote their equivalency with the axis mundi (Taube 1998:454), and as something that orients and unifies the world it is an apt model of sovereignty.

Acknowledgments

Maline Werness-Rude and Kaylee Spencer are exceptional editors, and my conversations with Maline were especially beneficial. Justin Kerr's photography is essential to my research and I cannot thank him enough for his generosity. Karl A. Taube's scholarship inspires me, and I am grateful for his encouragement. David Stuart has graciously spent hours discussing the complexities of Maya writing with me, and Julia Guernsey has been an excellent source of guidance. Mary Heckler and Mark Hull very kindly read earlier versions of this paper and suggested improvements. Any errors of interpretation or of fact are my own.

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Notes

1. As Virginia Fields (1991) and Kent Reilly (1991) have demonstrated, the Jester God is a Classic Maya distillation of motifs and concepts that originated during the PreClassic era and are readily apparent in the art of the Olmec. Most of the Jester God jewels found in situ, such as those from Burial 49 at Topoxté (Teufel 2000:155) and in Pakal's Sarcophagus at Palenque (Figure 2.3a) (Schele and Mathews 1998:125–127), are made of greenstone, although Structure 8M-4 at Aquateca contained one made of white stone (Inomata 2007:134–135).

2. Hellmuth did describe the piscine Jester God as "piscine," but he also insisted it was a "forehead slug" rather than a "long-snouted" or "humanoid" Jester God (1987a:128).

3. To make anatomical or structural details easier to discern, beads (e.g., Figures 2.2f, 2.6c) and breath markers (e.g., Figure 2.6c–d), are frequently omitted from my drawings. Other images have been rotated (e.g., Figure 2.5b) to facilitate comparisons. In the case of Pakal's Jester God (Figure 2.3a), Schele drew the seven holes drilled into it for attachment, but I did not include them when I redrew her drawing.

4. The Tzeltal Mayan word for *fin* literally means "wing" (Hunn 1977:108–109) and the frequent resemblance between fins (e.g., K4562) and wings (e.g., K2704) hints at a similarly analogous way of thinking among the scribes. Although initially odd, terms such as "face fin" and "beak-snout" tend to be the most efficient way to describe the bizarre anatomical details of the zoomorphic entities appearing in Classic Maya art. "Serpent wing" (Bardawil 1976:196–198) is a long-established and widely-used example of such terminology. Hellmuth (1987a:100) also made frequent use of such descriptors (e.g., "cheek fin," "mouth curl").

5. Kerr assigns a unique number to each object he photographs for his database, which is accessible through his website (www.mayavase.com).

6. The mirror motif initially drew attention as a marking on the forehead of an entity called K'awiil (God K) (Taube 1992a:69–79). In a personal communication to Linda Schele in 1973 (cited in Schele and Miller 1983:9), Michael Coe identified God K's forehead as a mirror, based on his belief that the deity with one leg is the Maya prototype of an Aztec god named Smoking Mirror (Tezcatlipoca). Relying on visual evidence, Jeffrey Miller identified the motif as a mirror

in 1974 (cited in Schele 1976:26, footnote 4; see also Schele and Miller 1983:1), but died shortly thereafter. Consequently, the visual basis for his identification is not in the monograph Schele published to honor their collaboration. Since then, the efforts of archaeologists and the examination of images on pottery have revealed how the pre-Hispanic Maya created, used, and depicted mirrors. For an excellent analysis of the iconography relevant to Classic Maya mirrors, see Taube 1992b.

7. While *huun* refers primarily to the thick, cloth-like paper made from the fibrous inner bark of a ficus, there was at least one other kind of paper called *saya huun* that was probably woven from blades of sedge or made from the cortex of a wild mulberry tree that is a relative of the ficus (Houston 2012).

8. The greater variability of ficus morphology and the relative infrequency of the plant's portrayal helps to explain why its rendering is less consistently conventionalized than that of maize plants or waterlilies. However, as it became commonplace to depict a ficus leaf on the end of a headband to indicate it was made of bark paper, the look of the leaf acquired a consistency the appearance of the plant never attained.

9. The Quadripartite Badge is an iconographic motif consisting of a tasseled object, a stingray spine, and half of a bivalve shell inside a bowl marked with various motifs (Robertson 1974:77; Schele and Miller 1986:45).

10. The monograph (Houston and Stuart 1989) detailing the decipherment of the *way* (co-essence) logogram includes examples of both phonetic complementation and hieroglyphic substitution, and is very instructive for novice epigraphers. For summaries of the prevailing methods of decipherment, see *The Decipherment of Ancient Maya Writing* (Houston et al. 2001:7–10, 189, 195).

11. For comprehensive illustrations of the monumental art of Palenque, see *The Sculpture of Palenque* (Robertson 1983–1991), and for the site's dynastic history, see *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (Martin and Grube 2008:155–175).

12. Stuart (2005:59–147) provides comprehensive illustrations of the platform and a highly accessible analysis of its inscriptions and historical context.

13. Schele and Miller (1986:Figure VII.3) illustrate the panel in its entirety.

14. The crocodile is an aspect of the Celestial Monster (Stuart 2005:70–73), whereas the maw marks the entrance to the watery underworld (Taube 2003:413–416).

15. In Tomb 12, an Early Classic burial chamber at Rio Azul, each of the four walls bears a hieroglyphic collocation naming the direction it faces (Stuart 1987:161). Thus, the collocation on the east-facing wall reads *elk'in*; the collocation on the west-facing wall reads *ochk'in*, and so on. Elk'in (east) and ochk'in (west) literally mean "sun goes out" (*el*, "to go out"; *k'in*, "sun" [Kaufman 2003:461, 1314]) and "sun enters" (*och*, "to enter"; *k'in*, "sun" [Kaufman 2003:461, 1318]) and allude to the notion that the sun passes nightly through the earth. In contrast, the names for north and south occur infrequently and are

not overtly solar, although *nohol* might implicitly link the south to the sun's right side since *nohk'ab* is a Classic collocation for "right hand" (Stuart 2002).

16. The symbolic link between the serpentine and the celestial arises, at least in part, from the near homophony of the words for snake and sky (Houston and Martin 2011). Ophidian traits are common among sky-related motifs, such as the two-headed serpent symbolizing the ecliptic (Freidel et al. 1993:100), and the serpent wing that distinguishes a "celestial bird" from a water fowl (Taube 1989:2). Looper (2003:158–171) illustrates Stela C extensively.

17. A pair of matching shell discs from Holmul depicts a lord with a trio of Jester Gods arranged anomalously *across the top* of his head, from front to back. The middle jewel is anthropomorphic, whereas the other two are piscine. Differentiating the middle element of a horizontal triad emphasizes its centrality. Currently, I know of only one other anomaly in the arrangement of differing Jester Gods: on Pier D of House C at Palenque, a piscine jewel appears *above* its avian counterpart, and I cannot account for its irregularity.

18. The Popol Vuh is a mix of myth and history written in the language of the K'iche Maya. Hunahpu's name is a cognate of Jun Ajaw's.

19. Elements of the imagery on Tikal Stela 31 are similar to the iconography on the bone since the headdress Stormy Sky holds commemorates the same event. However, to guarantee a clear identity, the bird wears the elaborated medallion that refers to its name rather than the anthropomorphic jewel that denotes its offense. Thus, the headdress at Tikal does not qualify as an example of the avian trophy. It also bears the name of Stormy Sky's grandfather, Spearthrower Owl, to mark it as having been his, which implicitly identifies him as the one who put the bird in its place. Given that the stela is a political statement meant to emphasize Stormy Sky's Maya-ness despite being the grandson of a usurper from Teotihuacán (Martin and Grube 2008:34–35), invoking an event central to the concept of Maya rulership is quite savvy.

20. Also known as a kapok, a ceiba can grow to a height of 70 meters or 230 feet and have buttress roots taller than an adult human (Barwick 2004:104–105).

21. Kettunen and Helmke translate *yax-te'* as "blue-green tree" but it could also be "first tree" since *yax* means "first" as well (Boot 2009:207; Kettunen and Helmke 2011:126).

22. In Tomb 19, the center tree is on the eastern wall, the left tree is on the northern wall, and the right tree is on the southern wall. As noted, the flanking jewels of a Jester God triad arranged horizontally across a headband or a headdress are equidistant from the central jewel and align with the wearer's temples. The placement of the trees in Tomb 19 suggests that a trio of matching Jester Gods arranged horizontally correspond not only to middle, left, and right, but also to east, north, and south.

23. Individually, a *te'* marking is a vertical line with a pair of semicircles attached to the right or left side, one above the other, and with no space between them. It is part of the iconic component of at least one logogram (T514) signifying te'.

3

Redefining God L

THE SPATIAL REALM OF A MAYA "EARTH LORD"

MICHELE M. BERNATZ

Maya art of the Classic period (ca. 250–900 CE) incorporates a broad range of enigmatic, otherworldly beings that to modern-day viewers may seem unbelievable, inapproachable, and far from human engagement. One of the most interesting and bizarre members of the Maya pantheon is God L, an aged, chapfallen male most often characterized as a lord of the underworld and patron of merchants (Figure 3.1). Because of symbolic links to human sacrifice, deadly warfare, and the darkness of subterranean locales, God L comes across as a purveyor of evil and destruction, a supernatural force to be feared, avoided, or dismantled through correct behavior and religious worship. His regal yet sometimes comic narrative takes place inside of lavish palaces, near the sanctuary spaces of pyramid temples, within bountiful plots of agricultural growth, or along the roadways of cosmic terrain. Some situational aspects can be identified, but these are obscure places populated by supernatural beings, personifications of beneficial forces of nature as well as illness, death, and rot. The negative associations of his surroundings, marked at times by excessive luxury and deadly scenarios, presumably drive the labeling of God L as greedy, destructive, and evil. Yet the entire story may not be told in such undesirable terms: Maya religion was less moralistic in its view of underworld gods. Instead, entities like God L were envisioned with ambiguity, as forces wielding both beneficent and damaging potentials. In spatial terms, too, there are no clear-cut divisions. Activities carried out by transcendent beings like God L shift into and out of the topography of human existence, can occur in multiple places at once, and transpire within the bounds of real and imagined spaces.

This paper redefines God L as a Classic-era Earth Lord whose spatial realm includes underworldly, earthly, and celestial territories. The force of his godliness is neither good nor bad in a moral sense, but rather something to be respected and sought after, even if also feared. Although God L travels among the skeletal creatures of underworld legend, his primary abode was not entrenched deep within the abyss of underground layers, but likely much closer to the earth's surface. His territory encompasses a fertile and abundant borderland near earth and sky, the region of human existence where agricultural and material wealth is produced. Belowground water provides essential nourishment to myriad aspects of life, and it is through his control of water resources that God L derives supernatural power. Divine status allows the whimsical precipitation of both good and bad fortune upon mortal subjects who seek his aid and fear his tyranny. The designation "Earth Lord" correctly reflects God L's status as an owner of earthly resources, a status that generates his mythical story line focused on the benefits and detriments of kingship, wealth, and trade.

Maya Religion

One must look to the larger structure of ancient Maya religion to understand the spatial and conceptual notions present in the God L narrative.[1] When using the term *religion* I refer to the investigation of belief systems that may or may not incorporate a god or gods, but which express cultural ideas about divinity, truth, and the nature of the cosmos (Monaghan 2000). In the past, reviewers of Mesoamerican religion focused on identifying the roots of ideology at the expense of meaning, whereas now the concern is to uncover structural principles that inform social thinking and behavior (Monaghan 2000:24). Increasing specialization has produced more in-depth, culture-specific analysis and fomented recognition of the complex, subtle, and progressive nature of religion as well as the variability of religious thought even within the overarching and customarily linked region called Mesoamerica (Monaghan 2000:24–25). When considering an ancient religion such as that of the Classic Maya, there is a danger of carrying to the inquiry the researcher's socially encapsulated, a priori view of religious ideology, a point noted by Colin Renfrew (1994:47; see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1). It is especially difficult, for example, to separate pre-contact ideas from the Christian-based notions that took hold during the Colonial epoch, a time when indigenous ways were suppressed or eradicated and many works of art and architecture were destroyed or lost. Unfortunately, because of cultural changes as well as

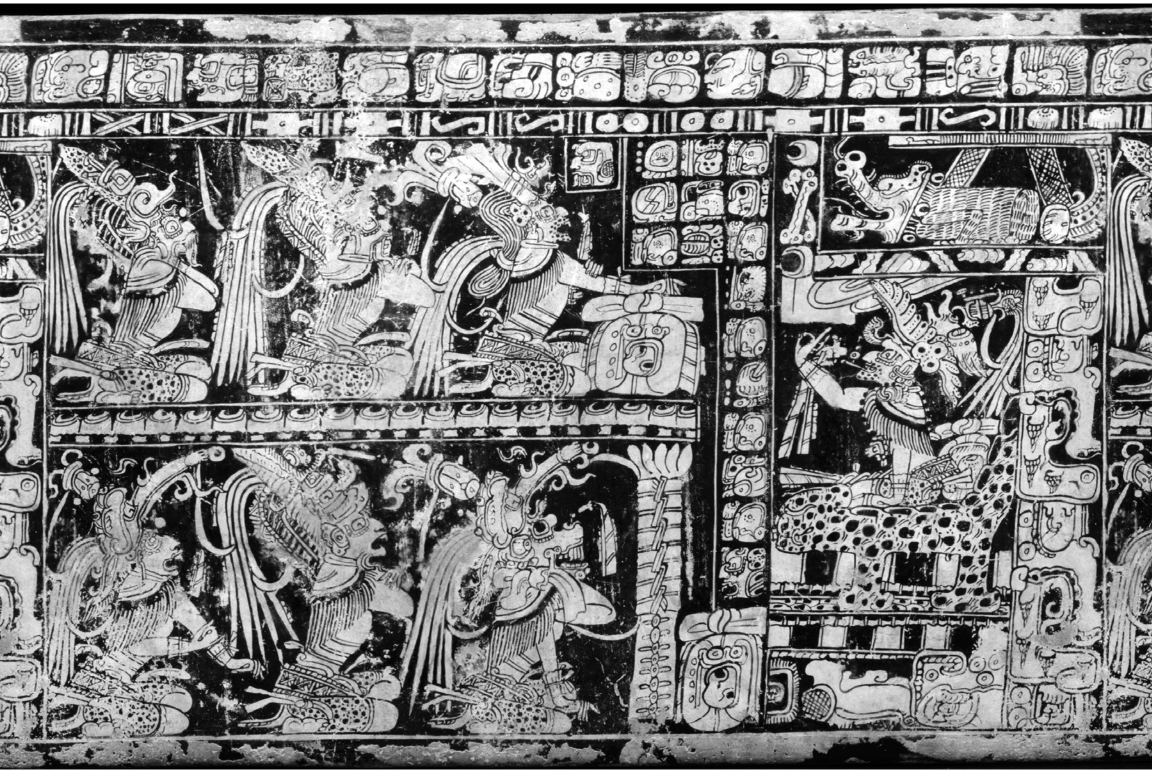

FIGURE 3.1 The Vase of Seven Gods. Rollout view of polychrome ceramic vessel, 27.3 × 11.5 cm (10.7 × 4.5 in) diameter, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Databse:K2796).

centuries lapsed, Classic-era evidence can be frustratingly sparse. When this occurs it is fruitful to look at data from later times. Groups like the Post Classic Aztecs, for example, share many cultural traditions with the Maya and provide windows into the deeper past.[2] Ethnological information from the contemporary age also proves useful with the caveat that continuity of ideas is not assured, and thus it is important to employ structural comparisons to test the validity of etic sources.

Much is unknown regarding their religious practices, but we can be certain the Maya were a profoundly devout people judging from wide-ranging evidence of ceremonial activity, depictions of supernatural events, and inscriptional references to *k'uh* (divine) entities (Houston 1999; Houston and Stuart 1996; Taube, Chapter 9). Religious narratives come to life in ancient Maya art and represent a cosmology that was considered both real and sacred.[3] In their visualizations of obscure essences and divine attributes, artists of the Classic-era picture a discernible reality and use sensory perceptions to help animate human recognition of godly forces (Houston et al. 2006:134–179). The residences of many gods were understood as nearby, spaces that could sometimes be possessed, even entered and exited in order to provide essential tribute and reverence (Houston and Stuart 1996:291–295; Stuart et al. 1999:133–206). "The Classic Maya interacted with gods who were not abstract but tangible beings," writes Stephen Houston (1999:57). "These gods were not exactly supernatural, at least not in our sense of that word: to the Maya, godly nature combined a material presence with powers beyond human capability, if not beyond human control" (Houston 1999:57). The Maya imagined life as existing within animate and inanimate things. According to Houston (1999:52), the earthly setting was envisioned as a place where "something like a stone or a hill may be as alive as a human being or where the carved image of a god may, in fact, *be* that god." Maya deities were not detached from humans in spatial or social terms, but "directly involved in a 'single moral community,' [and were seen] as members of the same civic society" (Houston 1999:57).

The Maya referred to their gods as k'uh to communicate a sacrosanct nature, but these special beings were neither all powerful nor without fault (Houston and Stuart 1996:289). They were perceived as existing among ordinary people, as undertaking similar activities, and in need of basic human requirements like clothing, nourishment, and shelter (Houston and Stuart 1996:291–295; Stuart et al. 1999:133–206). Hieroglyphic texts and artistic compositions describing the activities of k'uh beings indicate they were born and could die, were essential witnesses at special events, and participated in ritualized bathing and dressing ceremonies. Maya gods could be possessed in the sense of ownership and released to the custody of others. They were sometimes triumphant, other times vulnerable, and on occasion even remarkably unintelligent, making it possible for human trickery to bring about godly defeat. To be sure, gods could precipitate superhuman actions, yet they were close to humans with regard to frailties of personality, age, and ethics, and they experienced many of the same physical processes (for example, seeing, sleeping, eating, speaking, and breathing). Godly residences were located within the sacred mountains and caves of Mesoamerica and also within the quarters of certain man-made objects, like portable wooden or ceramic boxes made to hold divinely charged costuming or ritual substances (see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1). It was through the actions and offerings of religious ceremony that immaterial forces could be experienced as physically real (Morehart and Butler 2010:591).

The actions of gods and humans were interwoven, like a vast fabric of communal obligation best expressed by the word *covenant*, a deep and enduring pact of mutual responsibility where both gods and humans act to maintain order (Houston 1999:57–58; Monaghan 2000:36–39; Morehart and Butler 2010:593–603). Acts of reciprocity are essential: humans receive health, protection, and prosperity as a result of the attention, nourishment, and protection given to gods (Bernatz 2012:92). If the covenant is ignored, the world breaks down. The reality of existence thus envisioned becomes unified, driven by a single participatory force that allows the cosmos to exist (Monaghan 2000:26). Because everything is interconnected and mutually dependent, moral oppositions fall away. As John Monaghan (2000:33) remarks, "Transgressions are not identified through a moral calculus of good and evil," so wickedness may have been understood more as irresponsibility than as something like sin.[4] Put another way, "Morality was respect for one's obligations according to the covenants that interlaced the Classic community of humans and gods" (Houston 1999:58).

What separated humans from other earthly beasts was the conscious acknowledgement of duty: to sustain life, humans had to recycle themselves (to sacrifice their own bodies) or find appropriate substitutions like precious objects, aromas, and liquids (Houston 1999:58). Given the core belief in reciprocal obligations, the taking of human life and the collection of material wealth, done to satisfy godly appetites, became essential, life-sustaining activities devoid of moral qualifiers such as good or evil. Instead, these obligatory offerings were conceptualized as either sufficient or not. It is thus incorrect to categorize the underworld gods of Maya purview with terms of a derogatory or moralistic nature since any perceived outcome—whether success or failure, benefit or detriment—would reflect mutual actions and responsibilities.

Reconstructing the Maya Universe

To understand the spatial context of mythological events like the story line of God L, one must address Maya cosmology and directionality (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, as well as Taube, Chapter 9, for additional description and analysis of Maya cosmology). Current literature indicates that the ancient Maya world (Figure 3.2) was envisioned as a three-dimensional, three-tiered universe with the earthly residence of humans at its center (Bassie-Sweet 2008:53–83; Gossen 1986:229–230;

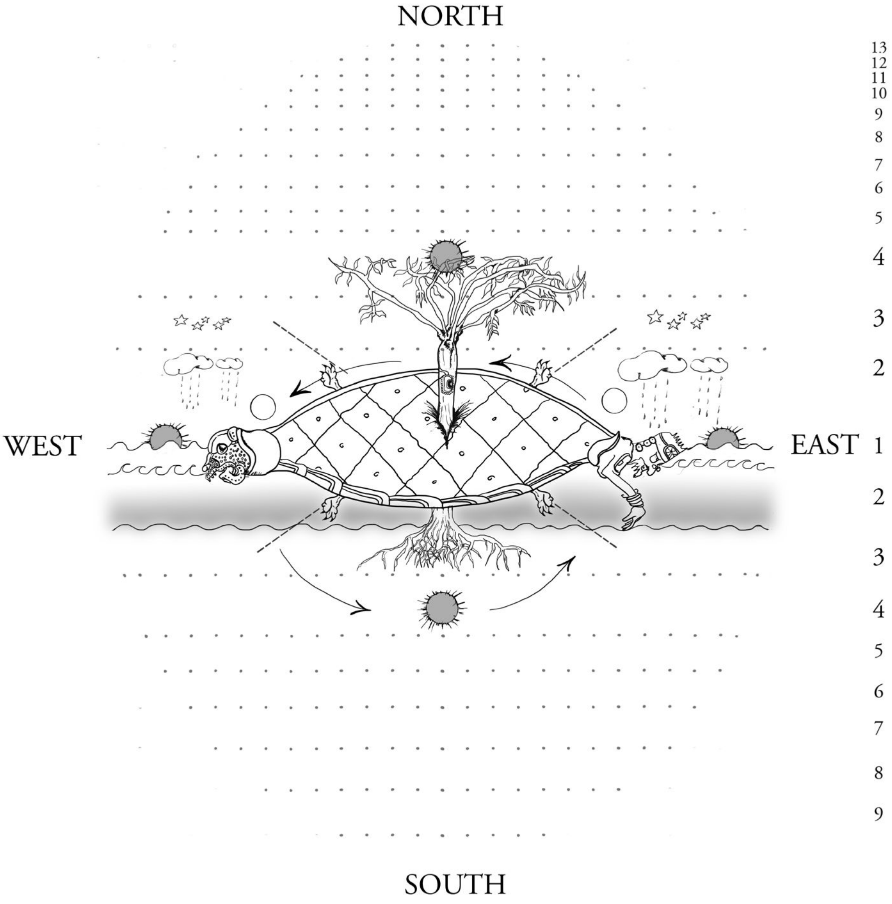

FIGURE 3.2 Organization of the Maya cosmos, showing directional associations and vertical layers with sun, moon, stars, and rain clouds in a hypothetical arrangement. Illustration by Jill Johnston.

Hanks 1990:295–351; León-Portilla 1973:56–90; Mathews and Garber 2004; Schele and Freidel 1990:66–77; Wagner 2001; Watanabe 1983).[5] This layered universe was contained within a cosmic sphere based on the human experience of watching astronomical bodies arc across the sky in regular diurnal and nocturnal transits, imagining pathways that extended above and below points of sight, and into the obscure upper and under realms. The sphere encompasses three major sectors on its vertical axis: a celestial upper world holding the sun, clouds, stars, and planets; a central, stony earth (where humans, plants, and animals exist) metaphorically conceived as a lumpy caiman or turtle floating upon the primordial sea; and a lower underworld steeped in darkness and populated by decomposing, skeletal creatures and layered with a passageway of water as well as areas of extreme heat. Underworld waters rise to meet the sky along the horizon and emerge onto the earth's surface as rivers, springs, and cenotes (watery sinkholes present in the limestone karst of Yucatán, Mexico). All three components are interconnected and sustained by the activities of supernatural forces and living/dead humans (Schele and Freidel 1990:66–77).

Pre-Columbian cultures like the Aztecs and Maya are generally said to have imagined thirteen celestial and nine terrestrial layers, although the numbering of levels is not consistently reported (Nicholson 1971:403–408; Seler 1996:11–23),[6] and some researchers suggest that segmentation beyond the three basic tiers (sky, earth, underworld) occurred in a horizontal, not vertical, direction (Nielsen and Reunert 2009). Extant Maya documents do not provide a complete description of cosmological layout; access to this information comes from the integration of multiple sources, none of which coincide fully. One Maya ceramic platter (see Kerr n.d.:K1609) dating to the Classic age reveals a stratified world with a starry night sky (pictured as a celestial reptile) and a dark, watery underground (Ik' Naabnal) entered through the open maw of a white bone centipede (Schele and Freidel 1990:66–70; Taube 2003a; Wagner 2001:287–289). Another example (Kerr n.d.:K1892) shows the Maize God rising out of the back of a turtle floating in a primordial sea (Freidel et al. 1993:65–66; Wagner 2001:286). Classic-era texts, like those on Stela 1 of Cobá and Stela C of Quiriguá, record happenings from a much earlier time frame when the creation of the current world took place. These inscriptions mention the placement of three cosmic hearthstones in mythical locations and actions undertaken by several deities including Itzamnaaj, a persona of high status. Mention is made of celestial places such as Na Ho Chan (the First of Five Skies) and entities like Wak ? Chan Ajaw (the Six ? Sky Lord)[7] (Freidel et al. 1993:65–69; Wagner 2001:283). Taken together these various sources appear to substantiate a three-tiered model with further inter-area subdivisions.

Colonial documents provide further details. A possible reference to cosmic ordering comes from a Maya manuscript called the Chilam Balam of Chumayel (see Roys 1967:105), which names entities like Oxlahun-ti-ku (Thirteen-god, *ku* being the Colonial spelling of k'uh) and Bolon-ti-ku (Nine-god), who take part in aspects of world creation. Some authors interpret these numbered monikers as relating to the thirteen sky and nine underworld levels mentioned above (Krickeberg 1969:69; León-Portilla 1973:71–77). In his chronicle of the Yucatecan Maya, Bishop Diego de Landa discusses a place of abundance marked by a shady *yaxche* (ceiba tree) where "good" people rest after death, a state of being that ends the burden of life-long labor (Tozzer 1966:131–132). According to Alfred Tozzer's (1966:132, footnote 616) footnotes, this paradisiacal location could be reached through an ascent into the "seven heavens above the earth" by way of the vertical axis of the ceiba tree. In contrast, people who lead a "bad" life face a place of suffering called Metnal, which Bishop Landa likens to the Christian hell. While it is clear from artistic imagery and textual sources that the ancient Maya underworld featured conditions through which deceased souls might be tormented, it is unlikely the pre-contact Maya conceived of this place as a "hell" in the Christian sense. Most ordinary deaths (regardless of sinfulness) resulted in one's passage into the underworld, but not all humans stayed there. Some, especially those of elite status, endured the challenges placed upon them and rose with the sun to exist eternally within a flower-mountain paradise (Taube 2004). Evidence of underworld escape comes from the Popol Vuh, for example, which tells of the Hero Twins, who survived many tricks and torments by dint of intelligent maneuvering and counter-trickery.[8] As heroic models of wisdom and endurance, the Hero Twins exemplify what could be accomplished through knowledge, correct thinking, and appropriate action.

A multi-leveled underworld is also described in the Popol Vuh narrative. The story recounts two sets of twins who pass through an earthly ballcourt "gateway" and descend into Xibalba (a K'iche' term for the underworld), encountering a cast of unwholesome characters, each of which was "given his task and dominion by One and Seven Death" (Christenson 2007:115, 160–168).[9] Named entities include One and Seven Death, the overseers of all underworld territories, plus six pairs of sub-lords charged with deadly chores: Flying Scab and Gathered Blood (responsible for sickening human blood), Pus Demon and Jaundice Demon (who swell and discolor flesh), Bone Staff and Skull Staff (entities that transition bodies to merely bones and skulls), Sweepings Demon and Stabbings Demon (in charge of stabbing and killing people who do not abide cultural standards for cleanly swept homes and proper disposal of trash), Lord Wing and Packstrap (causing people to die suddenly when traveling the roadways), and lastly, Bloody Teeth and Bloody Claws (the specific charge of this duo is not explained, though perhaps it is to tear apart and eat human flesh) (Christenson 2007:115–117, 119–127, 160–186). These first three sub-lord pairs oversee progressive, familiar stages of natural decomposition (sickened blood, swollen flesh, reduction to bones and skull) and may represent, at least metaphorically, sequential places through which one would pass as underworld transit unfolds. The abrupt and violent occurrences tasked to those remaining sub-lords imply unexpected deaths and relate to incidents of chance, moral causation (irresponsibility), and sacrifice made to satisfy earthly hunger. Perhaps, then, the last three duos resided deeper within the mysterious underworld.

One can see many parallels between Aztec ideas and those of the Colonial Maya. Alfredo López Austin (1997:15–18), for example, explains the Aztec notion of a great tree stretching vertically through three cosmic regions (see also Taube, Chapter 9, for a modern Maya complement). This model employs thirteen layers above the earth, distinguishing nine upper skies, marked by the expanding branches of the tree, and four lower skies designated by the tree trunk and including the surface of the earth. The roots of the tree growing deep into the ground define the nine places of death. As in the Popol Vuh, Aztec accounts portray multiple stages of underworld existence and indicate that the nature of one's death prescribed the ultimate destination one could expect: "People who died a natural death went to the lowest 'hell'; people who died of pustules went to the same place as those who died of wounds . . . ; children went to another one, and people who died in war or as sacrificial victims went to one called Tonatiuh Ixco ('in front of the Sun')" (López Austin 1997:216–217). According to López Austin (1997:16–17), the "nine upper skies" and "nine places of death" represent the "eternal present" whereas the "four lower skies (on the surface of the earth)" produce the "running of time." Thus, in the belief system of Colonial Mesoamericans, certain cosmic levels both above and below the earth stood in a kind of sustained or circular timelessness, whereas within the plane of human existence, time was sequential or linear. These notions undoubtedly relate to the Maya tradition of bundling time into 20-*tun* parcels and viewing attainment of significant time bundles, like the *k'atun* and *baktun*, as celebratory and even sacred achievements.[10] The Mesoamerican interest in tracking both circular and sequential time generated three distinct, yet interlocking calendars: the Tzolk'in (260-day sacred cycle), Haab (365-day solar year), and Long Count (a sequential record starting deep in the mythical past).

The most detailed account of vertical ordering comes from a Colonial-era document called the Codex Vaticanus A (Figure 3.3), which was created in the mid- to late 1500s. A version of the Aztec universe is pictured on

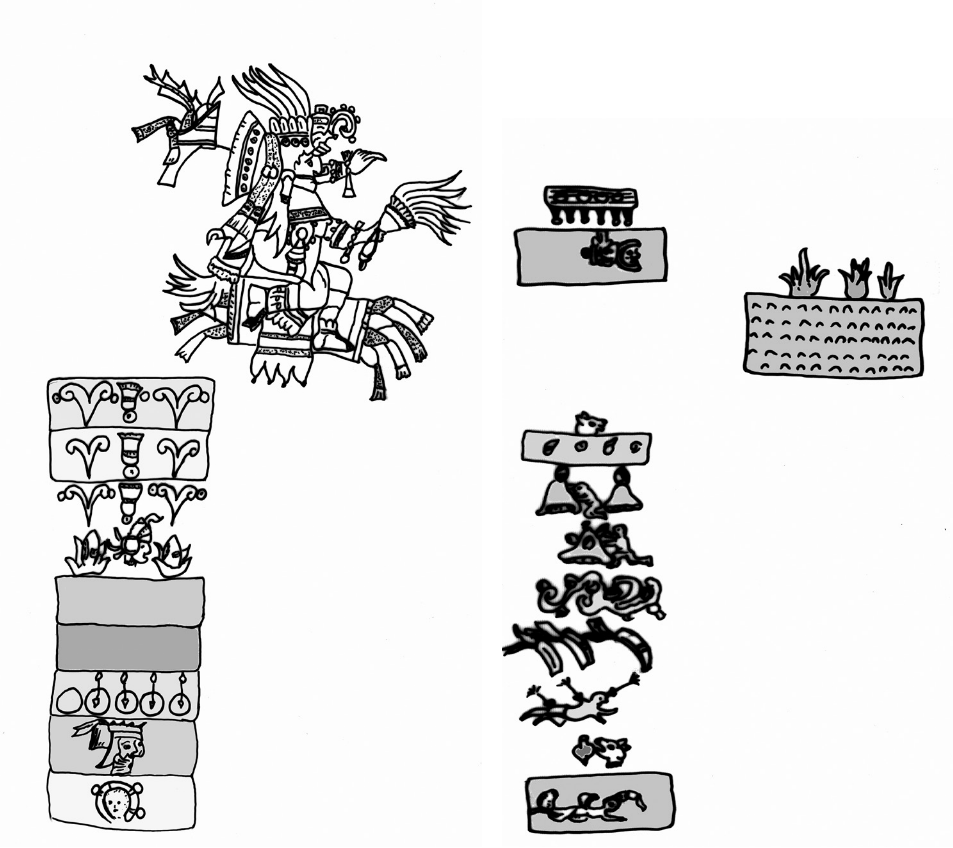

FIGURE 3.3 Levels of the universe according to Aztec informant, Codex Vaticanus A. Manuscript, 1566–1589 (Mexico). Drawing by Michele M. Bernatz after Codex Vaticanus A (FAMSI 1979:Folios 1V, 2R). Left side: Folio 1V, celestial layers four (at bottom) to thirteen (at top), with Colonial notations translated by Quiñones Keber (1995:192–194) respectively as "heaven of the sun," "heaven of salt?," "heaven of the Fire Drill constellation," "green and black heaven," "green heaven," "heaven of the roses [where the stone slabs crash]," "place of the white God," "place of the yellow God," "place of the red God," and "place of duality." Right side: Folio 2R, underworld layers nine to two (from bottom up), earth (placed toward right), and celestial layers two to three (at top). Colonial notations are translated by Quiñones Keber (1995:192–194) respectively as "place with no outlet for smoke," "place where hearts are devoured," "place where arrows are shot," "place where banners wave," "place of the knife-wind," "mountain of knives," "place where the mountains come together," "passageway of water," "the earth," "heaven of Tlalocan and the moon," and "she of the skirt of stars."

Folios 1 Verso (1V) and 2 Recto (2R) (León-Portilla 1963:57–59, 1973:135–143; Nicholson 1971; Quiñones Keber 1995; Seler 1996:11–23). In this document upper-world levels are distinguished by god names, colors, and/or actions, none of which are fully understood. For example, sky level thirteen marks "Omeyocan (place of duality)," the residence of a male-female creator couple (Quiñones Keber 1995:192). Nine is called the "heaven of the roses [where stone slabs crash]" and six, the "heaven of the Fire Drill constellation" (Quiñones Keber 1995:194). Could these areas make reference to thunder and lightning? Or might they insinuate activities critical to survival such as the grinding of corn or ignition of fire? Levels four, three, two, and one comprise the lower sky and carry monikers designating the sun, stars, moon, and earth in vertical descent (Quiñones Keber 1995:194). Noted within the same canopy as the moon is Tlalocan, a place from which clouds release rainwater. In Codex Vaticanus A, the earth belongs to both upper and lower regions and is counted as step one whether rising or falling in vertical space (Seler 1996:11). Below the earth are eight underworld stages beginning with the uppermost "passageway of water" and the secondary "place where mountains come together" (Quiñones Keber 1995:194). Deep in the ground are the eighth and ninth levels described respectively as "place where hearts are devoured" and "place with no outlet for smoke" (Quiñones Keber 1995:194).

While these Aztec and Maya accounts have strong interrelationships, it is the general (visions of a three-layered, multi-sectored universe) rather than the specific (who exists and what exactly happens where) that unites them. Still, we can derive insight from these accounts with regard to how cosmic ordering and directionality functioned in Maya thought. As mentioned previously, the earth in its horizontal plane is understood in ancient Maya tradition as a living entity (caiman or turtle) floating on a watery substrate (see Carrasco, Epilogue, for a detailed discussion of this important myth). Humans live on the craggy and mountainous earth, which is midway between the sun's zenith and nadir passage, and celestial layers are viewed as the incremental residences of various sky gods and spiritual forces. The uppermost (thirteenth?) level may be the abode of a creator couple, called Xpiyacoc and Xmucane in the Popol Vuh, who generated human beings from their own words and blood (Christenson 2007). It is less certain, however, whether the preeminent K'inich Ajaw (Sun God) of Maya lore resided in the thirteenth level (i.e., at the supreme pinnacle) or in the fourth celestial canopy (i.e., at the peak of the lower sky region).

The horizontal plane is oriented according to the sun's daily passage from east to west, with east being the focal direction linked to sunrise and therefore to notions of birth, ascendency, and life. West, on the other hand, is the place of sunset, decline, and death. The four corners of the earthly plane are marked by mountains, caves, trees, birds, and/or colors, as is the center point, which represents the heart of this cosmic model. The sun's ecliptic provides for the somewhat confusing extension and collapse of dimensionality as north equates with *up* at the same time it references territory on the sun's right side; likewise, south carries both the idea of *down* and planar positioning to the left of the sun (Watanabe 1983:712–713).[11] North is also the directional trend of the sun during the spring/summer season, and south marks its customary movement in fall/winter. Thus, north/up associations equate with burgeoning life while south/down suggest decline. That each new day begins at sunset is a Maya idea recorded by John Watanabe (1983:716–719), who worked among the Mam of Huehuetenango, Guatemala. The rationale of this view comes from the fact that just after disappearing below the horizon, the sun reverses its westward passage and begins an eastward course. This is but one example of how closely meshed are concepts of time, space, and life itself.

The model of a four-directional plane plus center axis dates to the Olmec era (ca. 1500–400 BCE) in Mesoamerica (Figure 3.4a). The Olmec

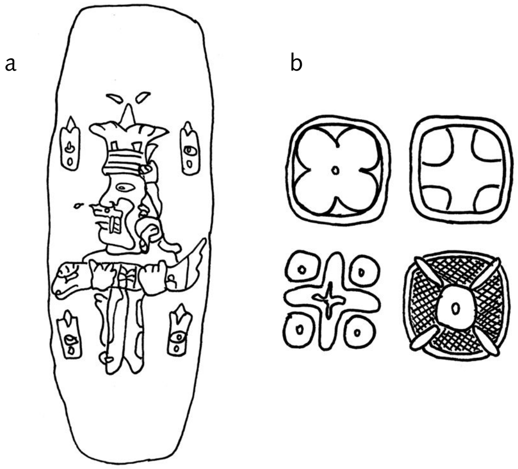

FIGURE 3.4 Fivefold images. All drawings by Michele M. Bernatz. (a) Olmec celt from Rio Pesquero with quincunx arrangement and maize god at center, after Reilly (1995:38, Figure 25); (b) Maya hieroglyphs representing five-fold arrangement of cosmos: *k'in* (sun/day) and *k'an* (yellow, precious), *ek'* (star) and *mi* (zero), after Coe and Van Stone (2001:39, 163–164).

conceptualized the universe as a quincunx with four corner posts and a ruler or corn deity at the core (Reilly 1995:38–39). A carved celt from Rio Pesquero represents the sun's ecliptic in symbolic form, pictured as the serpent bar held by a ruler at the corporeal center. In the Classic Maya age the same cosmic model is recreated through hieroglyphic symbols, temple building, planting, burying of the dead, and the caching of offerings according to five points of spatial order (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, and Carrasco's discussion of the symbolic meanings of the quincunx in ancient Maya hieroglyphic writing, iconography, and site planning in the Epilogue).[12] For instance, the cosmos is mimicked in quincunx-shaped hieroglyphs (Figure 3.4b) like *k'in* (sun, day), *k'an* (yellow, precious), *ek'* (star), and *mi* (nothing, zero). Another example is the burial discovered at Rio Azul where an elite male was laid at the center of a tomb oriented to the four quarters and marked by directional hieroglyphs (Stuart 1987). The presumed intention of this arrangement would be access for the deceased to the central, vertical axis through which celestial passage might be achieved. A similar model of time and space can be seen in the Late Post Classic Maya manuscript called the Madrid Codex as well as the Codex Fejérváry-Mayer, an Aztec document (ca. 1500 CE). Both of these renderings track the 260-day calendar and function as quincuncial cosmograms that lay out directional symbolism and picture a flattened, yet conceptually three-dimensional, world order.

In the ethnological research of William Hanks (1990), who worked among the people of Oxkutzcab, Yucatán, we find additional details on the organization of the Maya universe in contemporary thought. According to Hanks (1990:305–306), "great underground rivers . . . [d]riven by earthly winds . . . feed the wells and cenotes, providing the water that is ultimately sucked up into the sky . . . to then be cast back down to earth as rain." These great flows of water are situated just below the earth's surface while further down are fiery, underground places (Hanks 1990:306). Humans occupy a domain called "inside above earth," which incorporates the earth's surface as well as a number of lower-sky layers: "This is the domain of the *baálam ˀiík'óˀob* 'jaguar spirits' and other earth guardians who assist farmers and protect their corn fields" (Hanks 1990:306). Every layer conceived to exist, whether above, below, or upon the earth's surface, has a five-fold arrangement with a center point and four corners as well as its associated gods (Hanks 1990:306). Towns are centers of inhabited space whereas forests are more dangerous and marginal (Taube 2003b). Agricultural fields, normally positioned between the settled town and natural forests, are transitional places guarded by beneficent and ambiguous spirits (Hanks 1990:306–307). Roadways can be great, open, and straight or contrarily small, overgrown, and winding (Hanks 1990:310–311; see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for an overarching discussion of roads as ways of ordering and marking the boundaries that define each kind of space). Any "noteworthy configuration" might become a landmark that orients travelers; water sources (springs, wells, marshes, caverns, *chultunob* [man-made water collecting basins; singular: *chultun*]) are especially important points within the landscape of connected pathways (Hanks 1990:312–313).

The data summarized above helps in the visualization of mythical narratives since Maya gods existed within the envisioned cosmos. To decipher the spatial orientation of God L, one must look closely at the pictorial representations of Maya art and imagine his actions as occurring within such a three-dimensional model. That orientation, however, is dependent upon the deity's status, whether his domain is viewed as primarily celestial, earthly, or underworldly in nature.

The Earth Lord Concept

I argue here and elsewhere that a redefinition of God L is necessary (Bernatz 2012). Though it is not strictly inaccurate to categorize this figure as an underworld denizen or patron of merchants, these narrow labels ignore the broad terrain in which he functions and the primary source of God L's transcendence. A better label is that of Earth Lord, a category that is inclusive of underworld and mercantile attributes. In my view, God L is one of potentially many mountain-cave deities believed to own and dispense precious resources hidden within the local landscape.[13] An Earth Lord classification allows for the reorientation of God L's activities as interfaced with the living, experiential environment of humans rather than contained within a distant and demonic terrain. His nature is, of course, supernatural and dangerous; however, humans likely perceived God L's force to be close at hand and essential to the success of agricultural harvests. If he were an ancient Earth Lord, it is probable that acts of veneration directed toward God L were organized at special cave or springwater sites (close to cultivated fields and human settlements) where the deity was believed to be active. Although the Classic-era prototype does not match every aspect catalogued in recent ethnologies, one finds significant correspondences between contemporary accounts and the attributes, actions, and terrain of the ancient God L pictured in Maya art.

Ethnologies record widespread descriptions of beings called Earth

Lords (or Earth Owners), gods tied to indigenous beliefs about the structure of the universe and human obligations to sustain earthly resources through sacrifice and tribute (Adams and Brady 2005:303–310; Gossen 1974:21, 86–87, 266–267, 287, 311; Guiteras-Holmes 1961:191–193, 291; Moyes 2005:187–191; Vogt 1969:302–303, 1993:16–17, 33, 57–58; Vogt and Stuart 2005:164–179). Earth Lords are cave-dwelling deities in control of environmental assets that allow human existence and agricultural productivity. In particular, these gods oversee the fertility of soils, underground springs and water flows, the amount and frequency of rain that falls to the earth, and products generated through natural forest growth or domestic farming. As a result of their powers, Earth Lords are excessively wealthy and able to stockpile highly prized commodities. They can choose to withhold their wealth from humans or bestow it upon those deemed worthy through appropriate acts of reverence, good fortune, and even the bartering of human souls. Belief in the power of Earth Lords is so strongly held in some communities that people "cannot use land or any of its products for any purpose, whether to grow maize in a milpa or to construct a new house, without compensating the Earth Lord with appropriate ceremonies and offerings" (Vogt 1969:302–303). Still, there is an attitude of ambivalence with regard to worship since Earth Lords can bring both success and ruin.

No one name is given to Earth Lords but rather each locality has its own stories and monikers to describe the phenomena associated with these beings.[14] Attributes and narratives common to Earth Lord tales include the symbolism of water, clouds, and rain; snakes, frogs, and toads; lightning and thunder; crops such as corn, beans, squash, and cacao; the potent fertility of cavernous environments; and excessive accumulation of wealth. Mountain caves are the primary residence of Earth Lords and the place from which they control life-giving waters stored in underground pools and flows that rise to the surface of the earth in springs and wells (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for more information surrounding the relationships between caves, mountains, and temples). Rain, also thought to derive from underground sources, occurs when Earth Lords release moisture-laden clouds into the sky. Because caverns are likened to earthly wombs that germinate and nourish seeds, sweatbaths fall under the dominion of Earth Lords; thus, mythic narratives incorporate fertility, sex, birthing, creation, and regeneration into the saga of Earth Lord authority (Brady 1988). For some Maya groups, Earth Lords have command over roadways used to transport goods and, in a larger sense, the paths that mark the cosmic layout of the earth's horizontal and vertical axes (Adams and Brady 2005:306–308). As is expressed in the studies cited above, strong beliefs about the liminal nature of caves and essential forces contained within them inspired ritualistic activities in both contemporary and ancient times (Brady 2001, 2010; Brady and Prufer 2005; Morehart and Butler 2010; Prufer and Brady 2005).

It is easy to see correspondences between the attributes of Colonial-era Earth Lords and works of art representing God L (Bernatz 2012:95–100). As pictured in Figure 3.1, God L resides within a mountain cave that is decorated with de-fleshed bones and disembodied eyes, markers of the word *ch'e'n*, meaning "cave, spring, water hole," a place located inside the "animated mountain" or *witz* (Stuart 1997; Vogt and Stuart 2005:156–163). For the Maya, the notion of a living, breathing mountain encompasses paramount issues of world creation, the origin of corn, and the continuation of life through human sacrifice. The residence and story line of God L align this deity with acts of cosmogonic importance, especially occurrences on 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u (the date included in the hieroglyphic text and associated with the beginning of time), and portray his familiarity with creatures of celestial, earthly, and underground origin. On this and another ceramic vessel from the site of Naranjo (Kerr n.d.:K7750), God L leads a collection of supernaturals whose names draw links to forest resources like trees, jaguars, and deer (Zender and Guenter 2003:102–117). Water courses through his cavernous residence and is apparently under his jurisdiction. In Figure 3.1, symbols designating clouds, water droplets, and waterlily plants appear in a horizontal band below the rim text. Luxury and wealth are characterized by the sumptuous throne and elite costuming as well as the bundles of jade (*ikatz*) in God L's possession (Stuart 2006a).

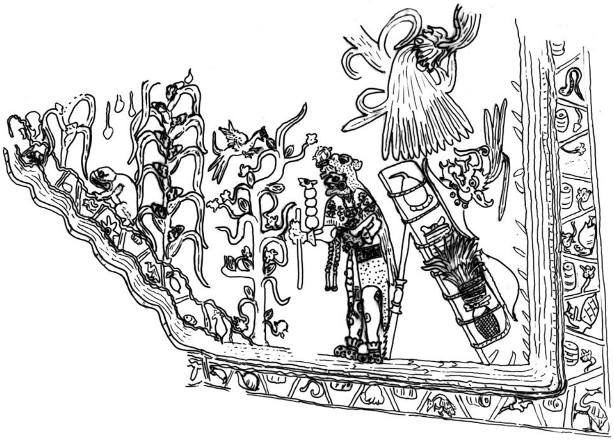

FIGURE 3.5 God L in painted mural from staircase of the Red Temple, Cacaxtla, Tlaxcala, Mexico. Drawing by Michele M. Bernatz after Uriarte (1999:Figure 66).

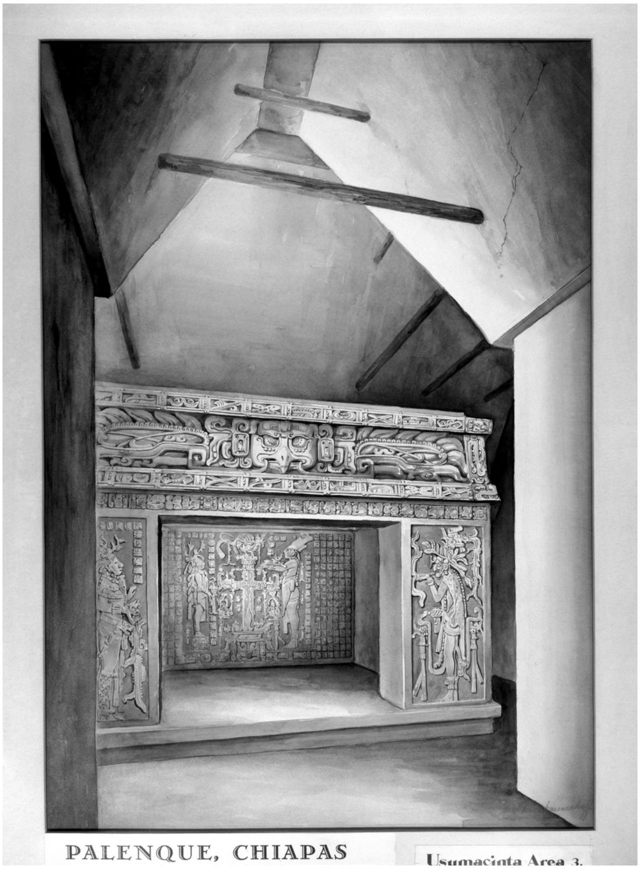

FIGURE 3.6 Sweatbath shrine inside the sanctuary of the Temple of the Cross at Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. God L appears on the right doorjamb. Drawing by Tatiana Proskouriakoff. Courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 50–63–20/18503.

Earth Lord status is verified through other data too. A mural scene at Cacaxtla (Figure 3.5) displays maturing crops of corn and cacao fed through the fertile and watery environment of God L's terrain; pictured also is a trader's back rack loaded with goods ready to be distributed, wealth made possible through agricultural productivity and divine sanctioning. Associations with roads and travel come through narratives of itinerant mercantilism as is likewise reported in Earth Lord commentaries (Adams and Brady 2005:306–308). Similarly, the idea of sweatbaths as a place of generative power is reproduced in the Temple of the Cross sanctuary where God L is sculpted into the eastern doorjamb of a ceremonial *pib naah* or "underground house" at the pyramid summit (Figure 3.6), which was used to conjure and activate the patron gods of Palenque (Houston 1996; Stuart 2006b:87–98, 109; see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, as well as Wren et al., Chapter 8, for additional comments regarding sweatbaths). Expressed with regard to contemporary Earth Lords, the corpus of Maya imagery reveals both prosperity and misfortune as outcomes of God L's presence: K'an Balam II of Palenque thrives in his role as king, evidenced by the Group of the Cross architectural program where God L is represented; but death by decapitation is the apparent result of a God L encounter on the so-called Princeton Vase (Kerr n.d.:K0511). Finally, the Late Post Classic name of God L in the Dresden Codex includes the prefixed hieroglyph *ha'* or *ha'al*, meaning "rain, rainy season" (Lacadena 2004:92), and a major illustration in this indigenous book depicts God L's participation in a flood of epic proportions (Figure 3.7), all of which upholds an Earth Lord classification.

The evidence presented in brief above (and outlined more fully in Bernatz 2012:95–100) can surely be extended. A small detail comes from an inscriptional text on the so-called Rabbit Vase (Figure 3.8), which refers to God L as *mam*, a Maya word meaning "grandfather, grandson, old man, ancestor" (Stuart et al. 1999:47–48, 205) and coincidentally, a name applied to the Earth Lord worshipped by contemporary Maya of Santiago Atitlan (Moyes 2005:191). The term is also used in a general sense by the people of southern Belize for innumerable gods that occupy the landscape and oversee rain, thunder, and lightning as well as hunting, fishing, and agriculture (Thompson 1968:57–58). Whether or not the salutatory mam makes reference to rain in Figure 3.8, other pictorial elements associate God L with watery places and lightning strikes. A shell ornament, worn on God L's ear in K1398 (see Kerr n.d.) and strung onto his beaded necklace in other imagery, makes reference to marine creatures sought for food and trade. Moreover, the ability to create lightning, a force wielded by Earth Lords (Vogt 1969:302–303, 1993:16–17; Vogt and Stuart 2005:170), may be communicated by an animated staff shown to be among God L's possessions. The staff (visible, for example, in Kerr n.d.:K1398, K1560, and K5359) has the knobby forehead and eye of a reptilian creature, a back-curving nose element, and sharply pointed attachments that may signify embedded obsidian or burning flames. This curved device, shown here (Figure 3.8) in the hand of a rabbit thief who has stolen it from God L, has belligerent implications. It is perhaps a kind of display pole used in military costuming (Wald and Carrasco 2004), or related to the Aztec Xiuhcoatl (Dütting and Johnson 1993:170), a fire- or war-serpent staff with the capability of enacting instantaneous and deadly strikes, much like the force of lightning. Curiously, it is when God L ventures out of the safety of his resident grotto, as in Figure 3.8 where he intermingles with the nighttime sun (seated above God L on the right) and a personification of the moon (symbolized by a rabbit in Mesoamerican lore), that the animated scepter is most prominent.

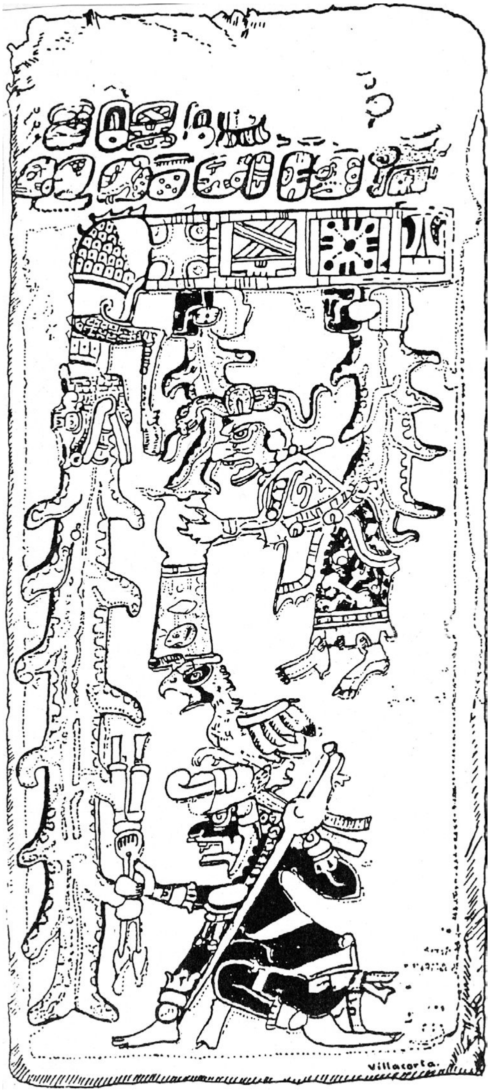

FIGURE 3.7 Flood Scene of the Dresden Codex. From Villacorta and Villacorta (1992:148).

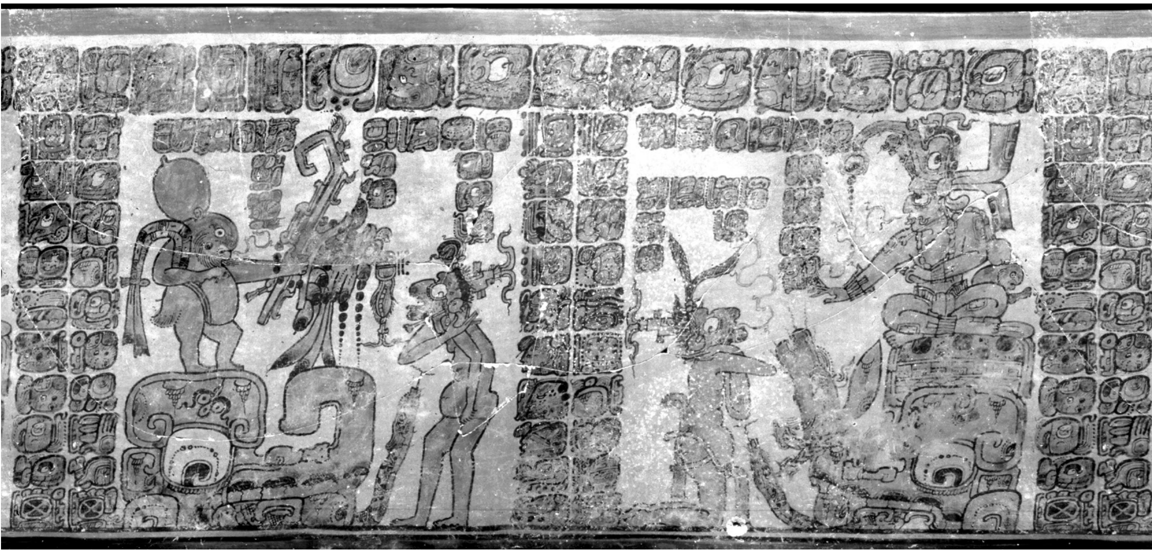

FIGURE 3.8 Rabbit Vase. Rollout view of polychrome ceramic vessel, 26 × 13.8 cm (10.2 × 5.4 in) diameter, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K1398).

Regardless of the meaning of his animated pole, God L is associated with fulguration through K'awiil, an anthropomorphic personification of lightning (Stone and Zender 2011:48–49; Taube 1992:73–76). The two are frequently seen in conference (Figure 3.9; see also Kerr n.d.:K3801, K5810, and K8856), and God L protects or transports K'awiil on occasion (see God L at Santa Rosa Xtampak in Taube 1992:84, Figure 41a); his charge of K'awiil suggests a close and mutually beneficial relationship. Another Classic-era lightning symbol may be the tobacco roll carried by God L, which in contemporary Tzotzil lore personified *anhel*, a rain and mountain deity affiliated with the Earth Lord grouping (Guiteras-Holmes 1961:217, 235).[15] According to Calixta Guiteras-Holmes (1961:217, 235) some people carry and partake of tobacco as a protectant against lightning. Many storage bottles used in ancient times to hold tobacco are decorated with God L imagery, evidence leading John Carlson (2007) to posit that the deity personifies this important native plant. The frequency of tobacco symbolism in the corpus of God L imagery points to his influence over this key agricultural product.

An archaeological investigation at the Yucatecan site of Labná (Brainerd 1958:26–32, 114–115, Figure 3b.1–3) provides another enticing clue: the ancient Maya placed a lidded, polychrome ceramic vessel depicting God L under a chultun at this site.[16] This ritual deposit seems to acknowledge the deity's connection to rainwater. The piece, made ca. 700–1000 CE, is a polychrome, lidded storage vessel about 28 centimeters (11 inches) tall by 21 centimeters (8.25 inches) wide (Brainerd 1958:27, 109, 114–115). Water droplets and curling volutes animate the lid and sides of the pot. Two figural pairs, sitting cross-legged and face-to-face, appear in a horizontal band near the top. One group depicts a human male across from a possible K'awiil while the other portrays a different male and God L. Sizing indicates relative equality between the figures, though favored right-hand placement suggests the two deities are superior in status to the humans (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for a discussion of right-versus-left symbolism). The males sit on cushions or benches while the gods do not, an odd reversal of hierarchical standards. The combined presence of God L (as Earth Lord?) and K'awiil (as the personification of lightning?) may signal a plea for rains to fill local chultunob. Of the more than thirty water storage basins explored at Labná, only one contained such a high-quality polychrome vessel as part

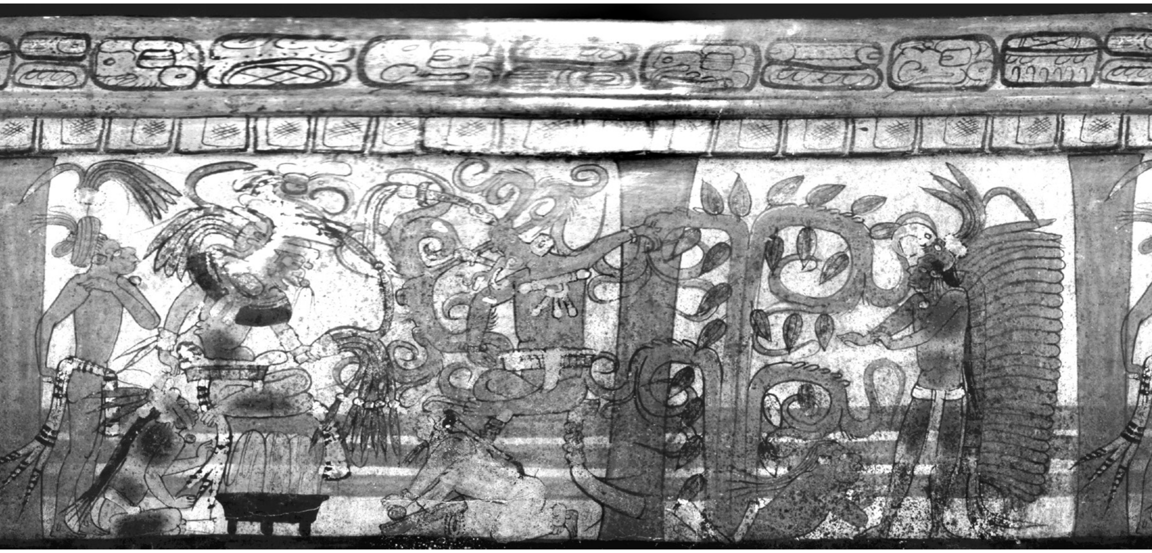

FIGURE 3.9 God L receives tamales from human devotees while K'awiil draws attention to cacao growing nearby. Rollout view of polychrome ceramic vessel, 30 × 12 cm (11.8 × 4.7 in) diameter, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K0631).

of deposited materials. It seems as though this deliberately cached ceramic example was a special tributary gift to God L and K'awiil, and that it signals divine ownership of this particular reservoir.

A few additional correspondences support an Earth Lord designation. One small point of similarity is the relationship between God L and armadillos. According to Barbara and Justin Kerr (2005), the armadillo is the *way* (animal co-essence) of God L. A mountain lord called Xucaneb, recognized by the Kaqchikel and Tzotzil Maya, uses an armadillo-shell throne (Bassie-Sweet 2008:232–233), as does the chief Mam of southern Belize (Thompson 1968:58). The spiraling line drawn inside the eyeball of God L may signify vision that looks into or out from a darkened, swirling, aquatic environment (Bernatz 2006:125–127), and maize foliage growing from his headdress suggests a linkage to healthy, growing corn.[17] Lastly, God L's jaguar attributes and owl headdress connect the deity to long-standing traditions, pictured in PreClassic paintings at the Olmec-related site of Oxtotitlan, whereby regal personas in avian-jaguar costume enter caves to perform ceremonies related to rainfall, water, and fertility (Manzanilla 2000:89–90).

The Spatial Realm of a Classic-Era Earth Lord

How might one define the spatial realm of God L when the deity is interpreted as an archaic Earth Lord? Since he is not prominent in the artistic and archeological record of all Maya eras and territories, we might surmise that some communities recognized God L while others did not. Where God L was acknowledged, he would have been associated with special mountain caves and/or critical sources of water that helped to sustain the agricultural bounty and commercial prosperity of a settlement. This dominion would have been perceived as in close proximity to the residences, fields, and forests of humans and understood as local and universal: existing both at the heart of a particular community and connected to a larger world order. His spatial presence, as relative to the cosmic world, encompassed a broad region both below and above ground level, an area that could be thought of as "near earth and sky." The majority of God L's activities take place in the first few layers underground, where water was imagined to flow, and the sun and moon make their regenerative evening transit. His territory additionally includes the surface of the earth (where corn and cacao outspread foliage) and expands upward into at least one canopy of the lower sky, which is the stratum of rain clouds. On the horizontal plane he might rest at times within a cavernous house at the heart of cosmic space, or tread outward upon roadways that define the four interrelated quarters. He interacts with other gods in supernatural locations and with earthly humans who recognize his mystical power. Reviewing the narrative and symbolism of God L in Maya art demonstrates these ideas.

Let us return to Figure 3.1, a rollout view of K2796 (see Kerr n.d.). This is a ceramic vessel made at or near the site of Naranjo most likely during the eighth century CE. Hieroglyphic text along the rim says the vessel was used for drinking cacao, and though it names an owner, this moniker does not correlate with any currently known king. Given the cosmogonic theme of the object, it was probably made to celebrate some major occurrence in the life of a Naranjo leader or ally. Held and turned within the hands, the possessor could imagine the event and build a parallel between his/her own time frame and the story line unfolding. A beholder might, for instance, witness the supernatural creation pictured and imagine his or her locality as participating within the same universal structure.

We see God L's cave located inside a sacred mountain. The symbolism and inscription (running vertically on the vessel wall) indicate this is the day of Creation (4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u), when aspects of the universe were put in order (*tz'akaj).* Two sacred bundles labeled *balun ek' kab* ("many earth and star" materials) appear before the right-facing lords along with a tall but unspecified package that appears to contain feathers or foliage. Another parcel, labeled *ikatz* (precious riches/jade), rests safely behind God L. Presumably, goods inside the more public bundles will be distributed throughout the universe according to some divine mandate, filling the sky and earth, each with its inherent resources. In contrast, the ikatz parcel containing jade, the preeminent emblem of wealth in Maya society (Stuart 2006a), belongs solely to God L.

In spatial terms, this is the cosmic center. The deity's throne room exists midway between the upper and lower levels of six sub-lords before him, while gestures and positioning show his supervisory role in this episode. Both the earth and sky are referenced in the inscriptions and symbolized by the presence of Chanal-K'uh, meaning "Heavenly God" and possibly naming the owl on God L's hat, and Kabal-K'uh, translated as "Earthly God" and naming the caiman with star, deer, and waterlily attributes that are pictured in the corbelled rooftop of God L's chamber (Zender and Guenter 2003:104–109). It is difficult to discern uniquely celestial features in the costuming of the upper triad; however, one can see underground symbolism, like de-fleshed bones and the long-nosed *chapat* (centipede), among the attributes of the lower group. This presentation of lords places God L at the midpoint between celestial and underworldly forces.

A vertically as well as horizontally centralized location is confirmed by Kabal-K'uh, the caiman hybrid. Also called Itzam Kab Ayin, the creature plays a major role in a life-altering flood that occurred in the archaic past (Taube 1989, 2010:205–206; Velásquez García 2006). When night skies viewed by ancient Mesoamericans were translated into pictorial forms, the starry-deer-caiman was equated with the sun's ecliptic, the Milky Way, and the *axis mundi* because of similarities in shape and positioning (Freidel et al. 1993:75–107). A PreClassic example is sculpted on Izapa Stela 25, showing the caiman body poised upright, like a tree, with nose touching the plane of earth and rear legs/tail extending upward, branching out, and growing leaves (Freidel et al. 1993:88–89). Standing in this manner, the beast becomes a World Tree at the universal epicenter.

In the Dresden Codex (Figure 3.7), the starry-deer-caiman is deliberately sacrificed to destroy and then revive worldly existence (Velásquez García 2006). The document illustrates a downpour of blood/water coming from the mouth of the caiman. This scene closes the New Year's section, pages that record calendar endings and renewals. Eric Velásquez García (2006) points out the similarity of the Dresden illustration to stories in the books of Chilam Balam from Tizimín and Maní: sources that recount how underworld gods brought Itzam Kab Ayin to the world center with the intention of causing a flood. The gods did not want a complete annihilation, however, so the caiman was dismembered and part of its body became the new surface of the earth. The down-spilling head and upper torso of the caiman connect to a skyband with paired oppositional markings: a *k'an* symbol highlights the universal quincunx while crossed elements emphasize the center point where sectors meet; a k'in glyph signifies sunlight and *ak'ab*, darkness. A black-painted God L crouched in a belligerent mode appears below the elderly Goddess O, who adds to the torrent by emptying her jug. He is armed with a spearthrower and darts, references to warfare (and blood sacrifice) undertaken on the earth for the sustenance of life. God L's position is grounded lower than the elder female and below the flood-producing celestial band formed by the partial body of the caiman. Thus, in Figures 3.1 and 3.7, God L is at the axis mundi; his placement relative to Kabal-K'uh suggests a realm below celestial levels of sky yet not far from the surface of the earth where sacred warfare occurs.

Another spatiotemporal notion can be drawn from K2796 (see Kerr n.d.) and its predawn or nocturnal time frame. Regional concepts of time and space, collected by Watanabe (1983:716–719), pinpoint how and where the sun is born. For some Maya people, the counting of a day begins with its descent below the western horizon, which marks the moment of its death.

The process of the sun's birth/rebirth occurs as it passes through the underworld, thought of as the womb of the earth. As it travels through the hot and damp underground realm, the energy and heat of the sun are regenerated so that it can rise anew in the east. That the sun has not yet emerged on this first new-order day implies that the supernatural congregation transpires in a vertically downward sector (where the sun would be regenerated) and along the axis mundi.

Caves like the home of God L are certainly part of the underworld; they were not avoided, however, nor conceived of as far away from Maya settlements. Evidence from art and archaeology demonstrates that caves were visited frequently in order to give tribute to godly forces and were even sought out as quintessential elements in the founding of residential centers (Brady 1997, 2010; Brady and Prufer 2005; Prufer and Brady 2005). One important PreClassic example is the mural rendered at San Bartolo, which pictures a cave inside Flower Mountain, the place where humans were believed to originate and to where later generations might return to live in paradisiacal abundance (Saturno et al. 2005; Taube 2004). Humans are shown bringing tribute items inside the cave in order to honor the maize god and other ancestral figures. Interestingly, the San Bartolo mural was created inside a basal-level chamber positioned underneath the larger Structure 1, as though the intent was to mimic a subterranean cave at the heart of this ceremonial architecture. In a different locale, Maya at the Late Classic site of Dos Pilas deliberately built pyramids over a series of natural underground caves, a construction technique that served as a means of augmenting the settlement with godly power while providing a ready source of water (Brady 1997; Vogt and Stuart 2005:163). Another instance of human life found in close proximity to caves is the conscious mimicking of grottos in ceremonial building. The stone rooms positioned at the tops of pyramids (like caves inside imitation mountains), recreate the transient space where deities of earth and sky might be contacted and revered. Caverns are indeed dangerous places where spiritual forces could cause harm, but because they represent a quintessential aspect of civilization, religion, and life itself, it was desirable to have them nearby.

We see humans paying tribute to God L in Figure 3.9. With his characteristic owl headdress, God L sits cross-legged and at the center of attention on the left side of this rollout image. He is at the summit of a stepped platform with a wooden roof and pillars. Humans gather near the lowest stair at the entrance of the covered space. On the left side of the scene are two males: one is standing with his left arm across the chest in a posture of both reverence and supplication while another sits on the ground in front of a tripod platter, most likely filled with tamales (see Spencer, Chapter 6, for an in-depth consideration of gestures denoting submission). A female on her knees can be seen grinding corn or cacao on a metate. At the far right is a third male, standing with bird headdress and long feathered cloak. The deity K'awiil, whose belted loincloth extends dramatically down the platform stairs, joins God L inside the regal chamber. While looking toward his devotees, K'awiil gestures to his left, reaching beyond the wooden pillar. He draws attention to the fruit-laden cacao bush emerging from the torso of a recumbent figure at the base of the structure. Thus, this narrative takes place within and in front of ceremonial architecture, a man-made environment rather than a natural cave. The human visit to God L's abode may be undertaken to offer food from the first harvest, an activity mentioned in Earth Lord accounts.

At Cacaxtla (Figure 3.5) humans are pictorially absent from God L's realm, but in actuality would have been physically near. The mural in the Red Temple is positioned below the main floor of the raised platform on which Cacaxtla is built, a man-made cave inside a man-made mountain. The painting appears along a nine-step staircase that descends from a doorway opened toward the north (Uriarte 1999:129–134). A metaphorical underworld that feeds life on earth, the room is physically adjacent to the palace compound, suggesting its use by local elites who literally lived next door. Excavated below the raised-platform settlement, the mural occupies an eastern wall of the Red Temple chamber, leading one to question whether God L's mythical travels took him beyond the central axis and into northern and/or eastern locales. Perhaps the deep red-painted background of the scene is meant to reference the color of eastern skies at sunrise. A frog or toad, symbolic of the rainy season or bufotenine secretions (Uriarte 1999:131–132), leaps along the watery band that feeds growing corn and cacao, indicating this place exists in both subterranean and aboveground strata. Likewise, the merchant back rack, so prominent in the scene and loaded with marketable goods, suggests transit and trade, activities dependent upon the earthly roadways that connect diverse settlements.

The Maya of Palenque reinforce the point that God L was perceived to exist in close proximity to humans. The deity appears twice in the Group of the Cross, a temple construction situated at the heart of the city near the palace compound but across the Otolum River. It is a setting that may deliberately reference an important spring on the mountainside just to the south (Stuart 2006b:87–98, 2010:41–43). The Temple of the Cross sanctuary (Figure 3.6), as mentioned earlier, is a ceremonial oven or sweatbath where ritual acts were performed to honor and nourish Palenque's patron gods (Houston 1996; Stuart 2006b:87–98). An image of God L is located on the right (east) doorjamb of the inner chamber and across from a portrait of K'inich K'an Balam II, the reigning king from 684 to 702 CE and the person responsible for this building program. The human king is dressed in special regalia that allows him to impersonate or embody ancestral figures (Stuart 2006b:112–113) and thus parallel the age and potency of God L. This pairing, which places a living king (albeit in ancestral guise) in communion with God L, demonstrates the proximity humans could expect under certain circumstances.

The sanctuary chamber is called an "underground house" in hieroglyphic texts; but the location has celestial implications due to the Wak ? Chan (Six ? Sky) moniker and the six platform levels of pyramid construction (Stuart 2006b:109–111). According to David Stuart (2006b:111), the Six ? Sky house is a mythical location "established in the north soon after the era creation day on 13.0.0.0.0 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u." It seems that the cigar-smoking God L has journeyed to this northern house (symbolized by footprints on his loincloth) to witness events articulated by the large sculpted panel inside the chamber. In logistical terms, the mythically oriented north house probably refers to a vertically upward place rather than a cardinal direction. This is confirmed by the man-made mountain that carries the chamber skyward, the Principal Bird Deity that decorates the upper sanctuary facade, and the celestial caiman sculpted on the exterior of the Temple of the Cross pyramid (Stuart 2006b:110–111). Moreover, the main tablet, which discusses the rebirth of Palenque's gods and ancestral generations, and illustrates ruler K'an Balam at two stages of life (as a youth and at accession), features "The Resplendent Jewel Tree" as a marker of the sun's zenith transit (Stuart 2006b:115–119). If the Maya believed in a cosmic system similar to that of the Codex Vaticanus A (Figure 3.3), the sixth sky canopy would be above the transit of the sun and near to the heaven of the fire drill, a fitting place for ceremonies aimed at temporal renewal. Regardless, the iconography here confirms the ability of God L to exit his underworld cave in order to commingle in both human and celestial space.

A supernatural place of a different sort is visible in Figure 3.8, a ceramic container picturing a less powerful God L than seen in other examples.[18] The source of his misfortune is the loss of costuming that empowers the deity. In scene one of this narrative, God L's clothing and staff/display pole are stolen by a trickster rabbit, an act that causes God L to humble himself before his associates. Like inscriptions from the Temple of the Cross, the conversational text in scene two of the Rabbit Vase refers to a mythical place in the north, which is supposedly where the pesky animal went after stealing God L's things. In fact, the rabbit (moon) has gone no further than to hide behind the sun god's throne, the two apparently allies in this caper. If not in the celestial north, where in the cosmos do these events take place? We see the animated mountain as a location marker in both scenes; but instead of being inside his mountain-cave abode, God L stands or kneels in front of the *witz* and markedly below his supernatural tormenters. The sun god, who is characteristically marked by crossed eyes and k'in signs, wears a long-nosed chapat on his head to denote the nighttime staging of this scene (Taube 2003a). Thus, the unfolding events take place in the underworld, presumably along the west-to-east course of the sun's nocturnal passage. One purpose of this illustration in a mythological sense is to underscore the superior forces of the sun and moon, both of which exist in a higher celestial canopy than God L. When cycling underground for regenerative purposes, the sun and moon would necessarily pass though the territory of God L (since it is positioned near the earth's surface and because it is a place of nourishment). One could hypothesize (referencing Figures 3.2 and 3.3) that the sun transits in the sky in level four and the moon in level two. If accurate, the sun would far outreach the normal capacity of God L while the moon would be more closely competitive. In fact, the Codex Vaticanus A indicates that both the moon and rain clouds (water sent into the sky by God L?) occupy level two. The conception of overlapping territory may have inspired a popular Maya story line in which the moon goddess and her rabbit steal God L's clothing (see, for example, Kerr n.d.:K5166 and K5359). It is plausible, too, that the notion of gaining and losing potency provided a viable metaphor for the rise and fall of political leaders and kingdoms (see Spencer, Chapter 6, for more information about nakedness and status in Maya art).

We have seen God L's activities at the cosmic center, into the downward space of the underworld, upon the earth's surface, and reaching into the celestial realm. The Venus pages of the Dresden Codex call to mind another spatial idea that must be addressed: the metaphorical movement of God L along the eastern and western horizons. As one of the named gods who take on the mantel of Venus, God L belongs to both dawn and dusk and, in spatial terms, to the sectors visible just above the watery expanses of sea that border Mesoamerican lands. A naked-eye astronomer of ancient times would notice the rising of Venus in conjunction with the birth of the sun at daybreak and at its death on the western front. Venus is never far from K'inich Ajaw (Sun God) during these brief celestial encounters; but, as the sun continues its upward swing, Venus darts back under the earth, like a metaphorical *aat* (a word for penis and old male deities like God L) that fills, ejects, and then softens again. In the guise of Venus, God L can never rise beyond the first few celestial levels: he comes briefly into view above the earthly plane only to return to his underworld abode. On the horizon, the pathway of Venus appears somewhat quirky and even violent, as the planet's orbit takes on its five, ever-repeating forms (Aveni 2001:80–94). The arches, twists, and double backs that characterize the Venus pathway seem to mark behavior that is disordered, especially when compared to the consistency of the sun's passage. It is no surprise therefore that ancient followers of God L, as a symbol on the horizon, might attribute to him a dangerous and unpredictable behavior.

Conclusion

It is clear from the commentary above that Maya gods lived within the landscape and perception of humans. The critical interrelationship between ordinary people and supernaturals can be thought of as reciprocal, a covenant into which humans and deities enter for universal sustenance. Whether of celestial or underworld status, gods were viewed without moralistic judgments of good or evil. Gods simply were, and when benefit or detriment occurred, both humans and gods were responsible. Because of these religious notions it is inaccurate to categorize beings like God L with negative terminology. A better assessment of his nature should reflect the ambiguity with which he was viewed and the potentiality he held for negative and positive outcomes.

The mythological narrative of God L equates well with contemporary reports of beings called Earth Lords: wealthy owners of earthly resources and controllers of water and rain. God L lives in a cave and travels the underworld realm; however, a spatial analysis reveals an existence that transcends underworld boundaries. The deity traverses onto the living environment of the earth's surface, visiting fields planted with corn, stands of cacao growing under the forest canopy, and temples built by kings. Examples drawn from Maya art lay out a wide horizontal yet more narrow vertical space for the actions of God L, who seems to have been generally contained within areas just above, on, and below the earth. His supernatural force is especially present in the upper subterranean layers where water flows sustain the fecundity of life. His range incorporated darkened underground places, the earthy realm of agriculture and warfare, and a limited area of sky, especially where rain clouds form. In the guise of Venus, God L could be detected along the eastern and western horizons whereas on other occasions he appeared at the epicenter of the universe. The painted narratives of Maya ceramics indicate his presence within sectors near earth and sky, places that were at least partly visible to Maya observers, sometimes close in proximity to settlements, and visited during ritual events. Acting as a kind of Classic-era Earth Lord who could bring good fortune or dismay, it seems God L was never too far from the realm of human beings.

Acknowledgments

My sincere thanks go to volume editors Maline Werness-Rude and Kaylee Spencer for the suggestions they made, which surely improved the content of my essay. They also deserve credit for being the force behind the conference sessions that ultimately led to this published anthology.

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Notes

1. See also Michele M. Bernatz (2012:92–93) for a short discussion on Maya religion. Excerpts and ideas first presented in my earlier article (Bernatz 2012) are here summarized with the permission of Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

2. Paul Kirchhoff (1952) defined the geographic limitations, ethnic composition, and cultural characteristics of Mesoamerica and recorded interconnected ways of life across the region.

3. For an extended discussion on the relationship between Maya mythology and the experiential reality of ancient people, see Bernatz (2006:52–62).

4. An excellent definition of the term *sin* as understood within the religious traditions of ancient Mesoamerica comes from Alfredo López Austin (1997:16, 46–47 footnote 9): "the transgression of gods or of humans against a previous divine order, an action which, if committed by gods, can produce a new process of creation, and which, when committed by humans, produces a serious disequilibrium capable of seriously affecting the transgressor, his family, and other people, since the condition is contagious."

5. Jesper Nielsen and Toke Sellner Reunert (2009) argue the autochthonous Mesoamerican cosmos includes three planes only (sky, earth, underworld); further divisions of the vertical axis occurred as a result of colonization and the imposition of European beliefs about the Christian heaven and hell.

6. Mary Ellen Miller (1999:40) references pyramids at Tikal and Palenque as examples of widespread Mesoamerican beliefs in thirteen sky and nine underworld levels; however, it is probable that across the regions and cultures of Mesoamerica varying local stories existed regarding the nature of its multilevel form (Bassie-Sweet 2008:58).

7. The question mark stands for a still undeciphered hieroglyph.

8. The Popol Vuh is an indigenous K'iche' Maya text copied from a long-hidden original by a Spanish priest in Chichicastenango during the early 1700s. Though the manuscript is Colonial in date, it is thought to be based on pre-contact traditions. To read the story of the Hero Twins see Allen Christenson (2007:119–191).

9. The first twins are called One Hunahpu and Seven Hunahpu and the second are Hunahpu and Xbalanque.

10. The word *tun* refers to the 360-day Maya year; *k'atun* refers to a 20-year period and a baktun represents 400 years.

11. According to William F. Hanks (1990:304–306), some Maya see east (rather than north) as up (celestial layers) and west (rather than south) as down (underworld territory).

12. The four boundary points of the quincunx arrangement do not necessarily correspond to cardinal directions, but may instead be conceived as markers of the four solstice positions (Stuart 2011:77).

13. I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to Karen Bassie-Sweet (2008:181, 230–235) and Simon Martin (2006:171; 2010:161), whose commentaries touch on the relationship between God L and mam (ancestral mountain gods). Their preliminary ideas inspired me to think more deeply about the Earth Lord concept.

14. Some of the recorded names for Earth Lords include Anhel (or Canhel), Mam, Tzuultaq'a, and Yahval Balamil (Adams and Brady 2005:303–310; Gossen 1974:21, 86–87, 266–267, 287, 311; Guiteras-Holmes 1961:191–193, 291; Moyes 2005:187–191; Vogt 1969:302–303, 1993:16–17, 33, 57–58; Vogt and Stuart 2005:164–179).

15. The Tzotzil people interviewed by Calixta Guiteras-Holmes (1961) use the term *moy* for tobacco products.

16. George W. Brainerd (1958:114) claims the vessel was excavated by Edward H. Thompson (1897). Further details of the archaeological context are unclear, however, since Thompson says nothing of the discovery in his report.

17. Foliage cascading from God L's headdress is apparent in his image at the Temple of the Cross at Palenque (see the Linda Schele Drawing Collection:Schele # 176).

18. For interpretations of the Rabbit Vase (Kerr n.d.:K1398) see Dieter Dütting and Richard E. Johnson (1993); Stuart (1993); and Robert Wald and Michael Carrasco (2004). The rim text tells us K1398 belonged to a young king named K'ak' Tiliw Chan Chak, who ruled from 693 to at least 728 CE under the regency of his mother, Lady Six Sky. Columnar texts indicate the vessel was made to commemorate a military "coming of age" ritual undertaken to prepare the youth for battle (Wald and Carrasco 2004).

4

Space Men Carving Out a Sense of Place in the Chocholá Style

MALINE D. WERNESS-RUDE

Although neither of them recognized the connection at the time, the grandfathers of Maya studies, John Lloyd Stephens (1843) and Herbert Spinden (1913:186) (Figure 4.1) both commented on and illustrated a handful of highly sophisticated, visually related ceramic vessels from the northernmost extension of the Maya world. In his now famous publication of the Grolier Club Exhibition, Michael Coe (1973) was the first to suggest that such pieces could be grouped together in what he dubbed the Chocholá style. The Chocholá designation is based on a loose set of shared artistic precepts governing iconographic and hieroglyphic inclusions. In addition to the consistent paste color and trickle (i.e., post-fire) paint Coe (1973:114) mentioned, he and Carolyn Tate (1985:124) have also noted that the ceramic bodies were frequently burnished or slipped prior to firing in order to enhance the luster of the clay. Cinnabar was rubbed into areas of the design once the pots had cooled (Figure 4.2; see also Ardren 1996:4; Coe 1973; Tate 1985:124) in an action that emphasized the imagery through the change in color. Such additional treatment probably also, as one of the culminating acts of creation, helped to dedicate or finish the vessel (see Olton, Chapter 7, for similar ideas regarding cinnabar and dedication).

Following Coe, many others have recognized that the Chocholá group may be identified and clearly distinguished from other contemporary carved wares found in northwestern Yucatán (Ardren 1996; Boot 1997, 2006, 2008; García Campillo 1992; Green 1997; Grube 1990; Grube and Gaida 2006;

Pallán Gayol 2006; Pool Cab 1997; Schmidt 2004; Simmons 1978–1980; Tate 1985; Vallo 2000; Velázquez Valadés et al. 2005). Long known for their depth of carving, sophisticated imagery, and complex hieroglyphic sequences, Chocholá vessels were manufactured in the Puuc (i.e., hilly) region of the Yucatán Peninsula for approximately one hundred years beginning ca. 700 CE (Figure 1.1; García Campillo 1992; Werness 2010). We can now extend this grouping to include greater diversity in vessel form and stylistic expression as well as a broader geographic area of manufacture. Core iconographic sets continue to demonstrate a remarkably consistent stylistic vision, however, even as the complete corpus evinces some variation according to regionalized production.

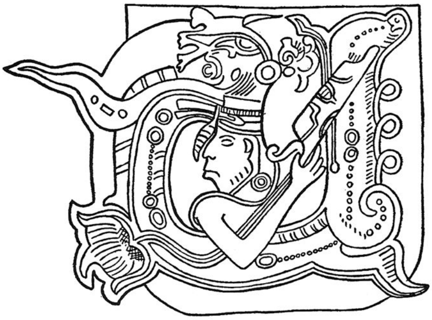


FIGURE 4.1 Isolated Bust Scene. Chocholá Style Vessel, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE. From Spinden (1913:186).

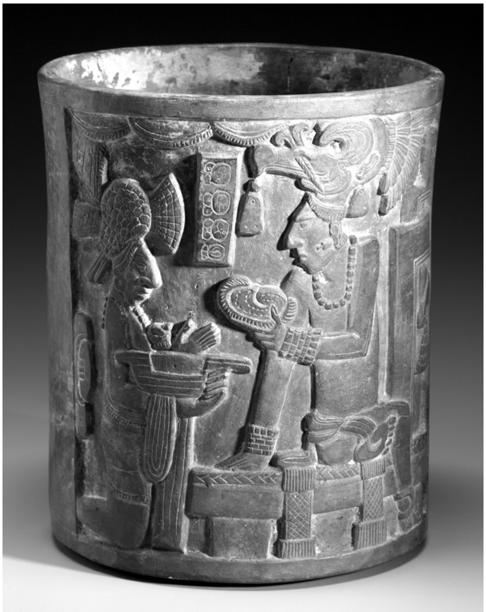


FIGURE 4.2 Palace/Ceremonial Scene with traces of red pigment, Chocholá Style Vessel, 20.7 × 17.3 cm (8.5 × 6.81 in) diameter, reputedly from Jaina Island, Campeche, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE. Image © Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas (Apx 1974.04).

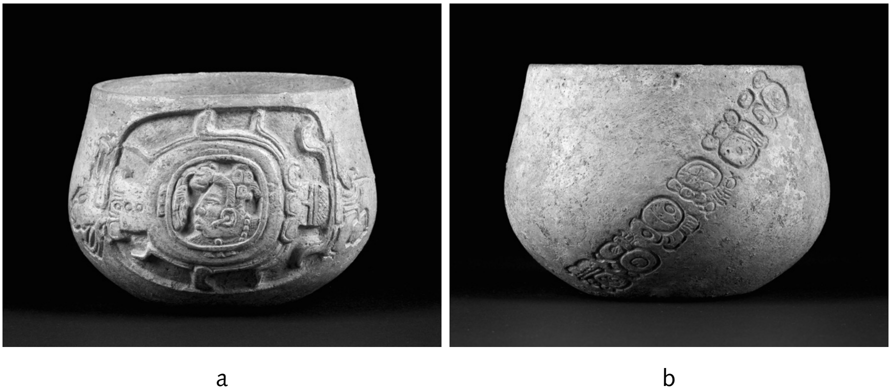
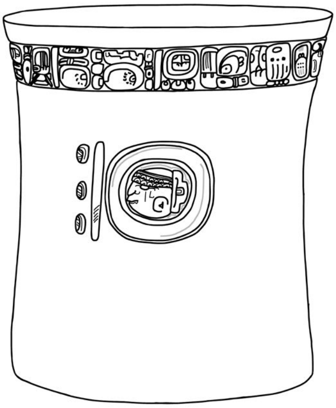


FIGURE 4.3 Isolated Bust Scene, Chocholá Style Vessel, 10.4 × 15 cm (4.13 × 5.88 in) diameter, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE, (a) Isolated Bust Scene, flower cartouche; (b) diagonal text. Image © Saint Louis Art Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer Jr. (257:1982).

Carved images of young lords (or, very occasionally, ladies) frequently emerge from the sides of vessels in the Chocholá style. So common is the appearance of a human elite that Chocholá pots can be grouped into categories based on the particular form taken by the aristocratic representation. Image groups show the leader in various guises, as a ballplayer diving across the side of ceramic bowls, meeting with subservient figures in a palace, sitting by himself in an undetermined location, or peering out through a cartouche or misty portal.[1] While all clearly legitimize the position of the person depicted and most display explicit locational references, the last—the Isolated Bust Scene composed of a partially visible human figure surrounded by either watery (Figure 4.1) or flowery (Figure 4.3a) scrolls or a cartouche (Figure 4.4)—provides the richest fodder for spatial analysis.

Most previous scholarship has focused on epigraphic and anthropological analysis alongside initial interpretations of imagery. While making strong contributions, these approaches were driven by goals that did little to elucidate the spatial constructs employed in the making of the Chocholá style or the ideology that inspired their creation. Consciously art historical and methodological perspectives that simultaneously emphasize dialectics provide a set of tools particularly well suited to this task. As Robert Nelson (1997:40) has noted, “In daily practice, art history engages not one but many spaces—aesthetic, architectural, urban, social, religious, political, and so on—and this bears within itself diverse examples of spatial narratives.”

FIGURE 4.4 Isolated Bust Scene, calendrical cartouche, Chocholá Style Vessel, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude from Sotheby's Inc. (1998:Sale 7138, Lot 150).



The present analysis will touch on all the areas Nelson mentions while focusing on the way in which the Isolated Bust Scene incorporates nuanced spatial considerations at three different levels. First, an examination of appearance necessitates a discussion of vessel form as well as the aesthetic space found on that form. Consistent formatting (the arrangement of shapes relative to one another) and layout (the placement and spacing of formatted elements on a surface) create connections with other like objects. Second, these visual features can be combined with an analysis of deposition, which allows the investigator to literally map the spread of the corpus and discuss the associated political implications such stylistic dissemination carries. Third, the imagery found on these containers explicitly alludes to particular places and their relationship to the viewer and the depicted individual. Indeed, this is what sets the group dedicated to partially seen lords apart from other iconographic sets in the Chocholá style. In it, the artist demonstrates an interest in the spatiality of imagery and in imaging space as a way of engaging with the viewer in a quintessentially more intimate manner than more straightforward allusions to architectural arenas like the stepped ballcourts or palaces found in other Chocholá scene categories (Figure 4.2).[2]

Aesthetics and Their Role in Identifying the Isolated Bust Scene Category: Form, Formatting, and Layout

The ability to recognize the Chocholá young-lord image set clearly goes far beyond simply identifying a representation on a ceramic vessel as one dedicated to an elite human figure, otherwise the category would be almost boundless. To begin with, the ceramic forms themselves, as objects in space, exhibit remarkable consistency. Unlike the tall, straight-sided cylinder vessels that are a luxury staple of the Classic-era southern lowlands, these shapes are shorter and more cuplike in nature. Most examples display a lightly flaring rim that gracefully curves down into a slightly swelling, typically footless base (see Figure 4.5 for an example of standard vessel shape). The resulting ceramic walls provide an even surface for the carving of imagery and text, although potters adjusted their representations and inscriptions to correct visually for these slight flares and rounded areas. Small variations to vessel form reduce the outward curve of the lip and/or the bulge at the base. In one example (Figures 4.3a–b), the potter created an inward slant at the top of the cup, for instance, as a way of emphasizing the curvature at the bottom of the vessel. Other craftsmen chose to make minor alterations to the flaring rim/swelling base form by straightening the walls (e.g., Figure 4.1) or changing the bottom so that it flares outward in a way that mimics the top (e.g., Figure 4.4).[3] Actual dimensions for Chocholá ceramics carrying the image of the isolated leader are also fairly consistent (Tate 1985:124).

In addition to creating standard forms, potters who represented the Isolated Bust Scene repeatedly selected similar layouts and formatting. First, there is the manner in which iconographic and textual blocks are distributed across the ceramic body. Second, individual text strings and images also contain internal arrangements that visually project a sense of stylistic affiliation. The broader picture of how text and image relate to one another and to the surface upon which they appear displays the same kind of consistency demonstrated by vessel form and the selection of the young lord (or lady) as a subject.

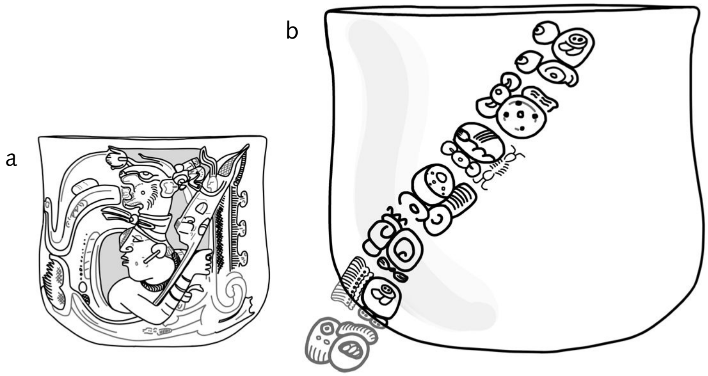


FIGURE 4.5 Isolated Bust Scene, Chocholá Style Vessel, 11.4 cm (4.48 in), Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE, (a) Isolated Bust Scene; (b) diagonal text. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude from Coe (1973:Catalogue 59).

Text Strings and the Written Word

In the vast majority of cases where vessel imagery shows a royal personage in a cartouche, the artist also included hieroglyphic texts (or, more rarely, pseudoglyphs mimicking the appearance of writing without actually being readable).[4] Chocholá inscriptions usually mention the container itself as well as its contents and the titles held by its owner and/or patron. Similar inclusions can be found on vessels across the Maya world and have come to be called either the Primary Standard Sequence (Coe 1973) or the Dedicatory Formula (Stuart 1989:154, 2005:114). As a result, despite the fact that such passages are widely used, the actual appearance of words in a string varies greatly due to the visual nature of ancient Maya logo-syllabic writing (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, especially the Commentary, Sources, and Suggested Reading section on Writing and Artistry). When the formula is carved into Chocholá examples of the Isolated Bust Scene, it can appear as a band that wraps around the top of the vessel and is set off from its body by rim lines (Figure 4.4). Alternately, the scribe incised the dedicatory words into a low-relief vertical rectangle opposite the image (Figures 4.6a–b). Most frequently (i.e., at least twice as often), however, the artist inscribed hieroglyphs into the vessel wall as a diagonal string (Figure 4.3b).[5] The diagonal or vertical text is a particularly telling attribute since such arrangements are unusual in other ancient Maya ceramic traditions. In almost all cases, the person who created the text went to great pains to keep it completely separate from any iconography. As the format of choice, the diagonally and vertically oriented glyphic strings appear on the opposite side of the vessel from the image, so that the viewer cannot see the written word and the pictorial scene at the same time. Such passages are often further set off from both image and ceramic body by single or double lines bounding the glyphic band (Figure 4.7b).

The actual appearance of the glyphs dramatically increases recognition through repetition by consistently emphasizing isolated sections of the Dedicatory Formula (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for a brief discussion of repetition). The *ujaay y-uk'ib* (his cup, his drinking vessel) and *ti tzih/tzihil* . . . (for fresh . . .) phrases in particular demonstrate this pattern. Most Isolated Bust inscriptions favor a truncated version of the Dedicatory Formula. In these cases, scribes usually started out with the *ujaay* phrase instead of the Introductory Glyph that, as its name indicates, commonly initiates the standardized textual dedication in other examples.[6] This means that the same term is located in almost exactly the same place across Isolated Bust pieces, a pattern that speaks to conscious choice given the omission of the Introductory Glyph it requires.

Not only did scribes use the same words in the same places, but they also spelled these terms using the kind of visual repetition seen in the iconographic panels found on the opposing sides of the vessels. A particular form of the **u** syllable appears in the *ujaay* collocation across many vases (Figures 4.3b, 4.5), for instance, despite the fact that Maya authors had quite a few visually distinct yet linguistically equivalent variants of the **u** syllable from which to choose. In other ceramic traditions throughout the Maya region, the combination of both *ujaay* and *y-uk'ib* is rare (Hull 2012) and *ti tzih/tzihil* also is not a phrase that requires constant use (for comparison, consider the relative scarcity of these terms across the dedicatory examples found in the Justin Kerr Maya Vase Database [n.d.] or in Dorie Reents-Budet's [1994] *Painting the Maya Universe*).

The craftsmen responsible for creating the young-lord trope in the Chocholá style took their interest in location as it applies to hieroglyphs even further. A handful of titles that are not mutually exclusive and which, in other contexts, can be combined with the highest of designations, the

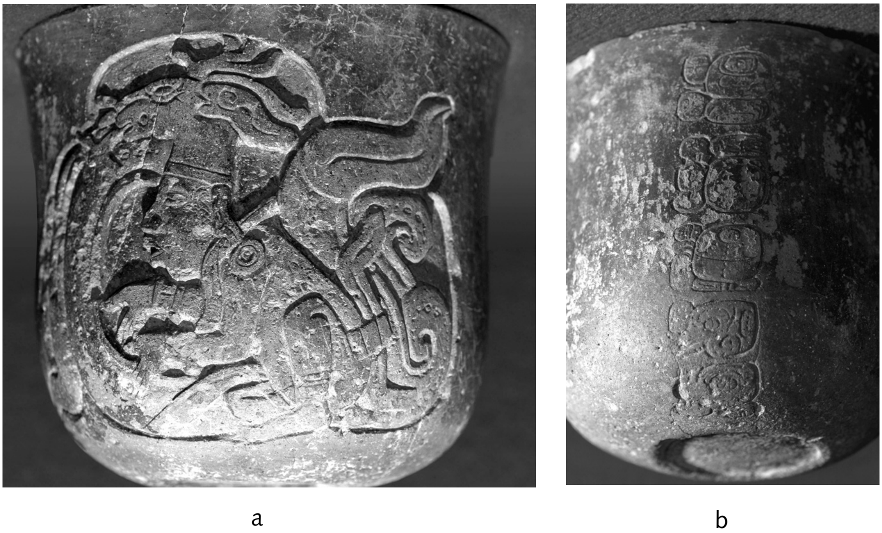


FIGURE 4.6 Lone Lord, Chocholá Style Vessel, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE, (a) Seated Young Lord; (b) vertical text. Photograph © David Stuart courtesy of the Department of Art and Art History, College of Fine Arts, The University of Texas at Austin.

divine lord moniker, were also given preference. The formatting tools mentioned above were clearly at work here too—the same titles, spelled using the same syllabic or logographic forms, occur in the same places over and over again. These nominal phrases often incorporate explicit spatial references as well. The frequently chosen *sajal* moniker, for instance, which Stephen Houston and David Stuart (2001:61) have suggested reads, "one who fears," clearly designates regional governors (Figure 4.5). *Bakab*, on the other hand, as Stephen Houston, David Stuart, and Karl A. Taube (2006: 62–63) propose, seems to describe the person so named as mountain-like and/or the head of a geographic region (Figure 4.5).

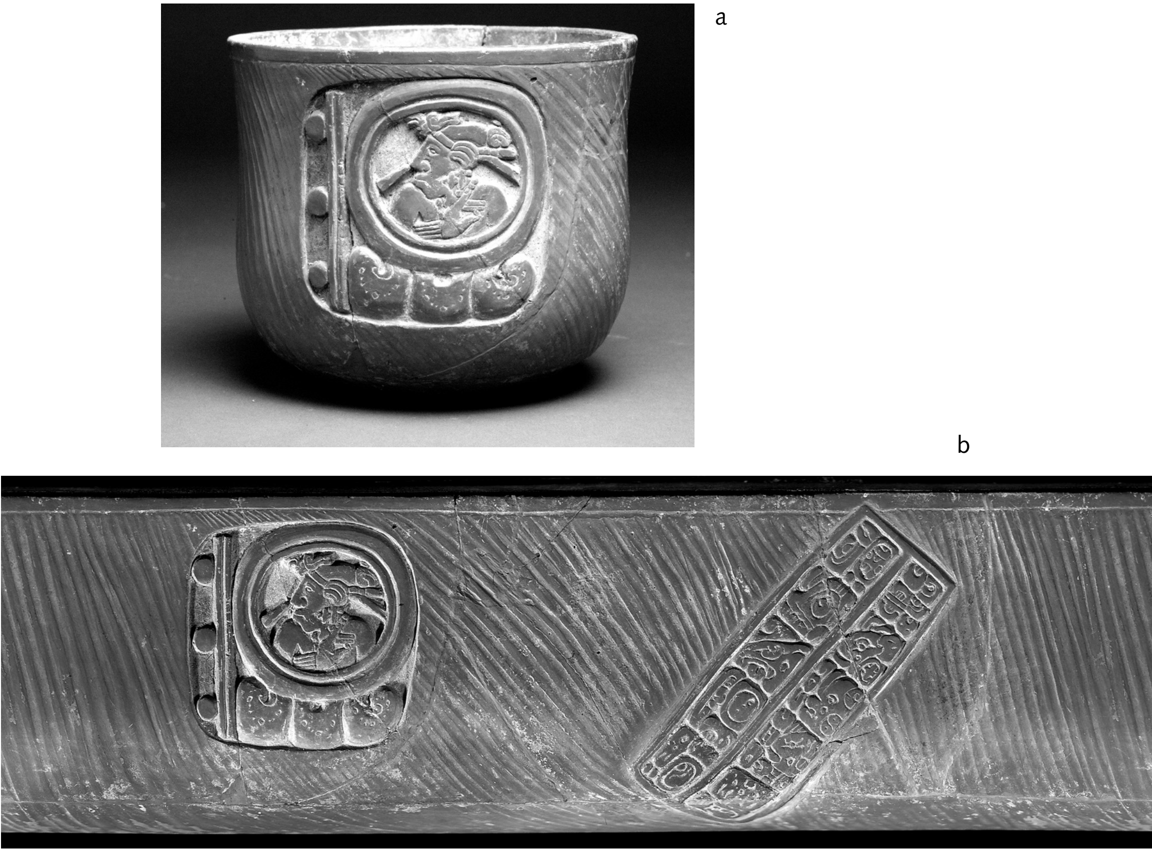


FIGURE 4.7 Isolated Bust Scene, calendrical cartouche, Chocholá Style Vessel, 12.6 × 15 cm (4.96 × 5.9 in) diameter, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE, (a) Isolated Bust Scene, calendrical cartouche; (b) rollout photograph showing diagonal text. Photographs © Justin Kerr (Maya Vase Database:K4466).

In using the bakab title, scribes often emphasized the geographical connection through spelling. In a variation of the standard **ba-ka-ba** syllabic approach, Chocholá artists repeatedly chose to render the term as **ba-ka-KAB** (Figure 4.7b). This spelling choice serves to focus attention on the **KAB** logograph. *Kab*, by itself, means earth and it is this less common set of glyphic choices, particularly associated with the Chocholá style, that led Houston and colleagues (2006:63) to suggest that the term referred "perhaps [to a] literal 'hilltop' that supported the sky (a reference to elevated palace dwellings and temples controlled by lords?) or someone in charge, ultimately, of agricultural terrain."

Also frequently incorporated are the *chak ch'ok* (great/red youth; see Grube 1990:325) (Figure 4.7b) and *kalomte'* titles, the latter of which can carry directional associations (Lacadena 2004; readers may also remember Werness-Rude and Spencer's brief mention of the northern kalomte' in Chapter 1). In this way, the preoccupation with spatiality seems to be demonstrated not only in the actual, physical distribution of such titles across vessels' surfaces, but also in the very selection of monikers that contain locational implications. The texts link the people to whom they refer with the land and an implicit control of geographic as well as political space.

Iconography

The artists working in this tradition maintained the consistency of their approach—already seen in the vessel shape, the formatting of text and image, and the layout of text strings—in the representations of the actual focus, the body of the leader. As already noted, the imagery itself is highly repetitious: a young lord's (or in one case, possibly a lady's) head is visible and seems to be emerging from some space not accessible to the viewer (for more on the viewer's relationship to the image, see below and Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, particularly the Sight, Vision, and Visuality section as well as the one dedicated to Visual Hierarchies and Conventions). Scrolls that partially frame the elite individual define this space and are marked as either misty (Figures 4.1, 4.5) or, less commonly, flowery (Figure 4.3a), or as day-sign cartouches (Figures 4.4, 4.7a–b). Geometric shapes (especially rounded squares) pick up where the volutes leave off when the scrolls do not reach all the way around the figured center (Figures 4.5a, 4.6a).

In the young-lord motif, visual features always fully encapsulate the leader's space. The individual in question typically appears in profile, looking to his (or her) right so that the viewer sees the left side of the face; the frame commonly cuts the figure off just below the shoulders. In some cases an implement held by the lord emphasizes the dimensionality of the representation by creating clear overlap between the human, the tool, and the scene boundary (see especially Figures 4.1, 4.5). A nuanced consideration of this kind of imagery provides important insights into the politicized message the potters incorporated into their designs. Such an evaluation must be based on a clear understanding of the formal constraints incorporated into the act of image construction, however, as well as an awareness of who would have seen it.

From a perspective that privileges formatting concerns, the ceramicists responsible for creating this group of vessels used a similar approach to the one they adopted in the layout of the hieroglyphic inclusions. They maintained separation in the creation of the image, which, like the text, remains completely distinct from the rest of the vessel. What is more, their marked use of high relief creates a sense of recession that in many cases verges on three-dimensionality, a point explored further below. The depth attained by Chocholá craftsmen is so consistent that it acts as a key diagnostic feature, one that, if not unique to the corpus, is at least infrequently associated with the ceramic medium in other contexts. In fact, such surface appearance has led several scholars to draw parallels between Chocholá examples and monumental sculpture in stone (Ardren 1996:237; Stephens 1843:274–276). The aforementioned volutes bind the space created by this deep carving, thereby initiating a transition between the location of the lord in deep space and the surface of the ceramic wall through the use of incision as opposed to high relief.

Text-Image Relationships

In coordination with the specific layout and formatting concerns that individually constrain text and image, the relationship between the two (or the lack thereof) acts as another diagnostic feature. Indeed, so careful were the potters in creating the distinction between the Isolated Bust imagery and its associated inscription that they rarely chose the traditional rim-band layout for the Dedicatory Formula, preferring the diagonal or vertical arrangement mentioned above. In the cases when a Chocholá artist combined this iconography with a rim sequence, he typically inserted a gap between the two, which he further emphasized by framing each space with lines while also separating the two sites of additional artistic activity from one another (Figure 4.4). This codification of a Chocholá pattern of text usage relative to iconography contrasts with other carved ceramics that provide instances in which hieroglyphic sequences have been incorporated into the scene frame. The Chocholá approach to the carving technique in the Isolated Bust Scene creates a nuanced use of space wherein both image and backdrop are separated from the rest of the vessel because each resides on a different plane. The use of incised line to create the glyphic strings discussed above embodies yet a third plane that is quite distinct from those created either by the surface of the vessel or the depth of the carved imagery (in particular, see Figures 4.3a–b).

The foregoing discussion has demonstrated that a set of core attributes can be used to identify the Isolated Bust Scene. In all cases imagery is clearly separated from, and "floats" above, a blank ground unconnected with either the rim or the base of delicately cup-shaped vessels. While distinct from iconography, textual inclusions say much the same thing in similar places. Indeed, this approach to formatting seems to relate to a quintessential desire to separate the constituent parts of the surface decoration both from one another and from the ceramic form on which they appear, thereby denying any connection between the different areas. When this approach is combined with iconography that focuses on a disembodied youthful visage seen from the left, the attributes coalesce to define a unique Chocholá group. Text and image are emphatically separated from one another on any given vessel, yet when viewed across examples, the constant combination of both speaks to their participation in the broader ceramic grouping we now call the Chocholá Isolated Bust Scene. In other words, the consistency in such arrangements broadcasts a specific, easily recognizable type of visual program in which the existence of one (a lord in a deeply carved cartouche frame) necessarily implies the other (the opposing vertical or diagonal incised text) given the consistency in the repetition of both simultaneous with their studied separation from one another.

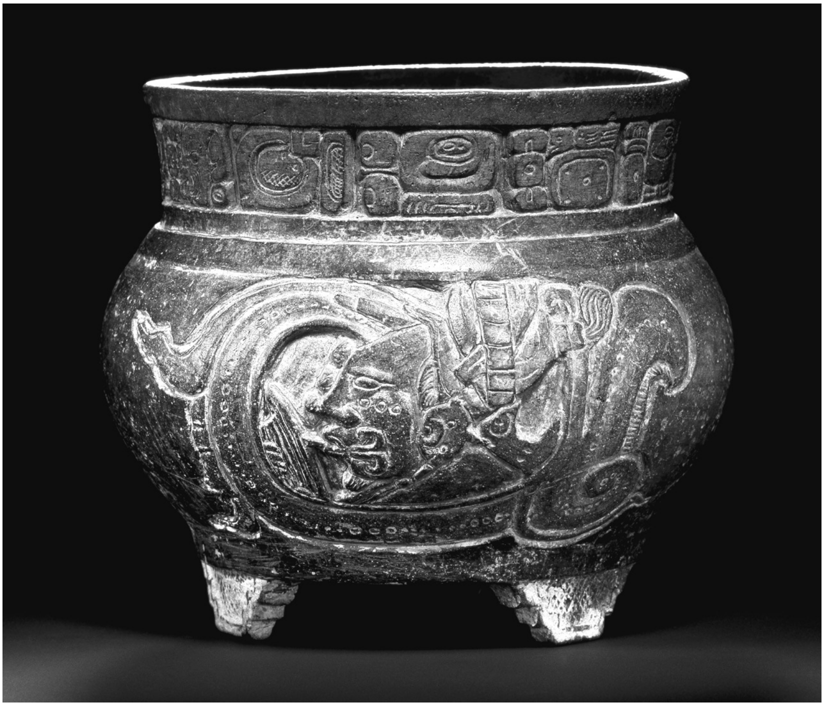
Expanding Connections

Not surprisingly, these diagnostic characteristics allow connections with other scenes in the Chocholá style while also demonstrating that, despite such seemingly rigid approaches to text and image space, the craftsmen could also experiment. One clear example of the Chocholá Isolated Bust Scene displays key attributes that create connections with other scene groupings (Figures 4.8a–b). The vessel in question diverges from the standard cup shape to incorporate a rim that changes direction radically from the trajectory of the vessel wall, which itself has taken a more rounded profile than normal. The pot also has a set of tripod feet that are completely atypical within the style as a whole. The paste is the right color and it does present a beautiful man in a fancy headdress surrounded by watery scrolls, but obviously this by itself would not be enough to identify the drinking vessel as part of the young-lord group or the Chocholá style.

When considered in conjunction with the iconographic and hieroglyphic parallels shared by the attributes found on this vessel and those of the previous analysis, formatting again acts as a key element allowing it to be classified as part of the Chocholá young-lord trope. Both a diagonal and a rim text appear, for example, and have precisely the same kind of relationship with the imagery mentioned above. The diagonal string reads *ujaay y-uk'ib ti tzih sajal* in a repetition of the most selected portions of the dedicatory sequence. The form taken by the **u** syllable in particular indicates a clear link with other vessels in this category (especially compare the **u** syllable found to the right of the third visible glyph block in Figure 4.8a with that seen at the outset of the texts in Figures 4.3b, 4.5). The sequence exhibits a further unusual development in the use of a full-figured form of the **k'i** syllable. While it only occurs in this one example from the young-lord trope, it is a frequent inclusion in calabash vessel types that scholars now classify as Chocholá (Green 1997; Grube 1990; Pallán Gayol 2006; Velázquez Valadés et al. 2005; Werness 2010). The calabash form, it should be noted, also incorporates a rim section that changes direction dramatically from the trajectory of the vessel wall.[7] The Chocholá use of the full bird instead of the more common bird wing to read **k'i** is unique within the corpus of Maya inscriptions. The selection of the full-figured form thus becomes another distinctive attribute that can be used to identify Chocholá vessels (see also García Campillo 1992; Werness 2010).

Two additional examples (Figures 4.6a–b, 4.9) do not incorporate the framed bust of a young lord in their iconographic programs but nonetheless demonstrate a close relationship with this scene grouping. A comparison indicates the kinds of connections across, and the slippage between, image sets that commonly occurred under the larger stylistic umbrella we now designate as Chocholá. In the first example (Figure 4.6b), a vertical text has been placed opposite the image and contains the by now familiar *ujaay y-uk'ib ti tzih* . . . phrasing. The right-gazing human on the other side (Figure 4.6a), like many of the busts, appears partially framed by a misty scroll. Rounded geometric forms close the scene at the top and back, and the vessel as a whole takes the softly curving cup shape popular in representations of the partially seen elite figure. Here, though, the aristocrat, represented in full-figured form, sits in front of his scene boundary. The combination of attributes—vessel form, vertical text with similar formatting and appearance (again witness the standardized form taken by the **u** syllable), visual formatting incorporating a scroll and geometric frame—indicate that this piece, clearly Chocholá in style, acts as a transitional work bridging scene groups. It vacillates between the bust scene and another scene category (the Lone Lord Scene) in which a full-bodied youthful elite appears, often seated, in an indeterminate location.

The representation of the Jester God (an entity connected with Maya kingship; see Steinbach, Chapter 2) in the second example (Figure 4.9) provides a similar transition between image space and vessel wall, even while dedicated to the presentation of a supernatural instead of a human. As with the young-lord prototype, the Jester God looks to his right so that we see the left side of his face. A watery scroll also frames him on three sides, while a rounded geometric form bounds the space at the top in an

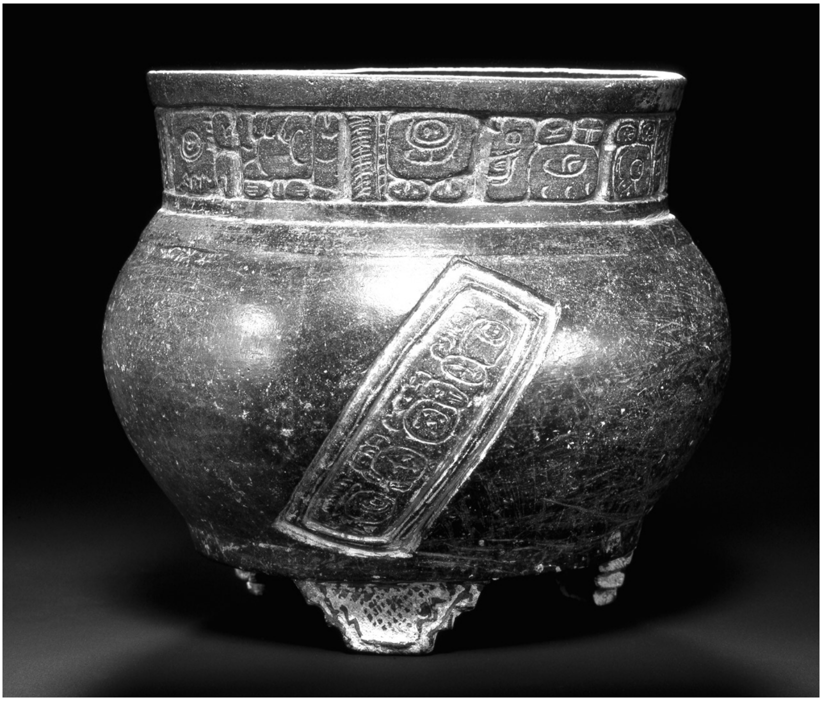


a

FIGURE 4.8 Isolated Bust Scene, Chocholá Style Vessel, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE, (a) Isolated Bust Scene; (b) diagonal text. Photographs by Claudia Obrocki © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ethnologisches Museum.

equivalent manner, at least in terms of layout, to that associated with the Isolated Bust Scene. Finally, the cup shape has been modified so that both the lip and base flare out at complementary angles in a manner consistent with one of the vessel-form variations standard in the Isolated Bust Scene category (compare Figures 4.4, 4.9).

Within the Chocholá set, artists developed the cartouche/watery/flowery frame as one solution to defining the space of the young lord, which was consistently used in conjunction with the Isolated Bust Scene. The choice of more rigidly geometric frames lacking any kind of scrollwork contrasts sharply with this aesthetic, even when the ceramic object participates in the style as a whole. Indeed, the iconographic depiction of space (a portal versus a palace, for instance) dictates the change in formatting.



b

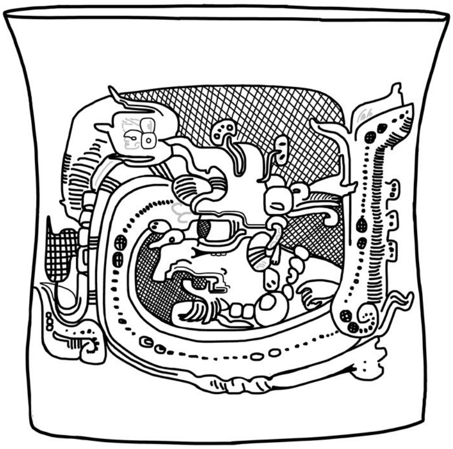


FIGURE 4.9 Supernatural Bust, Chocholá Style Vessel, Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE. Drawing of vessel by Maline D. Werness-Rude.

The portal, by necessity, takes on more curvilinear properties and creates a greater transition (through incised detail) between ceramic wall and image. Conversely, the Chocholá Palace Scene must create modified rectangular spaces that are characterized by the straightness and sharpness of their bounding lines (Figure 4.2).[8] In the Palace Scene, then, the shift from vessel wall to image becomes even more of a rupture since no scrolls provide visual transition.[9]

While the specific iconographic choices clearly separate this example from the Isolated Bust Scene grouping, they just as clearly indicate certain shared diagnostic attributes. At a basic level, the effort to keep image and text separate from one another while also distinguishing each from the vessel wall can be found in most Chocholá pieces. The formatting efforts govern not only representations of a partially visible, emergent lord but also other scenes within the Chocholá corpus. Such patterning speaks to the diagnostic nature of separation in both large and small categories, which conversely allows connections to be made across image groups. As such examples demonstrate, the style is typically characterized by the use of both text and image, no matter how separate they are from one another. This was such a strongly held association that some (apparently illiterate) artists included unreadable (pseudoglyphic) texts when replicating the appearance if not the actual content of existing pieces. The exact nature of the layout and the relationship between the vessel wall and the image itself could change, of course, based on the spatial referents desired in specific situations. The volute/cartouche frame is particularly characteristic of the young-lord trope but, as we have seen, such a nuanced approach to image space can be found strongly represented in other scene categories, like those dedicated to the depiction of supernaturals.

The basic use of the ceramic form in space as well as the spatially specific placement and nuanced execution of text and image in scenes focused on the aristocratic bust act as diagnostic features not only for this particular scene type but also for the style as a whole. That is not to say that one of these individual attributes can be used as *the* identifying or diagnostic characteristic indicating participation in either the scene or the larger style. Rather, it is the constellation of attributes that results in style and, conversely, no one vessel is likely to display every element. Furthermore, each "rule" governing production is flexible and could be modified as the artist saw fit, as the occasional use of tripod feet indicates. Just as no one element can define the style, it is equally true that no one image group acts as a hermetically sealed bubble of unchanging attributes.

Mapping Political and Social Space Using the Chocholá Style

Unfortunately many of the vessels now located in museums and private collections arrived at their current resting places due to looting and have only the most general of proveniences. Luckily, recent, fully sanctioned archaeological activity has uncovered vessels in the style, creating a clear anchor in the Puuc area of northwestern Yucatán. Because only a handful of pieces have secure archaeological provenience at this time, the kinds of connections the Isolated Bust Scene permits between itself and other scenes across the Chocholá corpus are especially important. A probable representation of K'awiil, inset into a watery cartouche and fully visible at a glance, was found in the Tiho/Mérida region and can be classified as Chocholá as a result of such visual parallels (Figure 1.1).[10] This is the case, even though its maker employed different figural proportions than those usually found in the Isolated Bust Scene.[11] In this way, we can extend the style's geographic spatial extent to include Tiho/Mérida.

Through an analysis of the Isolated Bust attribute permutations, vessels found at other sites can be linked to the Chocholá style as well. Pieces have been identified at Oxkintok (Schmidt 2004:33), Calcehtok (Figure 4.1), Uxmal (Vaillant 1927:310), and Xkipché (Vallo 2000:Tafel 21.7), all Puuc-specific sites near Chocholá and Maxcanú, as Coe predicted (Oxkintok is, significantly, the ancient center closest to the two modern towns last named). Vessels sharing attributes mentioned above have also been connected with the regions around Peto (Spinden 1913:Figure 185), Ticul

(Stephens 1843:275), and possibly Xpuhil at the furthest southern extent.[12] While still awaiting full analysis and verification, pieces from Xcalumkin may also eventually find a place in the Chocholá corpus, and Jaina seems to be represented as well (e.g., Figure 4.2).

Although space limitations do not permit a lengthy discussion of stylistic variation (see Werness 2010), pieces found further away from the area in and directly around Oxkintok display attributes that are less obviously Chocholá in most cases. The Tiho/Mérida example mentioned above incorporates distinctive iconographic details and a different set of proportions from those found in the young-lord trope or even in the Jester God vessel discussed earlier (Figure 4.9). In contrast, a Jaina example (see Vaillant 1927:311) seems to loosen the strict separation between the rim band and the image, although the latter is still set off from the former as well as from the rest of the vessel wall. These stylistic shifts can be inconsistent, however. The drinking cups that Stephens (1843:275) saw in Ticul and Spinden (1913:185) found in Peto, for instance, were created at the height of the style and, like the Jester God example, share many similarities with the young-lord motif in the way the image is formatted and laid out. The Ticul piece is, in fact, representative of that scene type. The artist included only a partial rim band so as to avoid interfering with the image, which resides near, but is still clearly separated from, the lip of the vessel.

Stylistic variation only serves to emphasize the consistency that characterizes the Isolated Bust Scene. Visual parallels first allow us to begin defining the group and then, by extension, the style. When combined with the stylistic disparities associated with examples found at greater distances from the Oxkintok/Chocholá/Maxcanú nexus first proposed by Coe, they suggest that such vessels were created in close proximity to one another. Indeed, the same artist may have even made multiple containers. The fortunate, intentional addition of the unusual, full-figured **k'i** syllable otherwise specific to Oxkintok (see García Campillo 1992; Werness 2010) suggests that that site acted as the primary center responsible for initiating the style. These recognizable design features and iconographic markers were then disseminated to, and also seemingly manufactured at, other locations within and beyond the Puuc region.[13]

As just demonstrated, the modern analyst can clearly separate vessels in the Chocholá style from other types of ancient Maya ceramic production based on formal attributes. This fact suggests that ancient viewers would also have recognized visual cues as signaling distinct groupings associated with a specific production area. Linnea Wren, Travis Nygard, and Justine

Shaw (Chapter 8) have used the term “political space” to draw attention to the spatiality of political connections made through the dissemination of visually related objects in later periods. The same idea regarding spatial mapping applies in this case: the ability to identify the likely manufacture focus based on the formatting of imagery means that Chocholá vessels constructed space through their distribution as well.

In the case of Chocholá wares, though, I would add that the space mapped by their geographic spread carried social as well as political connotations. Feasting events characterized aspects of ancient sociopolitical interaction throughout much of the Classic Maya world, including the Puuc region. In the northern Yucatán, many visually literate Late Classic attendees (themselves elites from the court and/or outlying areas) saw Isolated Bust cups displayed in such contexts. Undoubtedly they would have immediately recognized these serving wares as high-end luxury items. In their urban social settings of consumption, elite viewers would also likely have understood such vessels as connected—through appearance—with a particular political entity physically centered at Oxkintok. In this manner, the Chocholá style falls in line with many other ceramic wares that focus on repetitive appearance and layout as a way of suggesting conceptual groups, which in turn signal affiliation in political space.

Spatiality at the Third Level

The political identity the style projected was also metaphorically centered—through imagery—on the ceramic vessel itself.[14] Another perspective, now focused on formatting choices as they relate to iconography, encourages the further reevaluation of layout as it relates to image selection. Why did the artists who created the Isolated Bust Scene choose such arrangements and combinations over and over again? What purpose did they serve beyond creating the political space discussed above? The subset of the Chocholá style under consideration here takes such space-based considerations to yet another level by combining them with particularized imagery that incorporates deceptively simple yet immensely sophisticated spatial constructions. In this way, the young-lord trope literally images space in order to legitimize the position of the youthful elite figure (both as depicted and in actuality) through a series of direct and indirect suggestions regarding location and, specifically, the viewers’ position relative to that of the depicted lord.

Cosmological Space in the Legitimization of Social and Political Space

To begin, artists seem to have developed the formatting choices discussed above in order to send the clearest identity signals possible. The resulting constructions prove to be particularly advantageous in the construction of political space. The isolation of each visual grouping becomes especially obvious, for instance, when the viewer realizes that he or she is not required to turn the vessel in order to fully comprehend the scene it displays, as is typically the case with other luxury wares bearing complicated iconography. The consistency of this artistic vision serves an ideological purpose. Pots in the style are not only easily recognized. They contain imagery and texts that, individually, can also be taken in at a single glance. Such features create greater immediacy in identity formation. At a time when the tensions that would lead to the massive changes of the later Terminal and Post Classic periods were just beginning to be felt, it seems that Chocholá artists were still clearly participating in the production of Classic Maya luxury ceramic wares while also trying to appropriate the readability of more monumental image programs. Unlike polychrome styles, which could signal identity merely through color combinations (see Steinbach 2012), the young-lord examples had to develop readability at a distance (say, down the length of a table or across a room). Their consistent formatting and layout facilitates just this mechanism.

In addition to the broader affiliation markers already discussed, the repetitive appearance that characterizes the Isolated Bust Scene conveys ideological messages specifically associated with the iconography. In order to fully understand the nature of such messages and their transmission, a clear reading of the visual details that both compose and frame the scene must be developed. As we already know, the head and torso of a youthful figure appears within volutes. Dots of ascending and descending size mark the framing scrolls as misty in familiar symbolic shorthand, and the occasional appearance of waterlilies emphasizes this connection (Figure 4.10).[15] Flowers (Figure 4.3a) or day-sign cartouches (Figures 4.4, 4.7a–b) can substitute for the watery scrolls, but this happens less frequently. In all of these instances of the Isolated Bust Scene, conceptually as well as formally, the young lord resides at the center of the image. Moreover, he can be said to literally cause its existence as pictorial space through his presence, an idea developed further later in the chapter (see especially Figures 4.1, 4.5, 4.8a, and 4.10). In this way, he is the active, driving agent, the focal point around which everything else rotates, including the volutes, the vessel, and the rim band if there is one.

Iconographically, cartouches and elite figures cannot be separated from one another when they appear together in the young-lord visual trope. The intricate connection between the lord and his frame makes it impossible to separate the two from one another and marks the significance of the protagonist's location (in addition to his actions, as argued below). The intimate relationship between the two contrasts starkly with the clear separation between these visual components and the vessel wall that surrounds them.

Everything about the image tells the viewer to focus on the body of the depicted person. The scrolls that swirl around in the background do not hold the observer's attention once their watery nature has been identified.[16] After an initial glance, they may even be said to actively direct attention away from themselves, toward the youthful figure at their center (Figures 4.1, 4.5, 4.8a, 4.10). Their lines lead away from the man's (Figure 4.10)—or possibly the lady's—face, for example, yet following their trajectory immediately returns the onlooker to the represented individual, specifically to his/her torso. As such, the scrolls become mere locational marginalia. Nevertheless, they activate the scene through their implied movement, which becomes clearest when they are isolated and considered by themselves. Their existence thereby subtly creates the literal sense of rotation alluded to above. Yet this interpretation barely touches their misty surfaces; a more nuanced exploration of viewing parameters allows us to plumb their watery depths.

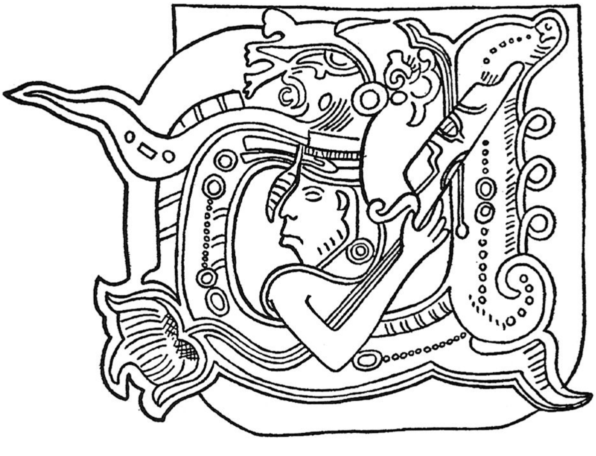


FIGURE 4.10 Isolated Bust Scene, Chocholá Style Vessel, 15.2 cm (5.98 in), Puuc region, Yucatán, Mexico, ca. 700–800 CE. Drawing by Maline D. Werness-Rude from Coe (1973:Catalogue 61).

The narrative nature of the witnessed moment becomes possible precisely because of such marginal information. The framing volutes are absolutely necessary in this context because they tell the person holding the cup that the young lord exists in a moment of transition. Indeed, viewers must complete the image by understanding that the elite figure leans out over his/her frame, emerging, as it were, and in doing so, moves from one type of space into another. That the lone figure can grasp an object that at times overlaps with the surrounding cartouche, or can hold the flowery frame itself when it appears, solidifies this sense of movement and the momentary. The external onlooker is shown this one fleeting moment within a larger story to which he or she is only partly privy. Ultimately, precisely because of the relative depth (incising versus deep carving), combined with overlap (as well as occasional iconographic markers like crosshatching), the artist meant the observer to automatically understand that the area contained within the swirling volutes telescopes back into space. In a nice parallel, the space that literally resides behind the image—i.e., the interior of the cup—would be filled with liquidy substances.[17]

The telescoping effect marks the lord's place as quintessentially different from that inhabited by the viewer. The misty movements of air and the watery nature of the lord's location, so often associated with underworld spaces, make the exact nature of the location clear. In imaged form, he demonstrates his ability to access places the average observer (even the elite onlooker) can never reach, an idea that the separating frame drives home.

Even the seemingly innocuous reference to beauty contained in the rarer flowery frame—in a lovely visual play, the aristocrat becomes the face of the flower (Figure 4.3a)—may carry ideological cues. In Maya art, flowers are often markers designating particular places as ones associated with the world of the ancestors (Taube 2004). Thus, the lord's separation from the quotidian world and his location in an implied transitional and flowery space may signify his divine heritage. It also suggests his access to the supernatural realm of his ancestors in addition to signaling his innate beauty. In a complement to such imagery, the leader in both the flowery and the watery frame can appear holding things (a plant stalk or a digging stick, sometimes identified as a paddle) associated with agricultural cycles.[18] Due to such associations, he may demonstrate the common allusion to the monarch as the paramount farmer, caring for his community, the land, and the gods (Stuart 2011). Using a similar set of associations, the examples where the lord shows up inside an Ajaw day-sign cartouche (Figures 4.4, 4.7a–b) emphasizes the elite figure's duty to tend to the days and the passage of time. He becomes the face of time and his efforts alone cause our present existence to continue while time also, in the form of the day-sign cartouche, constrains his place in the world (Werness-Rude 2012). Interestingly, in this context, caring for (or of) time can be metaphorically presented as farming a cosmic cornfield (Stuart 2011). Indeed, all three variations of the Isolated Bust theme may feed off of a similar set of core associations. In any case, regardless of the ways in which variation affects specific messages, the witness completes the image not only by seeing and interpreting the action but also by making and understanding such internally logical spatial connections.

Despite the viewer's completive impulse that leads to a sense of depth, Chocholá images are, in reality, flat. True, they are deeply carved, containing a certain modicum of depth as a result, but the images this technique produces still reside on surfaces. The young lord has been carved in relief as opposed to more fully in the round as is the case of effigy vessel representations, for example. This approach makes the cartouche frame absolutely necessary. Not only does it mark the supernatural space that partially (but can never completely) contain the elite figure, it also defines the relationship between the image as a whole and the vessel upon which it appears as well as that which exists between the iconographic forms and the viewer.

The separation from the ground on which the scrolls (or the flower petals or the day-sign cartouche) appear removes that which they surround from the observer's space by creating a metaphorical recession and projection within the real spatial construct of the ceramic container. The scene further distances itself from viewers because the volutes clearly act as dividers, a "window" to borrow a phrase from Western terminology, although in this case it is not a window onto the world but a window into the underworld (or possibly paradise in some cases). The multiplicity of spaces, combined with their defining frame, draws the viewer into the metaphorical location they enfold. The naturalness of this construct is emphasized by the fact that the centralized image, like the volutes that frame it, distances itself from the viewer by using the bas-relief medium of carving and presenting the lord in profile. An omniscient creator of whom we are only vaguely aware presents the young lord's location, and the man himself as well, for viewing.

Despite such rhetorical separation, the bust trope exhibits an immediacy not found in other Chocholá scene types. The mechanisms that separate the lord from us—the cartouche frame, the profile view—serve to emphasize his elevated social status, with the implication that we are at best barely equal and at worst subservient. I earlier described the image as floating across the vessel; its unanchored nature also separates it from the observer's space. At the same time, however, it creates an intimate interaction between us and what we see. Because the iconography, in a sense, seems to exist apart from the cup upon which it appears, it is not as easily discounted as "mere" imagery. Through a doubly distancing mechanism, we do not clearly associate it with the vessel that acts as its ground, and we interact directly with the image itself in a number of different ways precisely because of this ambiguity.

I return again to the cartouche as one of those subtle boundaries that is easy to overlook in focusing attention on the young lord. It is this very frame that allows the simultaneous separation and immediacy of the image—the separation and naturalization of the person seen through the looking glass, as it were, is explained by the fact that he currently resides in a surface that is both distinct and distant from a location in the natural world, particularly that of the viewer.[19] Furthermore, he is the only one capable of accessing such spaces while everyone else must remain necessarily outside. Yet the image does not allow complete separation; the lord is not merely a passive entity behaving in an object-like manner.[20] He instead leans out over his watery frame and reaches into what we must define as our space. Sometimes he holds implements that explicitly cross the boundary and appear in our space or at least in a transitional place as close to our location as possible. Because of their proximity to the viewer they take on added significance, thereby emphasizing the agrarian duties fulfilled by their owner and/or his connection with creation events depending on whether they are plant stalks, digging sticks, or paddles. This approach differs dramatically from other, less interactive images in the Chocholá corpus. In the palace piece (Figure 4.2) discussed previously, for example, the scene is fully self-contained and completely separate from the viewer's position (see also Werness-Rude and Spencer's comments on viewing as it relates to this example in the Visual Hierarchies and Conventions section in Chapter 1).

The cartouche itself seems to fulfill a simple location-marking function at first glance but further analysis indicates its ideological role in image as well as message construction. The ambiguity of the boundary-marking scrolls does not end with such spatial uncertainties. Indeed, it extends to include the origin of the scrolls themselves. The close observer easily notes where they end, yet where they begin, exactly, remains less certain—do they, for instance, come from the headdress or from the forehead of the young lord? If the forehead acts as the point of origin, ancient viewers would likely have drawn subtle parallels between the human figure they gazed upon and K'awiil and his smoking forehead torch.[21] Alternately, the scrolls could begin in the space behind the headdress. In either case, their origin seems to be inherently connected with the actions of the figure they surround. They cannot exist without him, just as they cannot completely encase him.

Conclusion

The analysis of Chocholá bust images has shown that the northern ceramicists responsible for their creation employed a number of different spatial constructs. The careful separation of scene from vessel, regardless of frame, creates a recognizable set of stylistic forms that would have signaled particular identities, thereby visually connecting players to a community probably centered at Oxkintok and composed of different sites in northwestern Yucatán. Furthermore, the cartouche frame, while a seemingly innocuous spatial marker, actually functions multivalently. It indicates the young lord's ability to transcend space and simultaneously access the realm of the gods and the natural world. It both separates (and further elevates) its occupant from, and suggests connections with, the viewer and the spaces inhabited by both. The exact identity of this entity remains ambiguous; he/she could be an ancestor who interacts with the natural world from the beyond. More likely, however, the depicted figures were actual lords or possibly generic representations of that social institution. The fact that they find visual parallels in other Chocholá examples that include scene captions naming the characters as historical individuals supports such associations.

Since artists worked at the behest of patrons when creating these kinds of luxury wares, the pictured elites likely represented some aspect of the benefactor's power. The resulting message directly shows his (or his associate's) ability to move between boundaries and, in doing so, create place. Alternately, or perhaps simultaneously, it implies his capacity to initiate exchanges between our world and the world of the dead through the appearance of, or allusion to, the trope of the ancestral figure in a cartouche. Furthermore, image placement and depth creates a relationship with the viewer that simultaneously emphasizes both proximity to and separation from this power nexus centered on the lordly visage.

In all of the ways enumerated throughout this chapter, the conscious artistic choices found in the Isolated Bust Scene work together to create a visual program designed to project ideas about wealth, status, sophistication, and unequal access to political and supernatural power. Through the subtle series of relationships between objects in space and texts and images in place, the leader expresses his legitimacy and ties others to him . . . the misty scrolls, we the viewers, the vessels themselves, all rotate around the axis created by his body. The spatiality of the artistic forms, combined with an awareness of the objects in space, makes the onlooker aware that he or she inhabits invisible yet mappable locations in the political geography centered on that "floating" figure and his (or occasionally her) literal and metaphorical place in the world. The Maya understanding of space, as defined by the Chocholá iconography and implied through its distribution, is inherently empirically relative. Furthermore, relativity is not some abstract concept; here the intangible—those misty scrolls and that map of connections suggested by distribution—makes it (and in doing so is itself made) tangible in true dialectical form. Such reification carries direct moral associations, both in the obligations of the imaged figure as a space man—a creator of space—and in the viewers' and gift-receivers' debt to him.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my coeditor in this project, Kaylee Spencer, as well as my mother, Hope Werness, for their many excellent comments and also for their support in the writing of this chapter. My gratitude also goes to David Stuart, George Bey III, Steve Bourget, Julia Guernsey, Athanasio Papalexandrou, Dorie Reents-Budet, and Karl A. Taube, whose advice on previous work spurred me to push my interpretations and analytic models further. I benefited too from the comments I received from Michael Carrasco, Mary Katherine Scott, and Rina Faletti, as well as Rex Koontz and an anonymous reviewer of the present volume. What is more, as coeditor, I had the unique opportunity to see the work of the other contributors as it moved through its final stages to reach its present form. I would like to offer them my thanks as well, for participating in this project with me, for allowing me to read their work and provide editing feedback, and, through this process, for helping me to see new threads of investigation in my own work. Without the involvement of all the individuals named here, combined with the strong support of my husband, Jeff Werness-Rude, and the rest of my family, the present work would not have been possible. I would like to especially single out my grandmother Joanne H. Benedict for mention here; her constant interest in and support of my work gave me great joy and is sorely missed in the wake of her recent passing.

Traci Ardren and Justin Kerr also deserve recognition. They have both been extremely generous in sharing images of Chocholá vessels with me during the course of my research—examples of which, in both photographic and drawn form, can be seen throughout this chapter—for which I heartily thank them. I also am very grateful for the images Maria Gaida,

at the Ethnologisches Museum Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz; Patricia Tainter, at the Kimbell Art Museum; Shannon Sweeney, the photography and image rights manager at the Saint Louis Art Museum; and David Stuart, in conjunction with the Art and Art History collection in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Texas, Austin, provided for my use. I am also very appreciative of arqueólogas Sylviane Boucher and Yoly Palomo, who, along with licenciada Frederica Sodi Miranda, were incredibly generous in allowing me access to the Ceramoteca collections in the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mérida (Centro Regional Yucatán). Finally, I wish to acknowledge Erik Boot, who called my attention to the calendrical vessel I have included here in drawn form.

Thank you to all—words can only begin to express the depth of my appreciation.

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2012 Contando el tiempo: señores y calendarios en las vasijas de estilo Chocholá/Telling Time: Calendrics and Lords in the Chocholá Style. Paper. Coloquio Internacional: "Tiempo y complejidad, Calendarios del mundo/Time and complexity, Calendars of the world." Museo Nacional de Antropología, México, D.F.

Notes

1. See Werness (2010) for the naming, listing, and description of all Chocholá scene groups.

2. In this chapter, the designation "viewer" (as well as "spectator" and other like terms) refers simultaneously to ancient and modern individuals based on the assumption that the basic ways of viewing space, while culturally influenced, are not markedly different, at least at a core level (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for comments regarding the nature of ancient Maya viewership). Despite this basic similarity, though, period viewers would have understood the images they gazed upon in exceedingly complex ways—an understanding that will be elucidated in what follows. Furthermore, at the outset, it is important to recognize that artists and patrons, by virtue of their literacy and elite status, not only shared an understanding of the imagery but also collaborated in the process of using it to convey power and construct ideology.

3. For a discussion of the gendered nature of potting and the likelihood that Classic-era potters were mostly male (i.e., craftsmen rather than craftswomen), see Clark and Houston (1998:especially 36–37), Foias and Bishop (2007:233), Reents-Budet (1994:48), Reina and Hill (1978), and Werness-Rude and Spencer (Chapter 1).

4. The pseudoglyphic texts often incorporate syllables that are individually readable but make no sense when strung together as a word(s).

5. The general sense that artists selected diagonal texts at least twice as often as they chose either rim or vertical sequences should be qualified—this statement is wholly dependent on the current sampling, which, like any sampling, may be skewed in one way or another. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Chocholá vessels are looted, which complicates the issue further. As a result, such statements will have to be constantly reevaluated and refined as more vessels in this scene category come to light, hopefully attended by strong archaeological provenience.

6. The choice of *ujaay* as the opening phrase in the dedicatory string is an attribute specific to the Isolated Bust Scene—it may be connected, at least in part, with the necessarily shortened nature of the Dedicatory Formula when it takes vertical or diagonal form. Those Chocholá examples from other scene groups that more consistently incorporate a rim band typically initiate the Dedicatory Formula with the Introductory Glyph. In these cases, scribes experimented with the form the Introductory Glyph takes, arriving at a variation unknown in other ceramic traditions (visible in the fourth glyph from the left, Figure 4.8b, as Werness-Rude and Spencer note in the Writing and Artistry section in Chapter 1; see also Grube 1990:323; Werness 2010:209–210).

7. While the exact angles of divergence in both cases are quite different, they seem to indicate similar manufacturing impulses.

8. Viewers accustomed to ancient Maya symbolism would immediately recognize the swags of cloth appearing at the top of the image as curtains. The drapes, combined with the raised dais on which the young lord sits, designate this space as a room within a palace. The vessel shape, glyphic sequence, depth of carving and clear separation of image and text all allow this example to be classified as Chocholá.

9. The rigidity inherent in the palace backdrop versus the flexibility of the watery portal frame may also carry ideological implications that tie into general distinctions between the ordered, bounded spaces of civilization and the unordered wilds or, we could add, underworldly spaces.

10. This cylinder vase is located in the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) Ceramoteca offices in Mérida. Archaeological investigation at the site uncovered at least one other vessel in the style, and others likely emerged from looter pits in the region. For further information on the Tiho connection, see Pool Cab (1997:59, 105–106, 146) and Werness (2010:especially 57, 60–61, 244–246, and Figure 31).

11. Admittedly, the traditional proportions and carving techniques found in association with the Isolated Bust Scene account for some of the most sophisticated artistic expression found in the corpus or in the carved ceramic medium period, for that matter (e.g., Ardren 1996; Coe 1973; Tate 1985).

12. Sherds from a vessel found at Xpuhil currently reside in the Mérida branch of INAH—they exhibit a depth of carving that suggests a Chocholá affiliation but the remains are too fragmentary to make such classification certain.

13. For other reasons that support Oxkintok as the center of a production nexus associated with the style, see García Campillo (1992) and Werness (2010).

14. The royal portraits gracing the sides of Chocholá vessels may have represented the Oxkintok lords themselves. Alternately, the Oxkintok patrons may have commissioned likenesses of the underlings (or, less likely, equals) to whom they presented these vessels as gifts. In doing so, they would have doubly honored gift receivers while simultaneously solidifying alliances, political connectivity, etc.

15. See Schele (1988:301–302) for the identification of such water imagery.

16. It was Mieke Bal's (2001) exploration of the idea of focalization, as well as her fascinating theoretical discussion of the nail hole in Vermeer's *Woman Holding a Balance* (or *Woman Weighing Pearls*), that first led me to focus on precisely those areas—the misty scrolls—that typically receive little of the viewer's conscious attention.

17. When I first presented these ideas (Werness 2011), my fellow symposium participants, Philippe Bézy, Michele Bernatz, Travis Nygard, Elizabeth Olton, Kaylee Spencer, Penny Steinbach, and Linnea Wren, kindly pointed out to me the nice visual play between the watery imagery on the exterior and the actual, liquid contents in the interior.

18. For the identification of the object as a digging stick versus a paddle, see my comments elsewhere (Werness 2010:144–145).

19. In the Maya world, as in many other cultures, both Western and non-Western, mirrors and other reflective surfaces acted as liminal spaces, entrances to the supernatural realm, that were used in prognostication (Taube 1992:181, 189). We see these ideas expressed in the Chocholá style not only in the misty/watery portal that frames the transitional space of the royal figure and marks it as such, but also in what is probably an actual mirror held by the lord as ritual practitioner in Figure 4.8a. Interestingly, according to Taube (1992), flower petals have long been connected with mirrors in Mesoamerican imagery, which may further explain the occasional use of the flower as a frame for the young lord's bust; I would like to thank Kaylee Spencer for calling my attention to this potential connection.

20. The elite status of artists, combined with the nature of their profession, gave them access to restricted knowledge, which enabled them to create such strikingly original presentations of in-between spaces. Thus, they participated in these spaces just as did the carved humans centered within the swirling vortex. The artist, through his creative skill—his ability to "envision"—like

the ruler, occupied an indeterminate, not entirely terrestrial location. For further discussion of such ideas, see the sections on Artists, Artistry, and Patronage and Sight, Vision, and Visuality in Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1.

21. This kind of echo is made directly visually evident in some of the most famous works of the Maya world—K'inich Janab Pakal sports an actual forehead torch when he appears as the sacrificial Maize God on his sarcophagus lid in the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, for instance (Figure 1.17).

5

Public Spaces in the Ancient Maya City

A HISTORY

FLORA SIMMONS CLANCY

This chapter traces the histories of the great, open spaces in ancient Maya cities we call plazas. According to George Andrews (1975:37) plazas are "open space[s], artificially leveled and paved, which generally conform closely to the natural ground level." These plazas have been described and analyzed as "public" spaces (Andrews 1975:37; Inomata 2006). If they are, indeed, public spaces, it then becomes clear that civic agendas change through time with regard to the participation of the public at large in these spaces, agendas that encourage active engagement with the designs of the plaza and those that promote passive participation. Indices of these agendas are found on the terraces, platforms, and building facades that surround the plaza as well as in the sculptures that inhabit it.

A discussion of plazas brings up many theoretical and analytical issues: the differences between public and private spaces, the functions of theater and performance, the formal potentials of space and structure, the designers of the plaza, and the audiences invited to their spaces. In this essay, I will touch on all these issues, but my main focus is on the designs of plazas, their audiences, and their histories.

I use the term *civic* to refer to a city and its inhabitants. Civic architecture, therefore, indicates the built environment that defines a city without having to make the usual, and in many instances impossible, distinctions between religious and secular forms and functions (see Clancy 1997). I use *public* to refer to a "common space" as opposed to elite or private spaces (Parmington 2011:20), a distinction based solely on differences in size:

large, open spaces being common and smaller spaces being elite and private. Such dichotomies as public/private, common/elite spaces, are useful (perhaps) for this study, but in general I agree with Arlen and Diane Chase's (1992:3–17) observations that ancient Maya society was urban and complex and that a two-class society of elite and commoner is, in fact, too simple a model (Chase and Chase 1992:42; see also Becker 1973). Furthermore, several scholars have remarked on the difficulty of determining how the ancient Maya may have distinguished the differences between public and private events or spaces because such definitions are, for the most part, cultural constructs. What can be said, however, is that while large, open spaces may or may not have been public (they may have functioned as royal preserves, like the vast spaces of Versailles), they *could* have physically functioned in a way public spaces and small spaces, whether open or closed, *could not* so function.

A key issue with open spaces in general is the way humans participate with them and why they do so. While ritual and performance are important functions of public plazas, I wish to begin with a discussion of what I consider a motive underlying whatever took place in the plaza. An ancient, deep-seated belief that pervades ancient Maya philosophies is that humans needed to be involved in all events, times, and spaces (an understanding that underpins many of the chapters in this volume). A well-known material aspect of Maya life provides a good example: their methods of building and their construction practices. Unlike Egyptian pyramids, Maya civic-religious structures were designed so that humans could, and indeed must, interact with them (in a real sense, we still are interacting with them). First of all, the construction techniques were not ones that created a building to last for all time, but ones that required constant upkeep, repairing, restuccoing, and enlarging—continual changes that had to take place practically from one generation to the next (see Webster 1998:15–16). If the buildings and the surrounding areas were not constantly maintained, they might quickly disappear into the forest. Second, again unlike Egyptian pyramids, Maya pyramids were designed with stairways and stepped tiers, and sometimes with hidden stairs and passages to be used by performers who could suddenly appear to audiences standing in the plaza (Freidel and Suhler 1999). They were designed as places that promoted and required human interaction with their forms and spaces and not as the immutable and inaccessible forms characterized by the Egyptian pyramid of the Old Kingdom (see Clancy 1994).

A second example is more conceptual and has to do with how ancient Maya deities were defined. In the Creation story of the Popol Vuh

(Christenson 2003:76–84), several efforts by the gods for creating humans failed because the early creatures could not or would not say the names of the gods and remember them. Humans had to do this because otherwise if no one said the names of the gods and failed to remember them, the gods would cease to exist. Humans certainly needed the gods in order to survive, but the same was equally true for the deities: they needed humans to remember them in order to survive.

The reciprocal universe in which the ancient Maya lived was, in my mind, humanistic, and actually more so than the universe of the humanistic, Classic civilizations of Europe, which supposed a godlike reality existing whether humans were aware of it or not.

Plaza Spaces

Plazas, as well as patios and courtyards, while part of the civic, built environment, are nonetheless voids and are seldom described or analyzed as constructed spaces in themselves. Their open expanses are acknowledged but it is the buildings surrounding them that are used to define them. Marshall Becker (2003), working for the most part at Tikal, Guatemala, has identified ten plaza plans, all based on the configurations of surrounding structures. George Kubler (1985 [1964]) makes a distinction between open-cornered or closed-cornered courtyards or plazas, that is, open spaces totally enclosed by structures and inaccessible from without, or plazas accessible from within and without their boundary structures. A recent exception in this regard is Takeshi Inomata's (2006:811–814) examination of plaza spaces, wherein he analyzes the relationship between the physical space and the number of people it could hold.

Mary Miller (1998:187) states, "The void is key to Maya architecture, the space where meaning enters, anchored by surrounding mass."[1] This statement is appealing. No architecture (or anything, for that matter) exists uniquely by itself; all architecture is situated within a particular context whether natural or human-made. So, in a sense, a void only exists because of its boundaries. The word *void*, however, carries the negative connotation of "nothingness" and "meaninglessness," and it is almost certain that the voids that form plazas, patios, or courtyards within the ancient Maya city were not "left-over," meaningless spaces. They were planned spaces. As much as these spaces are defined by their built peripheries, they provided definition for their surrounding civic structures, as Miller's statement implies.

There is a specific kind of connection that exists between buildings surrounding the open space of a plaza, that of a "line of sight," drawing a connection between the doorways or the axial stairs of certain buildings across the plaza's void (Hartung 1971, 1984). Peter Harrison (1994, 1999:180) has demonstrated that some lines of sight actually express a geometric relationship or connection between buildings based on integral right triangles (Figure 5.1).[2] These lines of sight, then, activate and vivify the voids, and one might think of the geometric connections as a Geometry of the Void, in that the geometry is not expressed by solid forms but through space from point to point. A Geometry of the Void presents an interesting condition. In order to be known or experienced, one, two, or better, three people are required to stand at the specific architectural points and sight each other—to connect with each other—across the spaces involved in the geometry.

Another intriguing aspect of the great open spaces of plazas is their seeming naturalness (Mangino Tazzer 1992:13–14). While the grasses and trees that grow in the plazas of excavated cities such as Tikal, Palenque, and Copán may enhance this sense of naturalness for us today, the size and relative scale of their open spaces compared to the other built structures in those respective cities makes the association with natural features difficult to ignore (Clancy 1999:7). Furthermore, all interior spaces of the ancient cities were small, whatever their function, and much of peoples' lives were conducted in the open air (Aracon Garcia 1992:39; Mangino Tazzer 1992:13–14). Andrews (1975:10) suggests that the cleared milpa (a relatively small field for farming) was a "logical prototype for the more abstract notion of 'plaza.'" While Andrews (1975:10) believed the milpa was neither abstract nor spiritually symbolic, his ideas are refuted by the manner in which a farmer ritually marks and actually prepares his milpa (Mathews and Garber 2004:54). One wonders if there were not similar markings and preparations made in the ordering of the "natural" places that would become a plaza.

A more abstract, but romantic, idea is that the plaza symbolically represented the primordial sea out of which the mountain of Creation emerged, creating a dyad out of the pyramid and the plaza (Schele and Mathews 1998:43–46; see also Wren et al., Chapter 8, for discussion of the construction of water mountains at Yo'okop). Julia Guernsey (2006:27–28, 120) suggests that the water-catchment system constructed in association with Mound 60 at Izapa may have provided an actual manifestation of such a dramatic vision.

General consensus holds that plazas were not only public spaces but that they also functioned as places designed for ceremonies that are today described as public theater and performances.[3] Kubler (1962:29) considers

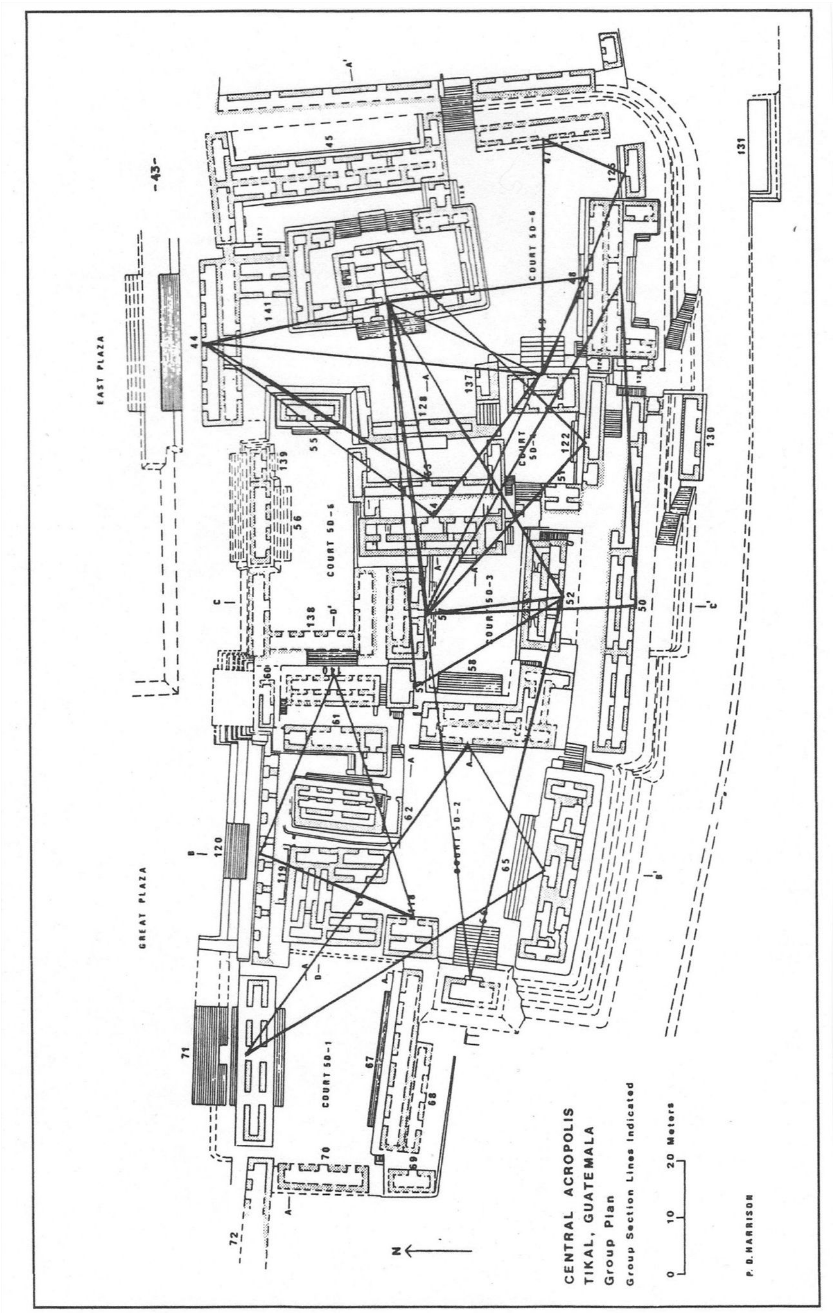
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FIGURE 5.1 Central Acropolis, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala. Twelve Integral Right Triangles. Drawing courtesy of Peter D. Harrison.

plazas as a fundamental mode of monumental architecture (along with the cairn, the path, and the hut); he further suggests that these open spaces marked “memorable areas.” Inomata’s (2006) valuable efforts at judging the meaning and function of Classic Maya plaza spaces focus on the importance of theater and performance for community formation especially, as he understands the ancient Maya, in societies only loosely held together. Alexandre Tokovinine (2003:3) translates the glyphs **CHAN-li** as *chan’nil*, “show or public ceremony,” which he sees as associated with “royal dances” performed before large audiences gathered in plazas (see Grube 1992:216). If these scholars are correct, then public ceremonies (however we label them) were an authentic part of the plaza’s functions (the need for repeated performative action in order to continually define not only the plaza space but also the community associated with that arena of the lived environment continues down into the present day; see Taube, Chapter 9). However, the relationship between the plaza and its spaces, monuments, and functions, and the human use of and experience of its spaces is, again, one of reciprocity. Michael Parker Pearson and Colin Richards (1994:3) point out the obvious: “Structures [plazas] are both the medium and the outcome of social practices.” In a sense, ceremony and theater need open spaces, and open spaces need (or suggest) ceremony.

History of Ancient Maya Plaza Spaces

It is during the Middle PreClassic period (900–400 BCE) that ancient Maya civic building projects can be first identified, such as the E-Group Complex and ballcourts (Clark and Hansen 2001:43–44, endnotes 5, 6, and 7; Estrada-Belli 2011:67–74; Hansen 1998:63–70). However, as Hansen (1998:72, 81) points out, architectural sculpture does not appear until the Late PreClassic period (300 BCE—250 CE), at which point we can get a better sense about ancient civic agendas for the open spaces of plazas.

Three major changes to the plaza space can be noted. First is the advent of monumental, stucco sculpture on the terraces, stairs, and building platforms surrounding the plazas of the Maya Lowlands during the Late PreClassic period. Second is the entry of freestanding monuments, stelae, and pedestals into the plaza’s spaces at the beginning of the Early Classic period (ca. 250 CE); and third, the gradual closing up of public spaces in the southern Maya Lowlands during the Late Classic period. These three changes take place in different and localized ways at different cities, as will be seen below, but the historical outline, as given, is a good, although general, description of plaza designs in the Maya Lowlands.

Before beginning this history, however, the highland regions to the south of the Maya Lowlands need to be acknowledged. During the Late PreClassic there was a strong tradition of public sculpture at the cities of Izapa, Takalik Abaj, and Kaminaljuyu. Modern Guatemala City has overtaken Kaminaljuyu, and while it is the source of extraordinary monuments, the actual configuration of its ancient plazas is not well established. Takalik Abaj has a history of monumental sculpture that goes back to at least the Middle PreClassic, but complete architectural plans have yet to be published. Izapa, however, has been well excavated and published on, and provides an authentic picture of plazas in the southern coastal plains of Late PreClassic Guatemala (see Guernsey 2006). In many ways Izapa's plazas, defined by surrounding terraces and pyramidal platforms and inhabited by freestanding monuments, are precursors for the Early Classic advent of stelae and pedestals in the plaza spaces of the Lowland Maya. However, two major differences exist between Late PreClassic Izapa and the Early Classic cities to the north. The civic architecture of Izapa was not embellished by large stucco sculptures (Guernsey 2006:26) and the stelae and pedestals erected in its plazas were carved with imagery that referenced mythic narratives and were essentially without texts (Estrada-Belli 2011:113).

During the Late PreClassic period, it was common for those centers experiencing a fluorescence of growth and power in the central Maya Lowlands to embellish the architectural surfaces surrounding their plazas with large stucco faces. These large faces, usually identified as deities, are zoomorphic or anthropomorphic, and scholars have described them as masks (Figure 5.2) (see Freidel 1985; Freidel and Schele 1988). Almost always these large masks were painted and composed with bilateral symmetry where large and fancy earflares would frame the faces. As Hansen (1998:82) points out, "an unusual aspect of the sculpture is the size and extravagance of its early forms." The masks sculptured for the Tigre Complex at the flourishing Late PreClassic city of El Mirador (Hansen 1990) are excellent examples, as are the masks carved for Group H at Uaxactún (Valdes 1998) and the better-known masks of Structure E-VII-sub, also in Uaxactún (Ricketson and Ricketson 1937; see also Proskouriakoff 1963:5).

These masks are gigantic in relation to human scale and in their symmetrical perfection and ordered repetition they convey an other-than-human, godlike presence (Clancy 1999:23–24). In their original, polychrome forms they must have been truly awesome. Whether these large faces were considered beautiful or not by the ancient Maya is a question that cannot be answered at this time, but I am willing to speculate they were experienced as a kind of thrilling beauty edging toward the sublime.

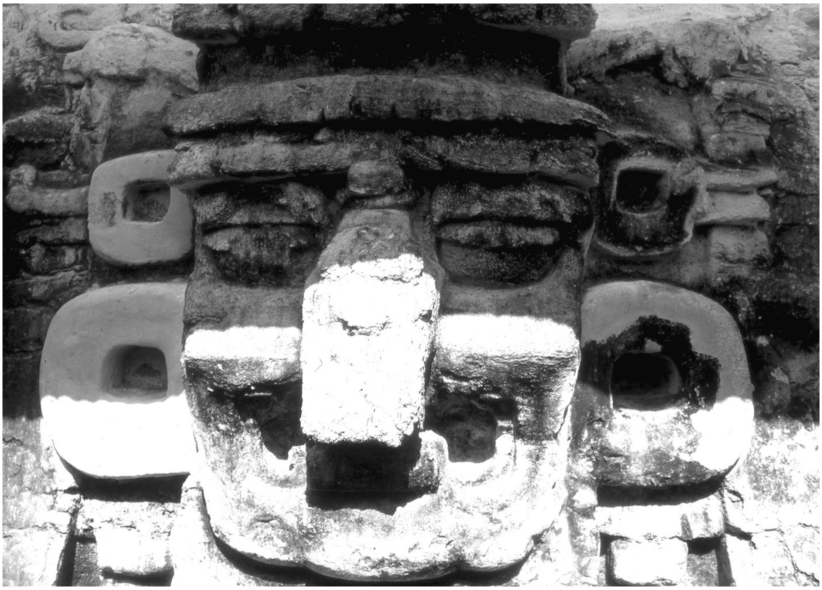

FIGURE 5.2 Structure 5D-33–3rd, Large Stucco "Mask" facing the Great Plaza of Tikal, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph by Flora Simmons Clancy.

In the Maya Lowlands, beginning in the Early Classic period, relief-carved stelae and pedestals were entered into the plaza, which definitely changed the experience of being in a plaza, and I believe its function as well.[4] Rather than being integrated into the architectural surround defining the space of the plaza, stelae and pedestals were freestanding monuments, which, like the people themselves, took up space within the plaza and the low terraces that surrounded it. The advent of freestanding monuments seems to be related to a decrease in the creation of large stucco masks (Schele and Miller 1986:106–109), and David Freidel and Linda Schele (1988:85) believe that the major aspects of mask iconography were transferred to the imagery of the ruler carved on the stelae and specifically to his headdress and handheld regalia. Be that as it may, while the stucco masks had been monumental in scale and godlike in appearance, stelae represented humans in human scale. The whole focus of the plaza experience changed from the contemplation of awesome deities to an ambiguous interaction between a flesh-and-blood person and the stony image of a human ruler, considered by Houston and Stuart (1998:85–90) as the "essential sameness" of the ruler's selfhood signaled by the glyphic phrase *u-baah.* The compositional fields used on stelae, recto-verso, multi-paneled, and wraparound fields common to the Early Classic period promoted an active relationship between a viewer and the freestanding monuments, wherein the viewer needed to walk around the object in order to fully understand it (Clancy 1999:24, 125). Rather than the passive reception of plaza imagery, no matter how grand it was during the Late PreClassic, with the advent of the freestanding monuments, the public became active participants with the new defining features of the plaza rather than "a mute audience passively receiving dogma" (Clancy 1999:127). They looked and were looked upon.

Inomata (2006) argues that the images of the rulers carved on stelae depict them dressed in plaza finery, reiterating how an actual performing ruler appeared before the plaza audience. Nikolai Grube (1992:216) acknowledges that the glyphic verb dance, or *ahk'ot*, occurs mainly in the western Maya region along the Usumacínta River, but believes that royal dances were ubiquitous throughout the ancient Maya region and were performed in plazas or the terraces fronting the pyramids that surround the plaza. Tokovinine (2003:3), in translating the glyphs spelling *chan'nil* as "show" or "public ceremony," considers their implication as "the first clear epigraphic evidence that events such as royal dances were indeed public ceremonies performed in the presence of a broad audience."

Another major difference between the PreClassic plaza and the Early Classic plaza has to do with indications of time. Images of the human ruler entering the plaza brought with them the narrative ramifications of history. Where symmetrical masks expressing the timelessness of deities dominated the imagery of the PreClassic plaza, stelae recorded with hieroglyphs the times of historical events in a ruler's life.[5] Whether the plaza participant could read the glyphs remains a question (probably many participants could not); nonetheless, time is part of the monument's message. Furthermore, if David Stuart (1996:167–168) is correct, the ruler embodied time within him or herself and, thus, so did his or her image. The inherent meanings of monumental imagery directly associated with the plaza experience moves from that of timeless symmetry to the bounded times of human experience, of the human story.

The concepts embodied within the open spaces of the plaza, as conceived during the Early Classic period, were ones that promoted the inclusion and active participation of the audiences involved in whatever ceremony or performance drew them into the plaza space. During the Late Classic Period, however, the ideas that influenced the way the plazas were designed changed from general inclusion and active participation to a kind of rote remembrance and repetition of ceremony. Indeed, Late Classic plazas were places that would have held collective memories as defined by Sonja Schwake and Gyles Iannone (2010:332–334). Potent rituals and ceremonies, the ones that "mattered," were held in more restricted, smaller spaces.

Several scholars have commented on the fact that plaza and courtyard spaces start out as open and accessible places but over time they gradually close up and become "claustral," as David Pendergast (1992:62–63) describes it.[6] In discussing open and closed courtyards (see above) Kubler (1985:254) states, "the main movement from open-cornered courtyards to closed-cornered courtyards is unmistakable." This closing up starts to take place at different times in different cities. At Tikal, while the Great Plaza remains accessible, only two Late Classic stelae were erected within its space (Stelae 5 and 11).[7] With the exception of Stela 21 and its Pedestal 9 placed before the Temple of Inscriptions (a fair distance from the Great Plaza), all other Late Classic monuments carved at Tikal were placed within Twin Pyramid Complexes, architectural assemblages unique to the city of Tikal (Jones 1969).[8] These plaza or courtyard spaces are defined by twinned, stepped pyramids forming an east–west axis on a raised platform. A roofless enclosure axially placed on the north side of the platform contained a stela and its pedestal mate while on the south side of the platform, a range-type structure with nine doors faced the enclosure. These Late Classic complexes can hold a fair number of people (Inomata 2006:816), but the raised platform, the obvious cardinal symbolism of the defining structures,[9] and the carved monuments placed away from the general space of the complex so that the plaza participant could not easily interact with, or contemplate, their imagery, all suggest a different kind of performance or ceremony—one more recondite than what took place in the Great Plaza.

A good example of the kind of "closing up" I am discussing is illustrated by the architectural history of Structure A-V of Uaxactún. Structure A-V starts out in the Early Classic period (ca. 295 CE) as a three-temple complex, called a Triadic Group by Francisco Estrada-Belli (2011:68).[10] As time progressed and Group A-V was enlarged and embellished, it was gradually changed from an easily visible, if not accessible, open plaza (or court) defined by its platform and three temples to one of restricted entrance and access. Tatiana Proskouriakoff (1963:114–129) beautifully illustrates this progression. What had been a place for ceremony and performance in the Early Classic period became an elite (if not royal) residence during the Late Classic period, definitely a "claustral" and restricted space.

Copán's large, ground-level plazas seem to have been open and available throughout its history (see Figure 5.3) but, as William Fash (1998:254) points out, during the reign of Ruler 16 (763–820 CE) a "major change" occurs with the "complete abandonment of the medium of the stela." I would change the date of the "major change" to 761, as Stelae M and N found in the Plaza of the Hieroglyphic Stairway, both dating to 761, are the last stelae known to be erected in a public place.[11] Stela 11, thought to be dated to 9.19.10.0.0 or 820, is a small column and may not have been considered a stela at all (Baudez 1994:254). It was found up in the acropolis, most likely associated with Temple 18 (Newsome 2001:229, endnote 16). What seems very possible is that the ritual or ceremonial focus of Copán moved to the smaller, less-accessible courtyards within the acropolis while the open plazas were memorial places. In these spaces, the dates and honored figures carved on stelae and altars represent the memories of about five generations or 150 years of regal history (from ca. 613 to 761 [Stela E to Stela N]).

Around the mid-ninth century another significant change occurs in plaza designs as stelae and pedestals disappear from these public spaces. Many cities of the southern lowlands seemingly lose their vitality by this time, and civic, creative energy moves into the northern lowlands. Here the plaza experience is once again enlivened by architectural sculpture and in the Puuc style of architecture, sculptural images tend toward the abstract, often resembling textile designs.[12] Furthermore, while glyphic writing continues, its presence is no longer so public as it was when carved onto stelae

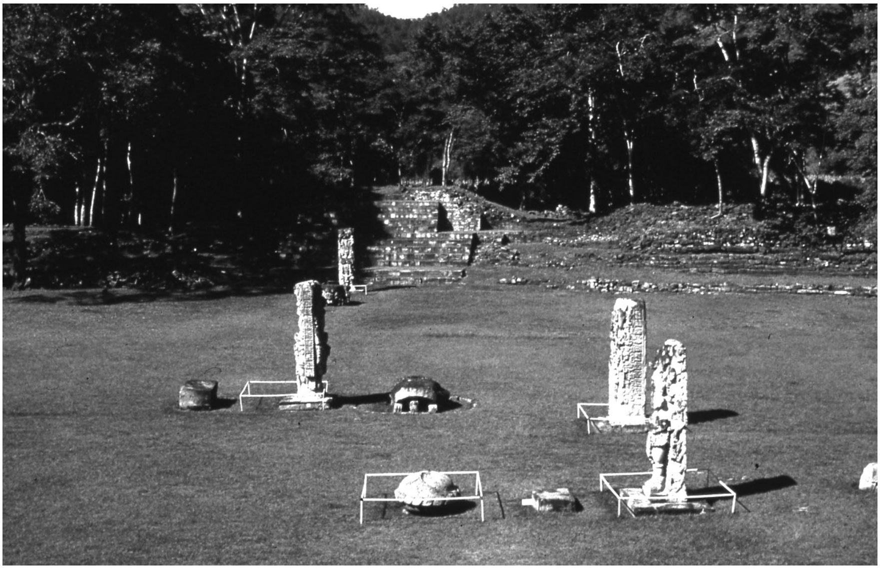

FIGURE 5.3 The Monument Plaza of Copán, Honduras. Photograph by Flora Simmons Clancy.

and pedestals set into the plazas. What kinds of performances took place in the plazas of the Post Classic periods are difficult to determine, but once again, the experiences within the plazas have changed, and this marks a change in the agenda of the sponsors and builders of civic architecture.

Concluding Thoughts

To think about ancient Maya plazas, or any civic structure for that matter, I believe one needs to recognize the Maya's basic belief in reciprocity, where the need for human presence and human appreciation is required for maintaining the existence of deities, events, and material things. Lines of sight bring to mind the Maya concept of *ik'nal*, where one's field of vision is a place of reciprocity; where the seeing person and the seen field are both active agents in the process of making meaning (Clancy 2009:1; Hanks 1990:91–92; see also Olton, Chapter 7; Spencer, Chapter 6; and Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for mention of this concept). Lines of sight, especially those that describe a Geometry of the Void, vivify and create meanings within the spaces of the plaza. Performances and ceremonies would partake of, and make meanings within, this active and vivid space.

In a sense, one need not ask what kind of ritual or other performative activity occurred in the plazas because they surely supported many different kinds of events, from markets to grand theater. This last is especially the case if one imagines the plaza as a staging place for a drama about the primordial sea out of which the mountain of Creation emerges. Speculatively, such a drama seems more pertinent for the PreClassic and Post Classic plaza spaces because of the timelessness or eternal present suggested by the monumental and symmetrical masks or the abstract patterns embedded into the architecture surrounding the plaza. With the advent of stelae and pedestals during the Classic period, ceremonies and performances would be more historically contingent and aligned to the needs of the ruler and the elite to maintain power and to elicit the support and active engagement of the community; thus one can imagine markets, dances, and theater performances.

Plazas are natural spaces made special by their surrounding architecture. As works of art, the great stucco masks first appear during the Late PreClassic period and suggest performances that centered on ineffable deities. During the Classic period with the advent of freestanding monuments placed within the plaza's spaces (the stelae representing kings and rulers and the pedestals that attended them), the ceremonial focus moved to a more human scale and concerns. As the Classic period drew to a close these places started to be less accessible, their entrances restricted or their spaces becoming smaller. The plazas that remained open but no longer received new stelae became places of collective memory, or remembrances of things past. Speculatively their ceremonies or performances lost immediacy, becoming iterations of old traditions.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Peter Harrison for his scholarly generosity and for our long-lasting friendship. You left us too soon, Peter.

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Notes

1. This statement follows a tenet of linguistic structuralism where it is thought that meaning actually resides between words (Jakobson 1971). I applaud Miller's analogy but she does not develop it in her article because her concerns are stairs and architectural relief-carved images.

2. Integral right triangles are a series of right triangles whose sides are whole numbers expressing the ratio of a2 + b2 = c2. The most common are the 3–4–5 and the 5–12–13 right triangles.

3. However, there does not seem to be a consensus as to what the differences are, if any, between events called ceremonies, rituals, theater, or performance.

4. A few Late PreClassic cities in the lowlands erected stelae in their plazas. Unfortunately these monuments are seldom found whole or in situ, and if they were carved with glyphs these are worn and seldom readable. Still, it is important to acknowledge their presence as a beginning of the change in plaza function currently being discussed (see Hammond 1982; Justeson and Mathews 1983).

5. I have elsewhere argued (Clancy 1999:20) that while symmetrical compositions can imply narratives, they cannot illustrate them. Symmetry represents conditions of stasis and timelessness. The symmetrical image is reflexive and self-referential.

6. See Jaime J. Awe, Mark D. Campbell, and Jim Conlon (1991); George Kubler, (1985:254); David Pendergast (1992); Daniel Potter (1985:142); Julia Sanchez (2006); and Lothar von Falkenhausen (1985:130).

7. Stela 11, dated 10.2.0.0.0 (869 CE), is the last stela erected at Tikal. It was placed (inserted may be a better word) into the very middle of the line of Early and Middle Classic stelae on the north side of the Great Plaza.

8. Nicholas Hellmuth (1972) reports a Twin Pyramid Complex at the nearby city of Yaxha.

9. See Wendy Ashmore (1991, 1992), Clemency Coggins (1980), and George Guillemin (1968).

10. Triadic Groups are thought to have first appeared during the Late Pre-Classic period (Estrada-Belli 2011:68; Hansen 1998:76–77). However, they may be monumental reflections of a basic, household architectural plan termed a "courtyard group" by Kent Flannery (1976:72–75). As monumental, civic architecture, the Triadic Group may have carried a symbolic evocation of "original dwelling," associated with the three hearthstones and the three stones of Creation (Clancy 1997; Freidel et al. 1993:67, 140).

11. Stela 8 is dated to 9.17.12.6.2 (782). It was found in the Cemetery Group near the modern town of Copán Ruinas (Baudez 1994:139). It, too, may or may not have originally functioned as a stela.

12. That some of the best-known architectural sculpture of Chichén Itzá is not abstract requires further research and analysis.

6

Locating Palenque's Captive Portraits

SPACE, IDENTITY, AND SPECTATORSHIP IN CLASSIC MAYA ART

KAYLEE R. SPENCER

Despite the efforts of early scholars to see the ancient Maya as peaceful devotees of gods and stars, images and texts from the Late Classic period (550–900 CE) reveal that war formed a necessary part of political interaction. Linked to heightened competition between polities, which in many cases escalated into broken, or remapped, alliances and full-blown wars, the forceful procurement of humans intensified during this era (Martin 1996, 2001; Martin and Grube 2008; Stuart 1995, 2005). Late Classic–period art reveals weapon-wielding warriors grabbing defeated fighters by the hair and assemblies of prisoners tethered like animals, while hieroglyphic inscriptions describe war events, the sacking of rival sites, and the capture of enemies in battle. Shown bound and stripped of high-status regalia, portraits of prisoners figure prominently in the imagery created during this time. Scenes of courtly life frequently include vivid portrayals of hostages offered as tribute, as the iconography on numerous elite ceramic vessels demonstrates (see, for example, Figure 1.11). In such cases the imagery celebrates the presentation of captives while the triumphant lords often simply stand on or over their war prisoners as a symbol of supreme domination. When represented in more public contexts, such as on stelae or architectural sculpture, however, prisoners most often appear in situations that suggest they serve not as gifts but as sacrificial victims.

Craftsmen rendered images of prisoners in all eras of Maya history, but captives played particularly important roles during the Late Classic period (Stuart 2005:270). At this time, hostages appeared with unprecedented frequency, while new and innovative conventions mark their presentation

(Houston 2001:209; Miller 1999:157). Elite viewers within Maya centers would have routinely seen images of captured enemies in a variety of situations, including relief sculptures adorning buildings and mural paintings within temples, as well as on portable objects like the aforementioned polychrome ceramic vessel bearing a scene of grisly human tribute.

Drawing from the material culture of several kingdoms within the Usumacínta region, the present investigation probes the contexts and spaces in which images of captives were encountered, particularly examining relationships between prisoners' portraits, architectural forms and orientations, and viewing practices. I focus on Palenque, in Chiapas, Mexico (Figure 1.1), because this site offers two key advantages for understanding artworks in this category. First, Palenque boasts a robust corpus of surviving images and texts, primarily in the form of limestone and stucco reliefs, which allows us to connect individual prisoners with specific people and events. Second, stone carvers at this site embraced portraiture as an artistic genre. This topic warrants further note, as the specific portraiture tradition developed at Palenque successfully encoded core ideological messages important in identity maintenance and social cohesion (Spencer 2007).

Portraiture at Palenque

Portrait artists at Palenque lavished attention on the portrayal of kings, queens, elite lords, and prisoners. Along with texts and icons adorning the body, the faces of figures portrayed in art likely cued viewers to the individual identities of sitters (Griffin 1976; Miller 1999:166; Schele and Miller 1986:63; Spencer 2007).[1] When representing the same person in different portraits, artists described a fixed set of facial features, retaining in each example select idiosyncratic details. For instance, all known portraits of the Palenque king K'inich K'an Balam II (ruled 684–702 CE) include a distinctively large nose, an awkwardly opened mouth, and drooping bottom lip (Miller and Martin 2004:207; Schele and Miller 1986:65; Spencer 2007:92–115). Similarly, every portrait of the later king K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb III (ruled 721–736 CE) (Figure 6.1) presents the visage of a jolly individual with fleshy jowls and a highly distinctive profile, including a dramatic forehead hook (at a nearly 90-degree angle) at the level of the supraorbital ridge (Spencer 2007:176–186). Faces shown in artworks, therefore, encoded information that facilitated viewers' ascription of the subject's identity. The exact working methods that implied realism and resulted in unmistakable uniformity across examples remain unknown, but it has been suggested that artists worked from live models or, in the case of posthumous portraiture, based new portraits on templates (or tracings) of existing artworks.[2] As a corollary to consistency, portraiture was so highly developed at Palenque that the makers of such images oftentimes endowed them with *seemingly* naturalistic or lifelike physical attributes, like the hooked brow ridge of Ahkal Mo' Nahb III, which can be imagined to approximate how the sitter may have appeared in nature (see Brilliant 1991:7–8; Miller 1999:164; Schele and Miller 1986:63–66; Spencer 2007). Recording a ruler's appearance in such a lifelike and unique fashion likely encouraged remembrance and celebration of a sovereign, but what purposes underpinned the similar attention to detail in the representation of prisoners?

Of the 111 portraits from Palenque, 26 represent prisoners (Spencer 2007). The relatively high percentage of artworks that feature captives in relation to kings and other nobles suggest that this category of imagery held great significance for Palenque's elites. It also calls attention to the need for

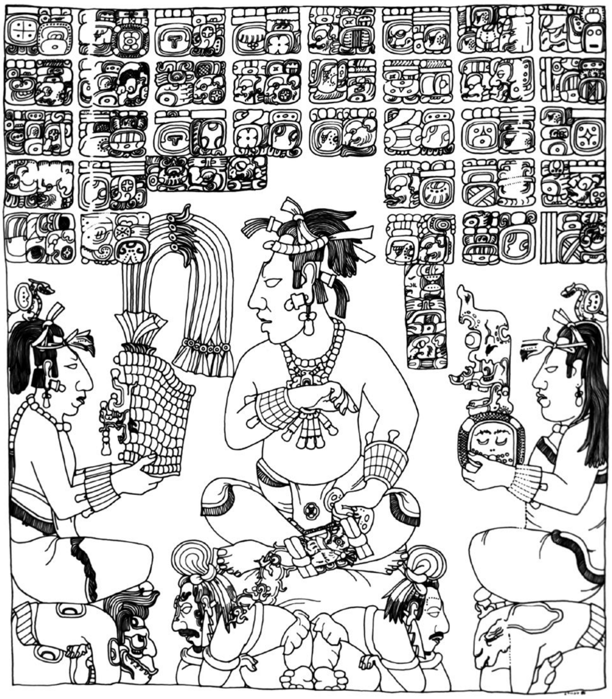

FIGURE 6.1 Tablet of the Slaves, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, ca. 730 CE. Drawing by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Drawing Collection:131).

scholars wishing to understand more fully the communicative capacities of Maya art and the environments in which it was experienced to undertake additional study of portraiture as an artistic genre at Palenque and other sites.[3] Fortuitously, the physical and spatial contexts in which Palenque's portraits were installed open frameworks for considering how this type of visual messaging operated. While reliefs portraying detainees embellish a number of Palenque's temples, designers concentrated the vast majority of such presentations in the East Court, an interior plaza located within the Palace (Figure 6.2), which was created under the auspices of the kingdom's famous ruler, K'inich Janab Pakal (ruled 615–683 CE) (Martin and Grube 2008:163–165).[4] The East Court, with much of its carved imagery installed on the outer surfaces of the buildings that define the plaza (rather than within the houses themselves), served as an "interface" between the Palace's inhabitants and the king's guests (Parmington 2011:138). This courtyard, therefore, offers a unique opportunity to examine a consistent program of prisoner portraits within the encompassing environment of the Palace buildings. As such, the plaza's collection of images depicting subjugated victims functions as a coherent, intentional statement about Palenque's kings and viewers.

A brief characterization of Palenque's political landscape during the reign of K'inich Janab Pakal (hereafter simply referred to as "Pakal" for ease of reference) and subsequent rulers assists in contextualizing our understanding of prisoner portraits at the site generally, and in the East Court specifically.[5] In 615, when he was just twelve years old, Pakal assumed the Palenque throne. Inheriting a kingdom that had recently weathered waves of enemy attacks, including substantial sackings by Calakmul in 599 and 611, the young king embarked upon a long and war-torn tenure. Despite these uncertain footings, by the middle of the seventh century, Pakal had reestablished the kingdom's power and strengthened its regional position. The sovereign achieved a critical goal in his campaign to renew Palenque's glory with his victory over Santa Elena, in 659, when he meted out punishment to that polity for its past support of Palenque's bitter enemies, Pomoná and Calakmul. Texts at Palenque describe the capture of the Santa Elena king, Nuun Ujol Chahk, along with six of his lieutenants. Hieroglyphic inscriptions carved on the staircase risers of House C, in the conquering site's East Court, specifically mention their capture. Sculpted reliefs installed against the base of the same structure present the prisoners' portraits, along with short texts indicating their identity.[6] With this significant military defeat and the consolidation of power, Palenque's influence began to rival some of its more established neighbors, including Piedras Negras, Yaxchilan, and Toniná.

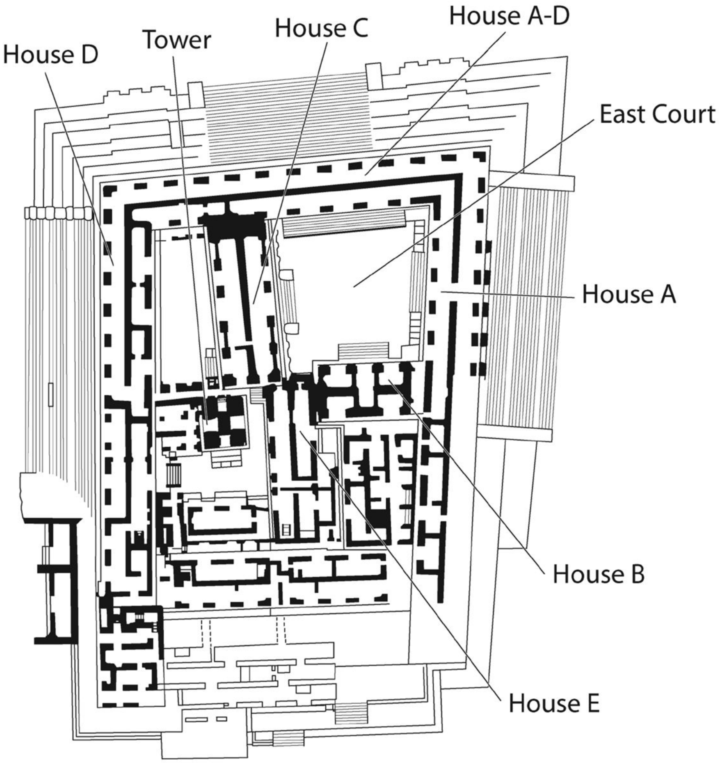

FIGURE 6.2 Plan of the Palace, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. Drawing by Kaylee R. Spencer after Miller and Martin (2004:Figure 59).

After the death of Pakal in 684, K'inich K'an Balam II replaced his father as king. K'an Balam's reign continued an agenda aimed at conquest and expansion. In 687, for example, Palenque's forces were victorious over Toniná, a powerful kingdom located forty miles to the south of Palenque. Defeat of Toniná propelled additional conquests (including a victory over Moral-Reforma), but the animosity between Palenque and Toniná persisted. Within five years of its initial defeat, in 692 Toniná retaliated and successfully captured at least two prominent Palenque lords, including the noble K'awiil Mo', whose portrait was carved twice at this enemy site (for photographs and drawings of Toniná Monuments 27 and 172 see the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions [CMHI], vol. 6:71, vol. 9:117).

At the height of this animosity, K'inich K'an Joy Chitam II (ruled 702–711), K'an Balam's brother, ascended the Palenque throne in 702, but his reign was cut short by Toniná's retaliation. A carved panel found at Toniná depicts the Palenque king bound as a hostage (see CMHI, vol. 6:153). Hieroglyphic texts carved on the captive's leg identify the sitter as K'inich K'an Joy Chitam II of Palenque, while the date recorded in the adjacent caption indicates a war event in 711. The circumstances surrounding the ruler's capture and demise remain unclear; however, some scholars presume that K'inich Baaknal Chahk (ruled 688–715 CE), the Toniná sovereign, allowed K'an Joy Chitam II to return to Palenque as a puppet king where he served in uncertain terms until 722 (Stuart 2003; Stuart and Stuart 2008:217). Upon his death a new sovereign, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb III, was installed at Palenque in 721 and the dynasty continued until scribes recorded the accession of the last Palenque king, optimistically named Janab Pakal III, in 799. It is within this context of military strife, political posturing, and uncertain accession that Palenque's captive portraits must be analyzed, but they must also be considered in relation to indigenous frameworks of viewing.

Despite the modern observer's routine exposure to violent imagery and reports of graphic wartime tactics, portraits of captives, such as those installed in the East Court, retain their arresting nature today. They likely were meant to evoke strong responses from Palenque's high-status audiences too. In part, this ability of portraits to affect beholders relates to ancient Maya belief systems that permit the merging of an individual depicted on an artwork with the actual person's identity (which is especially evident in the *ubaah* phrase, as I discuss below). That is, a sculpture that portrays a captive was in some cases perceived to be the actual prisoner (Houston 2001:207; Houston and Stuart 1998). Portraits of captives (embodying their essences) encouraged awareness of the sitters' identity and emotional state, fostered contemplation of the vulnerable and pain-riddled bodies of the people portrayed, and reminded beholders of their own ephemeral nature (Houston 2001; Houston et al. 2006:203).

Whether viewing the East Court's potentially sentient prisoner portraits from above, on the level of the surrounding house platforms, or from the vantage point of the plaza floor, the act of gazing carried with it meaningful information about the relief portraits' agency. While many Western cultures consider the operation of sight as relatively neutral, Maya thought apparently ascribed greater power to engaging this sense.[7] Sight was considered a dynamic, agentive, and reciprocal interaction, as concrete an act as touching another person or object (Hanks 1990; Houston et al. 2006:167–175; Stuart 1996). In Yucatec Mayan the root *-iknal* can refer to a changing "field of action related to an agent the way one's shadow or perceptual field is"

(Hanks 1990:91). Considering the meanings of *-iknal* in Yucatec in relation to its expression in Classic-period texts (generally occurring as variations of *-ichnal*), Houston and colleagues (2006:173) propose that the ancient Maya considered vision from multiple vantage points simultaneously, or as a "totality of objects within view," wherein participants (both human and sculptural) played active roles (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, especially the section on Sight, Vision, and Visuality, for an expanded discussion of indigenous views of seeing, as well as Clancy, Chapter 5; Olton, Chapter 7; and Werness-Rude, Chapter 4). In this context, both the living people and essence-imbued carved prisoner portraits within Palenque's East Court saw but were also seen, thus activating a shifting visual matrix.

The present research explores how various visual devices further endowed Palenque's captive portraits with a heightened capacity to engage with audiences. It considers how formal qualities (and their necessarily spatial aspects), including body pose, proportions, and compositional strategies, situate and inform viewers' experiences with this important category of imagery. Comparison to examples of portraits deriving from neighboring Maya sites and consideration of contextual information furnished by hieroglyphic writing allow the analysis of a broad range of factors underpinning the display and reception of captive portraits. I suggest that the capacity of prisoner portraits to stir and hold audiences rests on strategies employed by artists that successfully merge viewers' visual and experiential spaces with those occupied by the depicted prisoners.

The East Court

Marshall Becker (2003) defines plazas in terms of the structures that surround them (see also Clancy, Chapter 5). In the case of the East Court, four buildings containing broad expanses of staircases and relief carvings of prisoners define the somewhat irregular quadrangular plaza.[8] House A bounds the courtyard on the east, House A-D on the north, House C on the west, and House B along with (the side of) House E on the south, forming the Palace's main ceremonial plaza (Robertson 1985:61) (Figures 6.2, 6.3). Broad staircases leading from Houses A, A-D, C, and B allow access to the sunken plaza, while a narrow staircase, set back slightly from the larger rectangular portion of the courtyard, permitted access from House E, connecting the East Court directly to the important structure that contains Pakal's accession monument (see Carrasco, Epilogue, for an extended discussion of House E's important cosmic symbolism and meanings). Defined by masonry structures on all of its sides, the East Court assumes the shape of a "closed-cornered quadrangle," thus becoming a contained or closed environment accessible only from the staircases of each of the previously mentioned Houses.[9] When viewing the courtyard from any of the Houses, the staircases, or from the plaza floor, spectators encountered a multiplicity of painted bodies—one would have seen groups of detained prisoners when looking toward House C and House A, which occupy positions directly opposite one another in the courtyard.[10] The piers of the structures that enclose the East Court echoed the grim nature of the imagery displayed in the plaza below, presenting figurative scenes of captives to spectators. Although badly eroded now (making them partially illegible), some of the piers featured scenes of prisoner sacrifice (Looper 2009:212–214; see also Robertson 1985:Figure 222).

When facing House C, two captives, shown on a scale that far exceeds the size of the viewer, appear on the *alfardas*, or balustrades, that flank the staircase (Figure 6.4). As is typical of Maya depictions of hostages, the prisoners shown in Palenque's artworks are all male (Miller and Martin 2004:168). As they kneel in postures bespeaking their subjugation, a series

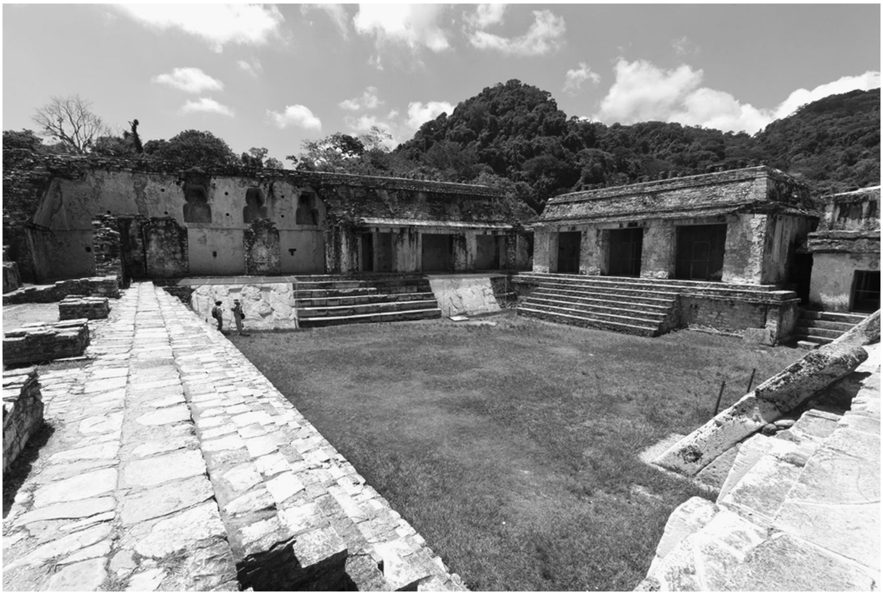

FIGURE 6.3 View of the East Court of the Palace, photograph taken from the northwest corner of the plaza, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, late seventh to early eighth century CE. Photograph by Amanda Hankerson (Maya Portrait Project:100703_MP_0321).

of knot motifs decorates their loincloths, suggesting that their eventual end likely involved sacrifice (Robertson 1985:62, 66; Stone and Zender 2011:77). Complementing the large captives that frame the staircase, House C features six carved reliefs representing prisoners, which are evenly spaced along the structure's base. Each captive kneels upon a low platform (barely lifting the sitter off the plaza floor) and presents his body toward the viewer while turning his head in profile. The heads of all of House C's prisoners face the central staircase, allowing them to *watch* an ancient viewer's ascent or descent into the plaza (Spencer 2007:153). Each prisoner extends one or both arms across his body, enacting a gesture that reveals his subordination (Baudez and Mathews 1978:32), while texts—as described above—carved on the nearby staircase record the group's capture in 659 (Martin and Grube 2008:164–165; Stuart and Stuart 2008:159).

Directly across the plaza from House C, House A also presents two sculptural groups portraying captured enemies (Figures 6.5, 6.6). Appearing in a variety of postures and body positions, nine larger-than-life prisoners decorate the orthostats that form part of the building's revetment. When

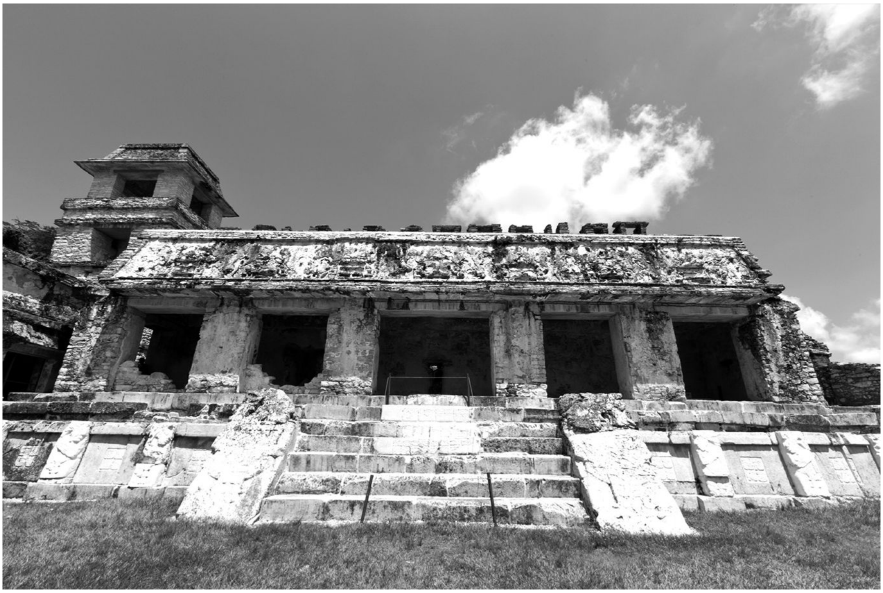

FIGURE 6.4 View of House C, Palace, including the hieroglyphic staircase and six of the eight captive portraits, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, late seventh century CE. Photograph by Amanda Hankerson (Maya Portrait Project:100703_MP_0363).

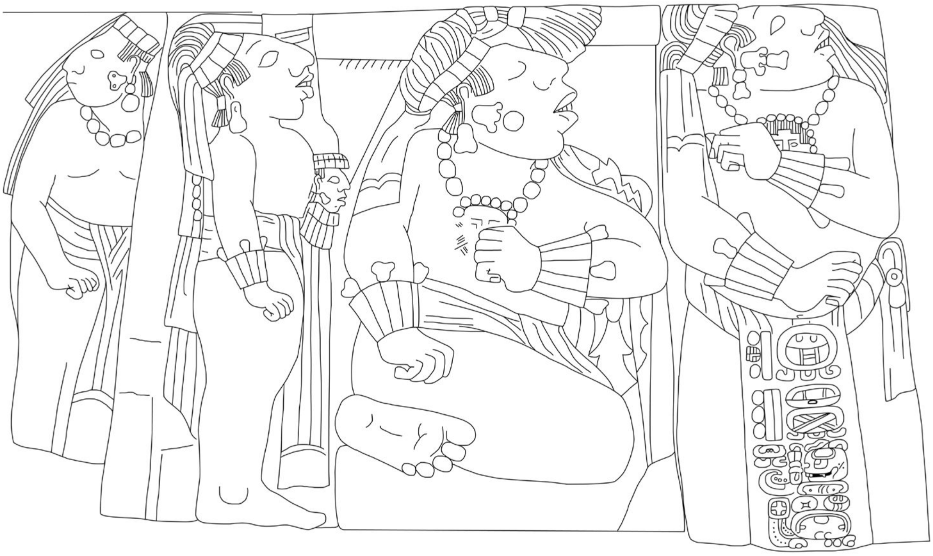

FIGURE 6.5 Portraits of prisoners appearing on the base of House A, to the left (north) side of staircase, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, late seventh century to early eighth century CE. Drawing by Kaylee R. Spencer after Robertson (1985:Figure 289).

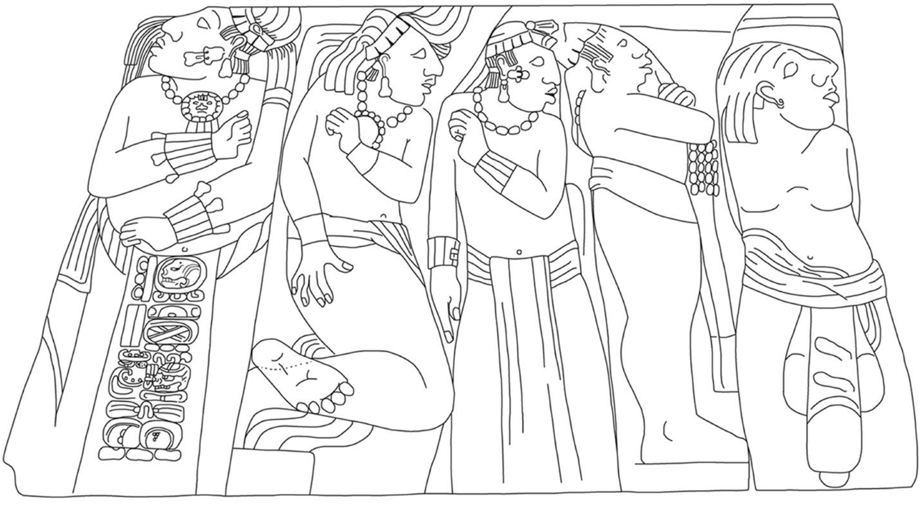

FIGURE 6.6 Portraits of prisoners appearing on the base of House A, to the right (south) side of the staircase, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, late seventh century to early eighth century CE. Drawing by Kaylee R. Spencer after Robertson (1986:Figure 290).

viewing House A's facade, the group appearing to the left of the staircase consists of four prisoners (Figure 6.5), while the right-hand group includes five (Figure 6.6). From a distance, each group appears to be a cohesive, unbroken unit. However, closer inspection reveals that the figures represented in each set consist of separately fashioned panels, which craftsmen joined together to create two multi-figural conglomerations. Their awkward merging and relatively flat carving style, which Donald Robertson (1974:105) characterized as a "shaved silhouette" method, contrasts with the House C portraits across the plaza. Such stylistic and compositional disparity emphasizes not just the creation of a captive-filled space but also, in the context of wartime looting, the active, aggressive appropriation of artworks, a topic investigated below. Hieroglyphic texts inscribed on the loincloths worn by the two central captives (who immediately frame the staircase), however, record the sitters' capture on consecutive days in 662 (Martin and Grube 2008:164), thus suggesting that some pieces of the program were inspired by the same event(s) and likely installed in the same moment.

As described in the preceding synopsis of Palenque's political climate during the lifetime of Pakal, the hieroglyphic texts located on House C's staircase risers and treads provide important clues for understanding the grisly nature of the court's captive-rich imagery. The inscriptions reveal the circumstances that motivated Pakal's commissioning of the plaza. They announce the prisoners' connections to the traitorous sites—Santa Elena and Pomoná—centers that had allied with Palenque's enemy, Calakmul (Stuart and Stuart 2008:159). Dedicated on the winter solstice of 661, the East Court, with its ambitious program of graphic sculptures and hieroglyphic inscriptions, served as a celebration of Palenque's victory over Santa Elena and a monumental record of Palenque's retaliation against its enemies (Stuart and Stuart 2008:159).[11] The plaza sent a message to the site's elites and visiting dignitaries that Palenque's sovereigns possessed the ability to triumph over its enemies.[12]

Recognizing Prisoners

Our ability to recognize the subjugated figures shown in the East Court as prisoners rests on the consistent categorization of imagery employed by Maya artists. As Claude-Francois Baudez and Peter Mathews (1978) noted in their seminal study focused on the subject, the following attributes mark the appearance of prisoners. Captives shown in artworks typically exhibit ropes that bind their wrists, upper arms, or necks. Unlike non-captured elites, prisoners of war appear in particular physical poses; they kneel, crouch, awkwardly recline, or press their bodies (belly-down) onto, or in some cases even into, the earth. In most instances they lack elite regalia, such as headdresses, jewelry, or other sumptuous accouterments that bespeak high status. Instead of displaying earspools crafted of precious materials, strips of cloth dangle limply from their pierced ears. Prisoners also tend to sport disorderly coiffures, often consisting of a loosely bound knot or chaotic mass of flyaways. Images of subjugated captives could, therefore, offer viewers a variety of clues to discern the sitter's lost freedom. Inclusion of one of these attributes was oftentimes enough to identify the status of the captured person in question, but Maya artists frequently chose to incorporate a multitude of visual cues simultaneously to signal degradation and humiliation.

Adding to our understanding of figurative artworks, hieroglyphic texts communicate information about the subjects portrayed in portraits. The phrase **u-ba-hi** (*u-baah*), which epigraphers translate as "face," "self," "person," or "image," plays an important role in identifying people—both captives and non-captives alike (Houston and Stuart 1998; Stuart 1996:159–162). Houston and Stuart (1998:79) argue that the *u-baah* expression identifies "a particular 'self' or 'image' [that] belongs to an individual, [in] an explicit . . . reference to portraiture." According to established portrait conventions, Maya artists could embed evidence of the sitters' individual identity by including name-related icons in headdresses or headbands (Kelley 1982; Stuart 2007). A similar strategy can be seen in the East Court, in the case of the six portraits that decorate the base of House C. In each example, the head adornments include signs that suggest the wearer's identity, while four-glyph text blocks communicating their name, title and site of allegiance appear adjacent to the corresponding images.

In the specific portrait subset that the prisoner category constitutes, the effort at individualization is supplemented by the desire to objectify, an impulse that led many artists to label prisoners' bodies with hieroglyphic texts. Oftentimes appearing on the leg, these inscriptions functioned as tags or labels to convey information about the sitter's identity and place of origin (Baudez and Mathews 1978:34; Burdick 2010:105–129; Houston and Taube 1987; Proskouriakoff 1963:150). Catherine Burdick (2010:113) suggests that the practice of "tagging" prisoners began first at Palenque (in the case of the prisoners shown on the House C alfardas, who wear loincloths marked with their names) and Toniná, before spreading eastward along the Usumacínta River. Within this scenario, the advent of artworks that celebrate the captivity of an individual must be seen through the lens of Palenque's regional conflicts. Pakal's vision of his victory over Palenque's foes as manifested by the East Court likely made a strong impression on the site's visitors, furnishing them with a powerful memory that could have sparked a new convention and taste for sumptuous display in the form of captive portraits.

Scribes denoted captive status in hieroglyphic writing as well. Texts routinely record the phrase *u-baak*—translated as "bone," "seed," "child," or "captive"—to describe a prisoner, while the term *chuk* refers to how warriors obtained hostages (Houston et al. 2006:221; Mathews and Biró n.d.; Montgomery 2002:41). *Chuk* (meaning "to capture" or "to seize") clarifies the discrete (and violent) action surrounding a captive's procurement (Coe and Van Stone 2001:90–91; Montgomery 2002:190; Proskouriakoff 1963). Houston (2001:211) notes that the same verb is applied to the capture of both humans and animals. Indeed, consideration of Maya art reveals close associations between the deer hunt and prisoners destined for sacrifice (see Taube 1988). At Palenque another carved monument, which represents prisoners in the role of throne supports, directly links hostages to deer.

The Tablet of the Slaves, a relief carving that adorned the quarters of the decorated war captain Chak Zutz', records the accession of king K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb III (Figure 6.1). On this monument artists portrayed two tethered and crouching prisoners physically supporting the weight of the corpulent sovereign on their backs. Packed together in close proximity, the detainees' bodies fold and collapse beneath the king's weight. A second set of zoomorphic creatures shown in the scene echo the prisoners' poses and serve as the thrones of the king's parents, who offer the new sovereign emblems of rulership (the so-called drum major headdress) and war (flint-shield effigy). Significantly, the figure on the right, whose body position and function conform to that of the prisoners, exhibits features that merge aspects of a human and a deer. The creature clearly possesses a deer's head and ear combined with a human torso, thigh, and upper arms (Figure 6.1). The ability of deer and hostages to operate in similar roles underscores their shared marginal status; both come from the wilds, or outer periphery of the socially constructed site center, and as such are appropriate subjects to hunt (for more information surrounding the dichotomies between the civilized, controlled spaces of a designed place in opposition to the dangerous, chaotic forest, see Taube 2003; Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1; as well as Taube, Chapter 9).

Although not found in the East Court, the Tablet of the Orator, a carved panel that served as a composite stairway throne, more overtly heralds the new functional roles that enslaved enemies assumed while demonstrating the great expressive capacity of captive portraits (Porter 1989) (Figure 6.7).

On this monument the imprisoned figure kneels on the earth and raises his hand to his mouth in a gesture of submission (Baudez and Mathews 1978:37). Subtly carved lines link the hostage's mouth to the texts that surround him, which employ second-person speech (Grube 1998:545). The subject of the artwork speaks to the audience as he buttresses the throne. Text and image operating in tandem, therefore, allow many of the individuals pictured in Maya art to be identified as hunted and possessed individual prisoners, whose new roles involved supporting the king.

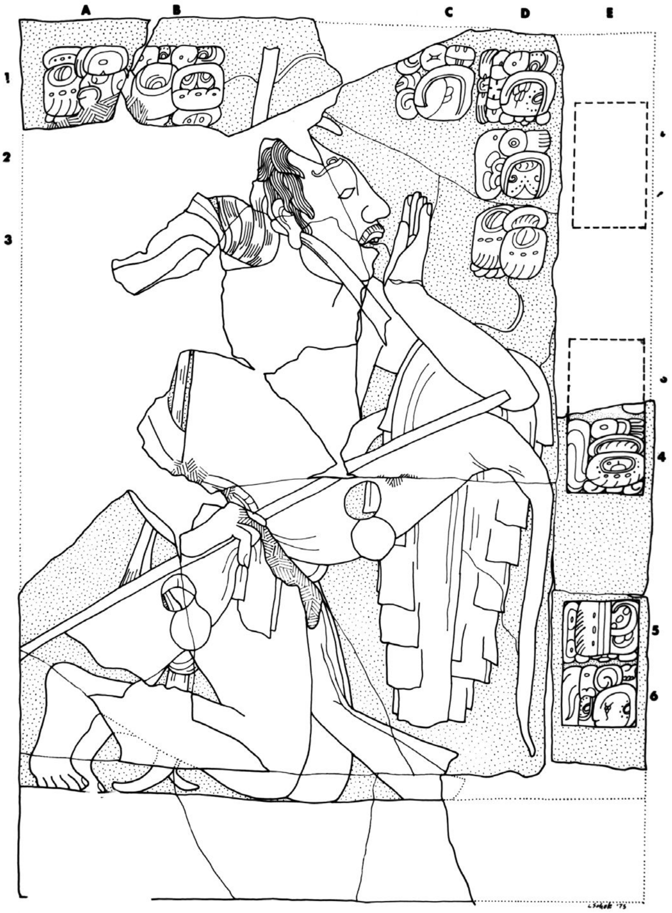

FIGURE 6.7 Tablet of the Orator, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, early eighth century CE. Drawing by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Drawing Collection:144).

Maya writing also reveals that captive identity became linked to captor identity through the process of procurement. The shifting status of a captor can be seen in the elite practice of taking new titles, like *aj baak* (captive-taker), following success on the battlefield. Variations in this designation reveal that the identity of a capturer continued to expand as the number of prisoners he acquired increased: titles translating as "he of two captives" and "he of four captives" are recorded in texts, while the favorite moniker of Yaxun Balam IV (Bird Jaguar IV) of Yaxchilan was recorded as *aj k'al baak*, or "he of twenty captives" (Coe and Van Stone 2001:90–91). Since one translation of the term *baak* signified "child" (Mathews and Biró n.d.), one wonders if certain custodial responsibilities befell the captor as part of his status-based promotion following the seizure of a prisoner. The forging of a unique, and somewhat complementary, bond between imprisoners and the imprisoned was, therefore, an emic construction; the socio-spatial gap between the two individuals engaged in the union necessarily changed. As Stephen Houston and Takeshi Inomata (2009:164) have asserted in discussions pertaining to the building of elite status, "a noble [captor in this case] cannot be self-declared"; instead someone of superior status, such as a king, could confirm nobility in relation to peers. Within the stratified nobility of the Late Classic period, the donning of fresh titles and the loss of others marked a new relational status for captives and captors. For both individuals, the act of capture catalyzed a process of renegotiating the relational status and identity. Portraits and hieroglyphic texts demonstrated such mediations and in some capacity served as declarations of an individual's modified status.

Bodies

Just as hieroglyphic texts and icons adorning a sitter's person encoded messages, so could the human bodies by themselves.[13] Bodies dominate the pictorial scheme of the East Court and appear not only in the relief sculptures of the court itself but also on the piers supporting the houses above that define the plaza. Awareness of this environment's unique corporeality is unavoidable, as is the audience's recognition of a shared commonality—viewers too possess a physical, human shape, a body that locates and localizes memories, experiences, and emotions. Empathic responses of this nature have been exploited by artists worldwide, where they play important roles in endowing art with meaning (Freedberg 1989). Through its familiarity, the body's postures, proportions, and other visual features cultivate relationships with viewers, at least on some levels, which begin to dissolve distinctions between subject and object, or viewer and viewed.[14]

Facial Expression

In many Western art traditions, viewers oftentimes rely on details of the face and facial expressions to assist in discerning the meanings of images; specific facial expressions might map nuances of a sitter's character or provide clues to propel narrative events. Faces depicted in Maya portraits, on the other hand, generally fail to communicate information about the subject's experience. Prisoners' facial expressions remain relatively impenetrable, indicating that overt manifestations of emotion operated outside of accepted norms of representation (Baudez 2009:273). In a few occasions, however, artists violated this convention and rendered expressive features in the portraits of captives, whose minor status likely permitted "experimental and fluid depiction" (Houston 2001:209).[15] Compared to the prosaic expressions observable in images of hostages dating to the Early Classic, the Late Classic examples present a broader array of emotional states (Houston 2001:2010–11), with exceptionally emotive examples found at Bonampak, for instance. The captives' facial expressions within Palenque's East Court follow the earlier pattern and offer few facial clues for interpreting their emotional condition; however, their original pigment would have endowed them with greater expressive potential.[16]

Nakedness

Without overt facial expressions to provide intuitive anchors, one must look to other qualities of the portraits to guide interpretation. One of the most conspicuous aspects of the East Court's sculptural program is the near nakedness of the captives. As is typical in depictions of prisoners, the detainees wear minimal attire. On the east end of the plaza, against House C, the figures wear loincloths, modest headdresses, necklaces, and wristlets. Strips of fabric hang through their ears. At the west end of the court, the basal sculptures of House A reveal even more skin. Prisoners wear longer, yet less ornamented loincloths, simple headbands (rather than headdresses), and beaded necklaces, while retaining small dangling earrings and wrist ornaments as a demonstration of their former status. The prisoner shown on the far right (known today as Captive 9) only wears a loincloth, part of which appears to be wrapped within his belt (Figure 6.8).[17] As a result, Captive 9 blatantly exposes his overscaled and mutilated phallus (Robertson 1974:107; Robertson 1985:66). In Maya art nakedness violates social norms, as it connotes compromised morality (Houston 2001:213; Miller and Martin 2004:168). In the case of the East Court program, the captives' uncovered skin and minimal ornamentation served as outward symbols of dishonor and humiliation.

While nearly all of the captives pictured in the plaza wear loincloths that cover their genitals, their lack of other regalia, or near nakedness, suggests their debased character and humiliation. At the same time, the generous display of captives' uncovered skin served as reminders of the unprotected body's fragility and vulnerability. Set against the backdrop of bare skin, abrasive ropes appear to bind captives' arms. Even loincloths betray their standard function of preserving modesty, as their tops (at

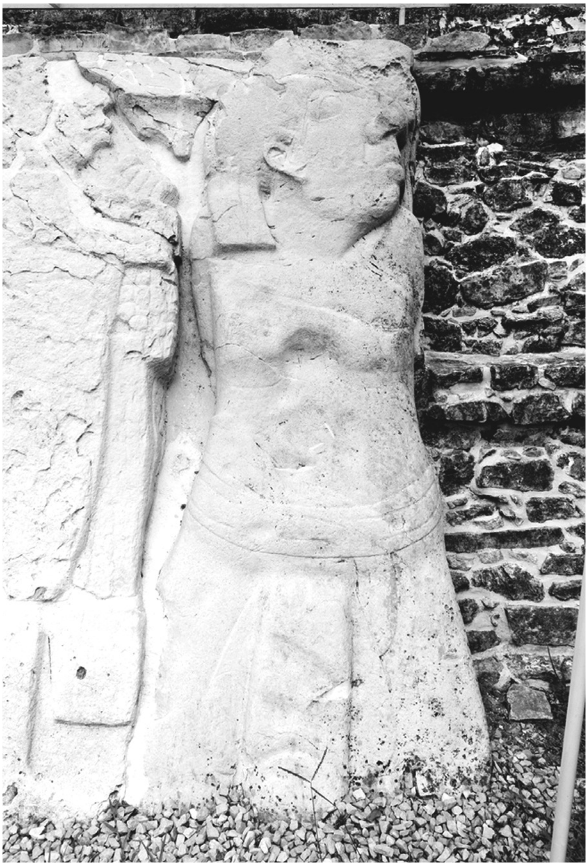

FIGURE 6.8 Captive 9 displaying overscaled phallus, from the base of House A, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, late seventh to early eighth century CE. Image cropped from a photograph taken by Amanda Hankerson (Maya Portrait Project:100706_MP_1871).

least those appearing on House A), twist and wrap restrictively around the figures' torsos. Similarly, the floppy, fibrous necklaces that adorn the captives of the House C group take on an eerily garrote-like quality, perhaps reminding viewers of the thin distinction between sumptuous ornaments that decorate the neck and instruments of torture that potentially asphyxiate it. At the same time the neck ornaments recall tethering devices used to string together captured wild game.[18] Emphasizing this precarious adornment, each of the six figures draws one or both arms toward his chest, a posture that symbolizes prisoner status while simultaneously partially obscuring the hanging ornaments. Although differing completely in subject matter and purpose, a relevant analog dating to the Early Renaissance can be cited in Western art. In the well-known bronze sculpture of David by Donatello, the adolescent's flamboyant hat, highly styled locks of hair, and fancy boots accentuate his nearly nude body. Similarly, in Maya art, ropes, necklaces, loincloths, and carefully chosen accouterments heighten the viewer's awareness of the victim's corporeal presence.

The prisoners portrayed on the plaza's east side (except Captive 9) wear ear ornaments, but earrings are noticeably absent on the six figures shown against the base of House C (see also Figures 6.1, 6.7).[19] Instead, strips of cloth hang through the empty piercings of their earlobes. In Maya art, the substitution of strips of cloth or paper for precious earspools can operate to indicate the degraded status of the wearer, but can also suggest an individual's engagement in blood sacrifice (McAnany 1995:44–45; Stuart 1988; Werness 2010:142). Furthermore, the substituted material oftentimes exhibits serrated edges and/or circular marks above downward-hanging flaps, indicating that holes have been punched or pierced through the fabric (Baudez and Mathews 1978:33–34; Proskouriakoff 1950:58–59).

Examples of cloth strung through ears can be seen at Palenque on the Tablet of the Scribe, Tablet of the Orator, and the Temple 21 Tablet, as well as on numerous monuments from other Maya sites. Mary Miller and Simon Martin (2004:168) point out that substituting ripped cloth for precious jewelry both humiliated the victim and underscored the violent exchange of such sumptuary goods from the captive to the conqueror. Furthermore, the authors (Miller and Martin 2004:168) note that "under normal circumstances, the Maya never cut or tore cloth; the ripping of cloth may well have been analogous to the tearing of flesh." Not only could it communicate the transfer of wealth from victim to conqueror, but fabric threaded through a captive's ear could also symbolize human skin, thereby encoding information about physical interactions with a victim's body. Wearing only select decorations, which contained culturally pregnant meanings, in combination with minimal loincloths, prisoners' bodies, as shown in the monumental record, became more palpable to viewers.

Postures

Several scholars have observed that body positions alone can convey the captive status of figures in art as well as reveal information about their level of distress (Baudez and Mathews 1978; Houston 2001:209; Miller 2000:206–219; Miller and Martin 2004:168). Similarly, the body positions exhibited by the East Court prisoners also announce their lost freedom, suggest their acute degree of physical discomfort, and also integrate the spectator's involvement. Although the reliefs rest atop slight pedestals that lift them off the plaza floor, the majority of the prisoners shown against the facades of A and, to a certain extent, the basal sculptures of House C *appear* to kneel directly on the ground, the same ground that is shared by audiences who stand within the courtyard. Prisoners' bare knees seem to press into what would have been a rough, stuccoed surface, occasioning images of raw, skinned knees to flood the viewer's imagination. The illusion of the hostages' physical connection to the earth recalls typical conventions in Maya art wherein rulers stand atop captives, whose backs become the compositional groundlines (in the case of monumental stelae). Similarly, from a vantage point atop the platforms of the East Court houses, the humiliated figures seem to kneel within an earthly underworld realm, below the spatial plane of the elite spectators.

Showing prisoners on their knees allowed sculptors to portray the bending of joints into unnatural degrees and angles. Some depictions of kneeling captives, for example, show the sitter's body weight thrust downward against his legs, which, when contorted below, cause the soles of the feet or ankles to splay outward, suggesting dislocation or fracture. Captives 3 and 6 on the House A program, for instance, are shown in profile view, yet the soles of their feet face the viewer, achieving a posture that would likely challenge, if not injure, the knee and ankle joints of most people. A similar posture can be seen on the Temple 17 Tablet and the previously mentioned Tablet of the Slaves (Figure 6.1). Demonstrating a broader interest in depicting individuals in pain, Baudez (2009:274–275, Figure 10.7) cites examples of artworks that show captives whose ankles are obviously broken, and it has been suggested that several sculptures from Toniná also record fractured ankles (Nygard et al. 2011). By extension, it is reasonable to propose that some of the artworks from Palenque depict captives with breaks sustained at the joints.

Adding to the list of possible injuries inflicted on captives, Merle Greene Robertson (1985:62) also observes the unnatural wrist and hand positions apparent in a few of the House A figures. She notes that some of the victims clench their fists tightly (a posture that requires sustained exertion as the body's natural response is to release), which provides a stark contrast to the one case where the hand hangs lifelessly. Perhaps captors or torturers targeted wrists, ankles, and knees, as full functionality of these joints would be crucial for success in battle. Kevin Johnston (2001) suggests such a scenario and extends it to other occupations, asserting that the capture of scribes and the fracturing of their wrists would have dismantled an enemy's ability to maintain cohesion at home. The broken wrist, which may be indicated by the single unclenched hand in the East Court program, might reference this idea.

In Maya art, arm and hand gestures also operated in a codified system to convey narrative cues and information about the relational status of the people depicted (Acona-Ha et al. 2000; Benson 1974; Miller 1983). Although not all gestures are well understood, a hand to the forehead indicated a woeful destiny, while bent elbows with arms crossed in front of the torso operated as an expression of deference to a higher lord (Miller 1983). Baudez and Mathews (1978:32) note connections between sculptures bearing captives with crossed arms and a Colonial description of subjugation offered by Cervantes de Salazar:

> All of them placed their bows and arrows on the ground on their right side, placing their right hands in their mouth, and having covered them with saliva, they placed them on the ground and brought them to the side of the heart, rubbing their hands. This was the manner of greatest reverence and respect with which those Indians venerated their princes, giving them to understand, according to my belief that they prostrated and humiliated themselves before them like the earth they trod (Tozzer 1941:235).

Echoing the Colonial description, Captives 1 and 6 of the House C facade cross their arms at the wrists and Captives 2, (presumably) 3, 4, and 5 extend a single arm across their chest. Along House A, all but Captives 1, 2, and 9 exhibit one or both arms crossed in front of the torso, a posture that also signified submission and sacrifice (Baudez and Mathews 1978:33). As previously described, the arms of Captive 9 are not represented at all, suggesting that they are bound behind his back. Another important detail furnished by Cervantes de Salazar highlights the physical contact between prisoners and the earth. Just as the captives pressed their spit-covered hands to the ground, the postures of the East Court victims also emphasize their physical connection to the ground.

Along with body positions and gestures, the vantage points from which we see the captured bodies also inform the portraits' meanings. In Maya art, a set of conventions guided the depiction of the human form in relief sculpture and painting. Rulers and elites routinely appear with their bodies en face, or frontally, with their head in profile view, usually turned to the left (Houston et al. 2006:223; Miller 1999:93, 157). Regardless of whether an elite was shown standing or sitting, the same rules applied: sitters were shown in profile view, or with frontal bodies, with their heads turned to the side. The six basal and orthostat figures of House C, as well as Captives 2 and 8 of House A, conform to this standard: they kneel with their legs and torsos directly facing the viewer, with their heads to the side. Captives 1, 3, 5, and 6 of the House A group, however, exhibit highly unusual mixed perspectives, including three-quarter views, which allow for the portrayal of bodies that seem to twist on the spine's axis in space. Captive 6, for example, is shown with his thigh in profile view, while his shin seems to extend diagonally toward the viewer, almost in an attempt to suggest foreshortening.[20] His hips, however, appear in three-quarter view while the shoulders are nearly square to the picture plane. Only the profile-presentation of the prisoner's head complies with norms of representation. Given the disciplined adherence to this system, presentation of a figure in three-quarter view, or a twisted perspective, would have alerted viewers to an anomalous situation. The postures and body positions combined with the unusual ways that viewers encounter the human forms create an awkward environment that charge the entire East Court with a disharmonic atmosphere.[21]

Scale and Proportion

In the East Court, artists' treatment of scale and proportion in rendering the groups of captives that adorn House C and A prescribes a particular kind of viewing experience, wherein audiences are cued to recognize and respond to certain aspects of the portraits. Selectively deviating from established canons of representation, scale, and proportion facilitates uncomfortable encounters with Palenque's images of hostages and directs viewers to fixate on specific qualities of the subjugated enemies they confront.

Scale

Scale plays an important role in shaping how audiences perceived the captives of the East Court. As described above, a total of eight prisoner portraits support the facade of House C. Each of the six vertically installed reliefs, which line the base of the house, appear in relatively consistent scale (measuring about 1.37 to 1.434 meters [about 4.5 feet]) (Robertson 1985:67), but the two alfarda portraits—which angle back toward the structure's platform at 45 degrees—are much larger, reaching 2.14 meters (7 feet) in height.[22] Surpassing the stature of viewers and the six accompanying prisoner images, these massive hostages provide optical stops that cue viewers to the spatial importance of House C's staircase and the important message its inscription recounts.

In addition to focusing attention to the staircase, the jarring differences in the captives' height urge a renegotiation of space that distorts perceptions of reality. The imposing scale of House C's alfarda images makes the six smaller prisoner portraits seem diminutive, even though they are actually larger than life-size. Despite their kneeling posture, the average spectator today needs only to gaze down slightly to peer into the hostages' faces. As viewers, or perhaps even Pakal himself, moved from the plaza floor to the northern door of House E, they could have gazed at a succession of prisoners' faces on their right before entering into the small structure.

Larger-than-life figures with inconsistencies in scale also punctuate the composition of House A's sculptural facade, although in a more complex fashion. The nine captive portraits displayed along this building exhibit severe disparities in relative size, as they range from 1.8 to 2.43 meters (6 to 8 feet) high. Like their companions across the plaza, some appear to be almost small (Captives 1, 2, and 8) while others are extremely large (Captives 3, 5, and 7) (see Robertson 1985:Figures 289, 290). Merle Greene Robertson (1985:63, Figure 293) notes that the scale is so disparate that if the hostages were to stand upright from their kneeling positions, their height would vary wildly, and if they were considered as a group, Captives 1, 2, and 8 are of such small stature as to be considered dwarfs even though they still would have in turn dwarfed an average viewer (Figure 6.9). Adding to the program's lack of visual cohesion, the portraits' grossly inconsistent scales prevent audiences from discerning any organizational scheme or pattern to their arrangement—instead, the representation of large bodies adjacent to small appears to be haphazard or random.

The irregularities of scale profoundly affect how the eye operates when

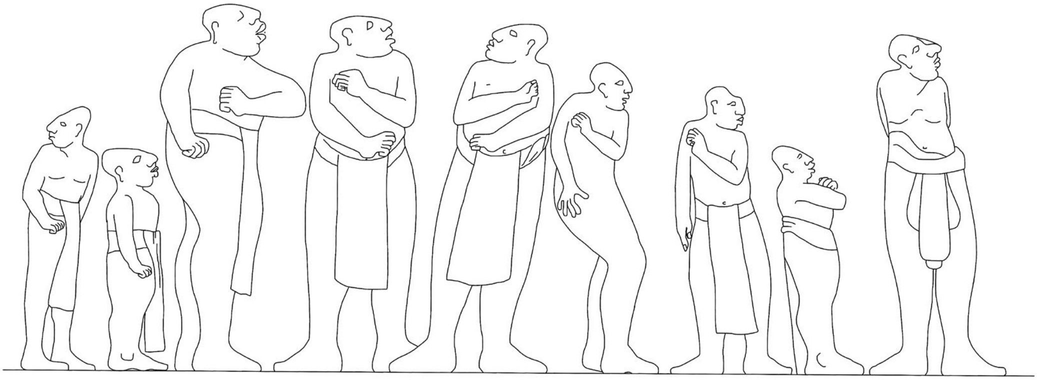

FIGURE 6.9 Reconstruction of the House A figures' heights if the figures were to be extended to their full size, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. Drawing by Kaylee R. Spencer after Robertson (1985:Figure 293).

viewing House A (Figures 6.5, 6.6). When looking at the sculptural programs from within the plaza itself, the dramatic differences in scale force viewers to engage in a perpetual renegotiation of space. The eye must telescope in to discern some of the smaller captives, and retreat back to address the larger ones, placing the visual field in perpetual flux.[23] The narrowing and widening of the eye's focus introduces an erratic and unstable cadence to the visual encounter of the plaza's imagery, adding dynamism and energy.

At the same time, the varying scale prevents the transmission of a single narrative event. While many of the captives of the House A group are so close to one another that they seem to touch, it is impossible to read them as a unified whole. They appear too large or too small to occupy the same reality. Instead, they seem to exist as unrelated figures, whose images and stories were extracted from various histories only to be combined into Palenque's new stone collage of imprisonment.

Proportion

In addition to scale, the body proportions of the plaza's figures also guide viewer's experiences within the space and inform interpretations of its imagery. The hostages decorating the facades of both House C and A, for example, exhibit a thickened set of proportions that emphasize horizontality rather than verticality (Robertson 1985:63). The following discussion explores how artists' manipulation of proportions draws emphasis to details of the body that locate it as a site of violence while simultaneously cuing viewers to specific body parts that engender culturally symbolic meanings.

Like the victims shown across the plaza, House A's prisoners exhibit massive heads, thick necks, short torsos, and generously rounded legs. At a place particularly known for its sophisticated adherence to naturalistic depiction, gross deviations take on great import. The most obvious distortions of anatomy can be seen in the portrait of Captive 9, whose penis and testicles far exceed the proportions of the rest of the body (Figure 6.8). This abstraction prompts viewers to consider the hostage's humiliated and sexualized body, which adds weighty layers of dishonor to the already debased victim. Heightening the visual impact, the overscaled phallus also heralds evidence of the captive's torture, as the penis clearly reveals two diagonal incisions. These marks likely served as a record of actual wounds suffered by the human victim (Robertson 1985:66). Furthermore, the figure's relatively narrow shoulders exaggerate the large depression carved from his chest. The concave hole might, like the slashes that mark the penis, document torture—in this case a collapsed chest resulting from blunt force trauma. Such overt departures from naturalistic representation at the level of scale and proportion, along with the portrayal of awkwardly angled ankles, knees, and wrists, strongly suggest that the hostage portraits installed in the East Court recorded more than prisoners' superficial appearances. Instead, the artworks also provided graphic visual narration of a variety of violent acts that victims suffered.

Numerous representations of captives bearing physical indications of trauma can be noted from other sites. At Bonampak, for example, muralists depicted blood dripping from crying detainees' fingers while a disembodied head rests on the staircase. Similarly, the polychrome vessel discussed in Chapter 1 (Figure 1.11) shows a Maya lord theatrically dancing with a severed head in hand as he presents three prisoners to an enthroned ruler. At Toniná, several headless sculptures recorded (or served as proxies for human victims in) decapitation ceremonies (Nygard et al. 2011). The stucco relief visible on House D, Pier F, at Palenque might portray this kind of grisly decapitation ritual (Baudez 2009:272; Robertson 1985: 44–47, Figure 222). Despite the carving's severe erosion, one can discern an ax-wielding figure striking a blow to the neck of a seated prisoner (see Looper 2009:212–214; Robertson 1985:44). The image portrayed on the pier might narrate the actual fate of the captives whose portraits ornament the East Court.[24]

In addition to serving as reminders of the particular type of punishment that a captive suffered, images that retain evidence of violence could simultaneously serve as stand-ins for the re-creation of similar actions. If a given prisoner were unavailable to act as the principal recipient of torturous acts (i.e., if the prisoner died from past violence), perhaps his portrait, which documented the specific nature of trauma he endured, furnished ritual participants with a substitute on which to re-perform violent deeds in ritual contexts. A related motivation for recording the physical effects of torture in art was to celebrate the amount of agony that one suffered. Baudez (2009) has demonstrated that in cases of self-sacrifice and the sacrifice of others, pain had a premium and moral value: the greater the pain, the greater the import of the sacrificial act. In the East Court, captives whose bodies registered evidence of graphic torture testify to the immensity of their forced ritual sacrifice.

While the gigantic phallus displayed in Captive 9's portrait might be the most conspicuous manipulation of body proportions, all of the hostages in the East Court show exceptionally corpulent legs, which must also be considered as an intentional statement of the artists and plaza designers. Merle Greene Robertson's reconstruction drawing, referred to above, also demonstrates the enormous proportion of the sitters' legs (if the figures were to stand) in relation to the rest of the body (Figure 6.9). In making them nearly two-thirds of the figures' total height, artists clearly wished to emphasize the legs. As described in the foregoing discussion, images of prisoners oftentimes bear hieroglyphic writing on their thighs, which may include their name, place of origin, or the date of their capture (Baudez and Mathews 1978:34; Burdick 2010:121; Stuart 2007). Such "tagging" is widespread in Maya artworks, where the labels also signify their status as a possessed object (Houston and Taube 1987). The placement of labels on the victim's thighs, however, imparted additional meanings beyond simply invoicing an individual's details of capture.

In ancient Mesoamerica, it was believed that an individual's power, and in some cases identity, was concentrated in the human femur, or thighbone (Burdick 2010:121–127; Feinman et al. 2010; Klein 2002; Miller 2007; Tedlock 2003:146–147). Catherine Burdick (2010:122) suggests that the location of the tag not only identifies the victim, but also demarcates the harvest site for the extraction of femur bones. Burdick (2010:122) further argues that such "'tags' refer to the role of the thigh bone as trophy and visually connect the captive image, the actual captive body, and his femur as a memento of capture and sacrifice events." Carved and painted femora have been found in tombs throughout Mesoamerica. Remarkably, at

Xcalumkin, a site in the Puuc region, a captor presumably commissioned his own likeness to be carved into the bone of his victim (Herring 1995–1996:51). The manifestation of the captor's image in the very material that constituted and contained his captive's essence eternally merged their identities (Burdick 2010:122), a union that was permanently acknowledged, as the bone was included in the owner's tomb.

The aforementioned example parallels the presumed motivation that informed the practice of elites donning new titles after the successful capture of a prisoner in combat. In both cases, the identities of each individual shifted in relation to the other. While the East Court portraits fail to display any identifying tags or marks on the sitters' thighs, and no carved femora have been excavated from the site, the grossly exaggerated scale of the hostages' thighs certainly draws attention to this body part, thus reminding viewers of its important symbolism. Like tags, the sheer monumentality of the legs, therefore, potentially evokes a range of meanings relating to captivity, power, and regeneration. The connections between captives and the earth—the multiple associations inherent in the term *baak* including "bone," "child," "captive," and "seed"—engages with the agricultural cycles of germination, life, and death (Houston et al. 2006:223–226). Within this model, where the humiliated victims served as fertilizer to sustain the cycle, the sacrifice of captives supported the foundations of kingship (Houston et al. 2006:223–226). In addition, the exaggerated legs enhanced the perception that the captives' bodies press into the earth, permanently rooting them to the plaza floor. Drawing a viewer's awareness downward, the prisoners' long and heavy legs reassert the captive's terrestrial domain. Just as prisoners support the throne in the Tablet of the Slaves accession monument, captives played a pivotal role in supporting essential cosmic cycles—and by extension, royal authority—through their sacrifice.

Within the East Court, other facets of the plaza's design encourage communication of captives' physicality. The artist's handling of scale, proportions, and even sculptural style combine to interrupt audiences' perceptions of spatio-visual stability, thus permitting a slippage of reality. On House A, from the base level of knees pressing into the ground, as the eye lifts upward the proportions of the captives' bodies become increasingly smaller. Because the carved panels slant backward at a 45-degree angle, the bodies' shifting set of proportions seem to perpetually elongate—the figures thus appear even larger than their actual over-life-size scale. Viewers experience an equally dynamic phenomenon when considering the group of prisoners displayed against House C. Each of the six basal figures appears to be carved in extremely shallow relief when viewed from the front.

When seen from other vantage points, however, their forms seem to round out and come to life, as the sides of the sculptures are actually carved in relatively high relief (Robertson 1985:67). As a result, from a frontal view, the captives clearly seem to be held within their own plane of existence, safely separated from a viewer's space. As ritual participants physically moved around the plaza, however, the captives appear to change, if not move. Adding to the dramatic environment, highlights and shadows created by the sun's movement would have intensified the contrasts and increased the illusion of dynamism. The East Court sculptural programs, therefore, present bodies in space that were loaded with perceptual and experiential stimuli.

Captives and Spolia

The art historian Donald Robertson (1974) astutely observed many of the East Court's peculiarities. He noted disparities in the scale and sculptural style of House A's relief program and interpreted the group's visual anomalies as evidence that the carved panels derived from a location outside of the East Court. He observed that some of the sections have carved borders on their top and bottom ends and that, in some cases, the moldings fail to align with one another. The uniform height of the reliefs, which allows them to fit between the building's platform and the plaza floor, was achieved by cropping the tops of each panel. To accomplish this, artists removed the upward-turned ponytails worn by most of the captives, along with their head adornments. Furthermore, the group consists of panels of slightly varying shades of limestone (Robertson 1974:107; Robertson 1985:61). Expanding on Donald Robertson's theory, Merle Greene Robertson (1985:61) noted that the type of stone employed to create the group is "not found exclusively at the site" of Palenque.

Other anomalies can be detected across the plaza in the House C sculptural program, on the west side of the courtyard. Decorating the facade of House C, the two alfarda portraits appear to be out of place. Carved in a different style than the six basal images, these sculptures deviate from the otherwise cohesive aesthetic exhibited within the House C program in terms of their adornment, loincloths, and sculptural style. Furthermore, House C's alfarda panels are rendered in a completely different scale and they project awkwardly above the level of the structure's platform, thereby intruding into the space of House C itself. Merle Greene Robertson (1985:67) observes stylistic similarities to the alfardas at the top of the stairs of the Temple of the Inscriptions, and speculates that both sets of alfarda reliefs were brought to Palenque at the same time. Sculptures that could be from a different site, therefore, embellish two of the most important architectural projects of Pakal's tenure.

If the relief carvings from the East Court derived from another site, their deliberate reuse encodes added layers of information about the people, places, and contexts to which the panels were tied based on original location.[25] The recycling of monuments must be considered in relation to the multiplicity of meanings hinging on the body and notions of captivity. The portraits operate as recontextualized surrogates. If portraits of captives could stand in as proxies for a real person, as Houston and Stuart (1998) have demonstrated, capturing or claiming another site's portraits could also serve as an act of domination.

Spolia refers to the intentional reuse of monuments in new spaces and situations. The word *spolia* derives from the Latin *spolium*, which generally refers to "a soldier's booty" or "spoils of war" (Brenk 1987:103). As Mrinalini Rajagopalan (2011:199–200) has pointed out, disambiguated objects invariably suggest a violent past, whether it is true or not, because the removal of artworks accompanied warfare so frequently. On one level, the East Court panels embody the violence of warfare that resulted in the individual sitter's capture. On another level, the actual sculptures suffered violence too—in their recording of acts of torture at the sculptor's hand, in their damage as they were ripped from their original location, and also in their material loss as they were cut down to size to fit the new spatial parameters of the East Court's revetments.

In research focusing on ancient Maya art, explorations into spoliated monuments suggest that strategic recycling permitted objects to embody acts of violence and domination over larger communities (Baker 1962; Just 2005; O'Neil 2012; Satterthwaite 1958). Bryan Just (2005:72) points to a collection of carved blocks within the Hieroglyphic Stairway at Naranjo, which seem "out of place" in terms of their style and content, especially since their incomplete inscriptions allude to military accolades bestowed on Naranjo's enemy, Caracol. These "foreign"-looking blocks exhibit stylistic similarities to examples found at Caracol, and suggest that Naranjo's forces stole the blocks from Caracol when they attacked that site in 680. If this is so, then the Naranjo army dragged the pillaged monuments back home and reinstalled them in the site's Hieroglyphic Staircase (Martin 2000:58). The newly displayed monument was thus "intrinsically tied to the original object and its historical and political meaning" (Just 2005:72). Loaded with new narratives, the recontextualized carvings at Naranjo permitted the site's elite to recall and recreate their dominance over Caracol;

they could play out a violent intervention every time they trod upon the carved glyph blocks as they ascended or descended the staircase. At the same time the conspicuous gaps left by the glyph blocks' extraction at Caracol probably remained—at least for a time—like scars, as visible reminders of the kingdom's defeat and lost history. Exceeding the effects of violence against a single individual, the strategic plundering and reuse of an enemy nation's artworks allowed victors to demonstrate their dominance over large communities in visible ways. Extracted from the plazas of Pakal's enemies, the East Court's spoliated captive portraits reminded audiences of Palenque's victories, while leaving conspicuous voids at the site from which they were stolen.

Staircases and Audience

Perhaps because of the arresting nature of the East Court's carved imagery, a critical architectural feature—the plaza's staircases—might initially escape notice. The dominance of the plaza's vast staircases that enclose all of the courtyard's sides suggests that conspicuous display also motivated the East Court's design. As previously discussed, sets of stairs bisect the groups of relief carvings on the facades of Houses C and A, while the majority of the courtyard's other two sides—House A-D and House B—consist almost entirely of broad staircases (Figure 6.2). Beyond their obvious function to facilitate access into and out of the courtyard, staircases acted as monumental apparatuses to display prisoners, facilitated the sacrifice of detainees, ordered the movements of ritual participants, and furnished audiences with spaces to sit or stand to observe the performance of ceremonies (Miller and Houston 1987; Miller and Martin 2004:168; Robertson 1985:61).

The links between staircases, warfare, captives, and sumptuous display can be seen in the mural decorating the North Wall of Room 2 at Bonampak, where a painted set of stairs operate as a mechanism to visually organize and present a collection of bleeding prisoners as part of a ritual event (see Miller and Martin 2004:174–175). Hieroglyphic texts also suggest the importance placed on a prisoner's public display, as the most frequent term employed to describe activities surrounding captives is *na'way* meaning his "presentation" or "exhibition" (Miller and Martin 2004:168; Stuart 2007:45). As a result, monumental staircases, with their inherent functionality in contexts of display and ritual performance, are often linked to captives in ancient Maya thought. These meanings undoubtedly undergirded Naranjo's forces' choice to spoliate sections of Caracol's Hieroglyphic Stairway. Along with other valuable commodities, bound prisoners frequently appear on staircase risers when depicted on polychrome vases featuring courtly scenes.

While staircases facilitated the display of prisoners during ritual performances, they also physically supported prisoners' bodies during ritual sacrifices. A carved *hacha*, or piece of ritual ballgame equipment, from Jutiapa features a sacrificial victim reclining over a set of stairs.[26] Shown in profile view, the captive's arched body and uplifted chest imply his imminent heart excision. Examples of monumental artworks connecting captives to staircases can be cited at a number of Maya centers, including nearby Toniná, where the Fifth Terrace displayed a series of bound captives; Yaxchilan, where images of prisoners participated in Structure 44's Hieroglyphic Stairway; and Dzibanché, a site with historic ties to Palenque's bitter enemy, Calakmul (see CMHI, vols. 6 and 9; Nalda 2004; Tate 1992:118, 256–257; Yadeun 1992). Because the memory and physical subjugation could be played out again and again—with every physical step atop the riser—staircases allowed conquest narratives to be brought to life and continually reenacted. As Miller and Martin summarize (2004:168), "Stairs may have been the single most common architectural feature that the Maya designed to celebrate victory and to bring the battle back to the court." Palenque's texts, as recorded on the staircase of House C, corroborate the spirit of warfare and victory and celebrate its human spoils.

Armed with an understanding that staircases implicate notions of dominance and display, elite viewers standing atop the elevated platforms of any of the East Court houses would have enjoyed privileged vistas of the plaza and sculptures below them. Viewers occupying House A and House C, however, themselves became actors in visual tableaus from the vantage point of all other audience members. From an onlooker's perspective in the plaza, the occupants of House A and C would stand atop the heads of the captives portrayed in the programs below (Burdick 2010:164). As such, the portraits, staircases, plaza itself, and viewers became participants in the re-creation of a common trope of imagery featuring elites treading upon the humiliated bodies of captives. From this perspective, the captives below—both real and those portrayed in sculpture—exist literally in an underworld realm (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1; Steinbach, Chapter 2; and Bernatz, Chapter 3, for expanded discussions of cosmic order and the characteristics of the underworld in Maya thought).

Access into this underworld realm required one to descend the plaza's staircases. A unique feature of the East Court's eastern (House A) staircase is the inconsistent height of the staircase risers. Starting from the top, the height of the risers increases as one nears the plaza floor. As a result the bottom step is over twice as high as the top step (Robertson 1985:61). This pattern would have prompted a noticeable shift in a procession's cadence, thereby endowing the activity with dramatic tension (Robertson 1985:61).[27] Flanked by alfarda portraits of prisoners angled at 45 degrees, one's descent into the courtyard would unexpectedly quicken, perhaps even causing ritual participants to stagger or fall to the plaza below (Hartung 1980:79). Conversely, when exiting the courtyard, the bottommost steps would have felt the most challenging and created the illusion of a slow and arduous ascent from the underworld realm (see also Olton, Chapter 7, for discussion of the phenomenon of ascending staircases in relation to Temple 1, Tikal).

Conclusions

Consideration of the East Court's relief carvings and design suggests that it must be seen as a dynamic place that spurred audiences to explore Palenque's violent past during the reign of Pakal as an active and corporeal experience. Manipulations of the spatial aspects of the plaza as a whole, wherein one became surrounded by imagery signifying conquest and sacrifice, and the spatial aspects of the carved panels that adorned the courtyard encouraged spectators to forge relationships with the figurative artworks that blurred boundaries between viewers and the viewed. In part, the suspension of the idea of separateness rested on the ability of portraits to communicate the identity of individuals, who possessed specific names, stories, and homelands. Facilitating the process, indigenous modes of viewing, which permitted limestone sculptures to possess and express the essence and animacy of the person portrayed in the artwork, allowed such portraits to become active participants in the rituals that the plaza hosted. The near nakedness of the hostages portrayed in the sculptural programs, combined with their submissive (and painful) postures, put audiences in intimate contact with the sitters' vulnerability, humiliation, and physical distress.

Exaggerations of select body proportions and inconsistencies of scale—which comprise necessarily spatial aspects of representation—cued beholders to look at the captives' bodies in specific ways. The massive phallus of Captive 9, for example, underscores his debased character and the genital mutilation he endured just as the victim's meager upper torso and shoulders accentuate his collapsed chest. Similarly, the immense thighs seen in all of the East Court portraits visually root the hostages to the underworldly plaza floor and also prompt audiences to consider the symbolism of thighs, femur bones, and their associations with war trophies.

Similarly, inconsistencies in the portraits' scales prescribe dynamic viewing processes. House C's gargantuan alfarda portraits punctuate or disrupt the otherwise orderly flow of the sequence of prisoner portraits, whereas the variations of size seen in the hostage portraits installed on House A's facade dwarf the viewer and force spectators to frenetically focus in and zoom out as they attempt to negotiate and renegotiate space to ascertain the relationship between the figures. At the same time, the disparities of scale seen in the House A group may have signified to viewers that Palenque warriors forcibly wrenched the artworks themselves from the elite center of an enemy site. Framed by staircases, which themselves evoked themes of warfare, conquest, and display, the artworks installed in the plaza heralded the king's ability to wield his destructive forces when warranted. The act of ascending and descending the plaza's staircases placed viewers in close physical proximity to the hostages' images, and in the case of the House C hieroglyphic staircase, permitted audiences to recreate—step by step—Palenque's conquest over its foes. Far from furnishing audiences with a harmoniously ordered or calm visual environment, the East Court required viewers to engage mentally and psychologically with the imagery that adorned its surfaces and to attribute the inequalities emphasized by the sculptural program to the power of Pakal. Whether the viewer was a ruler, prince, elite lord, or foreign ambassador, portraits likely reminded observers of the precarious positions they held. The tensions inherent in captive portraits, therefore, allowed them to become powerful participants in the visual programs at Palenque.

Acknowledgments

I extend my deepest gratitude to Maline Werness-Rude for her insightful comments and generous feedback as I prepared this chapter. Her careful consideration of several drafts greatly enriched this essay. The ideas and questions generated through our frequent discussions will serve me for years to come. Conversations with Linnea Wren, Travis Nygard, Elizabeth Olton, and Amanda Hankerson deepened my understanding of frameworks for discussing the body in art. Thanks go to my collaborators, Travis, Linnea, and Amanda, with whom I worked to create the Maya Portrait Project (http://www.mayaportraitproject.org), an ongoing image repository. This resource proved to be most useful as I developed my chapter, as I frequently needed to check (and recheck) many of the portraits contained in the archive. I am also grateful for the conversations and e-mail exchanges that I had with each of this volume's contributors. These discussions opened new perspectives from which to consider the central issues in my chapter and greatly expanded my understanding of how spatial constructs operate in a broad host of examples and contexts. Rex Koontz offered many useful comments on this chapter, as did a second, anonymous, reviewer; I am grateful for their insightful feedback. David Schele, the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc., and the permissions staff at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art deserve recognition for allowing me to use Linda Schele's drawings and facilitating the permissions process. In addition, I offer many thanks to Mathew Dooley for his unflagging support throughout the process of researching and writing this chapter (and coediting the volume as a whole). Finally, I wish to acknowledge the University of Wisconsin–River Falls for the travel grants I received, which supported fieldwork in Mexico and my participation in conferences as I developed and refined my ideas.

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Notes

1. I employ the term *sitter* to suggest that elite individuals may have "sat" or posed in order to have an artist render their image, a convention that is widely practiced in Western art. Heather Hurst's (2013) recent reconstruction of the mural on the north wall of Xultun 10K-2 features a seated king who is possibly posing for his portrait.

2. Linda Schele (1988:302) suggested that the portrait of K'inich K'an Balam II, which appears on the Temple 14 Tablet, was created by tracing the king's earlier portrait on the Temple of the Sun Tablet.

3. Whether or not artists at Palenque rendered the features of captives with consistency when making numerous portraits of the same individual is unknown, because no captive is shown twice at the site. At Toniná, however, two separate portraits represent the Palenque lord K'awiil Mo' (Monuments 27 and 172), and two separate carvings also portray the prisoner Yax Ahk of Anite (one labeled as Monument 155 and the other illustrated by Juan Yadeun [1992:101]). While the portraits of Yax Ahk are compellingly similar, the face of Toniná Monument 172 is badly damaged, preventing the level of comparison required to conclusively determine whether or not the portraits of K'awiil Mo' look the same. In my view it seems likely that captive portraits exhibited the same consistency that has been demonstrated in portraits of kings and elites at Palenque (see Spencer 2007).

4. Examples of captive portraits from Palenque located in places other than the East Court include the orthostats of the Temple of the Inscriptions, the Tablet of the Slaves (found in the North Group), the Temple 17 Tablet, and the Temple 21 Tablet.

5. Simon Martin and Nikolai Grube (2008:162–175) and David Stuart and George Stuart (2008:147–165) richly describe K'inich Janab Pakal's biography and offer detailed accounts of the political relationships between Palenque and its neighbors during Pakal's reign and the tenure of his sons. The summary of Palenque's tumultuous history presented in this paragraph and the two paragraphs that immediately follow derives from these sources.

6. See also Catherine Burdick's (2010:164) discussion of the identities and origins of the six prisoners portrayed on the base of House C.

7. See James Elkins (1996) for discussion of the phenomenon of reciprocal gazing. Drawing from a wide swath of visual culture, Elkins claims that the act of seeing faces and bodies frames human experiences in the world, while the bodies and faces that are seen possess the power to look back at the viewer.

8. Horst Hartung (1980) provides a detailed analysis of the lines of sight established by the structures defining the East Court and suggests that the resulting sight lines linked the East Court with important dynastic structures inside and outside of the Palace.

9. George Kubler (1962:133) describes Palenque's East Court as a "closed-corner quadrangle" and notes that it is the first courtyard to be created of this nature.

10. I extend my thanks to an anonymous reviewer of this chapter, who pointed out the importance of the original pigment that would have embellished the portraits displayed in the East Court.

11. Flora Clancy (Chapter 5) describes the ways that public architecture changed over time and asserts that one of the important functions of Late Classic plazas was to facilitate active participation in rituals that promoted the remembrance of past events. Although access to the East Court was likely

limited to elites, its commissioning and use probably relate to the importance of remembering Pakal's victories over Palenque's enemies.

12. Takeshi Inomata (2006) convincingly argues that performances staged in Classic Maya plazas both shaped perceptions of political reality and assisted in transmitting a version of history that upheld elite agendas.

13. Several of the piers supporting the houses of the East Court featured stucco relief carvings. Merle Greene Robertson (1985) offers rich commentary and documentation of the piers that face the East Court. A detail from one, House D, Pier F, is represented in this chapter (see Robertson 1985:Figure 222).

14. As described in Endnote 7, James Elkins (1996) offers a useful discussion of the active nature of seeing more generally.

15. Although overt displays of emotion are rare, Stephen Houston (2001:209) observes that it happens within a narrow set of categories, including in select depiction of captives.

16. See Endnote 10.

17. Merle Greene Robertson (1985) assigned numerical designations to each of the figures appearing along the base of House A. Reading from right to left, she labeled them Figures 1–9 respectively. I retain Robertson's system of numeration, although, for greater clarity, I refer to them as Captive 1, Captive 2, etc.

18. Maline Werness-Rude (personal communication 2012) observed that the necklace/garrotes worn by some detainees recall devices used to tether animals. Captives portrayed at Toniná and Dzibanché (see Nalda 2004; Yadeun 1992), for example, wear garrotes, or strangulation devices. While none of the examples at these sites feature decorative long beads, as can be seen at Palenque, it is noteworthy that twisting the central bead would quickly tighten the necklace.

19. The figure found on the south alfarda of House C wears an ear ornament. The upper portion of the north example (which is completely broken) likely displayed one as well.

20. Foreshortening requires the artist to modify the proportions and length of the body in relation to the viewer. Western artists used this device from the time of the Renaissance on; however, Maya artists largely ignored it, only using it sparingly in cases where the sitter occupied a position of low status (see Houston 2001).

21. Commenting on the spatial experience of descending the stairway of House A into the courtyard, Claude Baudez and Peter Mathews (1978:34) observe, "One cannot help being struck with the feeling that something is wrong."

22. The south alfarda measures roughly 2.1 meters (or 7 feet). Although badly eroded, the north alfarda likely stood at the same height (Robertson 1985:66–67).

23. I thank Maline Werness-Rude for suggesting this telescope analogy to describe how the eye operates in this context.

24. Matthew Looper (2009:212–216) suggests that the imagery displayed on House D's piers narrates episodes of ritual dance that involved prisoner sacrifice.

25. Maline Werness-Rude (personal communication 2013) observes that even in the unlikely event that the relief carvings were made at Palenque and designed for exhibition in the East Court, they were at least made to seem as though they didn't fit, giving the appearance of having been looted from another location.

26. See Justin Kerr (n.d.:K4895) for a high-resolution photograph of this sculpture.

27. The roles played by staircases in ordering the cadence of ritual activity and facilitating other dramatic performance effects have been addressed by Charles Suhler and David Freidel (1998).

7

Spaces of Transformation at Temple 1, Tikal, Guatemala

ELIZABETH DRAKE OLTON

A select category of buildings whose meaning is molded through individual experience rather than read in a text-image dialectic has often confounded our understanding of ancient architecture and its function. Such structures include the Temple of Apollo from Delphi, Greece, (fourth century BCE), the Old Temple at Chavín de Huántar, Peru (ca. 500–200 BCE),[1] and the subject of this chapter, Temple 1, Tikal, Guatemala (ca. 724 CE). These structures all share a spatial complexity that required an individual to traverse, in a literal and conceptual sense, both interiors and exteriors. In this light, audiences interacted with the building as an object that served utilitarian purposes and functioned symbolically (Eco 1980).

Archaeological excavations and art historical research allow the modern scholar to undertake a holistic examination of these ancient monuments. At Tikal, extensive time and effort has been spent studying the primary ceremonial precinct, which is organized around the Great Plaza and framed by the North Acropolis, the Central Acropolis, and the East Plaza. A tightly organized space that dates back to the origins of the site, the ceremonial center combined important dynastic burials, ceremonial loci, and palace residences into a single, coherent space that simultaneously spoke to Tikal's longevity and sense of place. The North Acropolis as a unit quickly became a location upon which successive generations of kings made their marks by building over and enshrining earlier constructions. Even so, the plaza created by the open area between the necropolis rising to the north and palace structures within the Central Acropolis to the south was largely unconstrained at its eastern and western edges until quite late in the site's history. It was not until Jasaw Chan K'awiil (hereafter referred to as Jasaw) took power from 682 to 734 CE that efforts were made to further restrict the central ceremonial precinct. In commissioning his own burial monument (Temple 1) and what is likely his most favored wife's cenotaph (Temple 2) opposite one another at the eastern and western edges of the Great Plaza, respectively, Jasaw initiated, and his son completed, a daring remodeling of Tikal's ceremonial center. In doing so, this father-son duo provided new spaces dedicated to ancestral worship for future generations while also linking ceremonial activity to earlier dynastic structures in both the Central and North Acropolis.

Today the nine-level pyramidal structure known as Temple 1 has become an iconic image representing ancient Maya elite architecture (Figure 7.1). Temple 1 has been investigated by archaeologists and art historians, resulting in the classification and interpretation of many architectural design features and the mortuary remains from Burial 116, identified as Jasaw's interment (Adams and Trik 1961; Coe 1990; Coggins 1975; Trik 1963). At this stage, analysis has been largely compartmentalized, focused on archaeological units, hieroglyphic inscriptions, and iconography as a way of exploring the history and chronology of material culture associated with (or included in) architectural forms. As a result of this formative work, we know that, within Temple 1, there existed an interrelated network of spaces characterized by the subterranean burial chamber, its horizon of lithics (formed by a several-ton mass of obsidian and chert chips), the superstructure shrine (including another elite burial), and an extraordinary set of carved lintels. These material expressions worked in concert with one another, creating multivocal meanings. In contrast to other studies, this chapter will explore Temple 1 in its entirety, including the ritual narratives embedded in its design that signify meaning through tactile and conceptual messaging. This work also paves the way for future efforts that try to understand the Temple as a microcosm within the macrocosm of Tikal's ceremonial center and its environs, as well as the Maya (and Mesoamerican) world at large. While exploring all of these scholarly avenues lies outside the scope of this chapter, comparisons with, and links to, some of the preexisting spaces of the central plaza will be developed.

French philosopher and social theorist, Henri Lefebvre (1991)[2] states that space is not empty; it is not a void but is both socially constructed and a physical entity. Applying Lefebvre's ideas to an examination of the disparate spaces of Temple 1 is instructive because his observations inspire new

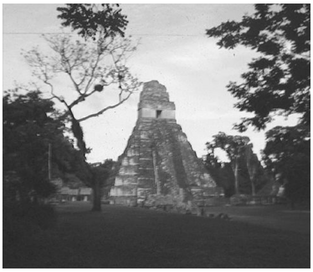

FIGURE 7.1 Facade of Temple 1, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, mid-eighth century CE, photograph by Elizabeth Drake Olton.

perspectives from which to analyze the structure and its environment. As a result, the following inquiries have guided this research: How did Temple 1 function? Was it solely to memorialize a dead king? How was this structure understood by the ancient Maya? Was it through western binaries like "inside" and "outside" or was it actually *seen* in a more complicated manner? What relationships existed between the Celestial Level[3] (symbolized by the superstructure shrine) and the subterranean tomb? And finally, how might the living and the dead have communicated?

Where Lefebvre provides insight into the concept of "space," semiotics theorist Umberto Eco (1980:20–24) similarly explores the function of architecture. Eco observes that buildings have multiple uses; some are related to a practical value while others reflect a symbolic function within a community. Eco's discussion of architecture as a type of "object" to be experienced presents an opportunity for a theory-based dialogue between semiotics and phenomenology with regard to Maya mortuary monuments. By considering architecture as emblematic rather than as solely utilitarian, Eco's approaches allow for new insights into our understanding of the built environment. Lefebvre's and Eco's more nuanced interpretations of architecture create a methodological matrix that can add important dimensions to scholarly analysis of Temple 1. In assembling its parts into a meaningful whole, this structure commemorated a dead king but more importantly, it served his surviving son as a location of pilgrimage, providing a conduit to supernatural locations far from the daily world.

For a person entering the shrine, the temple's central stairway morphed into an axis that led to three slit-like rooms with wide doorways (Figure 7.2). George Kubler (1985:322) described the experience of moving through Temple 1's superstructure as otherworldly, akin to viewing a movie: "Dark vaulted slots act as quick changes of scenes, like frames between pictures." Interestingly, the architectural design of the shrine disproportionately emphasizes doorways rather than vaulted chambers. Oversized wooden lintels mark the thresholds of three narrow rooms; two of these lintels, known as Lintels 2 and 3, are carved in bas relief and cover the most interior and private of the doorways. The superstructure, in its design, architectural decoration, and historical function, symbolized a rarified space of ritual. Evidence from the material culture and design suggests it was akin to a tomb-in-the-sky, a place where the ancestors resided, and a place where the living communed with their forbearers.

Yik'in Chan K'awiil (Ruler B, 734–746 CE), Jasaw's successor, was responsible for finishing his father's mortuary monument and, in doing so, was the one most likely to have ascended its facade stairs and entered its celestial level after construction was completed. In traversing the steep staircase, he would have experienced an abrupt change in his environment, as the open and comprehensible space of the Great Plaza below gave way to a series of confined and dark chambers at the structure's summit. Numerous studies have examined Temple 1, the epigraphy and iconography of Lintels 2 and 3, and the design and physical evidence of its superstructure. These readings have only provided interpretations of these rooms, doorways, deposits, and lintels as historical. By asking new questions like those introduced above, inspired by the works of Lefebvre, Eco, and the superstructure's archaeology, these features can be read as a text-of-transformation that was experienced by a visitor like Yik'in Chan K'awiil. Previous studies of this space and the imagery of the carved lintels have not considered how the interior environment of the shrine affected their meaning.[4] In the eighth century, Lintels 2 and 3 were a focus of ritual; the imagery on their undersides expressed, in material form, an ancestral vision seen by the progeny of Jasaw. The context of the lintels and their imagery, when explored in concert, facilitates a reexamination of the ancestral vision iconographic trope illustrated in stelae such as Stela 31. PreClassic- and Classic-period imagery depicts related rituals on stelae, murals, and lintels; within the celestial level of Temple 1 specifically, ritual is enacted and the imagery from the lintels become a catalyst for a communion with the ancestor.

Flora Clancy (1999:17) addresses the importance of considering the formal qualities of a work in conjunction with the "where" and "how" of looking: "Describing and analyzing compositions by their formal construction discloses certain features that guide viewers toward particular points of view: features that signal *where* to stand to look at the composition and *how* to look at the images it contains." Her observations clarify a methodology from which to interpret the lintels' imagery and the physical

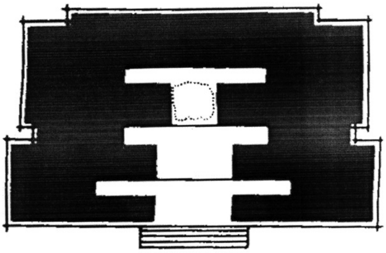

FIGURE 7.2 Plan of the Superstructure Shrine, Temple 1, 5D-1, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, mid-eighth century CE. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

experience of seeing these forms. Another approach that complements this creative process of seeing is based on ethnography and epigraphy. Stephen Houston, David Stuart, and Karl A. Taube (2006:167) have explored the "meanings" of sight among the ancient Maya, and they conclude that such an experience was *procreative* and "positively affects and changes th[e] world through the power of sight." The *y-ichnal* expression from the ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions refers to a reciprocal form of sight that affects the viewer even as the viewer affects it (Clancy 2009:170; Houston et al. 2006:167; similar ideas are also addressed in Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1). The experiences that inevitably surrounded "the seeing" of Lintels 2 and 3 were affected by both the formal features of the lintels' bas relief sculpture, the environment of the shrine's interior, and the creative powers of sight, or the *y-ichnal.*

I propose that the superstructure of Temple 1, like a tomb, was a transformative place that enveloped a visitor—perhaps a communicant—in an ensemble of experiences.[5] Designed to be understood by a participant or actor in ritual rather than a passive viewer, the shrine's atmospheric stimuli, material culture, and the design of the rooms and axial corridor emphasized the lintels' function and value as markers of conceptual messages. A detailed examination of the archaeological evidence excavated from Temple 1 suggests that the upper shrine and Jasaw's tomb beneath the plaza floor (Burial 116) were understood as parallel places (Olton 2010). When considered as analogues, the superstructure and Burial 116 echo one another; the celestial shrine was an accessible counterpart to the inaccessible subterranean royal tomb. In Temple 1, the celestial shrine functioned as a sanctified location of mortuary ritual and transformation, simultaneously; those who walked the central corridor and moved through the rooms conceptually reentered the mortuary chamber of the former ruler.

Parallel Spaces

Evan Vogt (1964:19–33) has noted that the ancient Maya may have perceived the superstructure shrine as a type of cave. Moreover, natural or human-made caves, like that which tops Temple 1, were spaces associated with mortuary tradition and transformation rituals. Within Temple 1, however, the relationship between the shrine and the tomb chamber is even more conceptual, and when these two areas are considered as parallel, a dialogue between the living and dead resonates along an axis that moves through the monument's core. A ritual network of transformation, denoted by analogous narratives seen in the material culture clarifies the parallel relationship of the celestial shrine and the tomb chamber.

Previously read as "problematic," some of the unusual archaeological materials found in both celestial shrine and tomb chamber are more comprehensible when they are interpreted as integral components of a "spatial iconography."[6] Andrea Stone (2005:249–254) has employed the term "spatial ideology" to describe how an individual might understand the geography and ritual spaces of a cave. Stone (2005:264–265) proposed that in its darkened and uneven surfaces, familiar and unusual physical features, along with ritual objects deposited therein, served to orient an individual and sacralize the space. Examining Temple 1's spaces as part of a "spatial ideology" akin to ancient Maya perceptions of cave interiors is useful. Our interpretations of this edifice are further complicated when we view Temple 1 as a dynamic structure that housed a deceased ruler while simultaneously facilitating a network of rituals that engaged the living.

Based on the mountain-cave metaphor found in Temple 1 and others like it, the structure can also be separated into three main areas or realms—the upper shrine, as the peak of the mountain, has celestial connotations, while the body of the pyramid inhabits our space, the terrestrial, which in turn places the burial below us, under the plaza floor, securely in the underworld. The celestial level of Temple 1, as opposed to its terrestrial and subterranean levels, was designed to be both public and private. In contrast, the tomb chamber far below, beneath the Great Plaza floor, was the epitome of private space (Olton 2010). Although the tomb and the "celestial" shrine are both dark, confined spaces, the superstructure and its exterior surfaces assumed a more public role in the sense that they remained accessible, even if such access was heavily restricted or distanced. Indeed, the shrine and the staircase most likely formed an important component of ongoing elite civic ritual. I suggest one of the functions of Temple 1's shrine was to *echo* messages of transformation and renewal signified by Jasaw's tomb below. An important feature common to both spaces is that they "house" a ruler: the tomb contained the interment of the father while the celestial shrine provided a physical and conceptual frame for the rituals of his son.

Shrines and Tomb Chambers

The following text highlights the parallel spaces of the shrine and tomb chamber through a comparative analysis of their material culture. These spaces will be recontextualized and their elements examined as essential in the communicative power of space and experience. As previously stated, these areas may have been read as human-made caves; interred within their close, dark rooms are precious objects, evidence of fantastic imagery, elaborate ritual, and elite burial. Read together, the shrine and tomb articulated a larger narrative of both death and renewal. Ritual narratives within Temple 1 are further magnified when they are compared to similar expressions associated with Burial 23 from Temple 33, located on the North Terrance and dedicated just a generation previous to Jasaw's. Correspondences between the material culture of Temple 1 and that of Burial 23 record the existence of intergenerational and historic funerary rites.

A corridor links the aforementioned small and consecutively arranged chambers that make up the celestial-level shrine of Temple 1. It thereby creates a series of intersections between the central progression of rooms from west (outer) to east (inner) and the north-to-south-oriented chambers created by the three right-angle crossings or doorways. The Maya architects emphasized such transitions by installing visual pauses, in the form of wooden lintels, at each of the crossings. The thresholds between Chambers 2 and 3 received even more attention as the use of carved lintels indicates. The comparatively flat ceilings of the crossings and the deeply vaulted expanse of the chambers call attention to the manipulation of space that created different vantage points for a visitor. Structural evidence suggests that Maya designers chose the thresholds adorned with carved lintels (Doorways 2 and 3), rather than the narrow space of the chambers, as a site of ritual.

Although the superstructure was designed around axes and right angles, this geometric approach to space belied an environment that was understood through sense and emotion rather than intellect. For example, the interior of the superstructure becomes progressively smaller and darker as one moves farther east into the shrine. The floor inclines at a gradual angle toward the ceiling, and the space becomes increasingly constricted. The elaborately carved lintels overhead must have appeared as shadowy, ghost-like images and in the flickering torchlight were only partially seen. Viewing the bas reliefs today, as two-dimensional works of art hung on the well-lit walls of a museum, contrasts markedly with the way the lintels were experienced during the eighth century.

The archaeology of the thresholds has yielded evidence of significant and unusual ritual. Interred in its unusually thick floors, caches and a human burial have been found (Coe 1990:603). The floor of Room 2 was charred

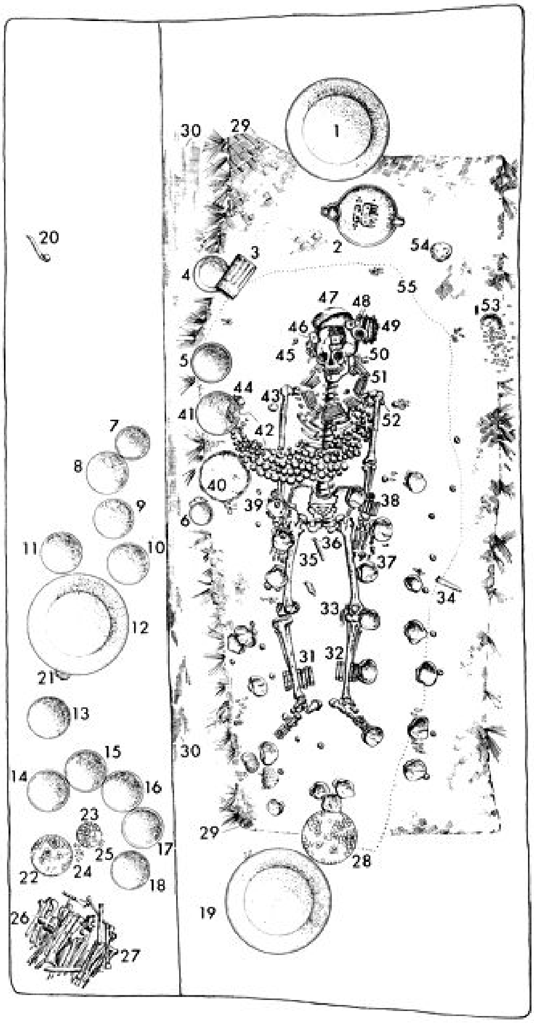
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FIGURE 7.3 Burial 116, Temple 1, 5D-1, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, mid-eighth century CE. Drawing from Coe. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

with copal while more burning occurred on the step to Room 3, which was almost completely incinerated due to such activity (Coe 1990:603). In addition, Coe notes (1990:603) the presence of many oval depressions in the floor of Room 3 that exhibited evidence of burning. The smoky darkness, uneven floors, constricted space, obscured imagery, and the smell of incense all would have contributed to a feeling of spatial disorientation akin to that experienced in caves and possibly tomb chambers, sensations that amplified an already rarified and private space.

In contrast to the above discussion of the celestial-level shrine, the burial chamber of Jasaw Chan K'awiil is 5.2 meters (roughly 17 feet) below the Great Plaza's floor (Coe 1990:604). Like the three chambers of the shrine above, it is also a vaulted room constructed of cut-stone masonry but the vaults are not so confined or "slit-like." A burial dais along the east wall creates a north–south axis and elevated the ruler's remains relative to a sunken aisle that runs the length of the west wall of the chamber (Coe 1990:604). The arrangement of the interment and its surrounding tomb furniture created a complex assemblage of objects originating from the earth and from the sea (Figure 7.3). Coe observed (1990:608) that the surviving funerary offerings surrounding and adorning the body (jade pieces, shells, pearls, stingray spines, feline bones, and polychrome pottery) appeared in configurations like rings, or a "magic circle" surrounding the body. These patterns, arrangements, and layers of offerings created a meaningful structure comparable to similar approaches of delimiting sacred space in the superstructure shrine.

A Painted Lintel and a Painted Capstone

The practice of delineating the sacred through the use of red pigments and ritual deposits has been observed in both the subterranean and celestial levels of Temple 1. In ancient Maya material culture, offerings placed in ceilings or adjacent to lintels are relatively rare. The unusual nature of these deposits may indicate their intrinsic importance and/or suggest that they functioned as markers of a sacred space in both the celestial shrine and the tomb chamber. Red paint applied to both a capstone in Burial 116 and the red-hued Lintel 3 over Doorway 3, along with similar deposits, illustrates a physical and conceptual link between the shrine and the tomb.

Artisans carefully finished the walls of Jasaw's burial chamber with a 2-millimeter (.079-inch) layer of gray plaster, covered the vault with a layer of dark mud and marl, and created an aperture in the ceiling used as a point of access and regress before the body was laid to rest (Coe 1990:604).

In a replication of the three lintels above, three capstones seal the tomb's opening (Coe 1990:604). According to Coe (1990:604), the central capstone was quite large and, decorating its underside (and thus visible from below), artists painted a solid bright-red disk measuring 22 centimeters (8.5 inches) in diameter. Interestingly, across the plaza, a similar painted capstone sealed the tomb of Burial 23 inside Temple 33 (Coe 1990). Scholars have postulated that the individual interred in Burial 23 was Jasaw's father, Nuun Ujol Chahk (Coggins 1975:456–457; Martin and Grube 2008:48). The red circles on what was presumably the last stone laid in the construction of both Burials 116 and 23 marked sacred space by visually denoting the final act of sealing the tombs. Across the plaza and across a generation, these rites created a bond between two deceased rulers and their burial chambers. Viewed in this way, parallel approaches to tomb design and funerary ritual may have worked to aggrandize the royal line of Jasaw while also functioning as a signifier of cyclical continuity among Tikal kings.

Although translated into a different medium and found in a different context, Lintel 3 and the painted capstones from Burial 116 and 23 provide intriguing similarities. William Coe, Edwin Shook, and Linton Satterthwaite (1961:44) interpreted the presence of the paint as evidence that the entire surface of Lintel 3 may have been coated with cinnabar.[7] The lintel's placement above a viewer—either a living or a hypothetical viewer—means that the visual information, in the form of red pigment, was oriented toward a visitor looking upward. In addition, the final act of applying red cinnabar paint to the lintel and capstones could have marked the tomb's completion, signifying the final act of the exequies, as well as indicating sacred space. These interpretations are speculative (see Werness-Rude, Chapter 4, for similar speculation regarding the practice of rubbing of cinnabar into imagery found on clay vessel walls); however, the unusual use of red pigment covering Lintel 3 and the capstone from Burial 116 as well as the shared nature of their settings points to a link between the tomb chamber and the threshold of Doorway 3. This example illustrates a mortuary tradition that came from the father (Burial 23), repeated in the son (i.e., in Jasaw's interment, Burial 116) and was, in turn, echoed in the funerary rituals of the grandson, as enacted in the celestial shrine of Temple 1.[8]

Another indication of a shared ritual narrative between the celestial shrine and Jasaw's tomb chamber can be seen in the contents of Caches 49A and B from Lintel 3 and various deposits surrounding the remains of the ruler. Lintel 3 covered Doorway 3, which marked the entrance to the deepest part of the shrine.[9] Caches 49A and B seem to have been placed in the north and south ends of the center beam (Beam C) of the five-beam lintel (Adams and Trik 1961:118). The archaeological report of Gustave Bernoulli (1877, as cited in Adams and Trick 1961:118), states they exposed the embedded caches: the offering to the south (B) was empty except for a small barnacle painted in cinnabar, while the north cache (A) was undisturbed. Cache 49A contained items from the sea—a sponge, seashells, coral, seaweed, coquina (butterfly-shell clam), and stingray spines—and all these cached materials had a red dusting of cinnabar (Adams and Trik 1961:118). No other deposits appear to be associated with Lintel 3, and no other lintel beams in Temple 1 have traces of paint or cached materials. The physical evidence detailed above and a holistic reading of the relationship between Burial 116 and Lintel 3, Doorway 3 from the celestial shrine indicate the presence of a shared ritual narrative.

Interments from the Shrine and Tomb Chamber

In conjunction with investigating the Lintel 3 caches (49A, B), archaeologists worked to identify the nature of a disturbance in the floor directly below the threshold of Doorway 3. Surface excavations conducted by Adams and Trik (1961) revealed a rectangular pit cut into the lime-concrete floor. Among the materials found in close proximity to the deposit were two complete stingray spines, one partial spine, and several pottery sherds (Adams and Trik 1961:118). Adams and Trik (1961:120) divided the excavations into three units that corresponded to changes in the composition of the floor (Units 1, 2, and 3). Unit 1 consisted of the natural collection of debris that has been discussed above. At 85 centimeters (roughly 33.5 inches) below floor level, Unit 2 was marked by striking changes in the substance of the fill, which included large amounts of a soft brown material, charred chips of sapote wood, and rodent trash (Adams and Trik 1961:120). Intermingled in Unit 2 was a "meaningless confusion" of human bones, pottery, obsidian flakes, and large amounts of copal resin with one ball containing a jade bead (Adams and Trik 1961:120). Although the original placement of the skeleton and tomb furniture have been lost, the excavators labeled this collection Burial 5, reflecting their assumption that it functioned as a unified whole, deposited during a single construction moment (Adams and Trik 1961:120). Severely blackened material found on the west side of the cist-type burial indicated a fire pit; associated burned materials were organized in a thick black line that separated Unit 2 from Unit 3 (Adams and Trik 1961:121).[10]

Due to the confusing mass of stone, bones, and fill, Adams and Trik (1961:122) identified Unit 2 as a Post Classic burial and they described the following contents interred within the cavity as the incomplete remains of a high-status female. Evidence of the principal figure's rank can be seen in the richness of the following features: one jade bead was placed in an unfired ball of copal; and four flaring, polychrome tripod vessels; three (or more) censers; and a group of utilitarian vessels were also included. The most significant feature of the burial is, perhaps, its location within the superstructure/celestial shrine, directly beneath Lintel 3, and in the foundation of Doorway 3.

The lowest level found beneath Doorway 3 was Unit 3 (closest to the last of the Temple 1 sub-platforms), within which Burial 6 resided. This interment dates to the Late Classic period, coeval with the construction and original use of Temple 1 (Coe 1990:603) (Figure 7.4). The tomb intruded into the fill of the penultimate temple platform and was initially interpreted as a separate deposit, distinct from the original shrine construction (Adams and Trik 1961:121; Coe 1990:603). Burial 6 also conformed to the cist type, constructed of exceptionally roughhewn stones placed in equally rough lime mortar (Adams and Trik 1961:121). The north side of the grave's roof had been broken and Unit 2 had entered into this space (Adams and Trik 1961:121). Excavators encountered limited remains, including fragments of human bones and sherds from a tripod plate found in Unit 2, beneath the southern end of the burial (Adams and Trik 1961:121). Researchers struggled to determine what bones and tomb furniture belonged to the burial, as well as the sex of the individual, and whether more than one vessel could be assigned to the interment (Adams and Trik 1961:123).

One of the most unusual features of the burial was the "heavy deposit of lithics," consisting of flint chips secured in mortar placed above the interment's roof (Adams and Trik 1961:121, 124). The practice of covering the top of a cist or the roof of a burial chamber with lithics is rare at Tikal with the exception of Burial 6 and Burial 116, to be discussed below. Adams and Trik (1961:121, 124) compared this deposit with a similar mortuary expression from Early Classic Uaxactún (see Burials A20 and A22). Clemency Coggins (1975:456–57) notes, however, that Burial 23 from Temple 33 also had a covering of flint and obsidian chips. These distinctive features from Uaxactún and Temples 1 and 33 from Tikal suggest a pattern of ritual, marking sacred space immediately outside an interment, presumably in an act of dedication.

Reevaluating these earlier interpretations, Coe (1990:603) surmised that Burials 5 and 6 constituted one interment from the Late Classic period. He believed there was one principal occupant, a female, like the person found in Unit 2 (Coe 1990:604). The other human remains may have been a result of the caching of bones and were analyzed not as a burial, but more as a "problematical deposit" (Coe 1990:604). In his reconstruction, Coe proposed that the woman wore a jade necklace of which only a copal-encrusted bead survives, was heavily shrouded, and was placed in a stone cist (Coe 1990:604). Coe's more recent interpretation of Burial 6 significantly altered our understanding of how the superstructure spaces, particularly the area surrounding Doorway 3, functioned in the Late Classic.

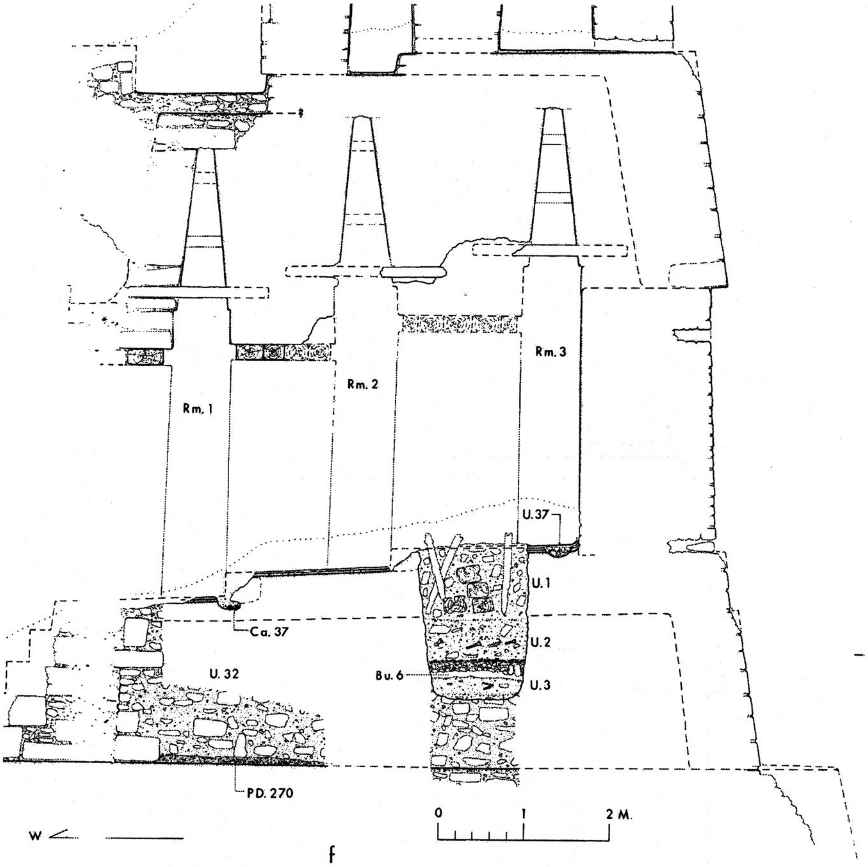


FIGURE 7.4 Section view of subfloor deposits and elevation of Superstructure Shrine, Temple 1, 5D-1, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, mid-eighth century CE. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

In contrast to the elevated position of Burial 6 within the celestial shrine, Jasaw's tomb (Burial 116) occupied a position roughly 5 meters (slightly greater than 17 feet) beneath the Great Plaza floor (Coe 1990:604). Coe commented (1990:604) that the depth of the burial chamber was unusual, as it required excavating a substantial section of bedrock during construction. As mentioned above, a raised dais supported Jasaw's body inside the finished, vaulted subterranean tomb. The deceased ruler was laid out in an extended and supine position, his hands were to his sides, and his head was oriented to the north (Coe 1990: 604). A rich combination of organic and inorganic materials—perishable goods, such as foodstuffs detected as shadowy smudges, and nonfood items including remnants of a feline pelt, leather, and several woven objects, as well as more stable items (and thus easier to discern) such as stone, shell, minerals, and bone—embellished the interment (Coe 1990:607).

Jasaw was adorned in death similarly to how he dressed in life, at least as depicted in his official portraits (see Stela 16, for example). Similar to his images in the public sphere, a diadem of nine square jade plaques encircled the deceased king's head while a set of matching earflares served to visually balance these accoutrements (Coe 1990:606; Harrison 1999:143). Some jewelry was not worn, but placed very near the body, as demonstrated by an additional set of jade earflares located west of the shoulder (Coe 1990:606). Surrounding his head were a variety of marine materials while a heavily altered *Spondylus* shell was arranged almost like a protective skullcap (Coe 1990:606–607).[11] The predominance of marine materials distinguishes this interment. What is more, while the colors green, red, and pink dominated the interment, the entirety of the burial was not coated in cinnabar, unlike the red-painted lintels above or the remains found in most other royal burials, for that matter. Interestingly, many of these same marine animals and shells were also found in Cache 49A from the superstructure shrine, suggesting a subtle, yet important, parallel between a celestial-level deposit and the subterranean interment.

Jasaw's burial and the construction of Temple 1 over his interment referenced past funerary traditions as it simultaneously created a link to the future. While Jasaw did not receive the traditional "blanket" of cinnabar as I noted above, his tomb included a more calculated dusting of red, concentrated in the north—or head—of the interment. Furthermore, Jasaw is not the only one to receive the select application of red pigment; Burial 23 from Temple 33 contained a similar dusting restricted to the throat area (Coe 1990:539).

Coggins (1975:456) mentioned the similarities between Jasaw's tomb from Temple 1 and that of Burial 23 from Temple 33, which is presumed to be the burial of his immediate predecessor and father (see also Coe 1990:539; Martin and Grube 2008:48). As previously discussed, the presence of feline (jaguar) pelts beneath a royal dais, a red-painted disk on the underside of the final capstone, and a lithic horizon cap form distinctive, shared traits found in both interments. The Classic-period funerary ritual associated with Temples 1 and 33 reflects an intergenerational relationship between Jasaw and his ancestor (Coggins 1975:373). Peter Harrison (1999:141) has also noted that Temples 1, 2, and 33 together create an unusual triadic relationship. Although no burial has been found in Temple 2, as significant parts of the subterranean level remain unexcavated, it is nonetheless considered an important memorial, perhaps even a cenotaph, in honor of Jasaw's consort (Coe 1990:618, 633–635). A series of ritual networks appear inside Temple 1; through the parallels investigated here, these expressions are also writ large on the sacred landscape inside the Great Plaza, thus illustrating that significant events are echoed throughout.

Echoes of Mortuary Ritual within Temple 1

Rarely seen in Classic Maya mortuary architecture is a burial interred in the floor of a superstructure shrine. Instead the more common tradition is to bury the individual beneath a structure, whether it be a domestic or a public building. Temple 1 contained a deep subterranean tomb in its foundation and a cist burial located in the "house" of the celestial level's shrine. The interments are linked by a strikingly similar material culture. Coe (1990:604) considered both burials to be respectively deep interments, the result of considerable effort on the part of ancient excavators.[12] In addition, tomb furnishings included offerings of Zacatel Cream Polychrome tripod plates in both interments. Mortuary ritual participants deposited the plates in close proximity to the respective bodies. Correspondingly, the orientation of Burial 6 is north–south, which opposes the axis of the shrine but aligns with the deposition of Jasaw's body below in Burial 116. The corresponding physical features above reflect patterns of mortuary traditions shared by the elites of Tikal, but perhaps even more importantly, these echoes of ritual may have guided a communicant through the distinctive funerary narratives present in Temple 1.

Architectural elements and material evidence from the shrine recall the tomb furniture and the rituals of royal interment in Burial 116. In other words, the dark vaulted environment of the celestial shrine, with its references to Jasaw Chan K'awiil and mortuary ritual, can be understood as a parallel space to the royal burial chamber directly underneath it within the plaza floor. It is likely that adorning the shrine were portraits of the dead and that a partial burial helped to define and enhance the spaces' function for a communicant. Distinct elements echoed the burial and tomb chamber below, but just as significantly this space and its rooms, doorways, thresholds, and imagery were different; they were parallel but not identical, as the living used the celestial shrine. The cave-like environment would have enveloped a person; communicants moved through an axial corridor that alternated between being both narrow and wide. Further disorientating the visitor was a floor that rose in elevation as one moved deeper within the superstructure, gradually compressing and tightening the interior space. Barely illuminated, the walls, floor, and carved lintels appeared ever changing in the flickering light. Rather than being in control, the communicant surrendered himself or herself to the experience of the space. The enclosed cave-like rooms and corridors, along with known caches buried in the architecture of the shrine, *obliged* a visitor to participate in rituals of transformation rather than passively experience these rites (see Spencer, Chapter 6, for discussion of a courtyard that similarly forces specific perceptual interactions and experiences).

Marking Space Below: Lithic Horizons from Burials 6 and 116

Below the surface of the Great Plaza and above the capstone of Jasaw's tomb chamber lies a massive deposit of lithic material; a similar pattern can be observed in the offering of lithics beneath the threshold of Doorway 3 and covering Burial 6. Both expressions mark place and qualify space; they were tangible declarations of mortuary ritual, yet the lithic horizons from Burial 6 and Burial 116 are enigmatic because they appear structurally unnecessary. The post-interment lithic deposit associated with Burial 6 consisted of an extensive cap of flint flakes numbering approximately seven hundred pieces in total (Coe 1990: 604). In association with the fill covering Jasaw's tomb chamber, beneath Temple 1 was a strikingly similar—but much larger—ritual expression composed of both flint and obsidian.

Although this deposit could be described as a collection of random stone scraps, Coe described the cache from Burial 116 as an esoteric collection filling a large space reaching at least 12 meters (39 feet) from the tomb chamber's capstone to the plaza floor above (Coe 1990:607–609).[13] Hattula Moholy-Nagy (2008:21) has observed that flint and obsidian offerings were always cached together. Including large deposits of debitage on or around burial chambers is a pattern seen elsewhere at Tikal, and Moholy-Nagy (2008:39) has noted that no fewer than nine other interments from the Terminal PreClassic to the Late Classic have this post-interment feature.[14] In any other context the two horizons of flint, and flint and obsidian could be deemed the result of knapping and thus more utilitarian in nature; where they are deposited, in a celestial shrine and amid the fill of a royal tomb, however, transforms such debitage into a "social" artifact.[15] Coe, as cited in Moholy-Nagy (2008:18), observed that a set of "emic rules," lost to us today, dictated and defined the functions surrounding these extraordinary horizon expressions. The consecratory and votive importance of the cache may have been influenced by funerary customs at Tikal and also the surrounding natural environment.

Mortuary Echoes: Cache 49 and Burial 116

The items found in Cache 49 from Lintel 3, Doorway 3, were singularly elite in nature, reminiscent of the grave goods from Burial 116. The most notable of these items were the modified and unmodified stingray spines, diagnostic of royal burials, which also symbolized the institution of kingship due to their association with self-sacrifice. Complementing both Burial 6's and Burial 116's organization, the orientation of the cache was north–south (Adams and Trik 1961:118). According to the mortuary database organized by Bruce Welsh and recently updated by James Fitzsimmons (2009:190, 191–198), most burials at Tikal followed a north–south orientation. In this way Cache 49 formed part of the parallel spatial iconographies and symbolic networks surrounding Burial 6 and Burial 116. Furthermore, lintel bed offerings are rare, and Cache 49's location, buried in association with Lintel 3, was directly above Burial 6. Ritually and physically, this cache marked Lintel 3 as sacred. Embedded into the structure of Doorway 3, the least public and most restricted of the three thresholds within the superstructure, these archaeological features further distinguish this area from thresholds 1 and 2. The inclusion of Burial 6 and Cache 49 in the superstructure of Temple 1 amplify messages that were funerary and celebrated the afterlife.

Parallel Iconographies

Temple 1's superstructure is most well known for the carved lintels that spanned the doorways of the most private spaces of the celestial shrine's interior. An examination of the lintels in their original context is necessary for this study; their significance as sacred objects to be experienced relates to their surrounding environment. A private space of transformation was created within the superstructure's architecture, signified by vaulted chambers, ritual deposits, a burial, the expansive widths of the two thresholds, and by the imagery from the lintels. An emic understanding of the superstructure's architecture, which this study proposes, presupposes that the ritual networks associated with Burial 116 and parallel expressions in the celestial shrine were meaningful as a whole. Furthermore, the charged and sacred environment of the celestial shrine served as the locale where the ancestor Jasaw was called upon by his heir; correspondingly, the lintels' imagery served as an index of the ancestral vision witnessed by the living.[16]

Environment and Experience in the Superstructure

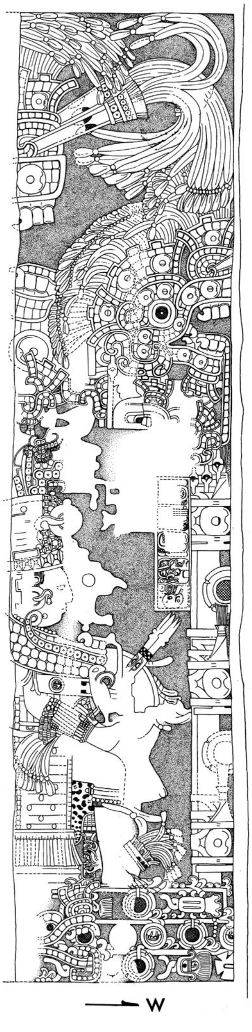
The westernmost doorway facing the Great Plaza served as the entrance to the dark, close, and constricted spaces of Temple 1's superstructure. Like a quiet lacuna between the open civic space of the temple's west facade and the activities below in the Great Plaza, this first threshold transitioned a communicant to the rarified area of the shrine. Marked by a lintel of two plain beams, Doorway 1 created a pause between public and private, between open, performative ritual and solemn, contemplative ceremony. As one moved further into the shrine, its darkness increased, which means that complex visual information seen in the carved lintels only became visible a section at a time. These carvings could not be read clearly in the close environment of the superstructure's shrine, which was illuminated by flickering torches that, although necessary for light, could be hazardous if brought too near the wood. Full comprehension of the sculpture was also diminished by the context of the lintels, which required an abrupt tilt of the neck and head while one also negotiated an uneven floor below. Shadowy images of Jasaw Chan K'awiil appear to "hover" over the viewer; consequently, reading the lintels and seeing Jasaw was difficult.

Communing with the environment of the superstructure shrine meant relaxing the urge to see clearly, suspending the need to understand space, and surrendering to the supernatural. The placement of the carved lintels in Doorways 2 and 3, combined with the environment of the shrine, created an unlikely site for reading historical documents or royal narratives. The ancient Maya often carved texts that described dynastic histories and important events on stone panels, stelae, altars, or stairways. These public monuments were well lit and easily accessible to the public. In contrast, when examined in situ, the carved lintels from Temple 1 and their accompanying imagery and texts functioned in a symbolic manner. These carvings are even more indelibly connected with their contexts than most public monuments and when interpreted in tandem with the architectural environment, they initiated a transcendent experience. Communicating knowledge, perhaps, was a secondary function of the lintels' imagery and text. Their very presence answers the following two questions: *How do I see my father?* and *How do I talk to my ancestor?*

The Context of the Lintels

The carved lintels spanning Doorways 2 and 3 marked the most sacred ritual spaces of the superstructure (Figures 7.5, 7.6). Thresholds beneath these carvings were wider than that of Doorway 1 because there were more wooden panels; Doorway 2 had four carved beams, and five carved beams are estimated to have spanned Doorway 3 (Coe et al. 1961:43). The comparative spaciousness of the shrine's central corridor is an unusual architectural feature, as Maya stone buildings (with few exceptions) were not designed exclusively for shelter. In ancient Maya architecture, wooden lintels had a clearly defined utilitarian purpose—to support the roof of doorways—but when they were carved, like those from Temple 1, with imagery and texts, their simple utility became much more complex. Contained inside the thresholds of Doors 2 and 3 was a veritable "ceiling" of imagery that, along with the inclusion of the major Late Classic female burial and other caches discussed above, became a locus of extensive, if private, ritual activity, causing these innermost passages to become sites of transformation.

Recontextualizing the carved lintels and discussing their imagery as viewed in situ (i.e., as installed in Doorways 2 and 3) allows us to ask new questions about the meanings and functions of these works. The carved lintels each commemorate a particular event, yet upon closer inspection, the imagery is more complex and seems to depict multiple ideas. Inside the celestial shrine and illuminated by firelight and ritual, Jasaw's doubled portraits become quasi-invisible and ever changing. The carved lintels imparted information that was quite different than that of public sculpture, as is evidenced by the style, context, and iconography of these works.



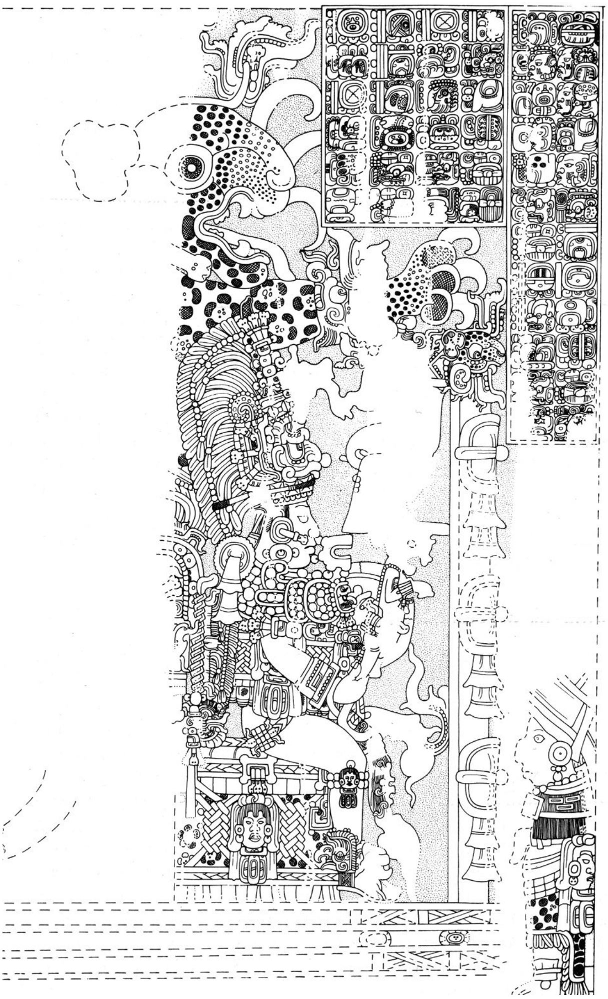


FIGURE 7.5 (LEFT) Lintel 2, Doorway 2, and Superstructure Shrine, Temple 1, 5D-1, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, ca. mid-eighth century CE. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

FIGURE 7.6 (RIGHT) Lintel 3, Doorway 3, Superstructure Shrine, Temple 1, 5D-1, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, ca. mid-eighth century CE. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

The Carved Lintels

A close examination of the imagery and writing carved into the lintels from Doorways 2 and 3 suggests the dominance of image-based communication (rather than text-based communication). When the inscriptions from Lintels 2 and 3 are compared to the expansive figurative composition, the hieroglyphs appear lost in the imagery. As stated above, the composition and context of the lintels challenges the assumption of the text-image dialectic. Form and context impact meaning in other examples of this framing device that move beyond the purely textual. Such elements are employed in the imagery of the pier reliefs from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque; the design of the staircase of Temple 10L-26 from Copán (Olton 2010); and lastly the Lanzón from within the Old Temple at Chavín de Huántar.

The overriding emphasis on image over text is manifested in the formal elements of the carved lintels. The compositional repetition in particular can be seen in repeated figural and architectural forms, and line quality varies from calligraphic to descriptive, deeply incised, or shallowly carved. Differences in line and texture created an active, carved surface that danced before the communicant, especially in the ambient flickering light that illuminated the temple passages. Furthermore, information imparted through imagery may have been more visible in the uneven light of the superstructure's interior spaces, a fact that the differences in line and texture seem to emphasize. The superstructure and especially the comparative spaciousness of Doorways 2 and 3 engaged participants through the emotional impact of the viewing experience. Kubler stated that the carved lintels were "doubled portraits" of Jasaw (1985:324) and, when combined with their similar compositions, acted like identical templates, framing and presenting larger messages (Clancy 1980:184, 200). The two views of Jasaw act as the paramount engine of communication.

Lintel 2 (measuring 2.47 by 1.24 meters or 8.1 by 4 feet), above the second doorway, originally consisted of four carved beams; today beams A and B are still in their original position while C and D are missing (Kubler 1985:324). What we see today is missing 50 percent of its visual, and possibly epigraphic, information. Fortunately, the western half of the lintel's imagery is still generally intact; this section would have been the first encountered by a communicant entering the shrine. A concentration of imagery occupies the top (north) and the east and west sides of the picture plane. In stark contrast to the raised and deeply cut sections of carved imagery, voids or negative spaces are denoted by recessed surfaces. The predominant shapes depicted in the surviving beams consist of a seated royal person, a group of mosaic-encrusted serpent heads, architectural forms, and hieroglyphic inscriptions. The portrait is a rather fantastic image of the ruler in profile, enthroned within a scaffold-like structure, while supernatural figures loom over and lurk underneath him. It is not clear from the surviving imagery whether the seated figure inhabits a supernatural or timeless place, but several iconographic motifs appear to be inspired by Teotihuacán (Taube 1992).

The Late Classic ruler Jasaw has been identified as the protagonist in this imagery (Clancy 1980:176; Coggins 1975:450; Kubler 1985:324). Jasaw faces west, the symbolic direction of death; he sits stiffly on a padded bench looking straight toward the short seven-glyph inscription.[17] As a result of this placement and orientation, Jasaw's gaze would have met that of the communicant entering the space of the superstructure. Furthermore, it would have guided him or her toward the written text, which plainly denotes his name. Interestingly, Jasaw is depicted in an elaborate costume. He appears wearing Teotihuacán warrior garb, while his elite status and Maya-ness was registered by the markers of rulership that surround him. Furthermore, in Coe's reconstruction drawing, an outline of a deity mask covers the ruler's face, thus providing for a third identity. This multilayered portrait allows the image of the deceased ruler to be read in a variety of ways, as it is possible that there are three kingly guises depicted simultaneously in one image. For a communicant looking up, Jasaw appeared omnipresent, and his image would likely have invited comparisons with an all-knowing and universal oracle.

Although Jasaw has most commonly been described as being costumed like a Teotihuacán warrior, he has several features clearly associated with Maya ruler imagery as well. Adjacent to the short lances (and possibly an atlatl), Jasaw grasps a rounded shield (Taube 1992:69). Analogous representations of these shields can be seen in the same building (the Lintel 3 images, for example) as well as elsewhere at the site (in the iconographic programs of Lintels 2 and 3 from Temple 4, for instance). What is more, a jaguar pelt is depicted as draped over his throne, another marker of Maya rulership. These accouterments are reminiscent of Coe's description of the interment of Jasaw, as he was actually placed on a wooden platform most likely covered with several jaguar skins (Coe 1990:606–607). Costume elements and regalia originating from a foreign city that took on historic and mythic significance for the Maya—likely acutely felt at Tikal, given its direct historical interaction with Teotihuacanos as commemorated in Stela 31, hidden, by this time, in Temple 33—combined with local Maya imagery to reveal Jasaw as a universal warrior and ruler.

Lintel 3 spanned Doorway 3, the most private and secluded space of the superstructure. In total, it was composed of five beams of varying widths. Unfortunately, the vicissitudes of time have done their work and today only the first three beams remain, along with a fragment of the fifth (Coe et al. 1961:33–34). The fifth beam was 3.93 meters long, 1.34 meters wide, and 1.8 meters tall (almost 13 feet long, 4.4 feet wide, and 6 feet tall) (Coe et al. 1961:33–34). As has been previously discussed, Coe and colleagues (1961:33–34) believe that Lintel 3 was painted red with cinnabar. Significantly, Lintel 3 spans the space directly above Burial 6 and held Cache 49A and B embedded in its central beam. These features distinguished the space of Doorway 3 from the other doorways of Temple 1. The carved and painted imagery may have acted like a giant red capstone and, when this ensemble was combined with caches of precious items and the presence of a human interment directly below, likely served to create an aggregate that signified the sacred.

On Lintel 3, in contrast to Lintel 2, Jasaw is depicted as an enthroned and glorious Classic Maya–styled king. Visual emphasis is placed on details of his costume, royal accouterments, and sumptuous throne/bench. His portrait on the lintel is reminiscent of his portrait on Stela 16, (9.14.0.0.0, 711 CE), located in the Twin Pyramid Group N (Figure 7.7). Lintel 3 and Stela 16 are very different works with different viewing experiences, but it is important to note that some of the formal features these two portraits share appear as codified elements in portraits of Jasaw. Depicted in profile (but clearly legible) is the great beaded jade collar, and overlapping it is a three-piece pectoral seen in both Stela 16 and Lintel 3. The artists were careful to show the central carved diadem of the piece, which may depict a supernatural raptorial bird or even the Principal Bird Deity himself (see Steinbach, Chapter 2, for additional discussion of the Principal Bird Deity).[18] A similar sumptuous jade collar was recovered from Jasaw's interment (Burial 116).

The mat motif is another element both depicted in the carved lintel imagery and reflected in Jasaw's tomb furniture. This marker of rulership is represented woven into Jasaw's belt on the lintel. It is also seen as a set of vertical designs adorning the sides of the throne along with other icons of Maya rulership, such as the draped jaguar skin.[19] The associated mat imagery is an indication of Maya political elites. As a logographic sign, it was also used in the inscriptions as a way to denote the act of acceding to the throne; to be "seated upon the mat" alludes to the act of enthronement on a woven reed mat (for more information about the meanings of the mat motif and its translation into architectural sculpture, see

Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1). The imagery from the lintels and the tomb offerings in Burial 116 rotate around the deceased ruler Jasaw both in life and in death and continue to define him as the center, as the iconographic and spatial echoes from Temple 1 illustrate.

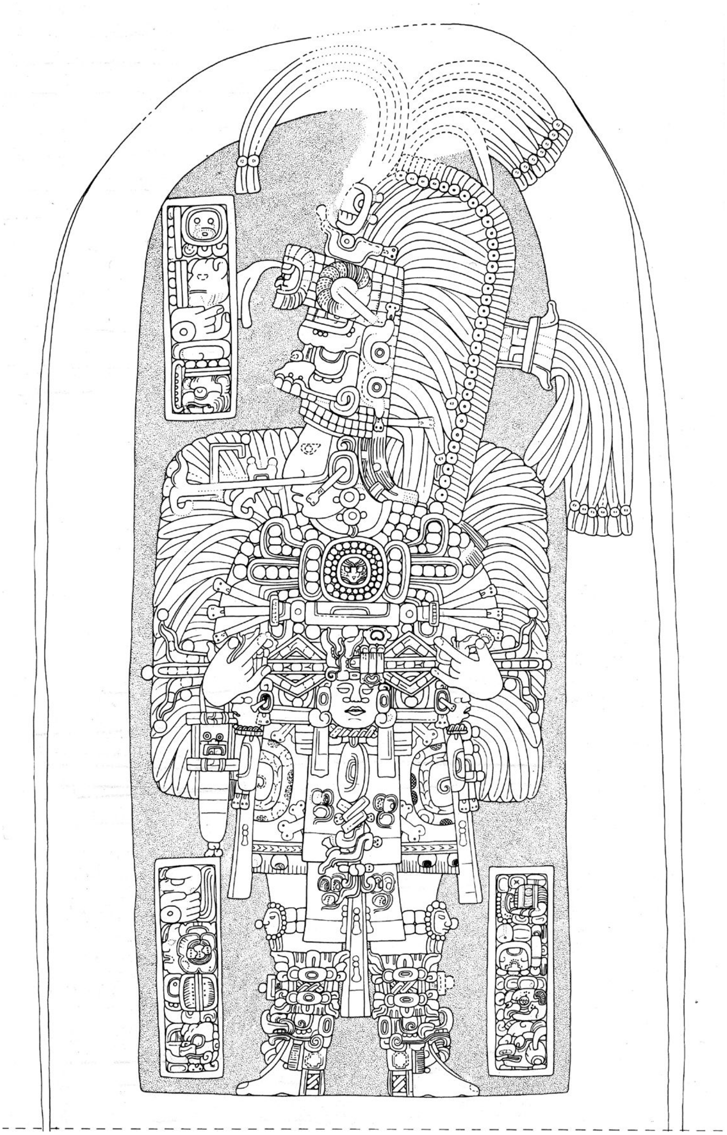


FIGURE 7.7 Stela 16, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, ca. mid-eighth century CE. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Doorways 2 and 3 and Burial 116

Passage through Temple 1's celestial level required traversing the darkened and enclosed spaces of the shrine. In addition to its cave-like associations, this interior can be likened to a tomb chamber, while the lintels above are comparable to capstones, a feature most clearly observed with Lintel 3. The key position of Lintel 3 within the shrine and its once bright red color are reminiscent of the capstone from Burial 116, which was also painted red on its underside (Coe 1990:604). The environment surrounding Lintel 3, including its linkage with Burial 6 below and Lintel 2 immediately to its west, marked the areas around Doorways 2 and 3 as particularly sacred. These elements signified the importance of localized sites within the shrine and, more importantly for this study, they echoed the larger network of ritual spaces throughout the Temple.

Beyond mere proximity, the lintels' imagery created an immediate connection between the superstructure and the burial. Jasaw is shown on both lintels and is buried below. What is more, in both lintels he appears seated on a drum throne decorated with a woven mat overlain with jaguar pelts. As has been previously noted, these ritual objects were also found associated with the body of the ruler in Burial 116. Lintel 3 includes a more explicit reference to this powerful feline in the form of a large and fantastic jaguar that looms over Jasaw in both a protective and defensive posture. Jaguars were associated with paramount kings, as the ancient Maya admired jaguars for their acuity in seeing, climbing, swimming, and hunting. Many rulers used *balam* in their titles, cloaked themselves with distinctive spotted pelts, and identified jaguars as their spirit familiars or *wayo'ob* (Houston and Stuart 1989; Grube and Nahm 1994; Martin and Grube 2008). Skins of jaguars likely also enveloped the bench upon which Jasaw was placed in Burial 116; in doing so, the pelts of this esteemed animal protected the ruler and symbolized his royal authority in life, in death, and in the afterlife.[20]

Lintel 2, with its visual references to Teotihuacán, includes additional features that echo Burial 116. Actually, both lintels depict Mexican and Maya imagery, although Lintel 2 has a larger number of foreign motifs. Indeed, in the middle doorway, Jasaw dresses in a Teotihuacán-style warrior costume. Far below, in the actual tomb, a black and white painted bowl includes a similar fusion of foreign and local motifs. Coggins (1975:512) describes the interior image painted on the base as an anthropomorphized Mexican year sign. The interior walls of the vessel were conversely adorned with 5 Ajaw notations interspersed with more of the anthropomorphized year signs. Coggins (1975:512) notes that some of the ceramics from Burial 116 may have been gifts from afar or made locally by foreign artists.

A third parallel between Lintel 2 and Burial 116 is seen in the presence of several mosaic mirrors found both depicted on the lintel and deposited in the ruler's interment. Karl A. Taube (1992:82) has interpreted these reflective disks as pyrite mirrors. In addition, pyrite mosaic mirrors were also found in Jasaw's burial placed near the body of the king (Coe 1990:606). For Taube (1992:82), these objects could reference rituals of transformation and emergence. In effect, the mirrors symbolized a door or threshold leading to a supernatural experience where a communicant changed in some way. The very nature of pyrite mirrors, whose surfaces are reflective and ever changing, created a continuously modified environment rife with confusing as well as supernatural sensations—exactly the atmosphere the communicant finds upon entering the superstructure shrine. The inclusion of these pieces alone may have signaled that the tomb and celestial shrine was, like an effigy of the tomb chamber, a place of emergence and transformation.

Experiencing Parallel Spaces at Temple 1: Conjuring the Ancestor

"Re-contextualization," what David Freedberg (1991:431–32) in his book *The Power of Images* called "seeing with old eyes," is a valuable tool for comprehending the ritual networks and reciprocal spaces denoted in the design and material culture of Temple 1. Applying this perspective to the parallel messages delineated in the previous section allows the scholar to investigate the relationships between the lintels and the extant archaeology and how an ancient elite visitor could have seen these images in new ways. Understanding the context(s) of an object becomes essential in this line of inquiry; we lack definitive voices from the past to help explain the meanings of art and architecture but through recontextualizing this history at Temple 1, narratives of transformation between death and rebirth come to light. The epigraphy and iconography of Lintels 2 and 3 did not operate in a vacuum; the environment of the shrine's interior spaces also determined their meaning and function. Furthermore, the imagery of the lintels, when viewed in their original contexts, worked to amplify the messages of the temple's ritual narratives that were centered around the royal burial chamber and the celestial shrine. Jasaw's portraits from Lintels 2 and 3 depict the deceased ruler but he is transformed in this depiction: his eyes are open and he wears a costume similar to those he wore when alive. Within this dark, close, liminal space, the communicant sees the ruler as an apotheosized figure, one that simultaneously fills the roles of ancestor, sage, and god.

Participating in the conjuring scene or ancestral vision experience is a third effect of actively seeing Lintels 2 and 3. The imagery of the ancestral vision is usually focused on a figure floating at the top of the picture plane who interacts with a second entity fixed to the groundline below. As a long-standing visual trope in ancient Mesoamerica and especially among the Maya, it is a scene permanently rendered in stelae and stone lintels. Examples of this visionary experience include, but are not limited to, Lintel 25 from Yaxchilan and Stela 31 from Tikal.[21] For the ancient Maya, communing with the ancestors was a rite that crossed borders between the living and dead, and traveresed the normal divide between the conscious and unconscious mind.[22] Depicted on these stelae and lintels is a relationship between a supernatural figure and a historical person who likely performed the ritual in life (Figure 7.8). In these carved examples the active participant provides visual focus due to their relative scale and the overall compositional arrangement of the scene. Conversely, the conjured or visionary figure is smaller and placed in the register above. The composition of Lintels 2 and 3 reverses this effect; in these examples, the visual focus rests on the figure that materializes through the ritual process, and the active participant is actually the *communicant* who stands beneath the lintel *seeing* the vision carved therein. In this way the viewer is required to physically complete the image in addition to "merely" seeing it (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for additional comments regarding the completive impulse).

Both the environment and the experience of seeing the lintels amplified and activated the visual trope of the conjuring scene. Depictions of ancestors in proximity to the living are generally read as scenes of vision quest and communion between an elite person and his/her ancestor (Freidel et al. 1993; Miller 1999; Miller and Taube 1993; Schele and Miller 1985; Tate 1992). Formal elements contribute to this sacred dialogue between the communicant and his or her ancestor. In the carved lintels from Temple 1, the imagery, rather than the glyphic data, is highlighted and the burden of communicating to a viewer was more figurative than textual. The imagery is accentuated by a varied use of line, inclusion of diverse textures, and in the patterning of two identical compositions. The orientation of the imagery (on the undersides of the lintels) along with the surrounding environment created a dynamic where image and experience activated meaning. Thus the doubled portrait of Jasaw depicted the immaterial that has become the material.[23]

Lintels 2 and 3 provide the modern viewer with only half of the conjuring scene; its entirety is depicted in Stela 31, also from Tikal, and Lintel 25, from Yaxchilan. Jasaw's doubled portraits signify the figure overhead, generally depicted above the core image in the complete scenes. This composition is clear in Stela 31 where the father of ruler Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II floats above his son in a manner that can be read as supportive and sanctifying (Martin and Grube 2008:34). The second half of the scene is acted out within the celestial shrine by the communicant who, through ritual, becomes transformed into the role of subject in the conjuring ceremony. This new

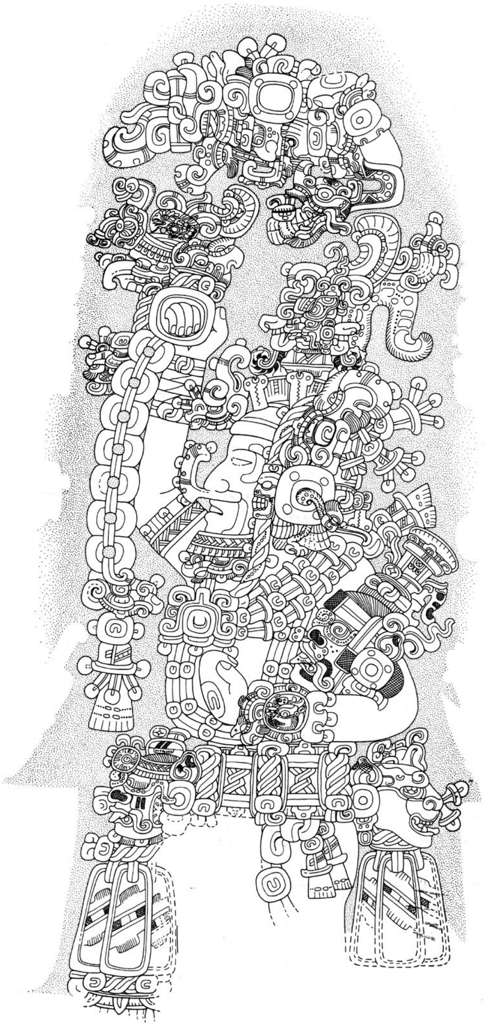


FIGURE 7.8 Stela 31, front, Tikal, Petén, Guatemala, mid-fifth century CE. Image © University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

actor lies outside the lintels' images, but the environment of Doorways 2 and 3 and the placement of Jasaw's doubled portrait directly above implicates and activates his or her location. In contrast, standard depictions of the trope on stelae and lintels feature the whole narrative, including the communicant and the ancestral vision as separate from the space of the viewer.[24] In the environment of the celestial shrine, however, the communicant becomes an actor in the scene; he or she completes the narrative and enters into an immediate, reciprocal relationship with Jasaw, the ancestor.

The imagery from the carved lintels above Doorways 2 and 3 catalyzed two transformations: first, the change from ruler to ancestor, and second, a more conceptual transformation involving the communicant who was also a ritual actor. As a result, the conjuring scenes from Lintels 2 and 3 do not illustrate the ritual in its entirety. Through the process of active viewing (y-ichnal), the role of subject or main actor in these scenes or rites is exchanged with the communicant. Standing beneath Lintels 2 and 3, the human petitioner partakes in the scene by experiencing the carved lintels above as visions of the king as ancestor. The superstructure's unusually charged physical environment, activated by offerings and burials as well as the lighting of fires and the burning of copal, was a space of transformation in the literal sense. For an elite petitioner, the experience of seeing Lintels 2 and 3 would have been ritualized and quintessentially altering.

Discourses between Burial 116 and the superstructure are delineated both in the construction of these spaces and in the imagery from the carved lintels and the unusual presence of Burial 6. The monument requires interaction, which goes beyond historic value and is acutely experiential. Like the Temple of Apollo at Delphi and the Old Temple from Chavín de Huántar, Temple 1 was understood as both a physical monument and as symbolic entity. Unseen features from Temple 1, such as the parallel spaces between celestial and subterranean levels, served to amplify experiences of transformation. Communicants to the shrine found a series of rooms and expansive doorways that challenged conventions of Maya architecture. Negotiating the unpredictable, closed, darkened nature of the shrine's interior was perhaps the initial stage in a process of transformation that included disorientation, blindness, and finally, awareness, as the shadowy form of Jasaw Chan K'awiil's figure slowly came into view. Ritual could only enhance these visionary experiences.

When compared to the royal tomb, the unusual archaeology of the celestial shrine illustrates a compelling relationship between these two spaces. The structure and material culture of the shrine served to echo rituals from the burial chamber, thus creating an alternative funerary space used by both the living and the dead. More importantly, the rarified design of the shrine symbolized the tomb and functioned as its effigy. The ritually charged environment of the shrine allowed for the descendants of Jasaw Chan K'awiil to commune with their ancestor(s) by recreating and enacting the conjuring scene.

Articulated in this chapter are several reexaminations of canonical Maya art and architecture. By applying architectural theory as illustrated in the ideas of Lefebvre and Eco to the built environments of Temple 1 from Tikal, this monument can be seen as both a unified and a holistic statement extraordinary in its complexity. Through asking new questions and thus complicating and challenging previous interpretations and assumptions of the archaeology, imagery, and space of this structure, an alternative function of Temple 1 comes into focus. The parallel spaces of the celestial shrine and tomb chamber belie the essential relationship between a deceased father and his son. As a man-made site for the ancestral vision, the celestial shrine becomes both a cave for transformation and a tomb effigy; most significant for Jasaw's progeny (and perhaps for an elite audience) is the act of communing with a heroic ruler-turned-ancestor. Ritual networks within Temple 1 characterized by the structure of the shrine and tomb, the material culture of Burial 116 and Burial 6, the use of cinnabar, analogous caches, and the application of a "social artifact" in the form of a debitage horizon denoting two significant interments all work together in constructing a dynamic monument that served the living while honoring the dead.

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Notes

1. The Temple of Apollo is an imposing Doric sanctuary that exuded the strength of its patron deity; paradoxically the real power of the temple came from its unseen spaces. Constructed over a fissure in the earth, the temple's subterranean chambers contain energies that inspired the Delphic oracle. Correspondingly, the labyrinthine corridors inside the Old Temple at Chavín de Huántar, Peru (ca. 500–200 BCE), are another example of the potency of unseen spaces. At the apex of the hidden tunnels is the room of the Lanzón. Like a giant stone knife, the monolith pierces the chamber's floor while also cutting through the roof, creating a shadowy cavity that links sky and earth (Stone 2012).

2. Although Lefebvre is writing about modern Paris, his approach is valuable even with respect to the ancient world. His method has allowed for provocative investigations into any type of built environment and is not limited to just the European model.

3. The term *celestial level*, in this context, refers to the Mesoamerican and specifically Maya view of the cosmos organized in a three-part vertical dimension. In Olton (2010) the structure of the mortuary monument is compared to this cosmological organization. *Celestial*, *terrestrial*, and *subterranean* supply alternative ways of considering how these structures were meaningful and allow for embedded ritual dialogues to come to the fore.

4. Research on the lintels and their imagery has been completed by the following scholars: Richard E. W. Adams and Aubrey S. Trik (1961); Flora Clancy (2009); William Coe (1990); William Coe and Edwin Shook (1961); Clemency Coggins (1975); David Freidel, Linda Schele, Joy Parker (1993); Peter Harrison (1999); Christopher Jones and Linton Satterthwaite (1982); George Kubler (1985); Simon Martin and Nikolai Grube (2008); Arthur Miller (1986); Linda Schele and Mary Miller (1985); and Karl A. Taube (1992).

5. Rather than words such as *participant*, *viewer*, or *actor*, I chose *communicant* because it reflects both an active and receptive role for the individual. This potent and ritually dynamic context most likely required a person to observe and participate in a "communion" of sorts with him or herself and with the supernatural.

6. "Problematic" is a catchall term used by William Coe and other archaeologists as a way of labeling and organizing deposits that do not fit into our current understanding of Maya ritual.

7. Coe and Shook (1961:44) are careful to mention that the presence of paint on only one group of beams does not necessarily indicate that all the other beams were not painted; there is a strong possibility that the other lintels were also red.

8. For an important discussion of capstones and the creation of sacred space in architecture see Kerry Hull and Michael Carrasco (2004).

9. Doorway and Lintel 3 are also significant for this study because interred directly below was a Late Classic cist burial, known as Burial 6; see Coe (1990:603).

10. According to Adams and Trik (1961:121), this fire, although intrusive in the floor of the doorway, was open. An open fire in such a small narrow space could have been dangerous for the wooden lintels above; therefore, it is plausible that the fire was kept below the level of the floor for practical as well as ceremonial reasons. In addition, illumination by fire would have brightened the imagery of the lintels, potentially making them more easily readable. I thank Maline Werness-Rude for reminding me of this feature.

11. Also included were modified and unmodified *Spondylus*, Bryozoa, and *Arca zebra* shells (Coe 1990:606–607).

12. Although not as dramatic in depth as Burial 116, Burial 6 was comparatively deep. It was excavated all the way down to the top platform of Temple 1 just prior to the first level of the superstructure shrine.

13. This material intermittently covered the area of Units 21, 23, and 24.

14. It is unclear whether Moholy-Nagy considered Burial 6 in this list of similar horizons at Tikal or elsewhere.

15. Moholy-Nagy (2008:7) has defined social artifacts as objects or material meant for display.

16. For a discussion of indexical signs, see the Artists, Artistry, and Patronage portion in Chapter 1 and the Commentary, Sources, and Suggested Reading section that follows.

17. I would like to thank Maline Werness-Rude for reminding me of the symbolic significance of the western direction, which is the region of the sky wherein the sun also descends and is swallowed by the underworld every day (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, and Bernatz, Chapter 3, for further discussion of directional symbolism).

18. A similar bird is shown, in gigantic scale, arcing over the ruler in Lintel 3, Temple 4. Also, one could argue that an analogous depiction of this bird is seen at the top of Pakal's carved sarcophagus cover (Figure 1.17) or on Kaminaljuyu Stela 11.

19. Clancy (personal communication 2009) has noted that these designs replicate Tikal stela-altar border designs.

20. As depicted on the lintels, Jasaw is extensively adorned with jade necklaces and other accouterments, many of which were found amid the tomb furniture of the burial.

21. I have but mentioned two of the most famous examples. Yaxchilan in particular appears to have a wealth of "vision quest" imagery, including representations carved on Lintels 13, 14, 15, and 55 as well as Stelae 1, 4, 6, 10, and 11. These and other bas reliefs call for a more detailed exploration before this rite and its Classic-era functionality is truly understood.

22. Thus, sensory deprivation facilitated arrival at a place associated with hallucinogenic and conjured imagery. Ingesting certain chemicals, loss of blood, fasting, and physical pain would have further aided the ritual participant in achieving an altered state.

23. Tikal has a proportionately large number of the conjuring narrative scenes carved on stelae, including numbers 4, 5, 19, 22, 29, 31, and 40.

24. Carved Stelae 4 and 29 from Tikal also share the trope of the ancestor or deity figure pictured above the petitioner. The petitioner in these cases was a ruler who conjures a supernatural. In another example from Yaxchilan, Lintel 15 shows a woman (the wife of Yaxun Balam, Bird Jaguar) as the participant, conjuring an ancestor figure. The summoning scenes from Yaxchilan depict the whole ritual, including blood-splattered bark paper and vision channeled through a serpent, whereas the images from Tikal lack these additional narrative details in favor of greater simplification. In addition, the carved vision-quest images from Tikal appear on stelae as opposed to lintels, a difference in context that may have required contrasting depictions.

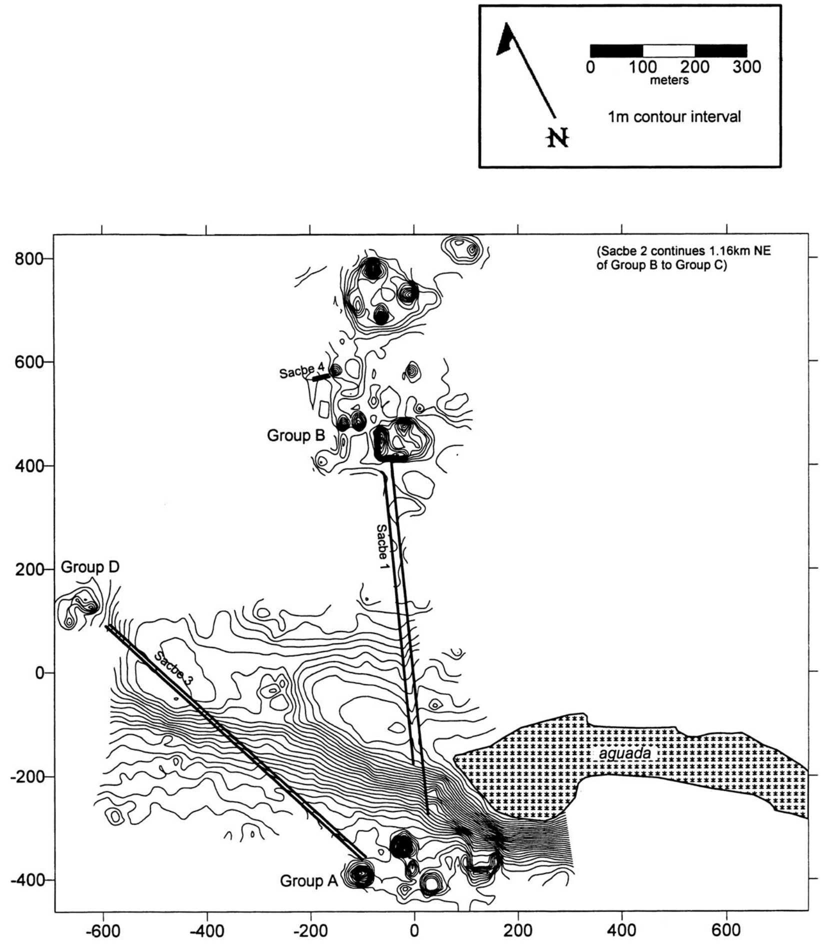
8

The Shifting Spatial Nexus of an Urban Maya Landscape

A CASE STUDY OF ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, AND CERAMICS AT YO'OKOP

LINNEA WREN, TRAVIS NYGARD, AND JUSTINE M. SHAW

Space is a social construct that can be understood using methodologies from many disciplines; in this volume as a whole it is investigated using art historical, anthropological, and archaeological research. This chapter, which is a case study of the ancient Maya site of Yo'okop, draws on a rich body of archaeological data to show that it can be understood as reflecting a nexus of ecological factors, cultural beliefs, and political strategies. Yo'okop, located at 19°57' N and 88°24' E, in west-central Quintana Roo, Mexico, was occupied for at least 2,000 years (Figure 8.1). Yo'okop is situated in a particularly interesting part of the Maya area, which has received little attention from archaeologists because of its tumultuous political history. This is the "Cochuah" region, the name of which refers to the polity that existed there at the time of Spanish Conquest, and which has been scrutinized by several scholars (Alexander 2004; Gabbert 2004; Roys 1957:3, 6, 135; Rugeley 1996; Tozzer 1941, 2:96; Villa Rojas 1945). The people in this region have been particularly successful at maintaining independence from foreign domination. The Cochuah area was poorly controlled by the government of New Spain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and it was the center of the Caste War of Yucatán during the nineteenth century. Situated on an escarpment above a flat plain, the site was clearly occupied by the Middle Formative period and seemingly continued as a residential center throughout the Late Post Classic period.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meters
1m contour interval
(Sacbe 2 continues 1.16km NE of Group B to Group C)
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Group A
800
600
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FIGURE 8.1 Topographic map of Yo’okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico. Map by Justine M. Shaw © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo’okop.

The temporal depth of Yo’okop contrasts with other sites in the immediate region that appear to have had shorter periods of occupation or prolonged periods of abandonment during Classic times. The fact that Yo’okop retained a population from the Middle Formative through the Post Classic periods presents the opportunity for studying the transmission of spatial ideas over time in a single setting. Yo’okop’s apparent continual emphasis on water management and cosmology and its shifting political alliances created a nexus of meanings that were central to the site’s functioning and also strongly suggests the ideological construction of continuity through time. While research at Yo'okop and most other sites in the region is still in its early stages, we hope that this chronology contributes to a better understanding of shifts in spatial constructs at Yo'okop and its surrounding region of central Quintana Roo.

The site was first documented in 1926 by the *New York Times* journalist Gregory Mason along with the archaeologist Herbert Spinden. They noted that Yo'okop once boasted grand architecture, including a pyramid that they exclaimed was "a whale of a Castillo!" The tallest structure at the site, S4W1–1, is indeed 28 meters (approximately 92 feet) in height—only two shorter than the widely celebrated Castillo at Chichén Itzá. Mason sent accounts of their travels back to the *Times* regularly, and he compiled them into a book the following year titled *Silver Cities of Yucatan*. Although lost for decades, in 2002, film footage from an expedition taken by Ogden Trevor McClurg was located in a family attic and used to create a documentary film of the same name, directed by Bob Connelly.

In this chapter we demonstrate that a mixed methodology—combining art historical and archaeological data and analysis—can result in an understanding of Mesoamerican space not obtainable with a single approach alone. In each section of the chapter, we interrogate a different time period and different ways of thinking about space in Yo'okop's history, emphasizing a different body of evidence. Using a chronological approach, we explain how Yo'okop's use of space changes over time to meet specific, constantly shifting needs. We also incorporate comparative material from across the Maya region. By so doing, this case study gestures at the complicated story of the city as a whole. Building upon theoretical frameworks by scholars who use space to develop multifaceted and nuanced analyses of cultures, such as David Summers (2003) and George Kubler (1962), we show that exploring space at Yo'okop is useful for understanding the cosmology, economy, architecture, monuments, inscriptions, domestic sphere, rituals, and the constant revision of the site's appearance over time. Space, indeed, functions on both literal and symbolic levels.

The occupation at Yo'okop can be divided into three eras, distinguished by the political spheres within which the site functioned. During the first era, consisting of the Middle through the Late Formative periods, Yo'okop shared traits in site organization and ceramics that were widespread in the Maya lowlands. During the second era, extending from the Early through the Late Classic periods, Yo'okop was politically aligned with the southern Maya area and more particularly with the Kan or Calakmul polities (Martin and Grube 1995). During the third era, extending from the Terminal through the Late

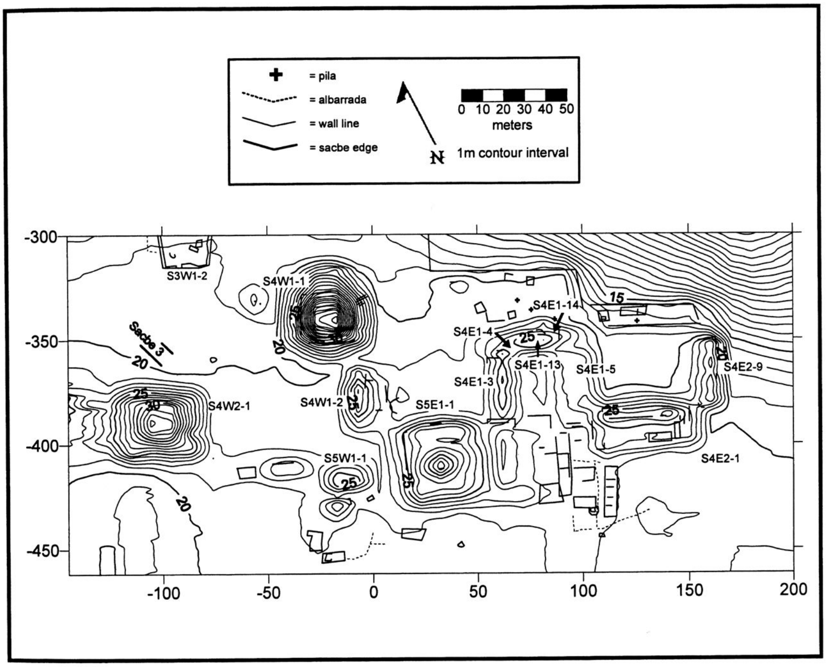
Post Classic periods, Yo'okop may have initially been threatened by Chichén Itzá but later entered the cultural sphere of the northern lowlands; this is a hypothesis that may be investigated further in the future. The numerous Post Classic temples and shrines and associated Chen Mul type *incensarios* (incense burners), as well as a possible Post Classic accession structure, reveal that the nature of Post Classic occupation at Yo'okop changed, and, possibly, that ceremonial activity became more localized.

We discuss the spatial properties of Yo'okop over time, beginning with the earliest occupation in the Middle Formative period and extending through the Post Classic. The analysis is informed by brief descriptions of Yo'okop that were published in the early twentieth century following the visits of Gregory Mason and Herbert Spinden (Mason 1927) as well as Gustav Stromsvik, Harry E. D. Pollock, and Heinrich Berlin of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (Stromsvik et a1.1955). In the early 1970s, a rough survey and a longer description of the site were published by Reginald Wilson, a medical missionary who visited the center with Jack Walker and Bill Clapp (Wilson 1972, 1974). Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop, which was initiated in 2000 by Justine Shaw and Dave Johnstone, is the only long-term archaeological investigation that has been conducted at the site. In 2003 the project, now called the Cochuah Regional Archaeological Survey (CRAS), was broadened in focus and continues to be based in the area. Field reports, several articles, a doctoral dissertation, and a book have thus been published, informed by data from CRAS (Johnstone 2005, 2006; Normark 2004, 2006; Shaw 2005, 2008; Shaw ed. 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008; Shaw et al. 2000; Shaw et al. 2010; Wren and Nygard 2005).

Cosmological Space in the Site Layout

A cosmological understanding of space is a good place to start, as it provides a Maya-specific glimpse into the fabric of the city. The urban landscape of Yo'okop visible today consists of four major architectural groups (A, B, C, and D) linked by *sacbeob* (literally "white roads"; see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for more information on sacbeob) (Figure 8.1). These four groups have significantly larger architecture (up to 28 meters or 92 feet in height) at substantially higher densities than the remainder of the site. Between the major groups, moderate-sized mounds (5 to 6 meters or 16 to 20 feet in height), platforms, *rejolladas* (sinkholes characteristic of the region), and small residential structures are scattered. These lower-density, intergroup zones are presumably where the majority of Yo'okop's population resided.

Groups A and B, along with some of the architecture constructed outside these groups, are aligned on a north–south axis that reflects an ancient understanding of sacred geographic space. As described in this volume's introduction (Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1), in ancient Maya cosmology, north and south defined a vertical axis corresponding to planes of existence (see also Bernatz, Chapter 3). North was considered to be the direction of the sky and was equated with the solar zenith. South was considered to be the direction of the underworld and was equated with the solar nadir. The underworld was believed to be a watery realm and the source of the primordial sea. Group A (Figure 8.2) is the southernmost architectural group at the site. It is linked by the 718-meter (or roughly 2,356-foot) Sacbe 1 to Group B. Group B (Figure 8.3) is further connected by the 1,800-meter (approximately 5,906-foot) Sacbe 2 to Group C. The monumental


= pila
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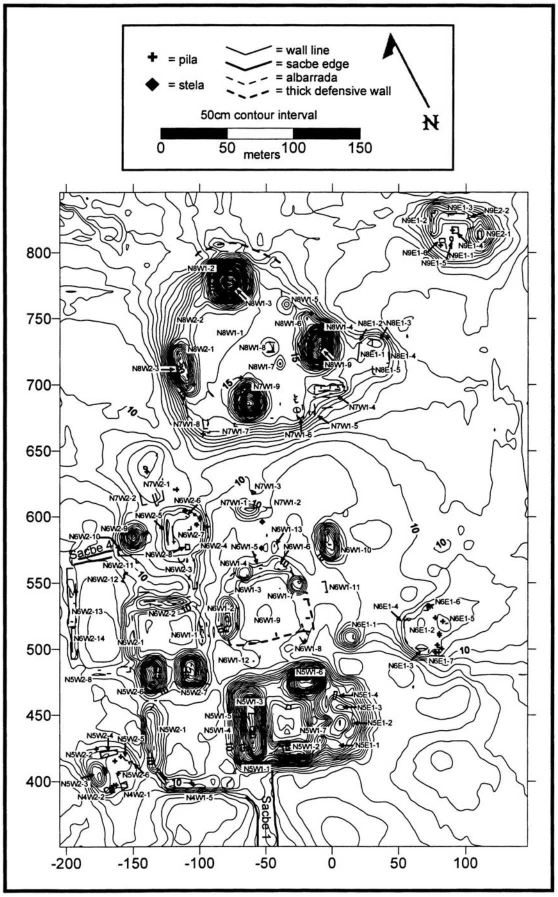
S3W1-2
S4W1-1
Sacbe 3
20
25
30
S4W2-1
S4W1-2
S5W1-1
S5E1-1
S4E1-14
S4E1-4
S4E1-13
S4E1-3
S4E1-5
S4E2-9
S4E2-1
15

FIGURE 8.2 Map of Group A, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico. Map by Justine M. Shaw © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

FIGURE 8.3 (OPPOSITE PAGE) Map of Group B, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico. Map by Justine M. Shaw © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

structures in Groups A and B, as well as some intervening constructions, share an alignment of 25 degrees east of magnetic north. Sacbe 1 is oriented 20 degrees east of magnetic north, and Sacbe 2 is oriented 48 degrees east of magnetic north. The majority of the site is situated on essentially flat terrain, although Group A sits atop a sharp natural rise. The only significant water source on or near the site known to archaeologists and local inhabitants is an *aguada* (shallow depression providing a water source) immediately to the northeast of Group A. Wendy Ashmore (1989, 1991) and Jennifer Mathews with James Garber (2004) have argued that Maya cosmology is reflected in site layouts, with north correlated with the celestial upperworld, and south correlated with the watery underworld. At Yo'okop, the underworld associations of the direction south are underscored by the location of the aguada at the southern terminus of the site axis.


✚ = pila
◆ = stela
= wall line
= sacbe edge
= albarrada
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50
100
N9E1-3
N9E2-2
N9E1-2
N9E2-1
N9E1-4
N9E1-6
N9E1-1
N9E1-5
N8W1-2
N8W1-3
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N6W2-9
N6W1-13
N6W2-10
N6W2-7
N6W2-4
N6W1-5
N6W1-6
N6W1-10
Sacbe 4
N6W2-8
N6W2-11
N6W2-3
N6W1-4
N6W2-12
N6W1-3
N6W1-11
N6W1-7
N6W2-13
N6W2-2
N6W1-2
N6W1-9
N6E1-4
N6E1-6
N6E1-1
N6E1-5
N6E1-2
N6W2-14
N6W2-1
N6W1-1
N6W1-8
N6W1-12
N6E1-3
N6E1-7
N5W2-8
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N5W2-7
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N5W1-3
N5E1-4
N5E1-3
N5W1-5
N5W1-4
N5W2-1
N5W1-7
N5E1-2
N5W2-4
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N5W1-2
N5E1-1
N5W2-2
N5W1-1
N5W2-6
N5W2-3
N4W2-2
N4W2-1
N4W1-5
Sacbe 1
10
15

Within the central plaza of Group B, two Late Formative plastered platforms oriented along a similarly aligned north–south axis have also been documented. This suggests that the adherence to the strongly directional layout and orientation dates to the Late Formative period (Johnstone 2001a:42; Shaw 2001a:106). The placement of plastered platforms at Yo'okop along this axis may have been determined not only by ecological and geographic features specific to the site, but also by cosmological concepts widely shared throughout the Maya region. The north–south axis at Yo'okop is similar to those that have been observed at other Maya sites, including Tikal, Copán, and Xunantunich (Ashmore 1989, 1991, 1992, 1998; Ashmore and Sabloff 2003). The upperworld associations of the direction north are suggested by the platforms in Group B established during the Late Formative period. Although limited, the geographic data provides a glimpse into the early spatial identity of Yo'okop. In particular, the site seems to have established itself along a north–south axis by the Late Formative period, a strategy widespread in the Maya lowlands, and to have focused its agricultural production near the aguada.

A major processional space was articulated by Yo'okop's 1,800-meter-long (approximately 5,906-foot-long) Sacbe 2, running at an angle of 48 degrees from magnetic north, sometime during the Classic period. This causeway was first surveyed by Wilson (1974), with progressively more intensive investigation in 2002 and 2008 by members of CRAS (Flores Colin et al. 2008; Lloyd 2002). During the 2012 field season Alberto Flores Colin dug test pits adjacent to the sacbe, but results were modest and mostly inconclusive. Because the terrain varied and the sacbe was constructed at a consistent level, the elevation of this causeway varies from near ground level to 4 meters (just over 13 feet) at its apex. Sacbe 2 can be dated to the Early Classic period or later by a Puuc-style vaulted passageway bisecting it, similar to those seen at Oxkintok and other Maya lowland sites (Lloyd 2002:23). The sacbe ends near structure N25E6–3—a pyramid that is 11 meters (36 feet) tall in the front, and 14 meters (almost 46 feet) high at the back, where the terrain is lower. It is the only major structure in the immediate area, suggesting that the sacbe was constructed to provide access to it specifically—perhaps as part of funerary processions (Flores Colin et al. 2008:35–36; Lloyd 2002:27). The fact that the sacbe is about 10 meters (or approximately 33 feet) wide suggests that at least six rows of pedestrians could easily transverse it concurrently as a part of ritual activity. Such experiential and performative uses of space can also be detected at other Maya sites, and a body of scholarship has been growing to understand it (see the work of Clancy, Chapter 5; Inomata 2006, 2008). Such ceremonial uses of sacbeob were probably common, and have been reported during the Colonial era by Diego de Landa (Tozzer 1941:77).

Economic Space in the PreClassic and Early Classic Periods

Geographic spaces between trade partners can be imaged by the location of the recipients of material goods, thereby creating an understanding of our place in the world based on the economy. Indeed, trade of objects creates a visual web of connections between sites (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, and Bernatz, Chapter 3, for more examples). Such economic spaces—the places that Yo'okop traded with—are hinted at by the ceramic record. Yo'okop's PreClassic history is not yet well understood, but by the end of this time period the site was clearly within the Chicanel sphere (please see bibliographic comments following Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for an explanation of ceramic typology). Although PreClassic ceramic sherds have been found in numerous test pits and surface collections, they are generally mixed with later materials; extensive data from the earliest levels of occupation remain buried or recycled into later constructions. Despite the limited evidence, the site was clearly occupied during the Middle PreClassic period (ca. 1000–400 BCE). Ceramic sherds from this time were documented in a test pit on the north end of Sacbe 1 in architectural Group B (Johnstone 2001a:36) as well as in soil washed down a slope near the aguada (Shaw 2002b:116). Although PreClassic ceramic objects have not been recovered in Group A, its location immediately adjacent to Yo'okop's only water source insured that Group A would have been frequented by virtually the entire population of the site. Because the most fertile soils occur near the aguada, the lower terrain near Group A may have been utilized primarily for agricultural production in the PreClassic period (Johnstone 2002a:7; Shaw 2002b:116). Based on the limited collection of ceramics recovered, the PreClassic period seems to be most similar to sites in the northern lowlands (Shaw 2001a:106). Late PreClassic ceramics at Yo'okop, like those at Cancún, can be identified as part of the Chicanel sphere shared by many sites to the north and south (Shaw 2002b:116). As in the Middle PreClassic period, Late PreClassic ceramics have been excavated from test pits on the southern edge and central plaza of Group B (Johnstone 2001a:36, 39; Shaw et al. 2000:67). As is typical of many sites in the region, the greater abundance of Late PreClassic, compared to Middle PreClassic, ceramics suggests that Yo'okop's population experienced a period of growth (Shaw 2002b:116).

Imported polychrome vessels from the Early Classic period suggest that Yo'okop was strongly tied to the Petén region (Johnstone 2001b:55; Shaw et al. 2000:46). Such exchange indicates that Yo'okop may have been a node along a north–south inland trade route (Harrison 1981:284–5; Johnstone 2002b:138). At the same time that the ceramic wares suggest Yo'okop's participation along an important trade route, Early Classic building projects reveal the temporal continuity in the internal utilization of the north–south axis. During the Early Classic period the political and economic identity of Yo'okop underwent a dramatic shift. The ceramic record indicates that PreClassic Yo'okop was part of a widespread Maya cultural sphere. The subsequent appearance of Petén-style polychromes at Yo'okop in the Early Classic period reveals a closer economic and political orientation toward the southern Maya lowlands. At this time most of the regional population was concentrated in the large centers of Yo'okop, Ichmul, and Sacalaca, while many of the other sites in the area were abandoned.

Architectural Space: The Early Classic Period

By scrutinizing architectural space, it is clear that the Early Classic (ca. 250–550 CE) was a period of architectural expansion at Yo'okop, as evidenced by the prevalence of megalithic Izamal-style steps present on some constructions (Shaw et al. 2000:67–68). The monumental architecture at Yo'okop is overgrown with vegetation, and there has been little architectural reconstruction there. The core of the city is thus difficult to study, but portions of the periphery are kept clear by local people for subsistence agriculture. The land is farmed by residents of the *ejido* (communally farmed land in Mexico, sanctioned by the state) of Saban. Many of the structures in Group A, such as Structure S4W1–2, seem to have been built or heavily modified during the Early Classic period (Shaw et al. 2000:18). Nearly 100 meters (328 feet) to the east of Group A, near the aguada, a platform with several elevated structures was also built at this time (Shaw et al. 2000:31). As Group A experienced rapid architectural expansion, spatial focus within Group B was reoriented. A test pit in the Central Acropolis (Structure N5W1–1) of Group B—an area established by the Late PreClassic period—suggests that construction and maintenance of the plaza floor ceased during the Early Classic period (Johnstone 2001a). However, a test pit in the Northern Acropolis (Structure N8W1–1) of Group B suggests that the architectural focus shifted northward. The area appears to have been well maintained, as evidenced by three successive layers of plaster floor on the North Acropolis (Johnstone 2002c:71).

Monumental Space: The Early to Late Classic Transition

An art historical understanding of space can be achieved by interrogating the monumental record at Yo'okop. There are two freestanding stelae and a carved wall panel at the site, all of which show naturalistic images of kings rendered in low relief. They have all suffered some erosion, due to the fact that they have been exposed to rain for over 1,400 years. Imagery on these monuments focuses on rulership, and it includes intriguing ties to the natural world—especially water. In an area with annual rainy and dry seasons and only one surface source—the shallow aguada—water was likely a key interest of leaders. Later in this chapter we will suggest that particular types of aquatic iconography combined imagery with architectural design and the orientation of structures to evoke a fertile, watery, realm.

Three figural sculptures and five hieroglyphic stones have been recovered at Yo'okop. These monuments can be dated between approximately 590 and 650 CE, a period that bridges the Early to Late Classic periods. Together, figural sculptures and hieroglyphic stones, all of which were prominently displayed in public space, reveal aspects of Yo'okop's political configuration. The subjects of the sculptures can be presumed to be elites and rulers at the site while the textual phrases that can be reconstructed from the stones indicate a strong political interaction between Yo'okop and the hegemonic state of Calakmul in the southern lowlands.

To understand the monuments and inscription, it is useful to examine a distinctive building at the site—S5E1–1 (Figures 8.2, 8.4). This structure rises upward like a typical pyramid, dips down at mid-elevation, and then rises up again. Structure S5E1–1 is located in the core of Group A, near the aguada. Unfortunately the building does not photograph well because of overgrowth, but Justine Shaw and David Johnstone have mapped it three-dimensionally. This distinctive structure consists of a square pyramidal base topped by four range structures along its outer edges. Inside these range structures is a square depression, similar to a moat in appearance (Figure 8.4). Rising from the depression is a small pyramid.[1] The shape of this structure invites researchers to posit hypotheses. Although the depression may have resulted accidentally from a collapsed substructure, it is also possible that the depression was an intentional part of the design of Structure S5E1–1. If so, the depression may have been constructed to hold water (Shaw et al. 2000:24; Clancy, Chapter 5, has suggested that these associations seem to be widespread in the Maya realm). The purpose of this building is not clear, but one intriguing possibility meriting continued testing is that it could have collected water for practical or ritual purposes. If so, the raised pool incorporated into Structure S5E1–1, located in the southern portion of the site, may have identified the pyramid as a water mountain.

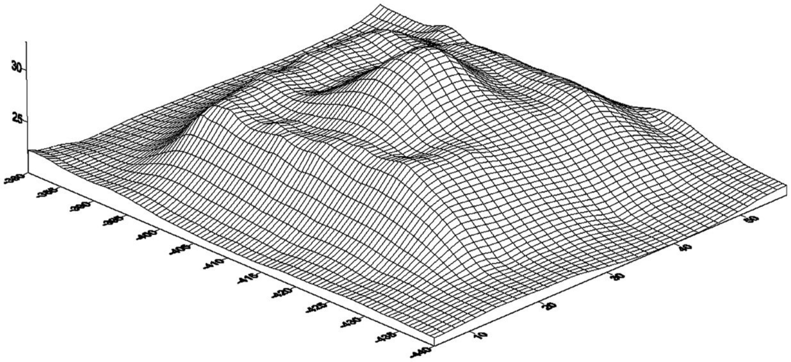

FIGURE 8.4 Structure S5E1–1, Yo'okop, Classic Period, Quintana Roo, Mexico. Diagram by Justine M. Shaw © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

The Inscription

An inscription recovered in the area adds further credence to the existence of sacred geographic space reflected in the architecture at Yo'okop. The inscription suggests a possible alliance between Yo'okop and the Calakmul (Kan) polity. Such an alliance would likely have been secured by means of a marital union between a Kan lady, identified as Ix Ch'ak Kab, and a local lord. Such an arrangement would parallel the marriages that Calakmul's royal women entered into at other sites, and it would conform to the emerging consensus that women played key roles in ancient Maya politics (Ardren 2002; Hage 2003; Inomata 2008; Josserand 2002; Marcus 1987, 1992, 2001; Miller 1998; Proskouriakoff 1960, 1961; Reese-Taylor et al. 2009). At least two marriage unions are known from the monumental inscriptions at the client states of Calakmul, for instance. At Sak Nikte' (formerly known as Site Q), a tablet inscription records the marriage of a Calakmul woman to the local ruler K'inich Yook (ca. 667–682 CE). K'inich Yook is described as the subordinate of the Calakmul ruler Yukno'm Ch'e'n II (636–686 CE) (Freidel and Guenter 2003). At Naachtun, an inscription on

Stela 18 suggests that a Calakmul woman entered into the El Perú dynasty. This woman can be presumed to be Ix Chan Ajaw, the subject of Stela 34 from El Perú (Wanyerka 1996:82). Indeed, textual evidence suggests that the marriage of Ix Chan Ajaw was arranged by the Calakmul ruler Yich'aak K'ak' (686–695? CE) to expand Calakmul's sphere of influence (Wanyerka 1996:82). In figural monuments at both Sak Nikte' and El Perú, the Calakmul women are prominently featured. The Sak Nikte' tablet depicts only women and lists the royal female (but not male) lineage (Freidel and Guenter 2003). At El Perú, a throne or altar is placed in front of Stela 34, which depicts Ix Chan Ajaw. The preeminence of Ix Chan Ajaw is further demonstrated by the central location of Stela 34 between Stelae 33 and 35, both of which depict men facing inward (Wanyerka 1996:72–74, 81).

The prominence accorded women of the Calakmul polity on the monumental records at Sak Nikte', El Perú, and, presumably, Yo'okop confirms the important role played by women in establishing and maintaining dynastic power. It is probable that women were key agents in shaping the social spheres of both Calakmul and Yo'okop, perhaps even becoming agents of cosmic space. Women are named in the lowland inscriptions of many sites as agents in interdynastic marriages that unite distinct polities (Culbert 1991; Josserand 2002; Marcus 1992; Mathews and Willey 1991; Schele and Mathews 1991). In addition, the inscriptions of at least three sites—Palenque, Tikal, and Naranjo—document women who were themselves rulers (Coggins 1975:218–222; Martin and Grube 2008:27, 38–39, 74–75, 159–162). That said, the relationship of Maya domains of power with gender spheres is not well understood. One approach to this issue has regarded male and female identities as dichotomies and has argued that female properties of fertility were either imitated or appropriated by Maya elite males to strengthen their ritual roles and political offices (Schele 1979; Stone 1988, 1991). In contrast, Rosemary Joyce (1996, 2000) has regarded women's and men's lives as complementary and gender roles as performative. Other scholars have proposed that the Maya elite viewed gender roles as potentially fluid and overlapping, including a third "two spirit" gender (Looper 2002). Still others have noted that Maya women sometimes acted in ways that seem masculine to modern Westerners, as when queens played active martial roles (Reese-Taylor et al. 2009).

The information known about Ix Ch'ak Kab is articulated in five hieroglyphic stones that were found in Group A, in the vicinity of Structure S5E1–1 (Figure 8.5). Stones B, C, and D were located together to the east of Structure S5E1–1 in 1966 by the aforementioned missionary Reginald Wilson and pilot Bill Clapp (Wilson 1972:84). They had been invited to the area at the request of the people who live in a nearby town, Dzoyola, and their work was affiliated with the Medical Aviation Fellowship. While Wilson and Clapp were there, they mapped the major architecture at Yo'okop. They also photographed the sculpture and inscriptions. Wilson published information about Yo'okop in both English and Spanish, and his work was the most complete source of information on the site available until CRAS was instigated.[2] According to local residents, the stones had originally been part of Structure S5E1–1. Although unconfirmed by inconclusive archaeological evidence, the likelihood that Stones B, C, and D originated from the same structure is supported by their similarities in sizes, carving depths, glyphic compounds, and cartouche formats. We therefore suggest that the size of the stones indicates that they were originally set into Structure S5E1–1, or a nearby structure, as risers in a hieroglyphic stairway. As has been noted at other sites, hieroglyphic stairways are part of a trope that often connotes military victory and celebrates them with the conspicuous display of messages (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, as well as Spencer, Chapter 6, and Olton, Chapter 7).

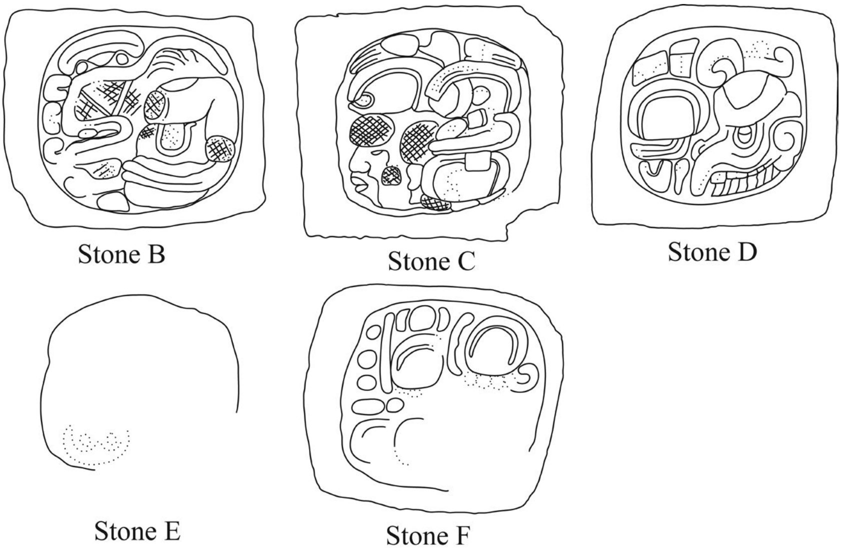
Stone B
Stone C
Stone D
Stone E
Stone F

FIGURE 8.5 Hieroglyphic stones, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico, Classic Period, ca. 593 CE (9.8.0.0.0). Drawing by Linnea Wren and Travis Nygard © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

The names and titles recorded in Stones B, C, and D suggest the role Yo'okop played in the political space created by the lowland Maya. Simon Martin has identified the name on Stone B as Sky Witness (Martin 1997:861; Martin and Grube 2008:104; Shaw et al. 2000:67).[3] Sky Witness is the name of the seventeenth ruler of the Kan or "snake" kingdom—a polity associated with Calakmul. While ruling the Kan kingdom from 561 CE to an unknown date, Sky Witness pursued an aggressive policy of expansion. This appearance of the name of Sky Witness suggests that the larger Kan polity may have played a critical role at Yo'okop in the sixth century.

The upper three signs of Stone C are read as the phonetic form of the *kalomte'* title that refers to lineage heads related to an overlord (Stuart et al. 1989) and to nobles who headed provincial towns under a regional overlord (Coe 1992:72). The lower-left sign on Stone C consists of a profile human head marked by crosshatched areas at the forehead, ear, and cheek. While eroded on the bottom edges, narrow parallel cheek markings appear to be shaped like the letters *IL*. As a result, the head sign on Stone C may be read as the *ix* or *na* title, meaning "lady." The lower-right sign below the kalomte' title on Stone C consists of a handheld ax, a logogram for *ch'ak*. The lowermost right sign, although too eroded to make an unequivocal identification, may represent *kab*, or "earth." Thus, Stone C might be read as Kalomte' Ix Ch'ak Kab (Kalomte' Lady, Chopper of the Earth) (Phil Wanyerka, personal communication 2002). Due to erosion, the reading of the personal name that follows is equivocal. Martin (personal communication 2003) has suggested that the crosshatched suffix in the final compound might be read as *ma* (associated patterns of female appellative phrases in relationship to the exercise of power and representation of gender roles are discussed by Erika Hewitt [1999]).

Stone D records an *ajaw* title followed by a locative phrase *nal imix*. The ajaw title, at the left of the compound, is recorded as **AJAW-K'IN(?)-ni-ya**, meaning "in lordship" or "in ajawship." The head in the lower-right side of the compound, consisting of a supernatural being with a disc-shaped headdress, is the logographic sign for the word *imix*, meaning "water, waterlily, lake or sea."[4] Above the imix sign is the locative marker *nal*. Together the compound glyph records a royal title identifying an elite as the "lordly person of the waters" (Phil Wanyerka, personal communication 2002).

Taken in sequence, Stones B, C, and D could form a complete phrase or simply name protagonists in a larger text. If they are in their original sequence, these blocks suggest that the Kan polity played a crucial role in the affairs of the smaller and distant site of Yo'okop. As the bearer of the kalomte' title, Ix Ch'ak Kab is identified as the possessor of a status subsidiary to a larger hegemonic state—likely the Kan kingdom ruled by the lord Sky Witness named on Stone B. As bearer of the ajaw title and its associated locative phrase, Ix Ch'ak Kab is acknowledged as a ruler in her own right at Yo'okop. Together, the hieroglyphic stones can be roughly translated as follows: "Lady Chop the Earth, Kalomte' under Sky Witness, the lord of the waterlily/water's surface place."

This inscription underscores the importance of directional space and its association with gender ideology. On the one hand, it alludes to a larger spatio-political system, as just discussed. On the other, it acts as an object in space. Elsewhere in the Maya region, stelae bearing female figures are placed to the west or south of stelae bearing male figures. As Joyce (2000) points out, among modern Mayan speakers, east and north are associated with the sun and with the heavens while west and south are associated with the underworld and with the earth. This has led Joyce to suggest that males were associated with the sun and heavens and women were associated with the underworld and the earth. Extending this idea to Yo'okop suggests that Ix Ch'ak Kab's queenly status may have been linked to the aguada at the southern end of the site core.

The inscription at Yo'okop also underscores the importance of sacred space and its association with agricultural space and everyday life. Evidence from Copán, Tikal, Kinal, and La Milpa indicates that water management and water rituals were of great concern to other rulers during this time period (Davis-Salazar 2003; Scarborough 1993; Scarborough et al. 1994). At Yo'okop, the *ajaw nal imix* title almost certainly refers to the site's large aguada. The prominent display of this title on an architectural structure in close proximity to the aguada reveals that water resources and manipulation of water rituals provided a crucial basis for the status and authority claimed by Yo'okop's rulers.

Two additional carved blocks, Stones E and F, were located by Johnstone and Shaw during the 2000 field season in Group A. These blocks were located near Structure S5E1–1 and north of Structure S4E1–13 (Shaw et al. 2000:54). Because of their similarities, we suggest that Stones E and F, like Stones B, C, and D, were also risers in a hieroglyphic stairway and that they may have been originally carved for the same structure. The upper-left quadrant of stone F appears to read eight *k'atuns*, and the upper-right quadrant appears to record the phrase *u kahi*, meaning "by the action of" or "under the auspices of" (Shaw et al. 2000:58). The *u kahi* phrase generally refers to a hierarchical relationship between a lord and subordinate noble. In this case, the phrase may be a reference to the action by which the Kan overlord Sky Witness established the subordinate female ruler, Lady Ch'ak Kab, as kalomte' of Yo'okop. The sequence "eight k'atun *u kahi*" was probably part of a period ending phrase. Therefore, the inscription may have indicated the end of the eighth k'atun in 593 CE (9.8.0.0.0) (Simon Martin, personal communication 2003).

Sculpture

Events at the end of the eighth k'atun in Yo'okop not only triggered the public placement of one or more hieroglyphic texts in Group A, but were also correlated with the public erection of monumental sculpture. The brief time span in which monumental sculpture and hieroglyphic inscriptions were carved at Yo'okop is coeval with the Kan polity's assertion of hegemony at Yo'okop and with Calakmul's ascendancy as a major regional site. The monumental record at Yo'okop may have been created, therefore, as a political declaration that Yo'okop was an urban space with a specific identity. Extensive damage to the glyphic inscriptions accompanying the sculptural monuments makes it impossible to identify the elite males depicted on Yo'okop's Stelae 1, 2, and 3 as either local lords or distant overlords (Figures 8.6, 8.7, 8.8). Nonetheless, the visual imagery indicates a clear focus on lordship.

Stelae 1 and 3 and a ballcourt monument named Stela 2 were discovered in Group B in secondary contexts. All of the stelae were found fallen in Group B, but the setting stones have not yet been recovered. As such, the stelae may have originally been positioned in different locations, and we will not draw conclusions about the specific positioning of the stones during Classic times until further data becomes available. Each of these monuments depicts a male ruler in a pose and costume that emphasizes elite status and political sovereignty. Tatiana Proskouriakoff tentatively dated Stela 1 on stylistic and iconographic grounds to the beginning of the Late Classic period, between 9.9.0.0.0 and 9.11.0.0.0 (613–652 CE) (Stromsvik et al. 1955:173). Stylistic similarities led Wren and Nygard to attribute the same Late Classic dates to Stelae 2 and 3.[5] These attributions link Stelae 1, 2, and 3 in Group B with the three-k'atun (60-year) period following the inscription of the hieroglyphic text(s) in Group A. From this perspective, all known stelae at Yo'okop should be considered part of the same program.

Stela 1 (Figure 8.6), which was recovered in Group B in a plaza east of Structure N6W2–6 (Shaw 2001b:Figures 5–6), depicts a single male lord standing in a frontal pose. The upper section of the monument is missing and its obverse face is uncarved (Wilson 1972:83, 1974:12). Attributes of elite costume include the wristlet, consisting of a cuff bordered by spherical beads worn on the figure's forearm; the belt adorned with helmeted heads; celt-shaped dangles below the heads; a skirt fringed possibly with shell tinklers or with beads and cloth; a loincloth and a pendant which hangs below the knees; garters with attached heads; and ornamented sandals. The costume elements in Stela 1 are shared widely throughout the central and southern lowlands. A serpent bar incorporating the mat motif is held diagonally across the chest of the figure on Stela 1. Frequently represented on occasions of period endings (Miller and Taube 1993:58–59), the serpent bar is a cosmological symbol representing the ecliptic of the sky. Both the bar and the mat are symbols of lordship, an association emphasized in this case by the foliated ajaw head that emerges from the bearded serpent maw on the lower terminus of the bar. The eroded outlines of a double column of glyphs form an illegible inscription on the upper-left portion of the stela.

Stela 3 (Figure 8.7) was recovered a short distance from Stela 1 in Group B (Shaw 2001b:Figures 5–6). Like Stela 1, Stela 3 depicts a standing human figure in a frontal pose and reportedly is uncarved on its obverse face. The inscription in column A suggests that this figure is a One-K'atun Ajaw. When first documented, the monument was broken into approximately ten pieces (Wilson 1972:84, 1974:13). The upper portion of the

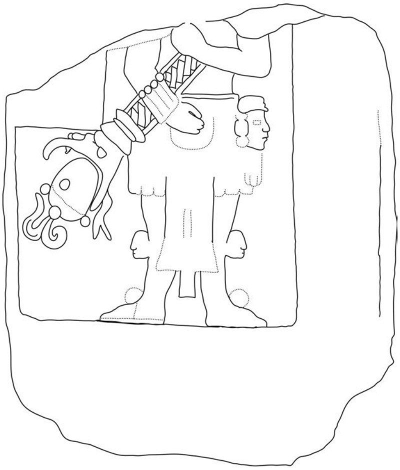

FIGURE 8.6 Stela 1, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico, Late Classic Period. Drawing by Linnea Wren and Travis Nygard © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

monument is damaged from erosion. The lower torso of the figure, only partially visible, is costumed with a belt-mask and three pendants, a skirt, a loincloth with a pendant extending to the ground, and ornamented sandals. Elongated pendants are characteristic of loincloths in the central and southern lowlands, in contrast to shorter pendants typical of the northern lowlands (Proskouriakoff 1950).

Only two elements in the upper portion of the monument are visible. A narrow, long, and deep depression is incised into the subject's chest. Because it was carefully worked, the depression probably dates to the time of the stela's original carving rather than being a later defacement. The depression may have been intended to hold an inset of another material, such as jade or obsidian. At the approximate region of the heart, the inset may have signaled that the ruler was both the most exalted performer of sacrifices and the most prestigious of victims. In the extreme upper-left corner, the partial outline of a fish may be tentatively recognized. Fish nibbling from a flower are typically incorporated into the headdress of the Water Lily Monster. This motif was also prevalent at Copán and other sites during the Late Classic period, where Barbara Fash suggests that it referred both to sacred concepts of the cosmos and to regal strategies of water management (Davis-Salazar 2003:293–294). Similar water-management practices as well as cosmological concepts are evident at Yo'okop and seem to be referenced by the headdress motif on Stela 2.

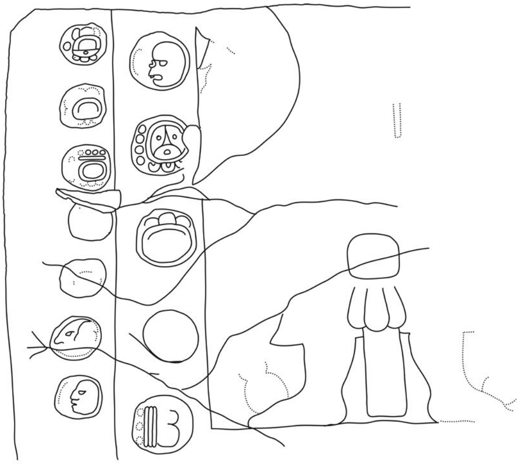

FIGURE 8.7 Stela 3, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico, Late Classic Period. Drawing by Linnea Wren and Travis Nygard © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

Although termed a stela by previous investigators (Wilson 1972:84, 1974:13), Stela 2 (Figure 8.8) employs a horizontal composition typical of architectural panels rather than the vertical format of a freestanding stela. Stela 2, recovered in Group B on the eastern end of Structure N6W2–6 (Shaw 2001b:Figures 5–6), was found situated 100 meters (or roughly 328 feet) to the north of a Classic ballcourt (Structures N5W2–6 and N5W2–7) (Wilson 1972:81, 1974:9) in which a partial ballcourt ring has been located (Shaw 2001b:24). We postulate that Stela 2 is now located in a secondary or tertiary context but that its original location was in the ballcourt itself. The absence of carving on the obverse makes sense, given that Stela 2 was likely originally set as a relief panel into an architectural structure.

Stela 2 depicts a ballplayer kneeling with one leg on the ground and with one arm upraised. The figure wears a pectoral, a wristlet on his upraised arm, a ballplayer's yoke, and a headdress combining a wide browpiece with a full-bodied bird and three animal tails. Although somewhat eroded, shallow incised lines on the abdomen of the bird suggest that it sports an obsidian mirror. If so, this headdress may represent the Principal Bird Deity and its elite wearer may personify the World Tree (see also Steinbach, Chapter 2). The dynamic nature of ritual space at Yo'okop is suggested by the action depicted on Stela 2. The ballplayer represented on the panel can be interpreted as a living agent who moves symbolically

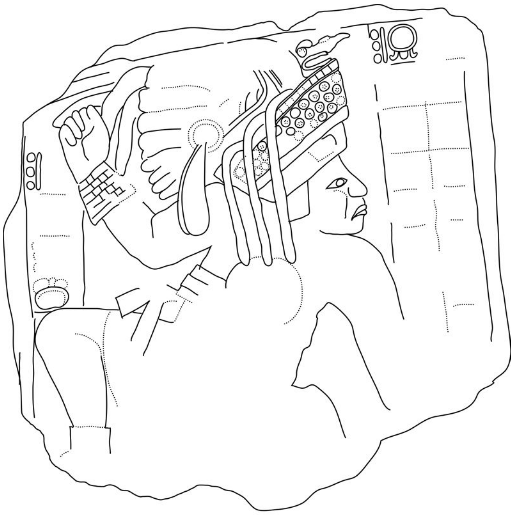

FIGURE 8.8 Stela 2, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico, Late Classic Period. Drawing by Linnea Wren and Travis Nygard © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

between the world's surface and the upper- and underworlds (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for more information concerning the liminal potential of the Maya ballgame and the ballcourts that staged such events). The primordial ballgame described in the Popol Vuh (Tedlock 1985) is understood to have taken place in the underworld and to have been played by the Hero Twins against the Lords of Death. The pose assumed by the subject of Stela 2 activates the space around the relief, labeling it as part of an underworld ballcourt and enmeshing the viewer in the ballgame of Creation mythology.

Taken as a whole, the impetus to erect figurative sculpture corresponds in date with the effort of the Kan polity to control Yo'okop. Previous to 9.8.0.0.0, the site's rulers felt little need to commission monuments to define their identities or to celebrate their achievements. The utilization of hieroglyphic texts and figural imagery appears to be a response to external pressures emanating from the southern lowlands. This suggests two possible scenarios. If the reliefs represent overlords imposed upon Yo'okop by a hegemonic state, then Stelae 1, 2, and 3 may have been intended to reinforce Calakmul rulership. In this way, Calakmul rulers might have depicted themselves on sculpture at Yo'okop in order to mark the site as a space that they controlled. Alternatively, if the reliefs represent lords of local reign, then the stone monuments may have been intended to portray the Yo'okop elites as autonomous or semiautonomous rulers. Their erection of monuments may have been a way to distinguish their identities from that of their Calakmul overlord or even to assert themselves as politically independent agents following a period of subordination.

Domestic Space: The Late Classic Period

The Late Classic is the time period for which the least amount of regional settlement-pattern data has been recovered to date; what populations there were remained concentrated at the largest sites. Within this context, understanding the lived-in, domestic spaces of Yo'okop can be grasped by looking at some of the settlement patterns at the site. The Late Classic period (ca. 550–750 CE), ushered in by the political changes associated with Calakmul, was characterized at Yo'okop by an intensive campaign of building in both Groups A and B. Although residential mounds remain unexcavated to date, it is notable that the population at the site thrived, as indicated by the construction of small residential spaces during the Late Classic period in Group A. These residential structures are located in the expanding Early Classic residential group near the aguada (Shaw et al.

2000:31). Besides the construction in Group A, Group D seems to have been established at this time. Although more archaeological work is needed, Group D is intriguing because the architecture has an anomalous orientation. Rather than maintain a 25-degree-east-of-north alignment parallel to the major architecture at Yo'okop, there is no apparent patterning in the arrangement of Group D. This unusual treatment of space may be tied to Group D's function as an elite residential area not meant for public ritual (Shaw 2001c).

Group A includes the pyramidal Structure S4W1–1, one of the most impressive structures at Yo'okop. The lower portion of Structure S4W1–1, consisting of a minimum of two terraces and rising 22 meters (around 72 feet), was built during the Late Classic period.[6] An intact northwestern corner of Structure S4W1–1 is curved, suggesting that the building's corners may have been rounded (Shaw et al. 2000:18). Similar rounded structures include the Pyramid of the Magician at Uxmal (Sáenz 1972) and Xaybe at Cobá. The original staircase of Structure S4W1–1 is aligned 25 degrees east of north, an orientation shared by the other PreClassic and Classic structures. This directional specificity indicates that the overall north–south plan of the site, established by the Late Formative period, continued to be important to the Yo'okop people in later times.

Construction also resumed in Group B during the Late Classic period. A test pit in the main plaza of the Central Acropolis showed that the plaza floor was raised by 2.4 meters (almost 8 feet) in a single construction effort and then capped by a platform. The plaza was later remodeled during the same period. Structure N5W1–1 sub 1 was truncated and covered, altering the spatial perception of the Central Acropolis by creating a more open vista (Johnstone 2001a:44). Interestingly, test pitting at the base of Structure N8W1–3 did not reveal construction dating to the Late Classic period (Johnstone 2002c:67–71).

The Early Classic economic and political orientation of the site toward the southern Petén area continued into the Late Classic period, as evidenced by the sustained presence of traded polychrome ceramics (Shaw et al. 2000:46). Late Classic architecture at Yo'okop is characterized by the plain, load-bearing, roughly quarried stone walls; slab corbelled vaults; and plain battered terraces with rounded corners typical of the Petén style (Shaw and Johnstone 2001:13). As evidenced by Petén ceramics and architectural influences, the cultural affiliation of Yo'okop with southern sites such as Calakmul was not short-lived but a long-standing phenomenon.

Ritual Space: The Terminal Classic Period

Unlike the Early and Late Classic periods, the Terminal Classic (ca. 750–1000 CE) is typified by a large regional population. This population was not only located in the larger centers, but also dispersed throughout the smaller sites of the area, including locations without evidence of prior occupation. At Yo'okop, Terminal Classic architecture can be used to reconstruct the ritual use of space at the site, as one of the few excavated structures—a sweatbath—seems to have had a ritual purpose. The Terminal Classic, indeed, was a time characterized by a radical restructuring of ecological, political, and economic space. This restructuring may be attributable to the collapse of southern lowland Maya polities, including Calakmul. Much of the Maya area was heavily impacted by a marked drought during this period (Hodell et al. 1995, 2001).

At Yo'okop, water levels in the aguada clearly dropped during the Terminal Classic period. This drop in the water table is evidenced by the construction of Structure S3E1–5 at the edge of the aguada, on land that is today submerged during a portion of the rainy season (Shaw et al. 2000:27). Structure S3E1–5, measuring approximately 7 square meters (23 feet), was painted red on its exterior with at least one serpent head tenoned into the building. At approximately the same time as the construction of S3E1–5, a line of cut stones was placed at the rim of the aguada. A paved plaza in front of Structure S4E2–1, south of the aguada, was also constructed in the Terminal Classic period.

Structure S3E1–5 can be identified as a sweatbath (Shaw 2002a; Shaw et al. 2000:24) (Figure 8.9), similar to Structure P-7 from Piedras Negras (Proskouriakoff 1963) and Structure 9 at Cerén (McGee 2002; Sheets 1992:98) (see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for mention of the sweatbath, or *pib naah*, as an architectural type). The interior of Structure S3E1–5 was comprised of a single room and had an unusual single square partial vault. The sweatbath included a U-shaped bench. Light scorching on the successive floors indicates that fire or heated materials were used within the building. Structure S3E1–5, like the sweatbath at Yaxuná (Structure 6F-12), lacks a firebox and, therefore, evidently relied on water poured over heated stones on the floor (Johnstone 1994).

The architectural constructions in close proximity to the aguada suggest that Yo'okop's response to the drier climatic conditions was both ritualized and pragmatic. Sweatbaths in particular are associated with caves (Houston 1996:142) and as such may be regarded as ritual entrances to underworld spaces. At many Maya sites, paved and stuccoed architectural surfaces functioned in water-management systems as rain-catchment surfaces (Scarborough 1993; Scarborough et a1.1994). Thus, the placement of a paved plaza to the south of S4E2–1 may have been designed as both a ritual space and a water-management feature.

The pragmatic exploration of the aguada as a water resource in the drier climate conditions of the Terminal Classic period may also have been responsible for a shift in residential patterns. This change is indicated by the construction of numerous Terminal Classic residences near the site's sacbeob but at a distance from the aguada (Kashak 2002:12). In addition to prompting Yo'okop residents to construct a monumental setting at the edge of the aguada for water rituals, drought may also have required Yo'okop agriculturalists to rely more heavily on the aguada, using ceramic pots to carry water for irrigation. As a result, agricultural activity in the city's core may have intensified at this time, and the land closest to the aguada may have been increasingly converted to milpa farming (Shaw 2002b:118; Shaw and Johnstone 2001:11).

Shifts in the ceramic record indicate that the political and economic collapse of the great southern sites, including Calakmul, affected Yo'okop.

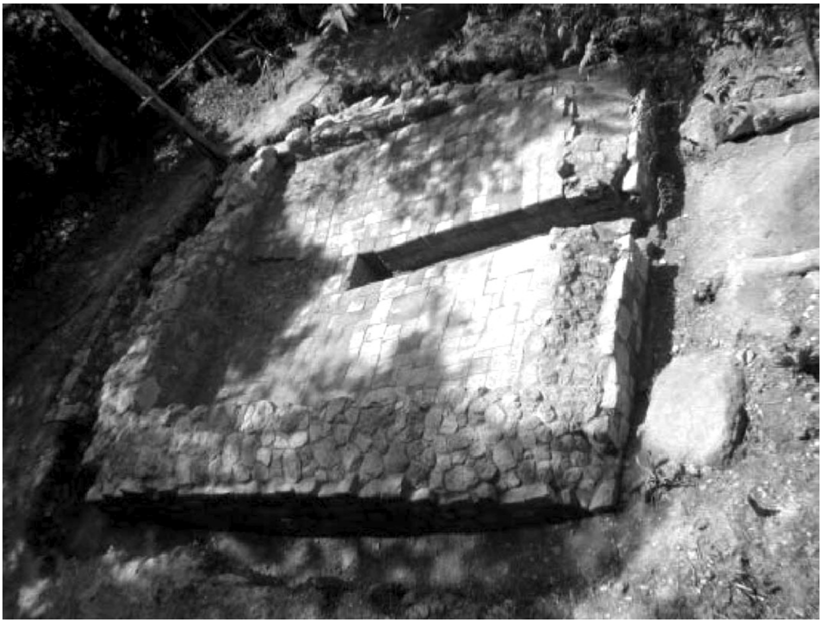

FIGURE 8.9 Sweatbath, Yo'okop, Quintana Roo, Mexico, Terminal Classic Period. Photograph by Justine M. Shaw © Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop.

Polychrome trade ceramics from the Petén region, which were once prominent at Yo'okop, disappear at the site. A very limited number of Sotuta ceramics have been found at Yo'okop (Shaw 2001a:108) and a few other sites in the region, but the dominance of Cehpech ceramics indicates that Yo'okop participated in trade networks with the northern lowlands. Moreover, despite the climatic stress, the presence of Terminal Classic ceramics in every excavation unit at Yo'okop reveals a continued, substantial occupation of the site.

Despite the changes in the political and economic landscape of the Maya region, the internal spatial design of Yo'okop remained consistent. The construction of Sacbe 1 between Groups A and B gave monumental prominence to the north–south orientation of the monumental plazas of Yo'okop. Datable by ceramics to the Terminal Classic, Sacbe 1 has a widened segment at its northern terminus at the edge of Group B. This segment may have functioned as an entrance to the plaza (Johnstone 2001a:36). Altar 1, a circular stone inscribed with hieroglyphs, possibly dated to the Early Classic period, was reset on the surface of Sacbe 1 at its approximate center. Although the hieroglyphs are now too eroded to be read, the presence of Altar 1 suggests that at least one function of Sacbe 1 was as a ritual space—perhaps an important ritual station. The ritual use of sacbeob at other Maya sites was recently summarized by Shaw (2001d:266; see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1), who notes that sacbeob can unify architectural groupings (Kurjack and Garza T. 1981), extend along the cardinal directions from pilgrimage sites (Bernardo de Lizana in Villa Rojas 1934:189), represent the axis mundi (Dunning 1992:135), and/or align with astronomical features (Folan 1991:227). Because Altar 1 was a setting for processional movements, the ceremonial space defined by Sacbe 1, like cosmological space, acted as a dynamic connection between realms.

Revisionist Space: The Post Classic Period

We will end the study of Yo'okop with an acknowledgement that space was historically—as it remains today—a socially defined category in a state of flux. Interrogating some types of data examined in earlier sections reveals that the ancient Maya at this site continued to revise their space during the Post Classic period (ca. 1000–1500 CE). This was a time at Yo'okop marked by shifts in the loci of construction and possibly by a changing configuration of the aguada by site inhabitants. The appearance of Chen Mul incensarios and East Coast–style temples, as well as numerous summit shrines, suggests that Yo'okop participated in the religious cult associated with Late Post

Classic Mayapán. It may be that the presence of the aguada, like the cenotes at Chichén Itzá and Mayapán, contributed to the elevation of Yo'okop as a destination for religious pilgrimages. Cenotes at X-Cabil and Sacalaca are approximately a day's walk away, and, together with the aguada at Yo'okop, may have formed a pilgrimage route. At the same time, the construction of an accession structure and the recovery of artifacts typical of non-ritual activities, such as hunting, indicate that Yo'okop maintained a sizeable residential population. This differs from other regional sites in the Post Classic, which are typified by the presence of small shrines and incensario fragments, but which show little evidence of a large permanent population.

Within Yo'okop, the loci of construction activities shifted. A resurgence occurred in Group A with the construction, or at least substantial modification, of Structure S4W2–1. The second tallest construction in Group A, Structure S4W2–1 measures roughly 45 by 45 meters (approximately 148 by 148 feet) at its base and rises about 15 meters (just over 49 feet) at its summit. The design of the structure, which incorporates two small square chambers reached by descending vaulted passageways, resembles accession structures from other sites (Freidel and Suhler 1999; Shaw et al. 2000:22). Structure S4W1–1 was reoriented with the addition of a 1-meter-wide (3.28-feet), balustraded stairway on its northeast corner. A two-story addition was also constructed on its summit, raising the total height by 6 meters (just under 20 feet) to reach a grand total of 26 meters (85.3 feet). The aguada, located to the northeast of Group A, may have also undergone alteration by human design. The presence of two Post Classic projectile points to the west side of Structure S3E1–5 suggests that the Post Classic Maya may have allowed vegetation to regrow around the aguada, resulting in an area suitable for hunting. However, it is not clear if this hunting area was thoughtfully designed or merely the incidental result of not clearing vegetation as the population declined.

Important construction activity also occurred in Group B. This activity indicates a shift in importance away from the Central Acropolis to the North Acropolis, which had experienced a construction hiatus in the Late and Terminal Classic periods. Post Classic buildings cap three pyramidal buildings, Structures N8W1–2, N7W1–9, and N8W1–4, as well as a range structure, N8W2–1. Stairs were added to the western slopes of Structures N8W1–4 and N7W1–9 and to the southern face of Structure N8W1–2. In the Central Acropolis of Group B, a Post Classic temple was added to Structure N5W1–3, and a small shrine was built on the summit of Structure N5W1–6. Small shrines were also added to both the western and eastern ranges of the ballcourt (Structures N5W2–6 and N5W2–7).

More modest construction activities occurred in Group D. Several small shrines capped the structures of Group D. Three were found on Structure N2W7–13; one was located on the top of Structure N2W7–12 and one on Structure N2W7–1. Yo'okop's residential zone has not yet been well studied. However, the examination of the main architectural groups suggests that the Post Classic period was characterized by activity focused intensively upon select locations throughout the site, including locations involving the sacbe system, rather than continuously dispersed across broad zones.

At the same time that the pattern of construction within Yo'okop indicated changing uses of space, the types of construction signal both continuities and shifts in the political and religious dynamics of the site. The construction of the accession shrine, Structure S4W2–1, emphasizes the continued importance of kingship, while the addition of numerous temples and shrines on the summits of earlier structures suggests participation in the religious cult emanating from, or at least related to, Mayapán. This participation is also indicated by the presence of Chen Mul incensarios. Effigy incensarios were reported to be numerous at the site prior to their removal by visitors (Peter Harrison, personal communication 2002) and by the modern Maya who regard them as *aluxob* (small spirits in Maya folk beliefs). Sanctioned archaeological excavations have recovered Chen Mul incensario fragments from Group B in a test pit at the foot of Structure N8W1–2, a structure capped by a Post Classic shrine (Structure N8W1–3). Chen Mul incensario sherds were also frequently seen during the course of mapping and excavations, although they were not collected unless part of a specific test unit. Fragments of five effigy incensario fragments were also found by Wilson (1972) in Group A in an interior chamber at the summit of Structure S4W1–1, the Castillo. Their presence in this context suggests that incensarios were an element in ritual ceremonies that activated cosmological space.[7] Directly above the chamber in which incensario fragments were located is another small chamber. The back wall showed three thick layers of plaster, each of which had been painted blue (Wilson 1972:80). The ancient Maya associated the color blue with sacredness and preciousness and blue and green hues were together linked with the center of the universe (Schele 1985).

As indicated above, Chen Mul incense burners can be seen as a marker of religious expression centered at Mayapán. They form a ceramic type assigned to the Tases phase at that site, which has both the most abundant number of incensarios and the most extensive range of iconographic types (Milbrath and Lope 2003:3–8; Smith 1971). Introduced in about 1250 CE at Mayapán, Chen Mul incensarios apparently spread south, signaling a north-to-south direction of influences after 1300 CE. During the Late Post Classic period, these effigies were widespread throughout the lowlands and were manufactured as far south as the Petén. This distribution pattern may reflect the role played by ritual and trade in integrating the northern and southern lowlands at this time.

Effigy incensarios, frequently found in burials and shrines, evidently represent a religious complex focused on both deities and deified ancestors. Their appearance in both household contexts and in public sectors suggests that the practice of rituals was not secularized, but was community-wide. Their use at centers in which sizable populations performed a host of domestic, economic, and political activities suggests that the presence of effigy incensarios is connected with a religious revival sponsored by the elite and perhaps utilized in order to control trade and to centralize dissenting social factions (for the use of other ceramic types in similar efforts to control political space slightly earlier, in the Late Classic, see Werness-Rude, Chapter 4). Their use at sites such as Yo'okop may suggest pilgrimage activities. At the same time, their presence may indicate a local elite eager to adopt the religious ideology promoted by a distant powerful center and to merge it with local lineage ancestors and gods. If this were the case, it would explain both the construction of temples and shrines at Yo'okop and the prominence of a new accession building. These Post Classic changes at Yo'okop reflected the changing geographic, political, and religious landscape of the Maya lowlands as a whole.

Conclusion

We have attempted to reconstruct a chronology of ecological, cosmological, and political space at Yo'okop. The site's size and extended occupation make it a particularly appropriate place to complete such a case study. During 2003, the Cochuah Regional Archaeological Survey began in the area near Yo'okop (Shaw 2003). This ongoing survey attempts to document the largely ignored yet sizeable sites in the zone north of Yo'okop and south of Ichmul. Areas documented thus far include portions of the ejidos of Xquerol, San Felipe, Saban, Tabasco, Ichmul, and Sacalaca. The data gathered by the survey suggests that Yo'okop and the less understood site of Ichmul were the largest urban centers in the immediate area and that smaller regional centers may have declined during the Early and Late Classic periods as populations became more concentrated. This regional coalescence corresponds with an important period at Yo'okop when ideas about place were rethought and demarcated by the erection of stelae. Ultimately, we have shown that at this site space was a vibrant, interesting, and varied part of the Maya world that constantly positioned and repositioned itself in space as its needs changed through time.

Acknowledgments

We wish to express our gratitude to people who have been indispensable in this research. Most importantly, we would like to thank the people of Xquerol, Sacalaca, Saban, Huay Max, San Felipe, and Tabasco who graciously allow us to live and work in their ejidos. In addition to the crewmembers we were able to hire, we received countless archaeological (and survival) tips and assistance from individuals throughout the ejidos. We also would like to thank our colleagues from the United States, Canada, Sweden, and Mexico, including Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH)-Quintana Roo (QR) and INAH-Nacional. Adriana Velazquez Morlet, director of INAH-QR, has been especially helpful to us. Reginald Wilson, a previous Yo'okop researcher, supplied us with photographic negatives and prints, documentation, and feedback. Phil Wanyerka and Simon Martin read and provided penetrating analysis of the glyphic inscriptions and pointed us in new directions. Field sketches produced by Ian Graham have been indispensable to our understanding of the epigraphy. Other colleagues, including Rosemary Joyce, Mark Van Stone, Elisabeth Wagner, Daniel Graña-Behrens, Harri Kettunen, and Jorge Elias have examined our materials, provided insight, and critiqued ideas. Also, our project ethnographer Sandra Bever provided us with advice on matters related to the modern Maya.

Without numerous funders, Proyecto Arqueológico Yo'okop and the Cochuah Regional Archaeological Survey would not have been possible. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the Selz Foundation, which financially supported research in 2001, 2008, 2010, and 2012; the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Swedish Research Council (VR), which funded research in 2010; and the Antiqua Foundation, which funded research in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2008. We very much appreciate the support and encouragement that Bernard Selz has continued to provide to us throughout the years. The 2000 season was funded by the H. John Heinz III Fund of the Heinz Family Foundation (reference number H1305) and the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. (FAMSI project number 99016). Linnea Wren and Travis Nygard's participation was supported by funds from Gustavus Adolphus College. Johan Normark's participation and analysis of this region was enabled by Stiftelsen Lars Hiertas mine, Den Adlerbertska forskningsstiftelsen, Stiftelsen Fru Mary von Sydows, född Wijk, donationsfond, Helge Ax:son Johnsons stiftelse, Gunvor och Josef Anérs stiftelse, Stiftelsen Wilhelm och Martina Lundgrens vetenskapsfond, and Birgit och Gad Rausings stiftelse för humanistisk forskning. Adam Kaeding's work with the CRAS was supported by funding from the Boston University Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship. Additionally, we would like to thank Paul and Phyllis Holmer; Nayla Wren; Kendall, Gloria, and Heather Nygard; and Tom and Mary Lou Shaw. Thank you to Dave Johnstone, too, for providing the first detailed documentation of Yo'okop's inscriptions, and for his feedback.

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Notes

1. We would like to acknowledge that Dave Johnstone, who is one of the principal researchers at Yo'okop, is cautious about interpreting the function of S5E1–1 before excavation.

2. Reginald Wilson has generously shared his photographs and other research materials with CRAS, and we remain in communication with him about our research.

3. While Simon Martin (personal communication 2003) identifies the name of Sky Witness, he concedes that it may refer to other rulers with the same name. He notes that this name may refer to someone other than the individual who ruled the Kan kingdom. Sky Witness is the name of the seventeenth ruler of the Kan or "snake" kingdom—a polity associated with Calakmul.

4. Dave Johnstone has suggested an alternate reading of the supernatural being on Stone D. He has proposed that it may represent the head form of K'awiil (Shaw et al. 2000:54).

5. Dave Johnstone dissents from Wren and Nygard's dating; he instead dates Stela 3 to the Early Classic on stylistic grounds. He notes that the use of enclosed cartouches and the stela's edge are also seen on stelae at Tikal and Uaxactún that are firmly dated to the Early Classic.

6. Although the exterior portion of this pyramid dates to the Late Classic, the possibility of an Early Classic and/or PreClassic structure buried underneath the Late Classic exterior should not be discounted.

7. See Michael Carrasco (2005) for an expanded discussion of incensario use in relation to sacred cosmologies during the Late Classic Period.

9

The Ideal and the Symbolic

THE USE OF SHARED ORIENTATIONAL SPACE IN CONTEMPORARY HIGHLAND MAYA PERFORMANCE

RHONDA TAUBE

The concepts of space, place, and territory have long been recognized as important socioreligious organizing principles in the archaeological (Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Taube 2005), ethnohistoric (Tedlock 1996), and ethnographic (Hanks 1990; Redfield and Villa Rojas 1934; Wisdom 1940) record of Maya society. In this paper I explore the processes by which space is materialized, sacralized, and understood on the national, regional, and local level in contemporary highland Guatemala. Although my particular concern is with dance, performance, and ritual action—Garrett Cook's (2000:14) expressive culture: "collectively organized manifestations such as festivals, dances, and street theater"—I briefly explore how recent events have shaped the indigenous response to external pressures and demands. Some of the questions I delve into seek to characterize or define substantive processes by which space is sacralized. For example, how and why, in action, do these expressive cultures continue to construct space as a bounded concept today? Or do contemporary ritual actions diminish and shift the boundaries that permeate contemporary K'iche' life in the highlands?

For answers to these questions, I look primarily at the region of Momostenango, a community of interest to numerous scholars both for its continuation of such ancient traditions as the sacred 260-day calendar and concomitant ceremonies (Cook 2000; Tedlock 1982), and equally, its reception of globalization and North American mass media (Cook and Offit, 2013; Taube 2009, 2012, 2013). In both types of studies, however, narratives regarding the establishment and maintenance of sacred space remain a central concern. Although I have been traveling to Momostenango to study the dances and festival performances since 2003, I want to emphasize that the majority of this research was conducted during the summer of 2012 and that it reflects current thought and practice among highland K'iche' people. I will use my experiences traveling to Guatemala in general, and Momostenango in particular, to provide a fertile discussion of the methods contemporary K'iche' Maya employ in sacralizing space and place; the recent politics regarding Maya sacred spaces; the role of the *momoztli*, the K'iche' Maya altar, in spatializing ceremonies; and how festival dances and performances construct sacred space and time, allowing ancestral influence to be felt and shared for the benefit of the community.

Space as a Theoretical Construct: Maya Sacred Socialized Space

The French philosopher Michel de Certeau (1984:120) notes how descriptions of space tend to fluctuate between two types: First, he focuses on the tableau in which individuals see the order of places, and provides the descriptive example of "the girl's room is next to the kitchen." The second type is the active sort by which the description provides an organized series of movements to follow that provide a tour of a location, such as "you turn right and come to the living room." The tableau functions like a modern map, whereas the tour is a sequence of locations that reveal themselves to the participant only when one reaches them in moving through the space. I would argue that for the K'iche' Maya of highland Guatemala, ritual actions make use of, and require a combination of, both types of metaphors; it is only through operation that specific ritual movements reveal the tableau and allow it to be seen in the present day. One must follow the necessary steps, or organized movements, in order to see the sacred and propitious nature of the locale.

As de Certeau (1984:123) remarks, the primary function of the role of stories or ritual narratives in the delineation of space is to authorize the establishment, displacement or transcendence of limits and boundaries, separating the realms of profane life from the inviolable. "A time or place are said to be auspicious or inauspicious depending on whether they provide or fail to provide human action with the necessary foundation" (de Certeau 1984:124).[1] For the K'iche', the illocutionary action, or controlled and specialized ceremonial event, results in a procreative vision of the world and authorizes, establishes, and constructs the existence of sacred space (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for more information on complementary ancient concepts of vision in relation to space). In other words, the spatializing operations and actions reference the very thing that they produce.

For the practitioners of present-day K'iche' spirituality, performing ceremonies that include spatial practices provides space with an active role not confined only as a form of physical action but also one of knowledge as well. These activities allow the production of sacred and ritualized space to function in the establishment of the underlying logic of the religious system (Lefebvre 1994:11). As Henri Lefebvre (1994:13) argues, physical space has no "reality" without the energy that is deployed within it, and this is certainly true of sacred Maya landscape, especially rich with locales punctuated by socially produced ceremonies. "It (social space) combines the city's reality with its ideality, embracing the practical, the symbolic and the imaginary" (Lefebvre 1994:74). Maya sacred and revered places may be either natural or built environments and may include a wide variety of topographic locales such as caves, mountains, hills, lakes, rivers, etc. Moreover, they are any place considered a proper backdrop for the confluence of cosmic energy and communication with the ancestors, whose remains demarcate any environment as sacred (Zapeta Osorio and Berganza 2009). Moreover, sacred spaces are shared public places, reserved for the "practice and spiritual, philosophic, scientific, technologic, and artistic formation of citizens of indigenous communities" (Zapeta Osorio and Berganza 2009). This means that sacred places require the congregation of living bodies, to continue to honor them and the ancestral presence held within, and preserve their place in posterity. Maya priests, or spiritual guides, play an integral role in this process.

Maya religious guides customarily choose performative ceremonial spots for themselves and their clients based on a number of shared factors, including the nature and exigency of the issue to be addressed or petitioned for; the spiritual protector, or Nawal, of all the individuals participating; and the calendar day associated with the specific altar to be used (Maxwell 2012:2). Thus, sacred religious space is also largely a socialized space and cannot be reduced to a singular object. "Space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products: rather, it subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity—their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder" (Lefebvre 1994:73). The construction of sacred space relies on social associations and contact. In this regard, spatial orientations reveal the significance of social relations; space includes and creates the important interactions necessary for the continued success of daily life including friendships, connection to family—both living and deceased—and important and valuable feelings and behaviors necessary for survival.

Politicizing and Spatializing Contemporary Maya Geographies

For contemporary Maya people of highland Guatemala, recent history is fraught with continuous territorial conflicts that include forced redistribution of populations, widespread and intense civil strife, targeted and racially motivated brutality, and genocide (REMHI 1999; Nelson 1999). Even 1980s Guatemalan dictator Efrain Rios Montt's military strategy, which was responsible for the worst period of counterinsurgent violence, was referred to as the "scorched earth policy," highlighting the significance of terrain in the national consciousness. During the thirty-year civil war that ended with the 1996 Peace Accord, the Guatemalan government made strategic use of landscape, or space, as a focal point of confrontation during the period of national ethnic tension (Jonas 2000). Still today, the landscape is inscribed with the tactics of state power and domination, including abandoned military camps, decaying public works, and monuments to the disappeared. These events have imbued the spaces and places of these tragedies, primarily the ancestral land of indigenous people, with new spatialized awareness that has inspired novel practices and meanings. Whereas there is no such thing as a unified "Maya" concept of space today, widespread oppression has created a shared history and conviviality among the different ethnolinguistic groups found throughout the highlands and the nation (Verhaagen 2011:47).

Landscape, which was once regarded as an expression of the spatiotemporal history of genealogies, migrations, and other ancestral associations, developed as a battlefield for the power of state control. At the same time, it has also emerged as an organizing factor of ethnic identity and a powerful force motivating indigenous resistance. The signing of the 1996 Peace Accord granted the legalization and protection of Maya religious practices. Through this landmark event and the influence and direct efforts of foreign nongovernmental organizations, Maya culture reasserted and redefined itself in order to claim civil liberties within a globalized national space. The role of contemporary Maya religion and the continued construction of Maya sacred space cannot be considered outside of a national political discourse. While the government readily features ancient Maya archaeological sites as a form of national cultural pride, contemporary Maya people are often dispossessed of their land and their full rights as citizens of Guatemala.

At present, in the space of national politics, many Maya priests engage in political activism as a means of preserving their cultural knowledge and at the same time demanding respect for their religious practices and beliefs. Maya groups, such as the Pan-Maya movement (Morales Sic 2004;

Warren 1998) or Oxlajuj Ajpop, a congress of Maya elders, midwives, and spiritual leaders centered out of Guatemala City, maintain a more homogenized organizational structure in order to combine a wider network of support. In addition, some of the primary functions of these associations are to create a powerful ethnic-based coalition that promotes respect for Maya spirituality and demands access to rights within the national space. What these organizations are in effect practicing is what Gayatri Spivak (1988:13) referred to as "strategic essentialism," focusing on their shared commonalities as a means of creating powerful civic advocacy among all Maya peoples today.

Given the hurdles, it is even more remarkable that Maya spatial practices have not only survived, but appear to be thriving and reviving throughout the western highlands. For example, it is due to the social and political pressure of a team of indigenous lawyers that the Guatemalan Congress is currently wrangling over the 2009 Propuesta de Ley de Lugares Sagrados, or "Law Proposal of Holy Places," a legal proposal that would protect Maya archaeological sites as sacred and safeguard the rights of Maya spiritualists, also known as *guias espirituales*, or "Day Keepers," who function as indigenous priests, to gain entry and practice ceremonies at these places.[2] As Judith Maxwell (2012:8) has noted, this is no small issue, as it would grant spiritual legitimacy to Maya cultural beliefs.

While investigators and tourists alike revere numerous ancient Maya archaeological sites, for living Maya people, terrain in and of itself is regarded as sacred and is viewed as a potential locale that allows one to interact and consult with ancestors and divinity through a necessary and specific sphere of action. Whereas active Maya spiritual practitioners give thanks and respect for the terrain, there are in fact some locations that are more sacred than others. These are considered "portals for spiritual energy and power," or channels of communication with the otherworld (Carlos Quiej, K'iche' Maya Day Keeper, Momostenango, personal communication July 22, 2012). They allow spiritual guides to promote a generally cleaner way of living or a spiritually pure existence free of lies, laziness, and other social problems and to advance the general healing of the nation (Carlos Quiej, personal communication July 26, 2012).

While it may seem to outsiders that this type of proposed law may be nothing more than a symbolic act, many spiritual guides are acutely aware of its details as well as the nuances of government, and are actively awaiting a legal determination. In lieu of congressional ruling, or despite the lack of one, many groups of Guatemalan spiritual guides from a variety of highland villages, towns, and cities regularly make treks to well-known

Classic-period archaeological sites in the Maya lowlands of the Petén to convene with their ancestors and carry out ceremonies as a means of communicating with important forbearers. On such days as Wajxaqib Batz', or 8 Monkey, the most important day in the 260-day K'iche' Maya calendar, as many as 2,000 spiritual guides travel en masse to renowned places such as the archaeological park of Tikal to perform religious rites (Selvin Poroj, K'iche' Maya Day Keeper, Momostenango, personal communication April 29, 2012). Comprehensive events like these have recently begun and could only take place along the backdrop of a new perception of state government, suggesting today's Maya are no longer only concerned with the village or local level, but see themselves as united, national citizens.[3] While the government has at times created policies of repression and exclusion of the indigenous people of Guatemala, it is only through the networks created by the existence of the state that such large-scale Maya ceremonial activities may take place. In other words, because of the widespread and uniform nature of the Maya Movement and the "new spiritual guides," Maya spirituality is now played out on a national level involving subjects that have potential sway over not only religion but politics, academics, and archaeology as well.

Directional Symbolism and Contemporary K'iche' Ceremonies: The *Momoztli*

While sacred places may be found in a variety of constructed and natural locales, the activities that spiritual guides perform in these places tend to be largely programmatic. Whereas most rites performed at religious shrines construct sacred space, the day Wajxaqib Q'anil, or 8 Seed in the 260-day calendar, is particularly suited for this discussion, as it is the day for prayers over, and giving thanks for, the seeds to plant, for the milpa, or maize field, and for all of terrestrial nature. I participated in this ceremony on July 22, 2012, at a place called Oxlajuj Noj, also known as Trece Sabidurías, or 13 Knowledge, the most sacred Maya altar in the hills above Guatemala's second largest city, Quetzaltenango, or as the locals refer to it, Xelaju. Like many other sacred places in Guatemala, low, circular concrete pads now demarcate the altar at Oxlajuj Noj (Figure 9.1). In fact, by regulation of Guatemala's Institute of Anthropology and History (Instituto de Antropología e Historia, IDAEH), in another instance of governmental involvement, the prayer "gates," or pads, are required at all public archaeological sites in the Petén (Stephen Houston, personal communication August 17, 2012).

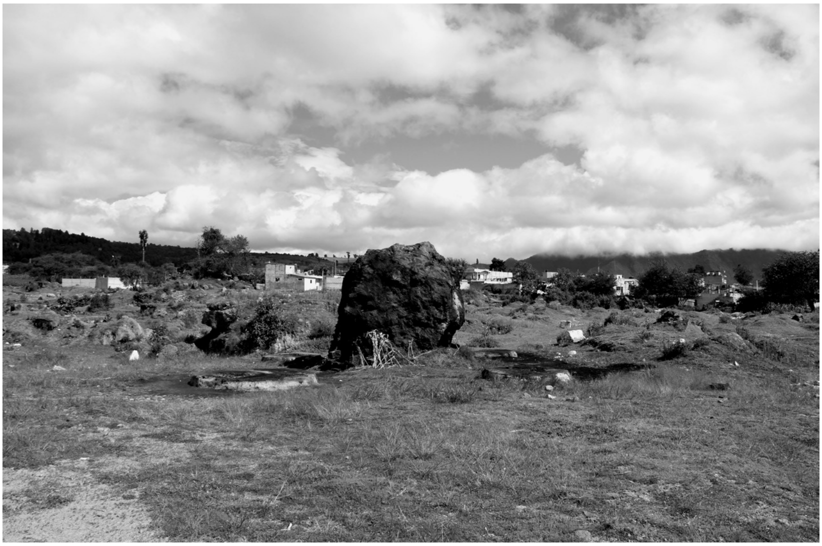

FIGURE 9.1 The K'iche' Maya altar Oxlajuj Noj, also known as Trece Sabidurías, or 13 Knowledge, is a site of ceremonies in the western highlands, near Xelaju, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, July 22, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

While made out of contemporary materials, it is easy to see the resemblance these round altars bear to ancient Maya stucco as a means of formalizing and sacralizing directional space. Four cement pads that function as raised ceremonial religious structures frame the central holy space, the rock that is the true focus of ceremonial activities and entreaties, and create a quincunx design. This design is familiar to specialists of ancient Mesoamerican structural design, as it is evident at such Maya sites as Seibal, where it is an ancient architectural feature (see Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1; Bernatz, Chapter 3; and Carrasco, Epilogue for expanded discussions of the quincunx in Maya thought). Most of the recently made prayer pads were created during Guatemalan president Álvaro Colom's administration to make official the rights of spiritual guides to perform religious ceremonies within explicit sections of archaeological sites.[4] Thus, concrete was poured to mark the four cardinal directions, here laid out around the traditional, sacred central rock that is said to have the face of a jaguar and is, undoubtedly, an ancient altar.

In preparation for a ceremony, each Day Keeper sweeps Oxlajuj Noj clean and purifies it with liquor to remove the residue of previous prayers and invocations. In addition to the already existing four directional points

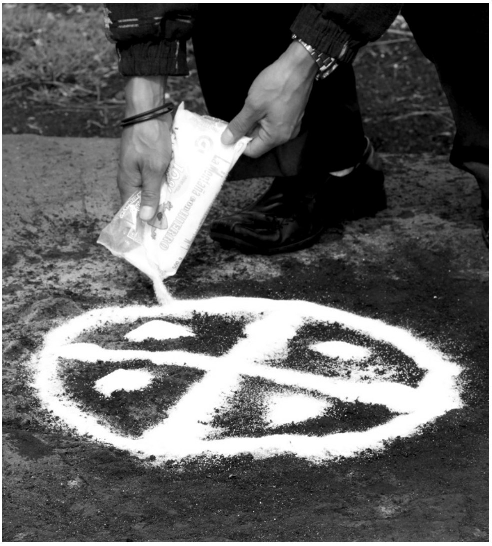

FIGURE 9.2 Use of cardinal directions demarcated in sugar in preparation for a K'iche' Maya ceremony, near Xelaju, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, July 22, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

poured atop the concrete momoztli, or altar, the spiritual guide must create a circle of sugar, then another diagram of the cardinal points first in sugar then in incense and other materials (Figure 9.2). Lines connect the four points in sugar, with east and west representing the path of the sun and north and south representing the path of air. They define all celestial and earthly space and create a focal point of cosmic energy (Carlos Quiej, personal communication July 22, 2012). The four directions are extremely important to recognize and mark, as doing so protects the participant's path from all sides and ensures a perimeter that deflects negative forces (Narcisso Peruch, K'iche' Maya Day Keeper, Momostenango, personal communication July 27, 2012) (for related ideas as expressed in ancient contexts see Bernatz, Chapter 3; Steinbach, Chapter 2, and Wren et al., Chapter 8). The concept of delineating boundaries between purified places protected by benevolent spirits and those of destructive and injurious forces is widespread among contemporary Maya and undoubtedly has ancient roots (for a discussion of activities that differentiate between the wild forest and the civilized realm of humans in Maya thought, see Karl A. Taube 2003; see also Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for additional exploration of the issues Taube raises).

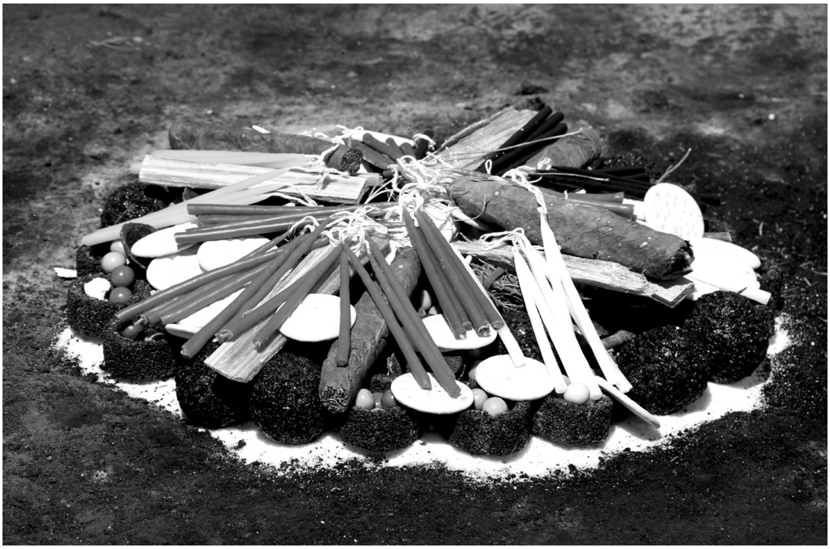

FIGURE 9.3 Diagram of cardinal directions covered with offerings of sugar, gum, incense, and tobacco; burned as a means of communicating with the ancestors and petitioning for fertile land, near Xelaju, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, July 22, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

Maya ceremonies are always performed with the spatial concerns of left to right when one faces the center, or counterclockwise, the direction to "open the road," as a means of engaging the channels of communication with the ancestral spirits (Carlos Quiej, personal communication July 22, 2012; see also Bernatz, Chapter 3, and Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for additional discussion of left/right directionality). This is taken so seriously, that if one performs a ceremony in the clockwise direction it is considered witchcraft and evil. On Wajxaqib Q'anil the spiritual guide, Carlos Quiej, also added chocolate and *chicle*, or bubblegum, as a special invitation to the ancestors, as both are things that originated in ancestral time and are part of the indigenous pre-Hispanic world. Familial spirits are petitioned and communicated with throughout Maya ceremonies as a means of interacting with previous generations and calling forth their blessings. Six different bundles of colored candles represent the four directions and the zenith and nadir with symbolism related to the path of the sun, the purity of air, the water and the land, indicating a connection to the land of ancestral spirits and time immemorial (see also Bernatz, Chapter 3, as well as Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, for an overview of ancient corollaries). The groupings of thirteen candles represent the thirteenth *baktun* in which we currently exist (Carlos Quiej, personal communication July 22, 2012). The entire diagram is covered with offerings and burned as a means of communing with the spirit world (Figure 9.3).

On this significant day, Carlos Quiej said a prayer in both Spanish and K'iche' for all of Guatemala and listed all of the indigenous people of Central America, including all the different Maya linguistic groups and those of Garifuna, Central Americans of Carib, Arawak, and West African descent, and individually mentioned prayers for Native North Americans as well, including the Hopi, the Navajo, and others from the United States. He petitioned for blessings for the spirits of land and water and named all of the rivers, oceans, and seas in the Americas. He catalogued all of the volcanoes, the mountains, and as many topographic features as possible. He petitioned on behalf of jaguars, as they are connected to the land, and thus have a particular association with women. He prayed on behalf of the ancestors and listed his lineage as far back as he was able. Afterward, he explained that ceremonies and the land—and space—is still considered under the domain of ancestral spirits.[5] For example, if someone wants to build a new house, he or she must first perform a ceremony asking permission of his or her ancient relations and wait nine months, the period of human gestation, before construction may begin. The land is fertile, a gift, and essentially female. Ceremonies direct action toward these benevolent beings and construct a purified state in which to create new requests and appeals.

Dancing Space, Dancing Time: Devotional Public Festivals and Sanctified Geographies

One of the most dynamic ways to access contemporary Maya thought regarding the construction of sacred space on the regional and local level is through dance-dramas and public performances. Public *bailes*, or "dances," generally refer to devotional communal festivals and all of their concomitant activities planned around the feast day of the patron saint. Dance and performance are the central focus, or soul, of ceremonial life in the highlands and provide the animation and instill the excitement necessary for successful religious celebrations. To become a member of a dance troupe is to be an affiliate of an indigenous "medicine society," one who seeks both protection from tribulation as well as personal empowerment. These individuals take responsibility for reorganizing and purifying communal space on behalf of the ancestors and for their living descendants (Garrett Cook, personal communication 2008). Individuals who participate in a highland medicine society are an important component of the festivals; their presence indicates a time of inviolability. The bailes the dancers participate in shape so much of the religious, social, and artistic life of Guatemala's indigenous communities that they form the nexus of many social relations and interactions that include family members, neighbors, friends, and ancestors.

Enrollment in a dance troupe is voluntary, based on the desire of an individual to form a closer relationship with a protective spirit. In Momostenango, most dancers take part in the performances to please Santiago, the patron saint of the community, with the hope that he will respond with approval and blessings. Within most K'iche' Maya communities today in the highlands, dancers do not participate in public bailes for enjoyment, exercise, or social reasons, as is usually the custom in the United States. Rather, it is a burden, a demonstration of personal faith, an expression of widespread hope, and a communal cleansing of the world (Santiago Pelicó, *alcalde* or mayor of Momostenango, personal communication July 21, 2012). Preparations for participation in one of the dance performances begin months in advance and require time-consuming organizing activities and physically draining rehearsals. The participants hold their first meeting eight months before the festival (Cook 2000:56). Immediately, *costumbre* (traditional religious practice) begins at the four sacred mountains—Quilaja, Socop, Pipil, and Tamanco—around Momostenango that represent the cardinal directions and central place. This indicates concern with the cleansing of terrain and the establishment of sacred space (for a discussion of the four directional mountains of Momostenango see Cook and Offit 2013; Tedlock 1982). The dancers hold rehearsals for the next eight months, practicing regularly and maintaining their commitment to costumbre. For sixty days before the festival, in addition to practicing, they must abstain from sexual intercourse and light a prayer candle every day. On July 18, three days before the *féria*, or titular festival, begins, they venerate the costumes through drink, dance, and prayer, and parade them directly into the church for blessings in front of the image of Santiago and all of their forbearers who wore the same costumes before them.

In the summers of 2005 and 2006, I was lucky enough to see the opening day of the festival and attend Mass with the dancers. On the very first day of the féria, dancers performing in the Baile de los Mexicanos, a narrative performance that recreates nineteenth century plantation life, circulated through town, paraded through the market, and danced into the main church in the heart of the central plaza. Once inside the church, they paraded right up to the images of Santiago, patron saint of Momostenango, and San Felipe, his secretary, and kneeled before them. A priest said a blessing over all of the dancers as a group, and then each dancer approached the saints individually and made an offering. The priest blessed each dancer separately with a bundle of flowers, which each kissed before leaving. The dancers who would perform on alternate days carried their own masks and folded garb into the church following the dancers who were decked out in their full-blown dance costumes as Mexicanos. At this point the priest blessed all of the dancers, whether in costume or not, in exactly the same manner. Next were the musicians, all of whom carried their instruments up to Santiago for blessing. The last were the wives and mothers of the dancers. Everybody then returned to the plaza, and the dancing began.

Participation as a dancer is extremely expensive and involves large sums of money to cover dues, costume rental, supplies, and food for the festival, in addition to payment to the religious leader, the musicians, and *autor*, the master choreographer and manager of the dance. For the majority of the participants the cost may equal anywhere from two to three months' wages, a cumbersome sacrifice for most. However, for some it is considered a custom left by the ancestors, passed down from father to son, and many performers believe they will die if they do not dance, as it fulfills the wishes of the dead (McArthur 1977:10–11, 1986). This link, or bond, is so strong between generations that many dancers choose only to wear the costumes that their fathers and grandfathers wore, allowing the spirits of the deceased to manifest themselves among the living, incarnated through the bodies of the living dancers. Moreover, for the K'iche', as for the Jakaltek, many dancers believe the past and the present coexist, as their ancestors accompany them on the long journey to rent their costumes (in cases where regalia is not otherwise inherited) and continue to linger for the duration of the festival (Thompson 2000:193). Likewise, in Rabinal, in the state of Baja Verapaz, Guatemala, the dances delineate the reciprocal relationship and profound mutual interaction that exists between the living and the dead (Janssens and van Akkeren 2003:9–13). The dances redirect the spiritual energy of the ancestors to positive community effects by exhibiting their remembrance (Janssens and van Akkeren 2003:10–11). This suggests that through dance and performance not only is space sacralized, but time is as well; it directly connects the dancers to their forbearers by creating a blur between the past, the present, and future.

Within the framework of the festival, one of the most important aspects of bringing large groups of people together is to create an atmosphere of *kikotemal* (happiness or joy) that pleases the spirits of the departed and temporarily releases them from the bonds of death. According to Harry S.

McArthur (1977:13), "the exhilaration of liberation is intensified by the atmosphere of conviviality created during the festival, to which the dead participate with the living in dancing, eating, and drinking, and often in accompanying them on the long trip to obtain costumes." Likewise, in Momostenango it is important that the dancers come to the plaza, the purified space of dancing with the ancestors, with a pure heart and spirit in order to spread the cheer and goodwill as a blessing for the community and world (Carlos Quiej, personal communication July 22, 2012). The dancers may only perform if they undergo sixty days of purification—three twenty-day months in the Maya calendar or three cycles of twenty-day names—whereby they meditate on and entreat the power of the ancestors. In addition, they abstain from specific activities that are thought to pollute the body and contaminate the sacred space of the performance. Moreover, their abstention creates an unadulterated mood and environment appropriate for the appearance of the spirits of the deceased and ready for a formal presentment to Santiago Apostol. Thus, the bailes are the dancers' gifts presented to the community, the ancestors, and the patron saints of the communities in exchange for health, wealth, and long life. In this manner, the cultural memory of the ancestors is brought to bear on the world of the living, affecting daily life beyond the confines of the festival.

Maury Hutcheson (2003) also explores the significance of cultural memory as an underlying component of identity construction present in dance-dramas among the Achi Maya of Rabinal. Hutcheson argues that during two specific types of dramatic events, history is remade with each performance, again suggesting that both time and space are flexible within the confines of festival performances. In this regard, the space and place of the past is continually available to those witnessing these events, while at the same time it creates a site of negotiation and confrontation of present-day identity. Hutcheson addresses the shifts that have occurred in Maya society due to globalization, changes in labor, as well as evangelization, and suggests that contemporary theater, although largely secularized, also addresses ways of maintaining tradition and a conservative vision of Maya culture. Likewise in Momostenango, many dancers who participate in traditional dances feel pressure from some members of the community to leave behind things of the past. They believe the dances are of great importance to the community and without their continued presentation the force and positive sway of the ancestors will be lost.

In Momostenango, the *cofradía*, a group of four senior men, organize the annual festival in honor of the saint (Cook 2000:35). They are the symbolic counterpart to indigenous governance and mediate the world of the spirits as opposed to the political realm (Cook 2000:50). Through participation in these events, the men elevate their status to *aj patan*, "burden carriers."[6] Each cofradía has a meetinghouse called an *armita*, an additional financial burden paid for by the alcalde, or mayor, that stores the saints' images and serves as the space for gatherings. The armita also provides an additional hub of focus and activity for the saint's feast day events. "The saint is carried in procession from the church to the armita and back again for the fiesta on a litter (*anda*) by the *cofrades*, who wear flower crowns" (Cook 2000:36). During the procession, the alcalde leads the assembly holding the silver cofradía emblem on top of his staff (Cook 2000: 37). The procession of the saint may appear at various times throughout the festival, day or night, and highlights a number of important individuals and locations along the way (Figure 9.4).

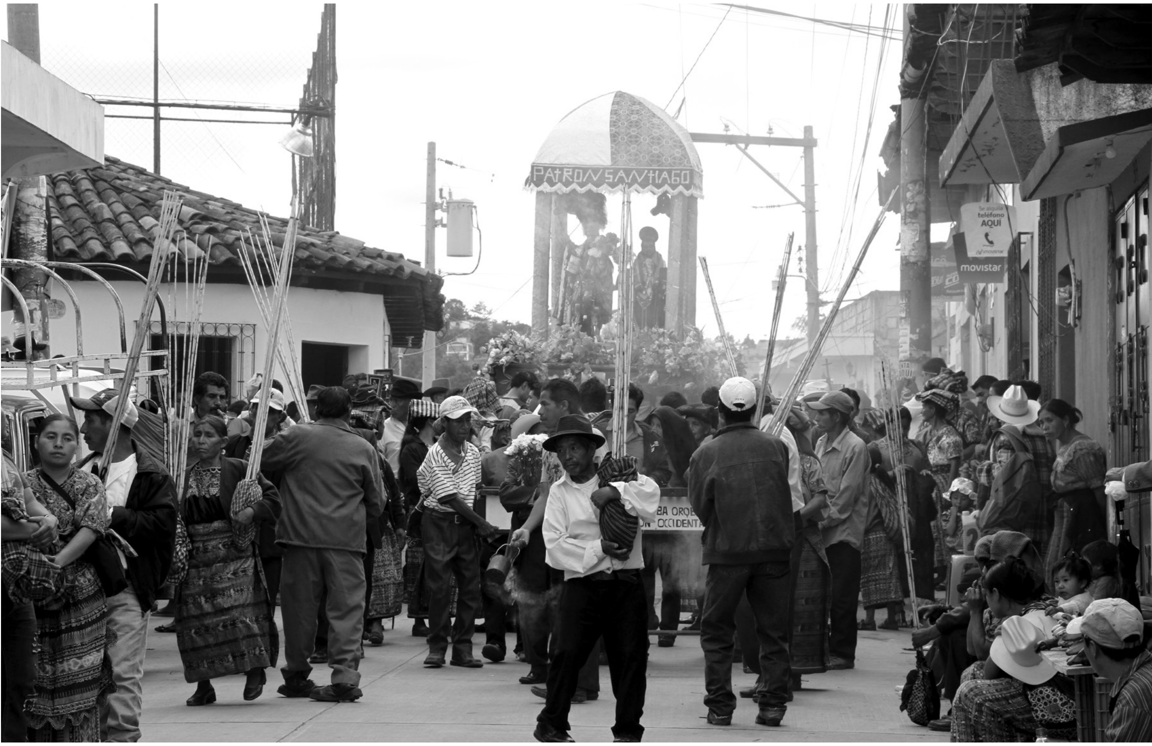

FIGURE 9.4 Petitioners accompany the image of Santiago, the patron saint of Momostenango, on one of his many processions during *féria,* the annual religious festival, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 30, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

Processional Geographies

The procession of the saint through the town demarcates the sacred space of the community and establishes town borders. A roving marimba and dancers from a variety of bailes, such as Los Mexicanos, the Deer Dancers, or La Conquista (Conquest) performers, precede the saint's litter, their rhythmic movements accompanied by music indicating that the sacred space of the saint is itinerant. In addition to dancers, individuals carry incense, flowers, candles, and fireworks and are accompanied by a marching band as a means of purifying the boundaries and environs through which they move. The music and sweet aroma of incense and candles, as well as the burning acrid odor of firecrackers, create smells and sounds outside of daily life and add to the celebratory feelings on the streets. Music is closely related to flowers and incense and has long-standing associations with dance as a means of social refinement and cleansing in highland Maya communities.

People who wish to have their homes or businesses blessed by the image of Santiago Apostol prepare their entranceway with pine needles and flowers and have *atole*, a traditional corn beverage, ready to serve to the litter bearers (Figure 9.5). Others wait in their doorways for a view of the saint to slowly amble by, held as an enormous burden by the cofrades. In this manner, they constitute Lefebvre's (1994:73) "social space," as this is a very public ceremonial occasion that maps out sacred, social space along the way. Participants in this process are organizing the logical order of the community, with all citizens as participants, either through the act of circumambulating through town with the litter, or by witnessing it passing their homes and through the streets. This process establishes the form of the community, creating a juncture between inner experience—both past and present—and the physical nature of social space (Lefebvre 1994:19). The dancers create a shared, oriented space through the movement of their bodies and the participation of the viewers (Scheflen and Ashcraft 1976:6). The actions are both constructing sacred space and time, and bound by them. This procession, though it appears throughout the festival, will always also be on the most important day, July 25, the actual feast day of Santiago. This act connects contributors and observers and constructs the boundaries of Momostenango as a sacred, ritually purified place, connected directly to the patron saint and, by extension, to the larger cosmological order. This order is continually remade with every ritual act and renewed with every festival season.

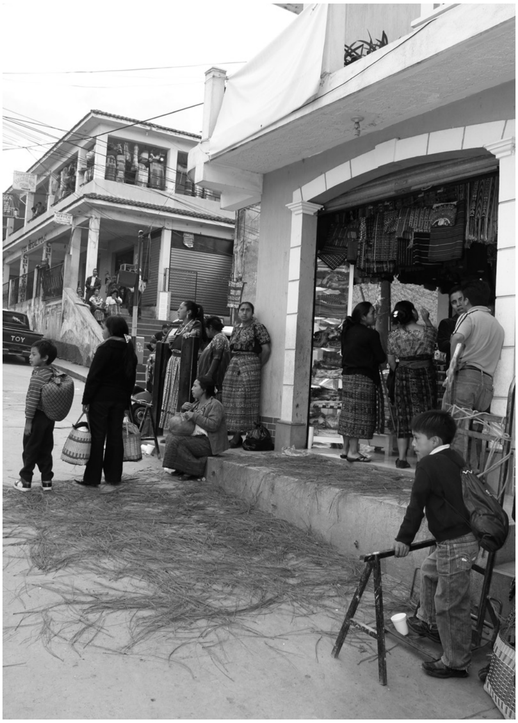

FIGURE 9.5 Business owners prepare their storefronts for Santiago's blessing with pine needles as a form of purification, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 30, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

In addition to the procession of the image of Santiago, various other religious organizations and brotherhoods arrange celebratory processions that also establish and define sacred space and social-group affiliations. Gatherings of dancers sponsor their own prayer vigils in the private homes of club officers and expect donations of flowers, candles, and money in exchange for dinner, dancing, live music, and a blessing performed by a spiritual guide. Streamers strung from the ceiling and pine needles covering the floor transform domestic space for the duration of the prayer activities and indicate normal daily household activities are suspended for the time being. As a means of demarcating sacred space within the context of the home, altars are set up as the locus of these events, often featuring an image of Santiago surrounded by a large offering of flowers, incense, and bundled candles (Figure 9.6).

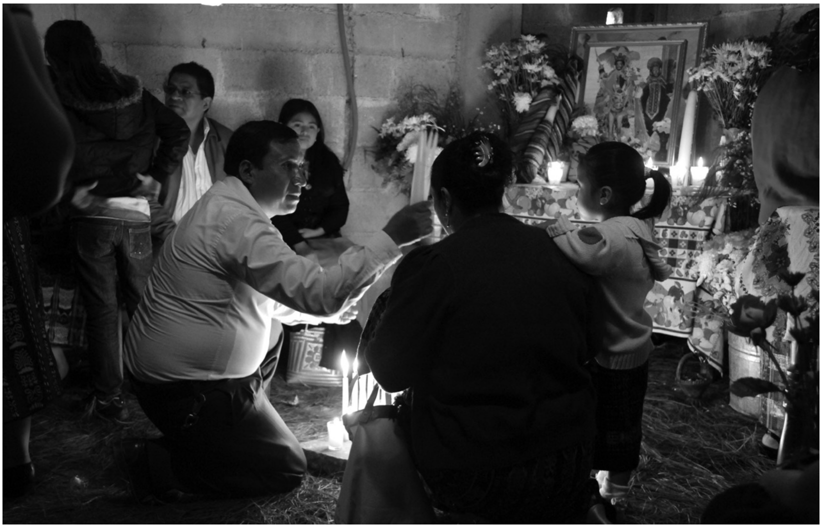

FIGURE 9.6 The K'iche' Maya Day Keeper, Roberto Coquox, performs blessings in front of a home altar dedicated to Santiago that is covered with bundled candles, incense, and flowers, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 31, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

Through the power of prescribed ritual actions combined with ritually significant objects, ceremonial space is constructed and revealed through a network of social interactions. The dancers receive their emotional and financial support from the participants within the community, who are in turn blessed by the illocutionary acts of spiritual guides. Within the setting of the household sphere, the pleasant hospitality of the hosts, the friendliness and sociability of the guests, and the geniality and the earnestness of the Day Keeper all add to the special warmth and significance of the prayer vigil and sanctify and protect all involved. Interestingly, such community-maintenance strategies are not exclusionary. In the few that I have attended, I have never felt unwelcome. In fact, if anything, my presence as a foreigner adds an extra cachet and spectacle to an already prestigious and important event.

After two days the vigil is complete and the delivery of all the flowers and candles to the main parish church takes place. All of the positive energy, protection, and prayers fostered within the safe and sanctified environment created within the domicile are transferred to the saint image of Santiago Apostol. To ensure his blessing, his image leads the procession from the house, in the hands of the group's president. The march moves through the

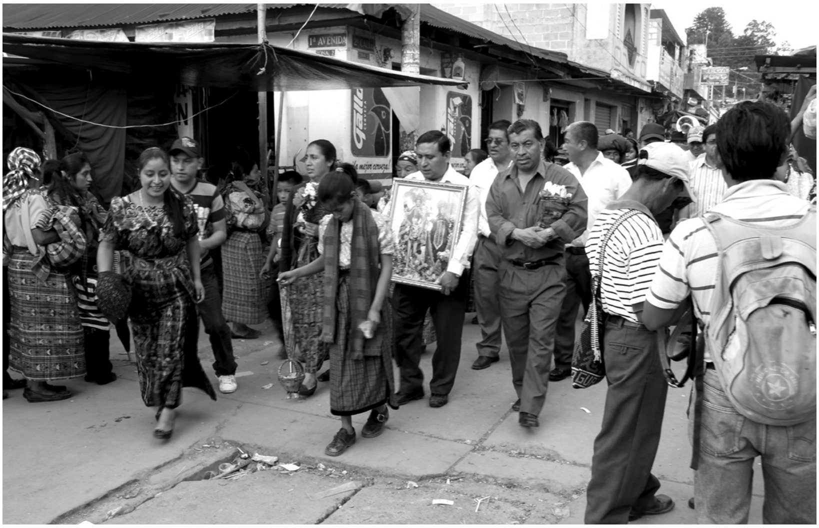

FIGURE 9.7 The image of Santiago leads a procession of parishioners through the streets of Momostenango, creating a sacred town, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 31, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

streets, where all traffic temporarily stops in order to allow anyone participating in the parade to pass (Figure 9.7). The group proceeds into the church and places the flowers and candles directly in front of Santiago as offerings at the base of his altar (Figure 9.8). There, the Day Keeper says a prayer blessing all who contributed to the event. Unlike our traditional concepts of the relationship of the individual to the prayer of church, where the blessings are created by the priest and disseminated throughout the pews, the space of the town is alive with the possibilities for consecrated action that originate in any possible locale. The power of the group to generate and direct prayers and blessings allow them to move in a variety of directions through space, heading in and out of the church. In this regard, virtually anyone has the potential to direct the positive forces of the ancestors on behalf of themselves, their family and friends, or the community at large.

Accompanying the processions in Momostenango are various other types of ritual activities, which include dances and add to the feeling of conviviality and joy. As in myriad other communities in the western highlands, Momostenango dancers stage the festivals in honor of their patron in order to sustain the community's bond with supernatural entities (Cook 2000:51). As Garrett Cook (2000:63) notes,

> For these dedicated ritualists, service to their deceased predecessors (*primeros*) and the saints is a series of ordeals fraught with initiatory symbolism and the search for personal supernatural power. Those whose ritual is adequate and who serve an image and the *primeros* with total devotion, being of one heart, are rewarded with life, health, and prosperity.

Within indigenous Maya communities throughout various parts of Guatemala, dance opens and maintains channels of communication between the living, their ancestors, and the realm of the spirits. Thus, at the dances observers behave correctly, demonstrating harmony in the presence of the saint in order to bolster their supplications.

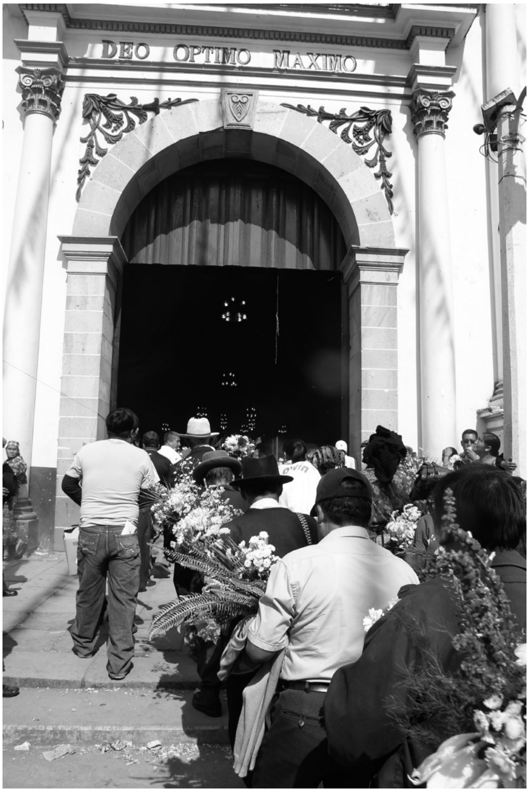

FIGURE 9.8 Offerings to the patron saint, Santiago, in the form of bundles of flowers and candles are brought from the procession into the parish church, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 31, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

Dances, Ancestral Community Building, and the Center of the World

Momostenango regularly features a variety of traditional bailes including Los Mexicanos, Los Monos y Tigres (The Monkeys and Tigers), and a traditional *convite*, or invitation dance. During the summer of 2008, a fourth type of dance—La Conquista, or "The Dance of the Conquest"—returned after a fifteen-year hiatus. All four dances start midmorning and appear for a couple of hours. Each one tells an elaborate narrative drawn out over the course of the day, with most performances ending at sunset. The dancers break for lunch and later appear again for the afternoon. All in all, the dancers may spend as much as eight hours a day for the duration of the two-week festival performing in the main plaza directly in front of the church. Their exhaustion at the end of the day is an indication of their devotion to Santiago Apostol. The burdensome dedication and planning of these dance days was nowhere more apparent than in the summer of 2008 when all four dances appeared side by side at the same time, creating a critical mass of public performance. Once the dances began it was nearly impossible to either move into or out of the plaza, as the streets were completely crowded, most certainly incorporating the multitude of observers into the frenzy of festival performance. The dancers did not just present overlapping performances, but overlapping times as well, as past and present commingled.

Dances in Momostenango function within the community much like Hopi *katsina*, or "spirit being" dances; they combine responsibility with pleasure (Kealiinohomoku 1989:58). For the Hopi, through their energy-building acts, the dances must bring joy to all and create a sense of what Joann Kealiinohomoku (1989:59) refers to as "withness," or a feeling of close-knit community, which requires audience participation from all members of the community. As Kealiinohomoku (1989:60) notes, non-dancing participants and audience members are essential; their beauty and strength attracts the spirits and pleases them, which in turn brings vigor and renewal back to the community. In Momostenango, similar attitudes and concerns about the dance and participation are present. For example, in the dance of Los Monos y Tigres, it is crucial for the costumed animal dancers to spill out into the audience, interacting with as many spectators as possible (Acuña 1978). The lions, jaguars, and monkeys perform tricks, beg for money, and generally provide comic relief, such as tying young boys' shoelaces together (Figure 9.9). They especially seek out young children, partially as entertainment, and partially to inculcate them into the religious fold. Moreover, their interactive street antics involve the community as much as do the high-wire acts they later perform as a demonstration of faith and bravery. The more the audience is involved in the event, the more successful it is.

By far the most riveting and significant crowd pleaser during the féria is the appearance of the *monos y tigres*, or monkey and tiger dancers, who perform a high-wire act in the main plaza. This spectacle is so expensive and such a draining accomplishment that the dancers only perform it in alternating years. On the first day of the féria, the dancers transport a tree to the central plaza. They "hunted" the tree that morning in the forest and dragged it into town with a semi; the tree must be large enough to reach above the roofline of the roughly three-story church and support the lasso the dancers will swing from. Before bringing the tree into the community, first it must be initially prepared: the branches are removed and it is partially cleaned in the area where it was felled. The tree is hunted, like something wild and feral, and requires human interaction to properly prepare it for the metaphysical and symbolic shift that allows it to be planted in the

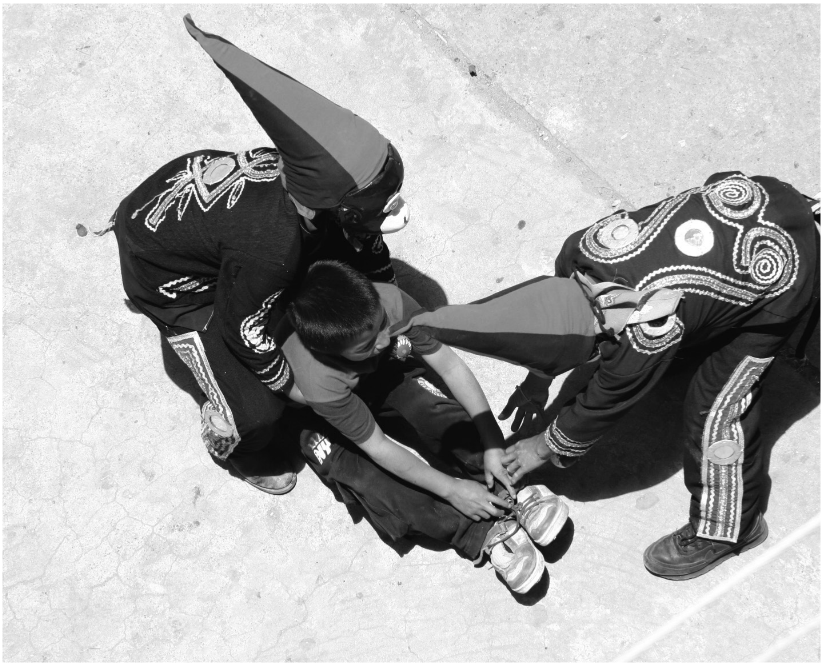

FIGURE 9.9 Monkey dancers tie young boys' shoelaces together as a form of comic interplay, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 27, 2008. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

center of the community. Ceremonies that began at K'oy Abaj, or Monkey Rock, another sacred space outside of the city center, take place early that same morning and provide a means for the dancers to commune directly with the spirit world.[7] Thus, the power of nature is temporarily released within the community through the production of proper spatial conditions and concomitant prayers. Karl A. Taube (1988) discusses a similar phenomenon during the annual Yucatec New Year's rites, where nature is allowed to ritually "invade" the community under proper ceremonies and ritual observances. In Momostenango, the spirits of the animals they perform as possess the dancers, allowing them to harness and foster the power of nature and convey it to the churchyard (Cook 2000:108).

The raising of the tree establishes an *axis mundi*, the center of a cosmological model of the world, as the four-sided courtyard bounded by the church on one side (which frames the tree), and the momoztli, the ancient, revered pre-Hispanic altar on the other (Cook 2000:108). The rope, or lasso, descends diagonally from the top of the tree and terminates directly next to the momoztli, establishing the boundaries of the performance and the sacred space of the plaza. This type of built ceremonial place relates to ancient and contemporary Maya thought in which quadrangular spaces symbolize the constructed, human realm and, by extension, the maize field/milpa, and the social space of the community (Guiteras-Holmes 1961:254; Hanks 1990:299; Redfield and Villa Rojas 1934:114). As this plan refers to a world fostered only by human exertion (Taube 2003:462), the effort of erecting the tree for the festival is certainly difficult and only accomplished through sheer physical labor and an intense choreography of dozens of people. The autor recruits every able-bodied man standing around watching to help, as the tree generally must weigh close to 2,000 pounds and be at least 65 feet long.

Before the activities to erect the tree begin, the area is roped off and rid of the contamination of women, vendors, children, onlookers, and dogs, as it has to be clean of all types of filth, sin, and pedestrian activities. Once segregated, the plaza undergoes purification as an act of safety and defense, to ensure no evil befalls the dancers when they perform. Thus, the ropes function as a boundary marker, the tangible, visible extent of the protective spirit of Santiago Apostol. The hole where the base of the tree goes is filled with white candles and incense, and the *costumbrista* and dancers bless this spot, an activity certainly reminiscent of ancient Maya architectural cache ceremonies (Taube 2005) (Figure 9.10). This is much like the Carnaval in Chamula that Victoria Bricker (1974:102–103) describes, where the monkey dancers ritually venture into the threatening forest in order to bring prepared firewood to burn in the churchyard as a form of New Year's renewal and purification. The dancers don monkey costumes that symbolize the power and unpredictable disposition of the forest and its inhabitants found living in the dense growth of trees. Likewise, their return from the woodlands represents the resultant taming characteristic that emanates from a properly ordered civilization. In Momostenango, the tree is cleansed, stripped of bark and trimmed of all protruding branches, in effect "civilizing" it and the participants who present it to the community.

Before the work begins in earnest, the autor and all the not-yet-costumed monkey and tiger performers dance around the tree and whip it in order to cleanse not only the tree, but the hearts and souls of the men through physical exertion and focused activity (Carlos Quiej, personal communication July 22, 2012) (Figure 9.11). Their labor is a form of atonement that requires equal parts dedication and sublimation. Again, there is a striking parallel between the raising of the tree in Momostenango and Zinacantan's Festival of San Sebastian that takes place in Chiapas, as described by Bricker (1974). There, the tree is erected by jaguars and monkey-like creatures referred to as

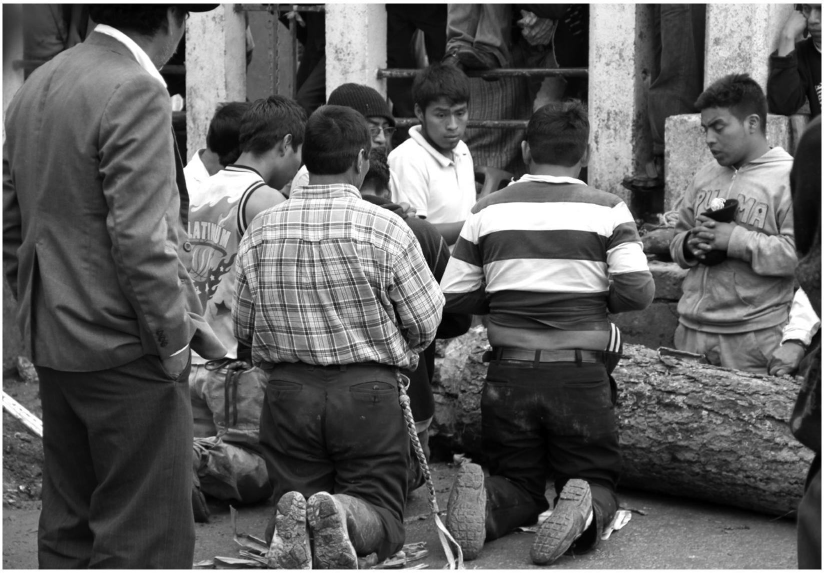

FIGURE 9.10 K'iche' Maya priest and high-wire dancers pray at the edge of the hole where the pole will be erected; the hole is filled with candles and incense, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 21, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

"Black Men." Moreover, the dancers place nine broken ceramic bowls on top of the tree, each filled with white candles and incense, much like the type used to initiate Day Keepers at Pa' Sabal (little offering place), the home of Momostenango's Wajxaqib Batz' ceremonies. The placement of the bowls of burning incense on top of the tree represents the purification and protection of the plaza as a constructed, social space. According to Alvino Cuyuch Xiloj, the mayor of Momostenango (personal communication July 21, 2012), the use of nine bowls symbolizes the nine months of gestation; in other words, the labor of the dancers helps give birth to a fresh, consecrated, and joyful festival and confirmation of the spirit of the community. In addition, nine months closely relates to the 260-day calendar, as they are approximate, equivalent periods of time. As the dancers move around the tree, whipping it, they stop to wave their hands over the sacred fire, as a means of receiving Santiago's blessings.

The elevation of the tree transpires over a three-hour period and establishes not only that the area of the monkey and tiger dancers as sacred, but sets off the festivities for the duration of the féria (Figure 9.12).

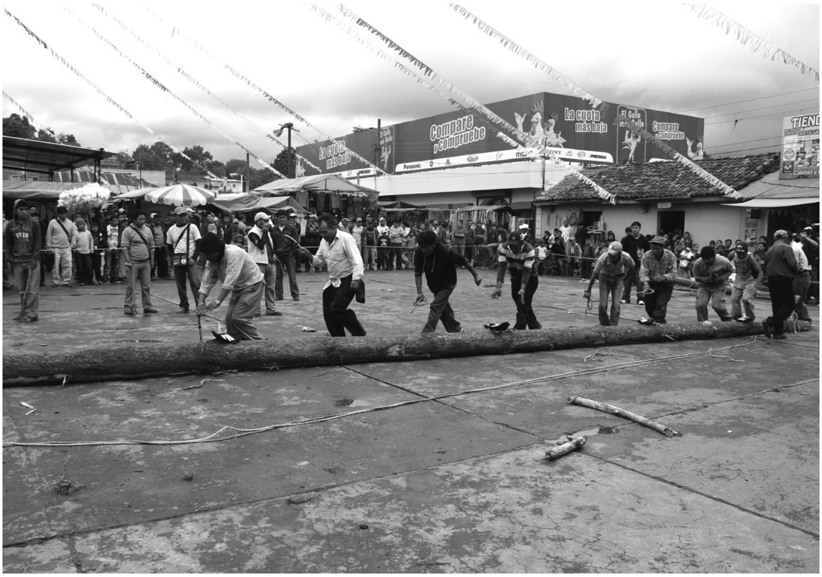

FIGURE 9.11 As a form of cleansing, dancers, who will swing down a rope from the top, run across and whip the pole, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 21, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

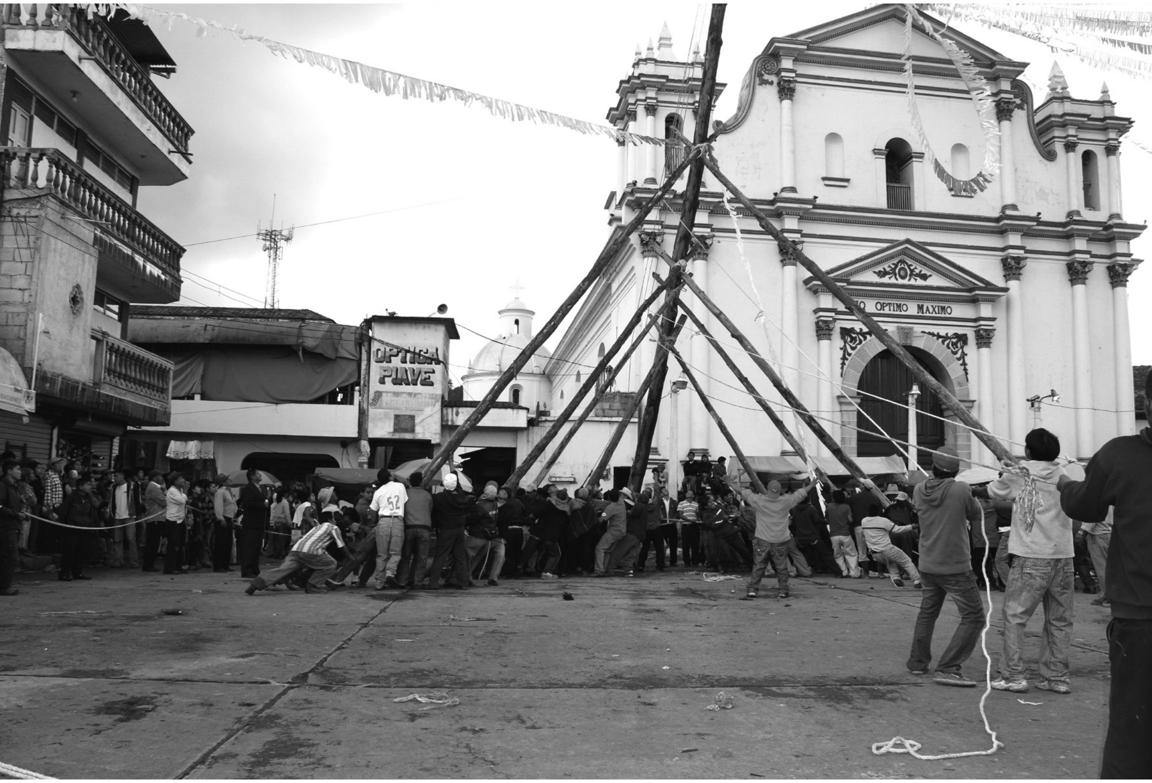

FIGURE 9.12 The purified pole rises in front of the cleansed and sacred space of the parish church, Momostenango, Totonicapán, Guatemala, July 21, 2012. Photograph by Rhonda Taube.

The organized series of movements and demarcation of space not only reveal a glimpse of another world, but also provide the spiritual protection necessary for the dancers' risky and terrifying high-wire performances. If the dancers properly follow the prescribed activities, their feats of bravery will prove their devotion to Santiago Apostol and likewise affirm his blessings, as they emerge unharmed. If the dancers are not pure of heart and spirit and have not followed the costumbre, or traditional rituals, they risk falling and sustaining severe harm or even death.[8]

Conclusions

I began this study by looking at the societal and material processes by which space is sacralized in the K'iche' region of contemporary highland Guatemala and exploring how the expressive cultures of performance continue to construct restricted, sacred space as a concept. These practices, though consistently derided by many within and outside of the community, have not diminished in the face of a variety of pressures. If anything, many K'iche' spiritualists have adapted their practices to accommodate recent changes, such as the pressures from the spread of world-wide communication and globalization, including cell phones, the Internet, and mass-produced goods alongside aggressive political upheavals, racialized discrimination, and violence. In the face of all these forces compelling change, K'iche' Maya people continue to call on the power and effect of the ancestors to influence their lives for the better. Day Keepers and other spiritualists are now organized on a national level to achieve respect for their beliefs and religious practices and protect their sacred spaces. Moreover, on a local or regional level, ceremonies continue to mark places appropriate for communing with divinity and allow one to interact with another sacrosanct realm. Festivals timed to the calendar year continue to mark episodes and territories of incredible spiritual and reverent power for specific individuals, an entire community, and most importantly, a patron saint.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank a variety of people who helped in the writing of this paper, either by sharing their time and ideas or providing valuable assistance and feedback. First, I'd like to thank the editors of the volume, Kaylee Spencer and Maline Werness-Rude for including my paper and for their very insightful and valuable comments. In addition, I'd like to thank in Momostenango: Carlos Quiej, Narcisso Peruch, Sabine Vicente, Selvin Poroj, and Domingo Tzoc Poroj. I would also like to thank Garrett Cook, Maury Hutcheson, Marvin Cohodas, Robin Blotnick, Rachel Lears, Linda Brown, Elizabeth Olton, Stephen Houston, Hector Escobedo, and, of course, Karl Taube.

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Notes

1. For a discussion of how Colonial-period Yucatec (Yukatek) Maya conceptualized foundational space see Michael Coe (1965). For a discussion of recent K'iche' interpretations and observations of ritual space see Barbara Tedlock (1982).

2. The term used by many progressive religious practitioners engaged in contemporary K'iche' cosmology is *guia espiritual*, or spiritual guide, indicating that the individual is involved in the new Maya movement. This distinguishes the individual from a *costumbrista*, or one who follows the old customs, which usually refers to an elder and traditionalist. José Roberto Morales Sic (2004) provides an excellent discussion of the ways the term has synthesized a variety of positions that previously had explicit and specific functions, such as *sacerdote*, *camal be*, and *Ajq 'ijab*. For a discussion of the new spiritual guide movement in Momostenango, see Cook and Offit (2013).

3. Traditionally, most indigenous people of Guatemala typically have not been concerned with positioning themselves as national citizens. Rather, they are seen as identifying primarily with their immediate, local community, next aligning themselves according to their language group, and finally as indigenous (Nelson 1999:5).

4. During his administration from 2008–2012, Colom was widely rumored to have been trained as a Day Keeper, or spiritual guide, and to this end, ran his election campaign as the "face of the Maya." His administration supported the Propuesta de Ley de Lugares Sagrados.

5. For a discussion of how the pre-Hispanic Maya practiced this same concept see Patricia A. McAnany (2000).

6. Numerous ethnographers have written about the burden of cofradía service as a means of leveling wealth in the community (for example see Vogt 1969). However, in Momostenango, the opposite appears to be true; the cargos of the saints legitimate wealth-based stratification. After serving in the cofrades, consequently, dancers say they become wealthier because of their service—they are free to act more boldly in commerce (Cook 2000:50).

7. Although I have never accompanied the dancers into the forest to retrieve the tree, I have been told that the departure is quite early in the morning and requires the participation of all the dancers. In addition, it also involves a number of ceremonies and prayers to determine the correct tree and to petition for blessings.

8. In the summer of 2004 one of the dancers declined to participate in the costumbre of the dance, and he was the only person who fell and was injured that year with a broken leg. Many people regarded this as proof of the power of the ceremonies.

Epilogue

PORTALS, TURTLES, AND MYTHIC PLACES

MICHAEL D. CARRASCO

From captivating descriptions and illustrations in nineteenth-century travelogues to the iconic pop status of Tikal's temples as the rebel base in the movie *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*, architecture has been one of the most enduring and emblematic aspects of Maya culture. Cosmology, time, and ancient astronomy have equally entranced those who encounter Maya culture and served as a means for accessing architectural meaning. The ease with which people approach and empathize with Classic-period Maya architecture and the landscape of cosmogony suggests that space taps into a realm of experience that is intuitively accessible. In addition to the immediacy of architecture, a possible reason for its resonance is that space is intrinsic to the ways in which we conceptualize the world. Indeed, as Stephen C. Levinson (1996:356–57) notes, "casting non-spatial problems into spatial thinking gives us literacy, geometry, diagrams, mandala, dream-time landscapes, measures of close and distant relatives and of high and low social groups." Accordingly, architecture and cosmology are only two of the most obvious avenues for approaching space, place, and the methods for spatial analysis. We could also add to this list those instances in which one spatial domain is translated into another, such as when art, architecture, and narrative present illusionistic or discursive spaces that are mapped onto real ones.

Since the 1980s, studies of space, architecture, landscape, and cultural geography have come to play an increasingly prominent role in Maya scholarship.[1] More recently Karen Bassie-Sweet (2008), John Staller (2008), David Stuart (2005), Karl A. Taube (2012), and Alexandre Tokovinine (2013), among others, have produced critical works on Maya and Mesoamerican architectural forms and symbolism, settlement patterns, toponyms, and sacred geographies. Mayanists have often focused on epigraphy, comparisons with central Mexico, and basic cosmological templates pieced together from over a century of anthropological fieldwork (Redfield and Villa Rojas 1934; Wauchope 1938). The result has been approaches to space that are largely archaeological, archaeoastronomical, epigraphic, or centered on understanding how cosmological patterns have been worked out in urban design and architectural form. Mayanists have delved into other regions and disciplines as well; however, this engagement has not always been thoroughgoing, and scholarship on Maya space and spatiality has often favored insular, descriptive approaches over comparative, theoretical ones.

A specifically art historical analysis is also missing from these discussions with the exception of a handful of key sources, as indicated by Maline D. Werness-Rude and Kaylee R. Spencer's (Chapter 1) overview of discipline-specific work in the area. Yet art history has long engaged with precisely the issues that are of most interest to the present work. To mention but one seminal work, Erwin Panofsky's (1991) study of Western perspective offers one of the first and most thoroughgoing analyses of the spatial transliteration of ontic space into the conventions of a specific pictorial tradition and the development of these conventions. Building on the aforementioned work in our field, contributors to this volume have engaged issues both similar to those that Panofsky confronted in his discussion of perspective and ones that extend well beyond the problem of depicted space to encompass spatiality, landscape, and cultural geography. They have offered a rich, innovative range of methods by which we might access Maya spatial thinking, particularly as it intersects in the nexus of myth, art, architecture, and performance.

In this final chapter I apply, extend, and amplify many of the important ideas and methods raised in this volume. In doing so, I focus first on some of the diverse theoretical issues raised by the study of space and place and how we might extend our thinking about Mesoamerican and Maya taxonomies of space. Following from this discussion in the second part of the chapter, I examine turtle and portal imagery and the relationship between mythology and the built environment. From the vantage points of Palenque's epigraphy, iconography, and architecture, I suggest that the mythological narrative preserved on the platform found in Temple 19 and its corresponding scene of accession compel new ways for interpreting the emic conceptualization of House E in the Palace. Within this analysis the quatrefoil portal deserves specific attention because, as a motif that serves to frame images and define fictive and real architectural spaces, the portal offers a particularly useful tool for the investigation of Maya spatiality. It functions as a window that, while framing another space, does not attempt to create a seamless continuity between the position of the viewer and scene that it frames. The portal is situated as a mediating device that bridges discontinuous locations. It does not disguise this role, but rather reveals the very means by which the viewer might move between these locations. An examination of the way portals and related mythological imagery and symbolism are built into Maya architectural forms correspondingly affords a more precise perspective on the relationship between buildings and their sculptural programs than is possible with only an iconographic analysis of a structure's sculptural veneer. As all of the preceding chapters touch upon portals or related topics to various degrees, my discussion both homes in on and magnifies this central construct in Maya thought in the epigraphic, art historical, and architectural record, and through the lens of the spatial categories introduced in the first section of this chapter.

Topocosm: The Body, House, and Cosmos

In Chapters 2 and 3, Penny Steinbach and Michele Bernatz eloquently describe the basic pattern of Maya cosmology in which four world bearers (Atlantean figures or trees) support the world plane conceptualized as a table. A tree, mountain, pillar, portal, or serpent penetrated the center of the terrestrial plane, connecting it with the celestial and underworld realms. If viewed as a plan, in its most simplified form, the quincunx pattern in Classic-period Maya art resembles the five side of a die (Figure 3.4b). It is a diagram that has served as one of the primary means of schematically representing the terrestrial plane from at least the Middle PreClassic period, and similar approaches to directional positioning can be seen in the modern rituals described by Rafael Girard (1995) and Rhonda Taube (Chapter 9).[2] The quincunx abstractly emphasizes the four directions (likely the points were formed by the rising and setting points of the sun during the solstices [Carrasco 2005:219]) and the fifth central point. This basic pattern also mirrors the plan of the prototypical house with its four supporting posts and central hearth (see Taube 1998). In the context of the hieroglyphic script the quincunx serves as the syllable **bi**, which is also used logographically for the word *bih*, "road" or "path." As indicated through its superimposition over the body (see the Las Limas figure, for instance, and the face in some mask examples) it could also serve as a means of assimilating and connecting the human body into these other schema (Taube 2000:302–303).

In Chapter 2, Steinbach cites the so-called Cosmic Plate (Figure 2.7; see also Kerr n.d.:K1609), a significant image that I will return to later in this chapter. It provides an example of the difficulty in reducing complex cosmological images into simple schema even when, as we have seen above, emic abstract diagrams of world structure exist. Through this example Steinbach highlights the intrinsic intricacy of hybrid forms in Classic-period Maya art and their polyvalency. Her observations make "topocosm," a term derived from ethnology and employed by Edward S. Casey (1997:4–5) to discuss cosmological space, all the more compelling as a single label that captures both the ideas of "place" and "cosmos." Topocosm moves the analysis away from abstract diagrams and concepts to places that instaurate cosmic structure and are equally embodied, historically contingent locations. That God L's domain necessarily connects contiguous areas of a layered cosmos made visible with the surface of the earth itself (Bernatz, Chapter 3), that watery or misty scrolls swirl around lords as a way of registering their presence in liminal spaces (Werness-Rude, Chapter 4) distinct from those associated with the *way* portal I will discuss later, or that successive leaders at Tikal created cosmologically significant references in the layered, historical spaces of the Central Acropolis (Olton, Chapter 7) further speaks to the utility of the term *topocosm* in the discussion of Maya spatiality.

Topocosm allows us to acknowledge that, like all peoples, Mesoamericans came to know the world through their bodily interaction with the environment over time. Through quotidian practice and memory, as Rhonda Taube (Chapter 9) demonstrates, they continue to reckon existential space and assimilate it into larger systems of cognition that create meaning-laden places and establish spatial and temporal orders. Relationships among these orders and other categories of things were forged through processes such as analogy, homology, metonymy, association, and metaphor to weave a dense tapestry of meaning. Thus, the relationship between cosmology and the built environment is realized in the string of analogies and homologies made among various kinds of bodies (human body, house, and world) (Gillespie 2000: 136).

For example, linguistically, body terms *chi'* (Yucatec) or *ti'* (Chorti), "mouth," are found in compounds for the words for *entryway*, and in Yucatec *hó'ol nah che'* (literally head/hair, house, wood/tree) refers to the ridgepole of the house. Columns, wooden supports, and leg/feet all employ the single word *ok* with various qualifiers to distinguish more specific meanings. Likewise the roots *calli*, "house," and *îxtli*, "face; eye," form the word *calîxtli*, "entryway" in Nahuatl (Karttunen 1983:22). In these instances the body is the reference point for categorizing the parts of the house (López-Austin 1988:345–346). Within the visual record, Virginia

Miller (2003) has explored how architecture is humanized through the merging of the body and architectural features, such as by the use of Atlantean figures as columns. In Maya thought, contemporary houses (Stross 1998) as well as Classic-period temple structures were instilled with vital forces through rituals and cache offerings. The massive toothed mouths that serve as the main entryways in Chenes- and Rio Bec–style temples vivifies the analogy between an animate earth, especially mountains and caves, and buildings (Bassie-Sweet 1996; Gendrop 1983; Vogt and Stuart 2005). The iconographic expression of the portal as jaws or its use to frame doorways suggests that openings into structures in Maya thought have consistently been seen as mouths, a metaphor and homology with the body that is particularly interesting to investigate further given the pervasive use of eating and digestion metaphors in Mesoamerican mythology and visual culture (Staller and Carrasco 2010). In particular it adds dimension to how we might conceptualize the house, specifically the hearth often at its center, as a site of transformation in Classic-period and Colonial mythology (e.g., the hearth of Classic Maya and central Mexican mythology or the place of rebirth in the Popol Vuh). Major mythological events occur within the space of the house, the form of which became a repeated motif in mythology, the built landscape, and many different kinds of portable objects. In many of these examples the portal or a portal-like feature is found at the center.

These schemata also inform such buildings and objects as shrines, palanquins, ceramic and stone models, cache vessels, liturgical instruments, and the paraphernalia of rulers that are not normally addressed in Maya architectural studies. Privileging the architectural aspect of these objects, we could see them as micro-architecture, following the discussion of similar items in medieval art of the West (Bucher 1976; see also Guérin 2013; Hahn 2012). The repetition of architectural forms at the macro and micro scales drew audiences and ceremonial participants together through the redundancy of the iterative symbolism of different classes of objects and the practices that surround them. Through this repeating set of associative imagery and forms, the house, milpa (maize field), and quincuncial pattern conditioned the conceptualization of larger sacred geographies in both mythology and the landscape (Ashmore and Sabloff 2002; Bassie-Sweet 2008; Schele and Mathews 1998; Staller 2008). For example, the analogy of measuring for a house (Powell, cited in Schele and Mathews 1998:35–36) or milpa for the creation of the world at the opening of the Popol Vuh makes the homology between house and world explicitly clear:

> Great is its performance and its account of the completion and germination of all the sky and earth—its four corners and its four sides. All then was measured and staked out into four divisions, doubling over and stretching the measuring cords of the womb of sky and the womb of earth. Thus were established the four corners, the four sides, as it is said, by the Framer and the Shaper, the Mother and the Father of life and all creation. (Christenson 2003:65–66)

In his commentary on this passage, Allen Christenson (2003:66) observes that staking the corners and stretching measuring cords between these points parallels the process for surveying a maize field, delineating the plan of a house, or arranging a *mesa* (altar) for ritual. This measuring creates a marked, cultural place. It does so because it orders space and creates a socially constructed place out of the forest and vacant land. Defining the center and periphery continue to find a home in the rituals of contemporary Mesoamerican peoples. For example, Rhonda Taube (Chapter 9) has noted that for the *féria* in Momostenango the center is continually remade by the "hunting" of a tree, which is brought into town and cleansed, thereby "civilizing" it. The participants then erect this tree at the heart of the community.

As several of the preceding chapters demonstrate, one kind of place is transformed into another in Maya spatial awareness. The milpa is cleared from the forest, whose guardians must be petitioned and thanked. The house and town are defined on territory that ultimately belongs to the Earth Lord. The idea of empty space does not seem to exist as such, nor are there words for "space." The house, field, and town exist as transformations of other prior arrangements. They come to be specific cultural places because they have been measured and organized by people. This process parallels the basic steps taken at the beginning of the present age when deities and materials were arranged or organized (Christenson 2003). In the Classic-period inscriptions, similar statements of the Creation exist. Terms such as *tz'ak* describe how the cosmos was organized on 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u (Carrasco 2010:608–11; Stuart 2003). Other important words include *jel*, "to change" (Carrasco 2005, 2010; Freidel and Macleod 2000), which begins phrases describing the 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u series of events, and in this context seems to evoke the changing of the hearth (*k'oob*) at the beginning of the present era (however, see Stuart [2011:216–219] for a different interpretation of the object that was changed). Mythological inscriptional narratives often initially define the spatial and temporal orders, as seen on the Vase of Seven Gods, in which the gods of heaven and earth are ordered (*tz'ak*). Maya and Mesoamerican cosmogenesis emphasizes a *creatio ex materia* (creation out of preexisting material [see Bateson 2000:xxx–xxxi]) or *creatio ex deo* (creation out of the being of god) view rather than a *creatio ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing).

The preceding chapters of this volume have borne witness to the central role space plays in enactments of these primordial events and how they are realized in historically specific places. For example, Flora Simmons Clancy (Chapter 5) shows how the ruler reenacts these primordial events through the reconfiguration of the political/sacral space of the plaza, while Elizabeth Olton (Chapter 7) explores tombs whose imagery and configuration conformed to key mythological narratives. In each of these cases, memory, or the reiteration of an event immemorial, gives cultural meaning to a site while at the same time responding to the specific historical contingencies of the actors involved.

A creatio ex materia view of cosmogenesis likely influenced how Mesoamericans also think/thought about the creation of space(s), or perhaps more accurately the creation of place (see Carrasco 1991; Smith 1987). A different understanding of the nature of space therefore leads to profoundly different conceptions of the world, because the metaphors that frame the world are also radically different. A common example of this metaphorical framing is the use of value to conceptualize time in the common expression "time is money," or time as a product that one can run out of, waste, or save. As George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) have argued, these metaphors provide a window onto the fundamental ways in which people view their position in the world. While it would take a fuller-scale study on space in ancient Maya thought than is possible here, the visual and epigraphic evidence give the impression that movement/travel, directionality, and the notion of abode—the place proper to a particular thing—are key concepts in Mesoamerican spatial thinking and its representation. These concepts are found concretely in the care taken to specify the proper locations of deities, people, and things (Gillespie 2000:139–140), or record mythic peregrinations, the arrival of dynastic founders (Stuart 2000), or the pilgrimage to cities and shrines, as seen extensively in central Mexican codices (Boone 2000; Byland and Pohl 1994). Records of movement are more than just travel accounts. For example, journeys of origin, of which the wandering of the Mexica is perhaps the most famous, are the spatial definition of history and the narrative unfolding of place. These journeys complicate the clean, abstract view of space presented by the quincunx or idealized plans such as the first page of the Codex Fejérváry-Mayer. Instead movement across the landscape and through time generates meaningful places that are again historically contingent upon particular cultural narratives.

The oscillation detectable between idealized plans such as the quincunx and the irregularity of the world is also found in the way that the human body is aligned with spatial ideals. On this point Christenson (2003:57) notes precisely how a K'iche' priest understands his spatial relationships with the altar:

> A prominent Quiché *ajq'ij* priest, named Don Vicente de León Abac, described his work to me in this way: "When I am seated at my table, I am *aj nawal mesa* [of, or pertaining to, the spirit essence of the table]. My body is in the form of a cross just like the four sides of the world. This is why I face to the east and behind me is the west. My left arm extends out toward the north, and my right arm points to the south. My heart is the center of myself just as the forms of the cross come together to form its heart. My head extends upward above the horizon so that I can see far away. Because I am seated this way I can speak to Mundo [World]."

Body terminology, as mentioned previously, also serves as an architectural lexicon. In a series of other metaphorical relationships, the house, as I will expand on more fully later in this chapter, can be equated with other entities, especially the turtle, caiman, and animated earth creatures more generally.

Thus, the house, the maize field, and the body, both anciently and among the contemporary Maya, serve as meta-forms through which other spatial categories were understood and architectural forms generated. In this light we could modify, if somewhat out of the original context, Gaston Bachelard's (1969:46) declaration in the *Poetics of Space* that "[the house] is an instrument with which to confront the cosmos" into the less eloquent one that the house is the instrument through which the cosmos is ordered. Or if we wish to stay more closely to Bachelard's meaning and emphasize the body and agency in the production of space we could pursue Pierre Bourdieu's (1977:89) line of thought that

> it is in the dialectical relationship between the body and a space structured according to the mythico-ritual oppositions that one finds the form par excellence of the structural apprenticeship which leads to the em-bodying of the structures of the world, that is, the appropriating of the world of a body thus enabled to appropriate the world. In a social formation in which the absence of the symbolic-product-conserving techniques associated with literacy retards the objectification of symbolic and particularly cultural capital, inhabited space—above all the

> house—is the principal locus for the objectification of the generative schemes; and, through the intermediary of the divisions and hierarchies it sets up between things, persons, and practices, this tangible classifying system continuously inculcates and reinforces the taxonomic principles underlying all the arbitrary provisions of . . . culture.

I prefer to see the difference between the presence of literacy and its absence not so much as the dichotomy between the symbolic and the objectified, but rather as a move from encoding the symbolic in lived space to its delegation to the realm of abstract contemplation. Or to put it yet more simply it is the move from the concrete to the abstract. In the case of the abstract (symbolic-product-conserving techniques), negotiation and embodiment do not take place in *a place* (to the same extent), but rather diachronically through the dialogue with the preserved word or a past discursive space. In this sense it works through time as opposed to the collapsing of time in ritual in a particular place. Putting these points aside in order to focus solely on inhabited space, Bourdieu is suggesting that the locus of the house and other inhabited spaces are the primary sites in which cultural ideas, taxonomies, and other axioms are made concrete through their embodiment in practice—habitus. Following this way of thinking, the production of space (and its transformation into place) entails understanding that our concepts do not just describe an independently existing order in the world but, through the categories of human thought forged by practice, produce that order. There is dynamic interplay between human cognition and the (built, depicted, narrative, metaphysical) environment, which in turn influences how we cognize reality. Our material culture is therefore both something that we produce through our concepts and practices and something that re-produces us as experiencing subjects. This dialectical relationship is one that nearly all of the authors in this volume use to explore various aspects of the material world they individually address.

Spatial conceptions are not only comprised solely by this reciprocal feedback between the physical world and body/mind, but they are also, as neuroscience has demonstrated (Graziano and Botvinick 2002; Ramachandran and Blakeslee 1998; Rizzolatti and Sinigaglia 2008), embodied in the neurophysiological maps of the body. Such maps or body representations show that, to some degree, an equivalency or identity exists between mental and real space, an equivalency that in fact reveals the illusion of truly discrete categories of space that are otherwise so useful to the analytic study of the world. A person's movement within the house or milpa as part of the regimen of daily practice links the outside world to the cognized one.

Thus space, as Maline D. Werness-Rude and Kaylee R. Spencer (Chapter 1) observe, involves much more than architecture or even the physical world. To develop a complete and accurate picture of Maya space that moves beyond the description of the physical arrangement of things, we must explore it in all its complexity. We would do well, in particular, to take heed of the relationships that ultimately unify whatever analytic categories we create for the utility of investigating a particular issue. This would include a census not only of the plans, sections, elevations, and depictions of buildings and pictorial relationships in art, but also how space is depicted in verbal narratives, encapsulated and created in deixis (referential practice), and produced and enacted in social practice (Bourdieu 1977; Hanks 1990; Lefebvre 1991). It is also critical to question the way the realm of the human articulates with other parallel, unseen registers of existence that often have different spatial rules—a kind of metaphysical space. We can posit at least five spatial regimes with significant overlap between them: pictorial, discursive (deixis, chronotope), existential (ontic space), metaphysical (ontological), and cognitive space. Each may be shaped further through the addition of subcategories and an examination of their interrelationships.

Represented space includes both the spatial relationships in a visual narrative, such as those between figures in the murals at Bonampak (Figure 1.14) or the one created between a sculpture and the viewer (Figures 1.18, 5.3). Querying the relationship between onlooker and object moves us toward the intersection of existential and discursive space in which the object, through the belief of the viewer or its structural position in space, gains agency. Discursive space is articulated through verbalization, narrative, and performance and is particularly clear in the description of space (as found in the passages from the Popol Vuh cited above), the spatial frameworks inherent in the grammar of language (Levinson 1996), and deixis. For instance, the positional verb class in Mayan languages designates actions within space. Likewise, numerical classifiers register the physical form, material, or animacy of an object. These linguistic features in English must be formed through the use of adverbs, in such constructions as “stand up” or “sit down” in the case of positional verbs, or simply are not as pervasively marked in normal discourse. It is unclear what effects these different ways of speaking and thinking about space have had, but it is useful to be mindful that grammatical categories and metaphors of space offer fundamentally different ways of describing the world. This is true even if one might not fully accept the linguistic relativity of Benjamin Whorf (Carroll 1956; see also Lakoff 1987; Lucy 1992). Indeed the general lack of words equivalent to the term “space” in Mayan languages suggests that this abstraction, so central to anthropological and art historical discourse and conceptual strategies, masks a more highly reticulated system of naming and understanding the world that is diminished by the use of this handy label.

Verbalization and performance concretely enact and negotiate discursive space and put a constant pressure on spatial concepts in language and possibly cognition. The reference to things in space brings existential space more clearly into focus and makes us consider the delineation of this category into optic, haptic, auditory, and possibly other kinds of spaces, as well as how these sensorial stimuli are (re)assembled neurologically and aligned to spatial cognition, cognitive maps, and memory—a kind of parallel cognitive space. One of the primary ways to examine the interrelationship between mental and physical space and practice is to assemble the lexical items that name spatial categories or that reveal the spatial relationships that were particularly marked among Mayan speakers. Not surprisingly the Maya hieroglyphic script has been one of the richest sources for gaining emic information on ancient Maya conceptions of space and time. For example, words for house/abode and structure (*-otoot* and *naah*, respectively) have been isolated, as well as more specialized terms such *pib naah* (oven house/sweatbath), *k'oob* (hearth/kitchen), *wayib/ab* (shrine/sleeping place), *ch'e'n* (cave/cenote), and *witz* (mountain), all of which provide a lexicon for approaching Maya architecture, as many authors in this volume note. The words *ch'e'n* and *witz* also denote structures even though their core meanings refer to geological features in the landscape. Thus, the analogy that has been detected between the built world and the natural one is reinforced and embedded in ancient terminology. Epigraphers have isolated words for other architectural features such as lintels, doorways, stairways, tombs, plazas, and portals that give a window onto the markedness of specific architectural features, classifications, and spatial conceptions unmatched for most other ancient American peoples.

One of the most significant terms for understanding space and agency in Classic Ch'olan is the relational term *-ichnal* and its Yucatec cognate, *-iknal*, discussed throughout this volume and elsewhere (Hanks 1990:91–94; Herring 2005; Houston et al. 2006; Koontz 2009; Stuart 1997:10). Hanks (1990:91) notes that *-iknal* has a range of possible meanings depending on context, including simply to indicate that a person is "in the company of X" or is "close to, alongside, with X." It can also function as a synonym to *naah* (house, fields, proximal region of) in the sense that it is the "place of X." While naah is a generally fixed location, -iknal can also be "a mobile field of action related to an agent the way one's shadow or perceptual field is" (Hanks 1990:91). In the case of Classic-era inscriptions, the fact that the

-ichnal of the gods is regularly mentioned indicates that they occupied a physical place and possessed a corporeal field equivalent to Yucatec -iknal (see Carrasco 2005; Houston et al. 2006:173–175: Stuart 2005). From this we can conclude that they had a physical existence, as is documented in Classic-period art, Colonial manuscripts, and contemporary devotional practices as well as in other Mesoamerican traditions more broadly (see Gruzinski 2001 for central Mexican examples). Mythological and historical court scenes of enthroned gods and rulers surveying courtiers (Figure 1.11) present a picture of how the -ichnal field of interaction was visualized anciently.

Conversely, investigating how indigenous peoples believe entities inhabit space potentially reveals emic concepts for which specific terms in English are lacking, or for spatial systems that present a different set of internal relationships. For example, malevolent, illness-inflicting spirits among the Yucatec, as Hanks (1990:339–345) has documented, are thought to reside in specific places. Their precise location must first be isolated with the use of the *h-mèen*'s (the Maya religious specialist's) crystal prior to an effective healing ritual. That such entities have a specific, relatively fixed position in the house compound provides insight into how an unseen or veiled spatial realm is experienced and plotted in Maya thought. Similarly, the *baatsik'* (spirits or winds) of the Teneek exist in a parallel spatial realm to that of humans with ruptures at particular points such as at ruins or along roads or paths (Ariel de Vidas 2004:133–135). This parallel spatial realm and the creatures that live within it often reference a time prior to the present cosmic age. Thus, as a number of the contributors have noted, space and time are intimately linked. This is the case in most cultures, but understanding the particular ways in which the two are joined may illuminate nuances that are unique to the Maya. The challenge is to find ways to extract these conceptualizations from the material residue of practice and the unarticulated systems evident in representation, mythology, surviving architecture, and urban planning.

Expanding Portals, Turtles, and Space

In the final section of this chapter an iconographic "case study," informed by an epigraphic and philological perspective, ties together some of this book's central lines of thought and provides specific, concrete examples of the concepts discussed above. Thus, the epilogue mimics the larger structure of the book, which begins with a theoretical discussion of spatial constructs and associated viewing practices. The case studies that follow and those that form the heart of this volume then explore how these ideas work in actual practice. When unpacking the principles explored in my foregoing discussion in relation to an important motif and concomitant concept in Maya art—portals—our understanding of central spatial constructs expands. The Maya represented portals in a number of ways (see Stuart and Houston 1994:71–72; Taube 2003). We have already seen the use of the misty, watery, or smoky portal as a conduit carved into the sides of vessels in the Chocholá style in Werness-Rude's work (Chapter 4). Let us now turn to another type of portal that, as both an iconographic and a glyphic form, is more explicitly connected with particular aspects of cosmology and architecture.

As has been demonstrated by this volume's contributors, a more detailed understanding of spatial significance emerges through the triangulation of the epigraphic, architectural, and art historical record than is possible through an approach that relies primarily on general patterns, such as directionality, the center, cosmic levels, or the overly simple sacred/profane dichotomy. For instance, while it is true that the quincunx pattern, directionality, and a multi-leveled universe are fundamental features of Maya and Mesoamerican spatial categories, they are also relatively common worldwide and therefore tell us little about the Maya. To put it plainly, we need to construct thicker cultural and historic contexts that better consider the specific aspects of a building, object, quotidian practice, or performance (just as Bernatz, Chapter 3, develops for God L). That is, these basic structures, like directionality, need to be woven back into the layers of memory and performance that give historical meaning to spaces (see Glassie 1987; Hendon 2010; Jones 2000; Taube, Chapter 9). In addition to the other insights offered throughout the preceding chapters, I hope that an analysis of the kinds of spaces designated by turtle terminology, the portal glyph (T591/769), its iconographic counterpart, and the places denoted by these motifs will anchor the earlier sections of this chapter to a specific set of examples. Moreover, since the portal glyph is one of the signs that spells the month glyph Wayeb, an understanding of its symbolic meanings in other contexts possibly also sheds light on the spatial representation of time.

The second part of this example turns to the Palace at Palenque and specifically to House E, a structure known anciently as the White House (Sak Nuk Naah) that opens onto the East Court at its southwest corner (Figure 6.2). The East Court presents the captive portraits discussed in Chapter 6. In this chapter, Spencer demonstrated the degree to which the public plaza discussed by Clancy (Chapter 5) became an internal, highly restricted space that emphatically connected captive supports with the earth and the viewer in the Palenque Palace's inner courtyard. My analysis in the final section of this chapter takes our resulting understanding of that space and moves from the East Court into House E. Unpacking how text, images, architecture, and portal iconography come together in House E illuminates connections similar to many of those addressed throughout this volume. These relationships become even more pointed, of course, when the textual, iconographic, performative, and historical associations of the various structures are taken into account; when they are peopled, in other words, and understood fully in emic context.

Portals, Passages, and Space

The portal glyph, T591/769, often read as *way*, is particularly instructive to a discussion of the Maya conceptualization of space because it names sinkholes and architectural features, describes mythological locations, and figures as a component of the month Wayeb.[3] The portal glyph has a specific, limited range of iconographic occurrences. In analyzing these contexts and conducting a detailed study of the painted capstone inscriptions from the site of Ek' Balam (Figure 10.1), Kerry Hull and I (Carrasco and Hull 2002) have proposed that the glyph designates the opening between the two sides of the corbel arch. In this interpretation the capstone covers the space denoted by T591/769.

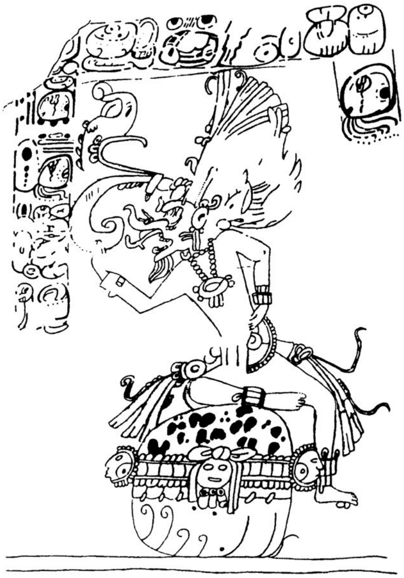


FIGURE 10.1 Capstone 1, K'awiil enthroned on a jaguar-pelt pillow, Ek' Balam, Yucatán, Mexico. The inscription records that the portal of the house of Tz'ibam Tuun was covered. Drawing by Víctor R. Castillo and Alfonso Lacadena.

Confirmation of T591/769 as reading "space" or "opening" comes from the range of the glyph's occurrences in other textual contexts (Stuart and Houston 1994:71–72) and its use in iconography (Figure 10.2), particularly in scenes depicting the location in which the Maize God sits or from which he seemingly emerges (Carrasco and Hull 2002; Freidel et al. 1993:269–70; Taube 2003). That this depiction seems to be a more detailed version of the Maize God's sprouting from a cracked turtle shell emphasizes that while T591/769 possibly means "room" as has sometimes been proposed (Linda Schele, cited in Stuart 2005:74), the glyph more likely signifies a general concept like "gap," or "opening," or a specific feature in the landscape such as a cenote (especially as it occurs in the Dresden Codex).

The mythological occurrences of the portal glyph suggest that the sign and its iconographic counterpart are also conceptually tied to birth and the movement from one realm to another. The possible temporal nature of this movement is seen through the use of the portal glyph in spelling the collocation for the month Wayeb. In this context it appears that the Wayeb glyph refers to the system of symbolism briefly outlined above in which the *way* component refers to the space or opening within the Haab cycle. Indeed, this short five-day month was considered an especially important and dangerous period of time. The ramifications of acknowledging this point of communion between the spatial and temporal likely extend beyond this

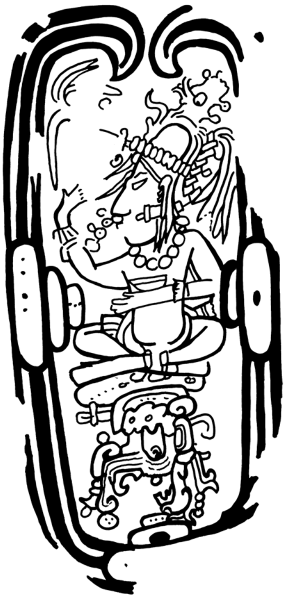


FIGURE 10.2 Unprovenienced capstone from northern Yucatán, Mexico, showing the emergence of the Maize God from within the jaws of the portal. Drawing by Michael D. Carrasco.

simple explanation and tie into the complex spatiotemporal diagrams known from central Mexico (e.g., Fejérváry-Mayer Codex, Page 1) and the Maya (e.g., Madrid Codex, Pages 75–76). Thus, the portal glyph in art and writing covers a semantic range, including names for physical features in the landscape as well as abstractions of a temporal period and mythological locations.

This philological perspective on the portal glyph is given greater credence when viewed within the larger system of architectural symbolism in which the roof of the house is metaphorically seen as the back of a turtle (*áak/ak*). Ethnographic fieldwork, architectural terminology, epigraphy, and iconography confirm this observation (see Carrasco and Hull 2002; Hull and Carrasco 2004), but it is worth reviewing this line of thought further to show the pervasiveness of the turtle metaphor in architectural symbolism. The lexical data is particularly revealing. Both Colonial and contemporary Yucatec dictionaries contain entries that demonstrate the use of *áak* as an architectural term or part thereof:

nokak	*casa de piedra* / stone house (Barrera Vásquez 1980:576)
nokak na	*casa de piedra*; *bóveda*, *casa aboveada* / stone house; vault, vaulted house (Barrera Vásquez 1980 :576)
nonak	*casa de piedra* / stone house (Barrera Vásquez 1980:576)
ak	*arqueado*, *cubrir* / arched, cover (Barrera Vásquez 1980:4)
-ak	*bóveda arquetectonica*, *construcción de mampostería que alberga*, *que tiene interior cubierto*, *edificio techado en general* / architectural vault, construction of rubble that shelters, that has a covered interior, roofed building in general (Barrera Vásquez 1980 :4)
ak	*tortuga* / turtle (Barrera Vásquez 1980 :4)
áak	turtle (Bricker 1998:2)
áak	lot (of land); structure (Bricker 1998:2)
áaktun	cave (Bricker 1998:2–3)

Nokak, *nonak*, and *nokak na*, “vaulted house” or “stone house,” appear to be compound lexemes of the unknown words *nok* or *non* (possibly deriving from *noj*, “large”) plus *ak*, which can mean “architectonic vault; roofed building in general” while the word *áaktun* means “cave.” The strong correlation in meaning between *áak/ak* as “turtle” and in reference to architectural features and caves provides striking linguistic evidence for the symbolic equivalency between the creature and Maya vaulted buildings as well as similar natural spaces.

The turtle terminology found in the word for crossbeam, *k'ab áak*, in Yucatec, further confirms the importance of this animal in Maya architectural symbolism. The citations of the term in Colonial and modern dictionaries (Barrera Vásquez 1980:360; Bricker 1998:140) and early ethnographies (Redfield and Villa Rojas 1934:33) attest to its consistent use to describe the crossbeams of the roof of a house. Fieldwork suggests that while some conservative communities still use this term, *k'ab áak* has been replaced by the Spanish word *tijera* (truss, or crossbeam) in regions where Spanish has gained, or is gaining, dominance. The literal meaning of *k'ab áak* indicates that the crossbeams served not only to stabilize the roof of the house, but also were symbolically the arms of a turtle bearing its carapace (i.e., the roof). In Classic Maya stone structures these beams are, as George Andrews (1975:76) has pointed out, "structurally redundant" and serve "no real structural function" since they provide no outward pressure on the walls of the vault. This fact speaks to the fundamental importance of k'ab áak/crossbeam to basic architectural symbolism and form.

Turtle terms in a Maya architectural lexicon are not limited to the Yucatán or the Colonial and modern periods. A particularly interesting example comes from the inscription on Quiriguá Zoomorph G that describes the death, in 785 CE, and burial of the ruler K'ahk' Tiliw Chan Yopaat (see Martin and Grube 2000:218). It does so by using the phrase *ahkil tuunil* to name the location from which the king's soul (*sak ik'il*) road-entered, the Classic Maya metaphor for the cessation of life (Hull and Carrasco 2004:135–136; Schele and Freidel 1990).[4] Similar examples have been found at Ek' Balam and Chichén Itzá (Voss and Kremer 2000:158, 172). Finally, the central image of the Maize God dancing in the quatrefoil interior of a turtle on the west wall of the San Bartolo mural attests to the antiquity of these concepts, particularly when compared to the image presented in Figure 10.2.

The so-called psychoduct, a physical passageway that connects the interior space of K'inich Janab Pakal's tomb to the superstructure in the Temple of the Inscriptions (see Schele and Mathews 1998:Chapter 3) is the most famous example in which architectural features articulate a conduit between realms. The iconography of the tomb in some ways is redundant because the basic symbolism that it expresses is already inherent in architectural form. Pictorial expression provides a more specific vision of this symbolism, tying the tomb and the processes that occurred within it to other realms of Maya life including arboriculture (McAnany 1995), genealogy (seen in the portraits of key figures in Pakal's dynasty), and the citation of other kinds of architectural spaces such as ballcourts.

The recognition that Maya tombs embody dense webs of meanings is hardly a novel observation, but rarely are these complex networks of symbolism teased out as fully as they could be given the now-sizable corpus of examples. Elizabeth Olton (Chapter 7) engages a related set of issues in her examination of capstones from Jasaw's tomb (Burial 116) in Tikal's Temple 1 and from Burial 23 in Temple 33. Unlike the capstones of northern Yucatán, the ones at Tikal are only adorned with a red circle. Nevertheless, context and the knowledge that the vault is associated with specific mythological narratives provide insight into the symbolism of tombs and capstones that lack texts or extensive iconography.

I suspect that the red circles on Tikal's capstones, as well as those found in tombs at Caracol (Chase and Chase 1998; Grube 1994), do indeed make "sacred space by visually denoting the final act of sealing the tombs," as Olton argues. Following the logic that Kerry Hull and I (Carrasco and Hull 2002; Hull and Carrasco 2004) proposed for capstones in northern Yucatán, this analysis can be extended further by specifically engaging the larger patterns of symbolism integral to the mythological episodes touched on above. In the case of the Tikal and Caracol capstones, the red circle marks the conduit between the space of the tomb and an exterior space. The red dot possibly symbolizes the blood-filled cord (*k'uxan suum*, "living cord"), recorded by Alfred Tozzer (1907:153), to connect the ancient rulers to the sky.

> It was at this period that there was a road suspended in the sky, stretching from Tuloom and Coba to Chichen Itza and Uxmal. This pathway was called the kusansum or sabke [sakbe] (white road). It was in the nature of a large rope (sum) supposed to be living (kusan) and in the middle flowed blood. It was by this rope that the food was sent to the ancient rulers who lived in the structures now in ruins.

If this were the case, the image of a rope connecting an entombed ancestral figure to the skyband that frames the upper edge of the carved image on Piedras Negras Stela 40 (Hammond 1981) might provide an illustration of a Classic-period concept similar to the k'uxan suum as described by Tozzer (Figure 10.3). In this scene the rope emerges from the ancestor bust's nose, moves through the space of the tomb, and passes through an opening in the tomb's ceiling before connecting to the skyband. The rope's origin point at the nose of the ancestral figure likely references breath and specifically that portion of the soul seen as residing in breath, *ik'* (Fitzsimmons 2009:131;

Houston et al. 2006:154, 156–57; Thompson 1970:252). A kneeling figure casts offerings through the portal's opening. It is significant to note that the tomb's shape takes the form of the quatrefoil with which the portal jaws are so often conflated. In actual structures, painted capstones are found precisely at the architectural equivalent of this point.

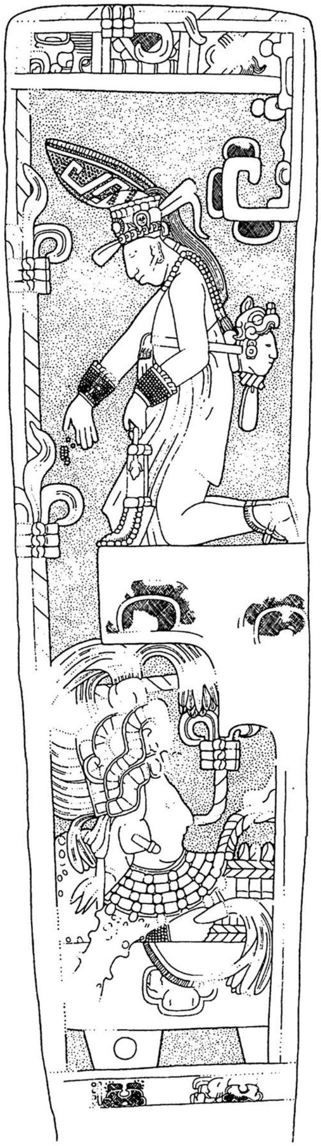


FIGURE 10.3 Stela 40, front, Piedras Negras, Petén, Guatemala. Drawing © 2000 by John Montgomery, courtesy of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Montgomery Drawing Collection:JM05530).

Therefore, Tikal's examples fit into a class of kindred features such as the capstones from the northern Yucatán, the Motmot capstone at Copán (Martin and Grube 2000:194), the Temple of the Inscriptions psychoduct, and *och bih* phrases, such as found on Zoomorph G and the Berlin Tripod vessel (Kerr n.d.:K6547). These images, myths, and the rituals known to occur in tombs and in other architectural contexts point to the fact that the implicated spaces are dynamic machines for the transubstantiation of the dead, in the case of tombs, and as vibrant places, to adapt the phrase "vibrant matter" from Jane Bennett's (2010) work on the ecology of things, in other contexts.

The use of turtle symbolism also occurs as a metaphor in discursive space in a cure for *kok* (asthma) from the Ritual of the Bacabs (Roys 1965:25–26):

> Then he would enter into kak-bacil (fire-, or eruptionphthisis). Then he would enter into the vault, its slippery part. Then he would enter into the vault, its door. Then he would enter into the vault, its front. Then he would enter into the vault, its rear. Then he would enter into the base of the vault, its base.
>
> The god spindle would be the tail of the gold turtle (ac). It enters into the front of the god shell . . . ; it enters into the back of his eye. Cast down is the bad (or imitation) crystal (or mirror). It enters into his face. Cast down would be the white bob. This would enter into the circle (or retina) of his eye. It would be cast down the white gullet (*lukub*, "swallower"), the red gullet I would enter to the upper tooth, to the lower tooth.

It would be difficult to decipher the role of the turtle in this narrative without the interpretation of architectural symbolism discussed previously. The sections immediately preceding the passages cited here invoke animated parts of a Maya house such as *ix ok-tun-xix* or "lady cement-pillar" and *ix okom-tun* or "lady stone-pillar" (Roys 1965:25). The first paragraph cited here describes the entering into a *nocacil* and *nococil* (in modern orthography *nokakil/nokokil*), both of which translate as "vault" (Barrera Vásquez 1980: 576). The entering into the vault is then contrasted with the entering into the turtle (*ac*, or, *áak*) in the second paragraph. Thus, the second passage restates the first but replaces a term for vault with one for turtle. The emphasis of this curing chant was likely focused on locating the dangerous spirit within space conceptualized as a turtle. Hanks (1990:339–345) notes that without this step, curing ceremonies would not be effective as it would be impossible for the h-mèen to lock or trap the spirit within a location from which it could be driven from the house or *sòolar* (the large house "garden" and open space associated immediately with the residence). The important point to notice here is that domestic space is conceptualized along similar lines and with the same set of metaphors as Classic-period courtly architecture. Unified metaphors for what on first glance appear to be very different kinds of spaces direct us to try to better understand the conceptual and functional links between these categories.

Palenque House E

House E presents one of the most significant overlooked examples of portal imagery (see Figure 6.2). As the chapters by Linnea Wren, Travis Nygard, and Justine Shaw (Chapter 8) and Flora Clancy (Chapter 5) have demonstrated, discerning and unpacking the relationships among buildings and other features at sites is one of the most effective ways of understanding the significance of each element. While my analysis of House E and Temple 19 will focus more on the texts of one and the imagery and spatial arrangement of the other, these two structures are best understood in relation to one another and as buildings within the larger context of the site. Specifically, my analysis sees House E as a realization of the heavenly location mentioned in the Temple 19 texts where the patron god GI acceded to the throne. In this way House E parallels the Temple of the Cross, which served as the built version of the Six Sky Place (*wak chan nal*) discussed in the mythological texts that adorn its inner sanctuary (Freidel et a1.1993; Schele and Freidel 1990:472, endnote 33; Stuart 2005). Indeed, the Temple of the Cross and the House E/Temple 19 example demonstrate that there are complex relationships between buildings and their mythological prototypes that complicate normative interpretations assigning structures and building complexes to generic categories such as palaces, temples, and funerary monuments, whose significance and functions are taken to be transparent. Acknowledging these relationships reveals the need to analyze specific Maya structures not only within the context of the urban fabric of the city, but to also see them through the discursive spaces presented in iconography and textual narratives.

According to the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs, House E (White House or Sak Nuk Naah), was dedicated by K'inich Janab Pakal on 9.11.2.1.11 (654 CE), after which it served as the location for the accessions of at least three kings: K'inich K'an Joy Chitam II, Ahkal Mo' Nahb III, and K'inich K'uk' Balam II. Despite its art historical significance and role in court ritual, House E and its associated structures, sculpture, murals, and texts have yet to be fully examined in light of advances in epigraphy, iconography, and recent discoveries. One of the most critical discoveries is the excavation of the inscribed Temple 19 Platform (Stuart 2005), which contrasts a narrative of the mythological accession of GI, one of Palenque's patron gods, with a visual presentation of Ahkal Mo' Nahb's crowning. The triangulation of these inscriptions with the iconography and architecture of House E, the Tower Court, and Subterranean Palace structures paints a detailed picture of accession rituals at Palenque and their mythological contexts. Moreover, Pakal's involvement in dedicatory events long after his death (Carrasco 2012a) suggests that the Oval Palace Tablet and associated throne possibly served as the site from which his corporal field (*y-ichnal*) continued to play an active role. Spencer (personal communication 2014) notes that the physical scale and height of the Oval Palace Tablet in relation to the bench below allows for the sitter to perpetually receive the crown. She observes that while it would appear to be a throne back, it is much higher than the back of the person sitting on the bench. The relationship of bench to tablet is such that the head of the sitter would align with the exact spot of the tablet beneath the crown, a composition that would allow for the virtual crowning of the sitter.

The major iconographic features of House E are relatively well known but usually not the subject of detailed analysis. Of particular significance for the present discussion are the Bicephalic Serpent Door (Figure 10.4) and Bicephalic Room (Figure 10.5), as well as the iconography of the Eastern Subterranean vaults that open into House E. Once only associated with death and the underworld (Robertson 1985:25–28, 34), the iconography of what has been called the Two-Headed Dragon (Maudslay 1889–1902, III: Plate 73), Bicephalic Serpent, Celestial Monster, or Starry Deer Crocodile (Stuart 2005:70–73) that Herbert Spinden (1913:56, Figure 57) first identified can now be recognized as representing the sky when celestial signs compose its body. David Stuart (2005:70–73) has suggested that the Starry Deer Crocodile is an aspect of the Celestial Monster or Cosmic Serpent specifically associated with a nocturnal manifestation of the Celestial Monster that symbolizes the Milky Way. Schele and Miller (1986:310–311) observed that this creature frames the arc of the heavens on the Cosmic Plate (Figure 2.7) wherein it lies opposite the portal jaws that bracket the arc of the underworld as well as a scene of the Maize God emerging from a central stone (Taube 1998).

Returning to House E, the jaws of the Bicephalic Serpent Door are an elaborate version of the iconographic portal found in the imagery discussed above (see Figure 10.2). Given the presence both of the imagery of the bicephalic serpent and the portal jaws in the iconography of House E, it is tempting to read the Bicephalic Room as the built version of the space presented on the Cosmic Plate and a number of Piedras Negras stelae, which will be discussed below. Confronted with this iconographic program, it is surprising that to my knowledge no one has explored the relationship between the imagery's depiction of a critical moment in Classic Maya mythology and House E's function as a site of regal accession.

An additional line of information for elucidating House E's meaning comes from the Temple 19 Platform text. The platform, commissioned by Pakal's grandson Ahkal Mo' Nahb, preserves a previously unknown mythic cycle that serves as a template for its patron's accession, illustrated in the accompanying scene. The south face of the platform depicts a member of the court in the guise of Yax Naah Itzamnaaj crowning Ahkal Mo' Nahb, who impersonates (*ubaahanil*) GI, a deity closely tied to the 9 Wind complex of Mesoamerican gods including, most famously, Quetzalcoatl. A hieroglyphic narrative frames the scene and, in addition to describing the accession of GI (C5-D8), also speaks of the slaying of the Starry Deer Crocodile (E3-F3), and fire drilling (Stuart 2005:60–77, Chapter 5). The Temple 19 text explains that the old god Yax Naah Itzamnaaj oversaw GI's accession (*chumlaj ta ajawle[l]*) at a location named as either the face-of-sky (*ta hut?* [T24] *chan* [Carrasco 2005]) or resplendent-sky (*lem* [T24] *chan* [Stuart 2005:66–68]).

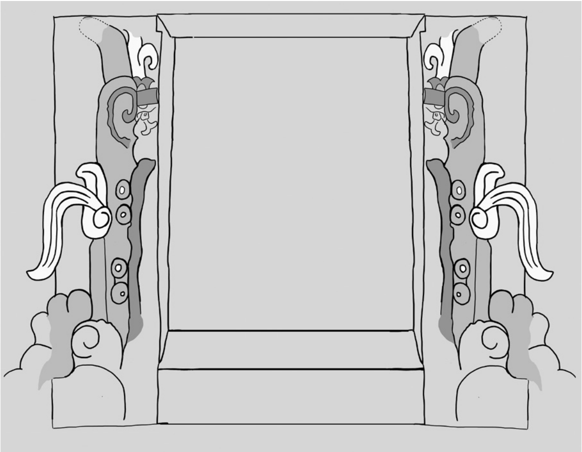


FIGURE 10.4 Bicephalic Serpent Door, House E, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. Composite drawing by Michael D. Carrasco after photography by Linda Schele (Schele Photograph Collection:10081-10082) and reconstruction drawing by Merle Greene Robertson.

Even if the precisely phonetic reading of the T24-CHAN collocation is debatable, its meaning of "heaven" or "heavenly place" is clear. If this is an accurate interpretation and if House E is indeed the location of dynastic coronation, as supported by the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs (Carrasco 2012b), then it is logical to conclude that House E provides the architectonic version of the face-of-sky or heavenly location.

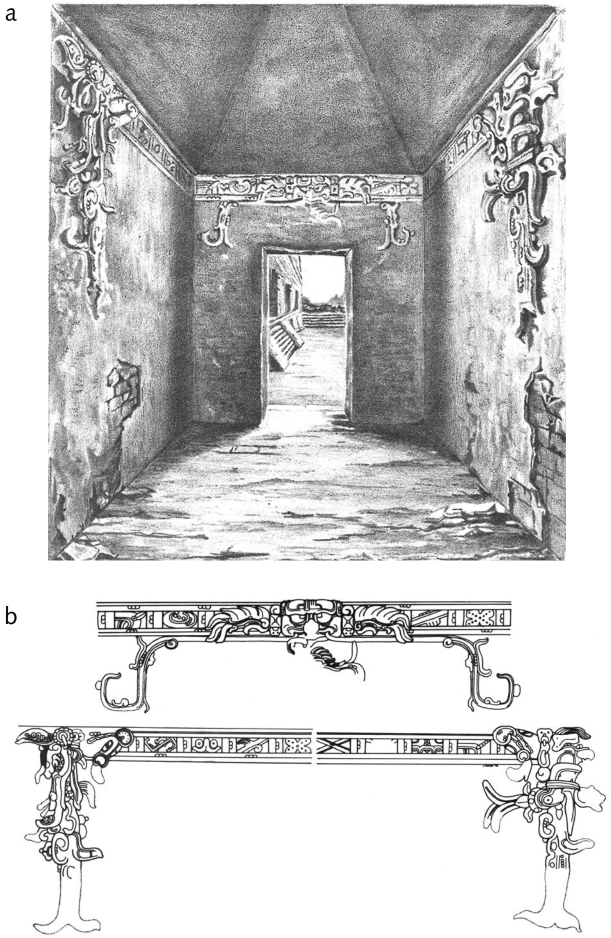


FIGURE 10.5 Bicephalic Room, House E, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, (a) Drawing by A. Hunter in Maudslay (1898–1902: Plate 43); (b) Detail, stucco sculpture depicting the Starry Deer Crocodile as a sky-band in north end of eastern corridor. Drawing by Linda Schele, © David Schele, courtesy of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Schele Drawing Collection:129).

If House E is a built version of the heavenly location described in the Temple 19 Platform text then its iconography can be read more precisely within the context of accession imagery. The Bicephalic Room's skyband, the Bicephalic Serpent Door portal murals, and the imagery of the vaults leading up from the subterranean passages become clearer (Figure 10.6).

One hypothetical version of a coronation would involve the future king beginning in the subterranean passages, moving up through the Eastern passageway, and into the western corridor of House E. He would have to cross into the Tower Court, which would place him directly in front of the Oval Palace Tablet and Del Rio Throne that both illustrate and mark the location of Pakal's accession. It must be remembered that Pakal's accession initiated Palenque's golden age and that later kings, as Pakal's descendants, wished to emulate his rule.

If our hypothetical king were to reenter the western corridor he could move through a narrow passageway connecting the western and eastern corridors that could take him into the Bicephalic Room (i.e., the northern half of the eastern corridor of House E), though other options would have been

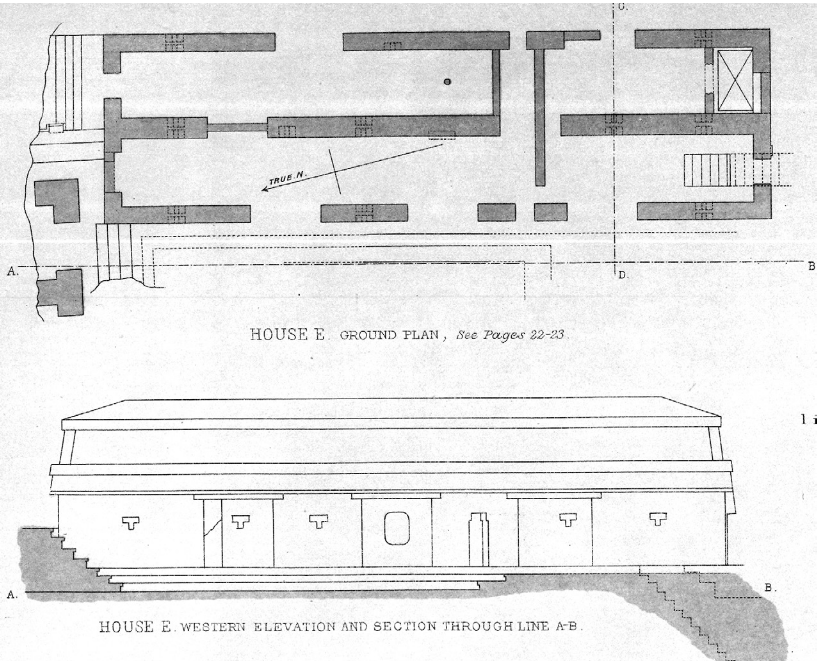
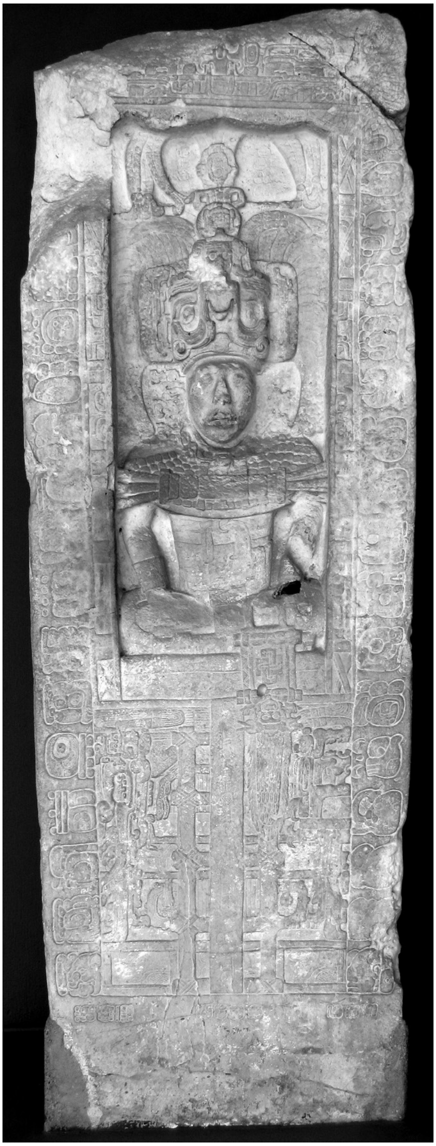

C.
TRUE N.
A.
D.
B
HOUSE E. GROUND PLAN, See Pages 22-23.
A.
B.
HOUSE E. WESTERN ELEVATION AND SECTION THROUGH LINE A-B.

FIGURE 10.6 House E, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, ground plan and western elevation. Drawing in Maudslay (1898–1902, IV, Plate 41).

available. Alternatively, for example, he could continue down the western corridor to pass through the Bicephalic Serpent Door leading to the East Court. Of course there are many other possible ways to reconstruct ancient patterns of movement through the Palace in contrast to other structures, like Tikal's Temple 1, which has a much clearer system of experiential progression (Olton, Chapter 7). However, as Stuart (2005:89) observes, the reference to the Starry Deer Crocodile in the Temple 19 text draws in imagery from other cities, like the iconography found on Piedras Negras stelae, which parallels that of House E. These examples possibly refine our understanding of at least one moment in the nascent king's accession rituals.

The iconography of Piedras Negras Stelae 6, 11, and 25 (accession of Ruler 1), for instance, would appear to be condensed versions of the imagery and spaces found in House E (Figures 10.7, 10.8). Each presents a ruler seated in a niche formed by a skyband with the Starry Deer Crocodile as the head and the quadripartite badge at its rear, exactly as seen in the stucco sculpture that surrounds the north end of the eastern corridor. The head of the crocodile may also be read as the part of the bundled crocodilian body that lies below and before the cushion throne upon which the ruler sits. On Stela 6, footprints lead up a scaffold ladder to indicate that the king, K'inich Yo'nal Ahk II, has climbed into this niche (Figure 10.7). Presumably this movement from the ground level to the celestial niche was key to the message of the image and therefore also to the act performed by the king during the event commemorated on the stela. However, on Stela 11 the footprints lead down from the niche to a sacrificial victim resting in a bowl with a bundle set within his abdomen (Figure 10.8). The figures that flank the frontal scene of the enthroned king on the sides of these stelae suggest that there were multiple participants in the events depicted.

These condensed images do not fully allow the modern viewer to appreciate the extent of the action or the precise nature of the represented spaces. Many commentators have speculated that the depicted structures suggest an ephemeral construction designed specifically for a punctuated ritual event. While nothing speaks against this view, the clear symmetry between these pictorial spaces and House E suggests that this architectural type could be of a more permanent quality. The direct access from House E to the East Court and its iconographic program of captives recalls the relationship of the sacrificed captive found at the base of Piedras Negras Stela 11 (Figure 10.8). In each case prisoners are presented on a lower level. On Stela 11, a prisoner lies limply at the base of the king's seat, while in the courtyard, Spencer (Chapter 6) has called our attention to the fact that the king could physically walk atop the heads of anguished, pre-sacrifice captives. If this is an accurate



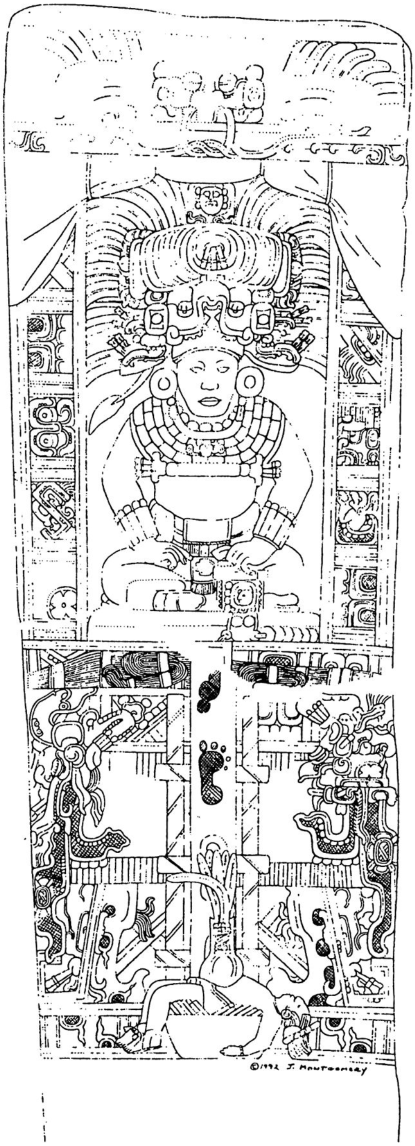


FIGURE 10.7 (LEFT) Stela 6, Piedras Negras, Petén, Guatemala. Photograph by Michael D. Carrasco.

FIGURE 10.8 (RIGHT) Stela 11, Piedras Negras, Petén, Guatemala. Drawing © 2000 by John Montgomery, courtesy of the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies Inc. and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Montgomery Drawing Collection:JM05320).

analogy then the Palace presents a much more deliberately constructed space than hitherto identified, one that seemingly conforms to pictorial spaces presented in narratives from other sites.

Many of the components of these images are found in House E as an experiential space: the ruler moves up from the subterranean passageways into House E. The Bicephalic Room corresponds to the niche on the Piedras Negras stelae. Indeed, at Palenque the temporary scaffold structures used in other accession rituals were realized in stone and stucco, thereby providing a lasting coronation site for Palenque's kings. Additionally, the Bicephalic Serpent Door's similarity to the iconography of royal and deity presentation (see Figure 10.2), of which Pakal's sarcophagus lid is the best known example (Figure 1.17), suggests it also functioned as a presentational framing device.

House E is an instrument for ordering space along several coordinates. Horizontally, the sides of the house align with the cardinal directions while its relationship with the subterranean passages and tower facilitates movement between different spatial levels possibly corresponding to those represented in Figures 3.2–3.3. The Oval Palace Tablet and the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs also locate the structure historically through the citation of previous coronations. The Temple 19 Platform panel ties the historical coronations that occurred in House E to the mythological accession of GI. House E thereby unified mythological locations and ritual performance while simultaneously serving as a locus of memory that helped construct the image of Palenque's dynasty. It also structured, quite literally, how specific dynasts understood themselves through this mythology and in relation to their own particularized history, peopled with specific ancestors.

We can understand House E through the spatial regimes of pictorial, discursive, existential, metaphysical, and cognitive space introduced earlier in this chapter. To run through the first four categories, we could begin with existential space so as to pay close attention to what is actually where and when, as well as the monument's physical and formal relationships to other spaces in the Palace. The relationship between the physical space of House E and the depicted space on the Piedras Negras stelae force engagement with the ways in which existential spaces are translated into pictorial ones. Iconographic spaces, in turn, flesh out the enigmatic locations articulated in glyphic discourse; it is precisely these discursive spaces that allow us to specifically visualize the network of relationships connecting history to myth and viewer to image (see Carrasco 2012a). These networks would be nearly invisible if we were limited to only the physical and representational evidence. Finally, the oscillation between the historical use of House E and its mythological prototype points to a metaphysical or ontological space. In an extended study it would be useful to consider these and other categories further to see if they provide ways of approaching architecture and space that produce improved understandings of the difficult material confronting art and architectural historians of the Maya. Suffice it to say that here I have loosely deployed these categories so as to emphasize the range of issues that they could potentially address.

Conclusion

Architectural terminology and Classic-period iconography demonstrate that cosmological narratives were instantiated not only in iconographic programs, but also in architectural form. This observation has significant ramifications for understanding other architectural features and instances in which buildings lack sculptural programs. Namely, it suggests that structures often expressed fundamental cosmological concepts in their form. When coupled with other formal features, such as alignments and numerical symbolism (e.g., the nine terraces on the Temple of the Inscriptions or Tikal's Temple 1), a picture of a highly symbolic architecture emerges. Upon these structures were then inscribed and sculpted a repetition of forms and symbols at different scales. The density of the redundancy of the information in architecture and on other classes of objects—common and elite—spun a connecting thread through different social strata and allowed for an immediately intuitive phenomenological understanding of what one might imagine formed some of the more esoteric images and rituals of Maya society. The point here is that it was being-in-space, experience, and the memory of similar forms and practices that were important carriers of meaning, as the authors in this volume show. The meaning expressed in form, phenomenological experience, and memory worked alongside the semantic information of specific iconography or texts that are generally—rightly or wrongly—believed to have been less accessible to the general population (for a discussion of literacy rates, please refer to Werness-Rude and Spencer, Chapter 1, Writing and Artistry). While the relationships between sculptural and pictorial imagery and architectural forms have received little art historical scrutiny in Mesoamerica, it is perhaps one of the richest areas for future work.

These examples as well as the ones collected by our contributors also demonstrate that one of the common ways of creating special spaces and structures among the Maya was to coordinate these places with specific locations from mythology. Thus, to name a building particularized it and therefore made it special. The Maya did not make use of abstract formulations, such as "sacred space" so common in our discussion of indigenous spatial concepts. Naming, ordering, and inscribing especially significant places—as the various chapters contained within this book and the foregoing case study demonstrate—with historical and mythological information lead us to more productive ways of getting at the emic discourse on ontic space than does the rehashing of the major features of Maya cosmological space. Common themes in the study of space and architecture, such as directionality, cosmic levels, and other fundamental ordering principles, while necessary for understanding ancient art and architecture, do not, and have not, allowed for an adequate appreciation of the complexity found in the formal symbolism of Maya architecture, the historical and mythological references built into it, or the relationships between this formal, aniconic symbolism and the iconic sculptural program it supports.

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Notes

1. To list even a moderately complete list of works on architecture, space, and related topics is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, an understanding of Maya architecture has greatly benefited from the work of George F. Andrews (1975, 1995), Paul Gendrop (1983), Stephen Houston (1996, 1998), Jeff Kowalski (1987, 1999), Harry E. D. Pollock (1980), and Linda Schele and Peter Mathews (1998). Issues of urban planning, site alignments, and toponyms have been taken up in the scholarship of Wendy Ashmore (1989, 1991, 1992; Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Ashmore and Sabloff 2002), Anthony Aveni (2001, 2008; Aveni et al. 2003; Aveni and Hartung 1986), and David Stuart and Stephen Houston (1994).

2. In PreClassic-period examples a bar often replaces the central dot (Taube 2000).

3. The Wayeb glyph is formed from the combination of T591/769 and **HAAB** (T548). In most examples T591 lies above the Haab glyph.

4. The inscription reads: **OCH-bi-ya u-SAK-IK'-li ti-a-ku-li TUUN-ni-li**, for *ochbiiy u sak ik'il ti ahkil tuunil*, "his [K'ahk' Tiliw's] soul entered the road at the vault" (literally turtle stone).

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Flora Simmons Clancy was an authority on ancient Maya iconography and culture. As a student of George Kubler, Clancy extended his pioneering approach to develop art historical methods for understanding Maya ways of creating and modifying the built environment. She authored numerous books and scholarly articles and her best-known publications in relation to the topic at hand include *Pyramids* (with Jeremy A. Sabloff, Smithsonian, 1995), *Sculpture in the Ancient Maya Plaza: The Early Classic* (University of New Mexico Press, 1999), *Vision and Revision in Maya Studies* (coedited with Peter D. Harrison, University of New Mexico Press, 1990), and *The Monuments of Piedras Negras, an Ancient Maya City* (University of New Mexico Press, 2009). As these works demonstrate, Clancy adroitly employed art historical methodologies in the interpretation of ancient Maya visual culture and its arrangement in space. As a professor of art history at the University of New Mexico, Clancy had a distinguished career as a teacher, mentor, and chair. She acted as a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow at the School of American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico, for example, and was also awarded a Senior Bliss Fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, D.C.

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ISBN 978-0-8263-5579-9

University of New Mexico Press
unmpress.com | 800-249-7737