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The Once and Future King: A New Approach to Ancient Maya Mortuary Monuments from Palenque, Tikal, and Copan

Elizabeth Olton

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**THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING: A NEW APPROACH TO
ANCIENT MAYA MORTUARY MONUMENTS FROM
PALENQUE, TIKAL, AND COPAN**

BY

ELIZABETH DRAKE OLTON

B.A., Art History, Augustana College, 1987
M.A., Art History, University of Illinois, Chicago, 1999

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy
Art History**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May, 2010

DEDICATION

For
my mother
Nancy Drake Olton

And in memory of my father
Robert Nicholas Olton
1921-2004

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Researching, writing, and molding this dissertation into a coherent document has been the result of many years of work. The following people have been instrumental in the development and completion of this project. I authored this dissertation, but many of the insights and innovative perceptions were due to the guidance of my committee and other mentors.

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ABSTRACT

In the years between 683 to 734 C.E., the ancient Maya cities of Palenque, Tikal, and Copan experienced great change caused by the death and burial of powerful kings and the accession of new kings. As demonstrated in evidence from the mortuary rituals and interments of K'inich Janaab Pakal, Jasaw Chan K'awiil, and K'ahk Uti' Wiz' K'awiil and in their respective mortuary monuments, the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, Temple I at Tikal, and Temple 26 at Copan, these funerary events initiated new forms of art and architecture that changed the ceremonial cores of their respective cities. Memorializing a dead king was not the function of these temples. Instead, they were statements of continuity that were articulated in themes of renewal, transformation, and intergenerational convergence. Evidence suggests that the ancient Maya understood these monuments in their entirety; they were thus comprehended as funerary temples that were designed to be experienced in a manner that went beyond cognitive understanding.

This dissertation examines the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 and explores what could have motivated the Maya to construct these large monuments and how they might have been meaningful. Traditional art historical methods of comparative and formal analyses are employed as tools for discussing patterns of meaning among these temples. The structural and decorative programs shared by all three temples signal that they are part of a separate genre of architecture that is specifically mortuary and interactive. Furthermore, these features are also a mode of communication. Messages depicted in the offerings, sculpture, and spaces of the royal interment resonated throughout the entire monument thus creating parallel environments. Architecture and imagery thereby become the agents for experience and meaning: these structures were active places that engaged the viewer, set up a series of experiences, and elicited a particular set of responses. These three monuments symbolized a continuum and depicted in their forms, spaces, and imagery was the cyclical progression of life and rebirth.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

If a house, a building, or a city is not palpably haunted in its architectural features—if the earth’s historicity and containment of the dead do not pervade its articulated forms and constitutive matter—then that house, building, or city is dead to the world. Dead to the world means cut off from the earth and closed off from its underworlds. For that is one of the ironies of our life world: they receive their animation from the ones that underlie them.¹

The epigraph comes from Robert Pogue Harrison’s book *The Dominion of the Dead*, and although he explores the culture and architecture of death from a Western perspective, his observations provide a powerful entrée to my examination of ancient Maya funerary temples. Like Harrison, my perspective is predicated on the manners in which the eighth-century Maya interacted with mortuary monuments. I am inspired by his approach to mortuary architecture and his observations on the continuity between life and death. For the ancient Maya inhabiting the cities of Palenque, Tikal, and Copan, the dead were always close. This “haunting” can be observed in the life the cycle of a corn plant and in the intergenerational convergence between a parent and a child; it is also evident in the transformation of a dead king into a living ancestor; and it is evoked in the experience of ancient Maya funerary architecture.

I began my dissertation work by asking several questions that explored the “hows” of Maya funerary temples. For example: “How was the temple meaningful?” and “How was it built?” I delved into the archaeology, analyzed the formal qualities, and examined the iconographies of numerous funerary structures. Since 2003 when I began this project, I have reevaluated these observations, and today my inquiries are founded on questions like “Why

¹ Harrison, *Dominion*, 36.

build the monument?” In other words, what query or need did these monuments satisfy for the ancient Maya who were compelled to construct the mortuary temples of Janaab Pakal from Palenque, Jasaw Chan K’awiil at Tikal, and Ruler 12 at Copan. I respond to this question in two ways, First I describe and analyze the structures. I do not emphasize is not placed on building history or chronology, rather my examination is focused on considering how the structure was used and understood. The second half of my response interprets the structures, archaeologies, and imagery from these temples as a series of codes that were meaningful for an ancient Maya audience.

Late Classic Maya rulers were honored in ritual and buried in sumptuous tomb chambers, and the actual interment of these rulers was the primary function of mortuary monuments. However when these structures are considered as a fusion of architecture and sculpture, when the boundaries between inside and outside are dissolved, then these monuments can be examined as objects that also expressed symbolic functions. Evidence suggests that the ancient Maya did not consider these monuments as atomized spaces; instead they understood these structures in their entirety.

In general, architecture has many functions, least of which is to shelter and contain people and things. It can also be considered an *object* in space that people moved through and interacted with. Turning away from previous analyses of Maya mortuary monuments I seek to consider these structures in holistic terms as spaces that are intrinsically different from other architecture and reflective of the needs of the living. In order to remake these buildings into objects, traditional spatial distinctions are deconstructed. Part 1 of the dissertation partially deconstructs the monuments by dividing them into three separate parts (Subterranean, Terrestrial and Celestial levels) and comparing them to one another. This

detailed description is the foundation for part 2, which is an interpretation of these structures as objects and as “symbolic” architecture.

The inhumation of a ruler in a magnificent burial chamber that was encased in a massive structure was a choice, not a critical necessity for the ancient Maya. This dissertation explores what could have motivated the Maya to construct these large temples and how they might have been meaningful. The Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 are spectacular funerary monuments, but sentiments of grief and nostalgia are not part of their vocabulary. As a separate genre of architecture, these monuments proclaim intergenerational convergence; they engender transformation; and they depict renewal. Furthermore, the related themes of convergence and renewal are conveyed through the fusion of image and space, as seen and experienced in the parallel iconographies of these temples. These reinforcing parallel entities deliberately effected transformation for the populace, the elite community, and the deceased.

A New Approach

In July of 1998 I was working in an excavation tunnel located within a subsumed structure in Temple 26.² My task was to help excavate a cache that had been interred in the floor of a small room.³ Polychrome plaster, tiny shells, and a series of architectural decorations removed from their original contexts were placed together in this offering.⁴ The colored chips

² I was a participant in the Harvard Field School at Copan, Honduras. William L. Fash, professor of anthropology and director of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, and Barbara Fash, who is currently the director of the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions at the Peabody Museum, organized the program. I am indebted to them for giving me this extraordinary experience, which was one of the inspirations for this dissertation.

³ The “Hijole” structure is still under investigation and does not appear on the stratigraphic map of Temple 26. Fash, *Scribes*, 20. Archaeologist William L. Fash dates this structure to the reign of Ruler 12.

⁴ The tenoned sculptures are enigmatic works and more research needs to be done on this imagery. Based on my recollections there were around ten tenoned heads recovered from the cache. Jennifer von Scherwin née Ahfeldt has speculated that these works may have originally adorned Temple 22. The caching of architectural

of stucco may have once been part of a painted narrative, the shells might have symbolized a watery environment, and the tenoned deity heads most likely emphasized the line of a cornice, as their imagery is reminiscent of supernatural fishermen, water deities or paddler figures (fig. 1).⁵ The sculpted supernatural figures were and are visually striking. Their inclusion in the cache was exciting but their appearance also gave rise to questions about how mortuary monuments functioned, what their spaces symbolized, and the nature of change. Like the deceased ruler, who was buried in this monument and transformed into an ancestor, these disparate items from the Híjole cache could also have been transformed, thus becoming markers of sacred space.

Temple 26 and other Maya funerary monuments represented ancient structures that I had studied but never previously experienced. Their building histories, burials, and imagery were for me abstract and separate entities loosely connected to the monument as a whole. While working in Temple 26 and traversing its excavated interiors, I developed a foundation from which to look at the structure in its totality—its hidden interiors and visible exteriors. Recollections of my experiences in Temple 26 supported my sense of mortuary structures as places that were meaningful in their entirety. This dissertation expands upon my experiences and thoughts from the field, using them as a basis for a new approach to mortuary monuments. Using both formal and comparative analyses, from a point of view inspired by phenomenological questions, I am will be looking at the funerary temple of K'inich Janaab

decoration from other contexts within a burial or a cache is uncommon, but this is not the first time this type of offering has been seen in the archaeological record. Beneath the sarcophagus of Pakal inside the Temple of the Inscriptions is an offering of modeled stucco heads that may have also come from an architectural context; in this instance the building that they were pulled from dates after the interment of Pakal. This particular cache will be discussed later in the dissertation.

⁵ After reviewing the style and formal qualities of these creatures, I believe they are strikingly similar to representations of the Paddler Gods or fishermen depicted on carved bones from Burial 116. For drawings see Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27*, figure 191.

Pakal I known as the Temple of the Inscriptions; the mortuary monument of Jasaw Chan K'awiil I, which is Temple I; and within Temple 26, the Chorchá structure, which housed K'ahk Uti' Witz' K'awiil (Ruler 12, 628–95 CE).⁶

By combining fieldwork, archival research, and the study of excavation reports, I have concluded that these three temples are part of a separate genre of architecture. This observation is supported by shared visual and spatial characteristics from the temples' structural and decorative programs. My perspective does not preclude that there are significant differences between the three monuments, many of which are easily discernable and have been discussed by scholars for years; however, what makes this current study unusual is its focus on these structures' similarities. I have made three observations about the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 that support my interpretations. First, the deposition of a king's body was immensely important to the living, the society at large, and the ruling family in particular, as such mortuary temples were not frozen in time but were activated through ritual and reentry. Second, messages depicted in the architecture, sculpture, and offerings from the tomb chamber resonated throughout the monument. Third, the sacred natural environment, which was understood by the ancient Maya both literally and conceptually, can be used as a model for interpreting these royal mortuary monuments.

The design of these structures was distinct—they were carefully planned, and extensive rituals accompanied their construction. Furthermore, mortuary monuments had various features that distinguished them from other structures, such as the incorporation of references that were funerary in nature or referred to renewal: for example, the use of the

⁶ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 162, 44, 200. I defer to Martin and Grube's 2008 volume for the spelling of these rulers' names and their accession and death dates.

numbers nine and thirteen.⁷ The exterior imagery of these monuments, ranging between the figurative, narrative, and the conceptual, is echoed in the structure and decoration of the interior spaces. There exists a tension between the public and private spaces of these monuments, which creates a sensory dynamic that is like viewing sculpture and architecture simultaneously.⁸ This tension can be observed in the relationships between three areas: the exterior surfaces, the interiors of the superstructure, and the tomb chambers. Finally, these structures house the inhumation of a royal person and are analogous to the “humic architecture” of phenomenologist Harrison, which quite literally refers to architecture fused to the earth (composed of organic materials including plants, and human remains). Harrison explains, “I would expect a humic architecture of this sort to be vertical in the downward and not only upward sense, and its rising to be more of an emerging than a soaring.”⁹ Maya mortuary architecture was founded on history and humus as the royal grave was interred in this mixture. However, the inhumation of the king satisfied only a portion of the whole interment process, and the extensive terrestrial (aboveground) and celestial (superstructure) features of these structures are a testament to these later concerns.

The architecture and material culture of these monuments provide evidence that the living needed to maintain continuity with the dead. Offerings and internal architectures that physically and conceptually linked the tomb chamber to the outside world illustrate what Susan Gillespie has observed, that these spaces “have more to do with the relationships

⁷ References to myth and ritual are also prevalent in the hieroglyphic texts associated with these structures. There are striking examples of this from the Temple of the Inscriptions (carved panels and writings from the sarcophagus cover and base) and Temple I (carved bones from the western aisle of Burial 116 and from the carved Lintels 2 and 3). At Temple 26 the hieroglyphic stairway’s inscriptions recount myth and history (though these interpretations are still being verified, and the glyphs are still being read). The multiple carved objects cached throughout the many subsumed structures of Temple 26 are other sources of writings that discuss ritual and myth.

⁸ Davies, *Death and the Emperor*, 2.

⁹ Harrison, *Dominion of the Dead*, 35.

negotiated by the survivors between themselves and the dead and/or the ancestors the dead will become.”¹⁰ Sealing the tomb did not terminate the efficacy of the royal interment, rather this act may have represented a phase in a series of royal exequies and commemorations.

Art historian Andrea Stone has observed that a cognitive ideology existed within the ritual contexts of caves.¹¹ In caves these messages are comprehended by individuals traversing through the parallel spaces of tunnels, pits, and chambers and taking notice of meaningful patterns in the environment. Similar resonances are found within the spaces of the man-made funerary temple and were understood both physically and conceptually. The internal parallels of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 become clear when these spaces are considered in their totality. Thus I argue that the monuments should be viewed as interactive entities, as sacred environments that engaged the viewer in ways that moved beyond historicity.

Over forty years ago ethnographer Evan Vogt hypothesized that ancient Maya temples and sacred mountains were comparable entities.¹² Through archaeological investigations, hieroglyphic decipherments, and interpretations of iconography, scholars have realized that these monumental cousins, the mortuary temple and the mountain, both composed of stone and earth, each containing burials and caves, are more alike than previously thought. Likewise, an understanding of the relationships between the sculpture, spaces, and deposits of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 is essential to a discussion and validation of my observations. Grounding my research in archaeology

¹⁰ Gillespie, “Personhood,” 78.

¹¹ Stone, “A Cognitive Approach,” 249–54, 264–65. Prior to reading Stone’s work, I noticed a similar phenomenon and coined the phrase “spatial iconography,” which will be used in this dissertation.

¹² Vogt, “On the Concepts,” 19–33; Vogt, “Ancient Maya,” 192–95. Not all sacred mountains contain caves with human interments inside, but enough burials have been documented in this context to make this ancient practice part of the general literature of ancient Mesoamerican sacred geography.

and formal analysis has made some of these observations possible; however, this dissertation also reflects a new perspective that is informed by architectural theory, semiotics, and phenomenology.

The Three Temples

This brief description of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 is meant as a short introduction to the architecture, decoration, and spaces of the three temples. Although the monuments contain the remains of a Maya ruler and are roughly coeval to one another, there are ways in which they contrast; however, I believe these are more reflective of the unique needs of each dynasty rather than a shift in an overall narrative of convergence, transformation, and renewal.

The Temple of the Inscriptions is a nine platform temple crowned by a superstructure containing a portico that faces out toward a plaza (615–83 CE) (figs. 2,3). Six piers support the portico, four of which are decorated with figures holding an infant. Attached to the exterior walls of the superstructure are two inscribed panels that frame the portico entrance leading to three rear chambers. Adhered to the back wall of the central chamber is a third inscribed panel. A hidden stair was found beneath the flagstone floor.¹³ This passage descended into the monument and lead to an internal architecture that included the vaulted tomb chamber of Pakal and an axis, called a psychoduct that was both sinuous and angular linking the subterranean to the celestial. Pakal's carved sarcophagus and cover is the centerpiece of the chamber, and depicted on the lid is a portrait of the deceased ruler guised

¹³ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 80.

as an infant. The monument was constructed in one building phase and was begun by the ruler Pakal and completed by his son Kan Bahlam II.¹⁴

Temple I is also a nine platform structure that was completed in one building campaign—it was started by Jasaw and finished by his son Yik'in Chan K'awiil (682–734 CE) (figs. 4,5). Architectural sculpture is figurative and concentrated in the roof-comb and although heavily eroded, the ruler Jasaw is most likely the figure depicted seated on a throne. Temple I's superstructure is small, yet within this space there are also carved hieroglyphic narratives. Rather than being inscribed on panels they are found on lintels that span two doorways. Depicted on these wooden lintels are what George Kubler has described as “doubled” portraits of the enthroned ruler Jasaw.¹⁵ A vaulted tomb chamber was found deep inside Temple I, and interestingly features from the interment are repeated in the superstructure's interior space. Jasaw's burial was not accessed by an internal stairway but was completely subsumed by the temple. The burial chamber was however, marked by a massive cache of obsidian and flint chips that was in excess of 9 meters thick.¹⁶

The final or last building phase of Temple 26 encompassed the burial monument of Ruler 12 (final phase, ca. 755 CE) (figs. 6,7).¹⁷ Unlike the other structures, Temple 26 has an extensive building history and was constructed in approximately nine phases; the burial structure of Ruler 12 is number fifth in this series of subsumed buildings. Like the tomb chambers from Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I this internment was also marked in space, not by a stairway or cache but by twelve incense burners. Modeled in clay, their lids

¹⁴ Robertson, *Temple*, 44,45; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 165.

¹⁵ Kubler, “Double –Portrait,” 321.

¹⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 607.

¹⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 111.

are portraits of Ruler 12 and his dynastic predecessors.¹⁸ Although the burial structure of Ruler 12 is suspended within the sub-constructions of Temple 26 the spaces of the interment and tomb chamber reflects a Subterranean, Terrestrial and Celestial level arrangement. Like the psychoduct from the Temple of the Inscriptions and the lithic cache from Temple I, the twelve incense burners linked these levels together. The western façade of Temple 26 is adorned with thirteen stepped platforms and an extensive hieroglyphic stairway. Embedded in the stair are five seated figures and one standing figure. These elite personages were most likely portraits of former Copan dynasts. Although buried under three additional structures, the interment of Ruler 12 was not forgotten, and it was explicitly in two places on the hieroglyphic stair.¹⁹ Ruler 12's son began the final phase of Temple 26, and it was eventually completed by Ruler 15.²⁰

Core Resources

For an art historian studying ancient Maya art and architecture, primary sources consist of two types: archaeological reports and personal field experience. A major focus of this dissertation is a comparison and contrast of the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, Temple I at Tikal, and Temple 26 at Copan in order to explore their meanings. Ample archaeological information exists for these monuments, as do reconstructive analyses. Ready access to these monuments was another factor in my decision on what temples to include, and spending time inside the natural and built environments, studying the masonry and sculpture, was vital to my investigation. At the Temple of the Inscriptions I was able to visit the tomb of Pakal on several occasions, and my participation in the Copan Field School

¹⁸ Fash and others, "The Hieroglyphic Stairway," 112.

¹⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 146.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 150.

provided me with access to the archaeological tunnels from Temple 26, which included the burial of Ruler 12 inside the Chorchá structure. Excavating within the tunnel was a rare opportunity to work inside the context of a mortuary monument. Although I did not conduct archaeological work at Tikal, opportunities to study Temple I from dawn until after dusk (along with other similar temples, such as Temples IV and V) were virtually unlimited. Individually, this fieldwork was different, but considered as a group these experiences laid the foundation for this dissertation. While I focus on these three monuments for the practical reasons described previously, I contend that my findings may well be applicable to other ancient Maya mortuary monuments (fig. 8).

This dissertation is dependant upon the facts of excavations and the findings of archaeologists, as they are the basis for my interpretations. Alberto Ruz Lhuillier's seminal book *El Templo de las Inscripciones* (1973) has been an invaluable resource. His detailed descriptions of the archaeological process, photographs and drawings, and interpretations created a narrative of the building not seen in other books. The exhaustive *Excavations in the Great Plaza, North Terrace, and North Acropolis*, (Tikal Report 14, 1990) by William Coe was vital for my comprehension of Temples I and II and of the North Acropolis, North Terrace, and Great Plaza. William Coe's refined understanding of and commentary on the archaeology and reconstructions of these spaces and their temples present a clear description of the accomplishments and trials of such a huge excavation project. Correspondingly, the descriptions and analyses of Temple 26 by William L. Fash were an essential resource. Fash's book *Scribes, Warriors, and Kings* (2001) and his other articles provide vital information on the burial of Ruler 12 and the complex archaeology of Temple 26. Bruce Welsh's inventory of ancient Maya burials, *An Analysis of Classic Lowland Maya Burials*

(1988), and the most recent work by James Fitzsimmons, *Death and the Classic Maya Kings* (2009), provide important comparative information on the locations and orientations of royal burials from outside this study. Fitzsimmons's book is more than an inventory of royal burials; he also interprets the archaeology and epigraphy associated with ancient Maya mortuary traditions, so his volume is a valuable secondary resource. Mortuary ritual read in the epigraphic record has been detailed in the work of Marcus Eberl in *Muerte, entierro, y ascensión* (2005). He, along with Fitzsimmons, has been instrumental in examining these rites as processes that may have taken months if not years to complete.

Resources that are closely allied to archaeology but are also interpretive have been equally valuable for this dissertation. Merle Greene Robertson's monumental volume *The Temple of the Inscriptions* (1983) has sensitively reproduced and examined the colors, styles, and forms of the sculpture from the temple. Her work augmented Ruz Lhuillier's detailed chronology of the archaeology of this monument. Robertson asked different questions of the temple and its archaeology based on the communicative power of sculpture rather than its architectural development and archaeology. In addition, her documentation of the temple's imagery, in both drawings and photographs, has been invaluable. Another work that is related to archaeology, but which supplies both insightful and comprehensive interpretations, is Clemency Coggins's dissertation "Painting and Drawing Styles at Tikal" (1975). Coggins's work is a portrait of a dynasty informed by mortuary expressions. Her dissertation has proven to be a vital interpretive model that greatly influenced my work.

Patricia McNany also presented innovative interpretations of archaeology and imagery associated with burials. Her book *Living with the Ancestors* (1995) is a melding of archaeological with anthropological theory, and she has astutely proposed that scholars

should focus more on how mortuary spaces, whether elite or commoner, were integral to the maintenance of lineages and ancestors, and were not simply locations to depose the dead. Other secondary sources include proceedings from the symposium “The Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices” from the 1966 meeting of the American Anthropological Association. The seminal work of archaeologist Lewis Binford, “Mortuary Practices: Their Study and Their Potential” (1971) published in the proceedings of the conference, provided a systematized model for the study of burials where none had previously existed. His paper articulated the need to look beyond mere description and classification of tomb furniture to consider questions of social behavior. I used Susan Gillespie’s “Personhood, Agency, and Mortuary Ritual: A Case Study from the Ancient Maya” (2001) as a foil for the empirical examinations proposed by Binford. These secondary resources represent thoughtful interpretations of the environments of Maya royal burials and the imagery associated with these interments. This scholarship makes clear that interment of the king was not the sole purpose of mortuary monuments.

Penelope Davies’s book *Death and the Emperor* (2000) is a thorough yet succinct art historical examination of Roman imperial mortuary architecture and its meaning. Like the cities of the seventh- and eighth-century Maya, Imperial Rome was highly politicized. Funerary structures functioned to house the dead but also operated as succession monuments. Davis proposes that mortuary architecture should be considered as a separate genre, a perspective I have sought to use in this dissertation. In addition, Davies has observed, as have I, that these structures were a fusion of architecture and sculpture.

Analyses that focus on architecture, such as “The Design of Space in Maya Architecture” by George Kubler (1985), and Flora Clancy’s examinations of sculpture (“A

formal Analysis of the Relief Carved Monuments at Tikal, Guatemala,” 1980, *Sculpture in the Ancient Maya Plaza* 1999) have provided me with a perspective that considers the meanings of these forms. Kubler’s descriptions go beyond the *utilitas* of ceremonial structures and instead invite us to explore the many symbolic possibilities of these monuments. This is particularly true of his discussion of the meanings of pre-Columbian roads from Yucatan.²¹ Like Kubler, Clancy places forms at the center of her analyses, and her discussions of sculpture in *Sculpture in the Ancient Maya Plaza* are concerned with how imagery is meaningful through the various forms it takes. Her examinations include an analysis of how the contexts and compositions of sculpture affected the legibility of form.²² Davies’s, Kubler’s, and Clancy’s observations are concerned with the manner by which monuments and sculpture communicated to a viewer, thus shaping that viewer’s experience.

Complementing the formal analyses of Davies, Kubler, and Clancy are theories of urban planning, architecture, and experience by Henri Lefebvre and Umberto Eco, while Phenomenologists Robert Pogue Harrison and Emmanuel Lévinas consider the relationships between the dead and the living. Specifically, the work of Lefebvre, a philosopher and social theorist, helped me to consider space as both a physical entity and something that is socially constructed. Although his work in *The Production of Space* (1991) is focused on modern Paris, he discusses the built environment and “space” as socially constructed and meaningful. Eco, a semiotician, literary critic, and philosopher, comments on the symbolic function of architecture, which, like Lefebvre’s space, can be considered a type of a social construct. His article “Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture” (1980) explores architecture as an

²¹ Kubler, “The Design,” 242–43.

²² Clancy, *Sculpture*, 13–25.

object that may have had various functions, some of which are related to its utility and others that reflect its symbolic use within a community.²³

Eco's discussion of architecture as a type of "object" to be experienced presents an opportunity for a theoretical dialogue with semiotics and phenomenology with regard to Maya mortuary monuments. The Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 can be approached as a type of "Eco-object." As such, the monuments may be conceptually visualized in their entirety, with boundaries between interior and exterior erased. According to Eco, the denotative features of a temple are those that reflect a "codified function," while the temple's structure may simultaneously connote a symbolic function.²⁴ Explorations and interpretations of ancient Maya funerary architecture in terms of its mortuary contexts tell only half the story; how the monument communicated to an ancient audience or participant needs to be considered as well. As Eco observed, these questions are not opposed: "Seeing functions from the semiotic point of view might permit one to understand and define them better . . . thereby to discover other types of functionality, which are just as essential but which a straight functionalist interpretation keeps one from perceiving."²⁵

Robert Pogue Harrison's book *The Dominion of the Dead* (2003) and his article "Hic Jacet" (2002) present a phenomenological reading of mortuary architecture. He suggests that structures for the dead can be read as markers of place and contribute to a culture's understanding of its history; in other words, they can be read as origin places. Harrison remarks that during the Paleolithic, dwellings for the dead were constructed before permanent homes for the living were built. What motivated these ancient people could have

²³ Eco, "Function and Sign," 20–24.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 12.

been ancestor worship and also the need to create a sense of place.²⁶ For the ancient Maya who buried their dead kings in the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, these monuments were continuums that represented cycles of time articulated in the creation of children and in the creation of ancestors.

Emmanuel Lévinas is another phenomenologist who considers how the experience of death affects the living. In *Time and the Other* (1979), he proposes that to die is to create the future; this is most eloquently expressed in his notion of paternity. Levinas seeks to resolve death's vagaries by exploring its reconfiguration as an augur of the future. The oblivion of death becomes tangible in a future that is transcendent and most cogently realized in the creation of a child.²⁷ Consequently, Lévinas defines time as the progression of a cycle—in this sense, the past, present, and future can be examined as a coherent *totality*.²⁸ Levinas's ideas are particularly salient when applied to ancient Maya mortuary architecture and themes of dynastic succession.

Grounding my research in the physical and historical aspects of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 has provided me with essential facts on which to base my interpretations. Readings based on iconography and epigraphy helped to organize this information and place it within the context of ancient Maya ritual. Considering how these complex structures and their royal interments may have been meaningful requires an understanding of form and space, while theories that address visual codes and phenomenological experience inspired me to ask questions that have not been previously considered.

²⁶ Harrison, *Dominion*, 18.

²⁷ Levinas, *Time*, 91.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 80

Chapter Outline

This dissertation has been organized into two sections. Part 1 is a detailed analysis and comparison of the physical, formal, and material evidence from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26. The themes of Subterranean, Terrestrial, and Celestial levels serve to organize this analysis, and these three sections correspond to chapters 2, 3, and 4. Part 2 considers the implications of analyses from part 1: chapter 5 interprets mortuary rituals within the context of the three temples, and chapter 6 explores how these monuments were meaningful to the subjects of the interred rulers and their progeny.

Early in my research it became clear that in order to look at these mortuary monuments from a holistic perspective and as part of an architectural genre, I would need to examine their component parts individually. Part 1 represents a comparison between the analogous spaces of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26. The reader will quickly notice that although part 1 is a traditional art historical comparison and formal analysis, the manner in which information is organized is untraditional and based on themes corresponding to the Mesoamerican cosmos.

Although this approach essentially contradicts the intent of the dissertation (to explore these monuments in their entirety), it does perform three important functions that are of value when considering the meanings of the monuments. First, this approach creates a frame for comparative analyses between temples; second, it deemphasizes concepts of “interior” and “exterior”; and third, this organization employs Maya concepts of the vertical cosmos to describe and explore this sacred architecture.

Separating the forms and structures of these temples into intersite comparisons also allows for closer and more focused analyses. In chapter 2 the interments of Janaab Pakal,

Jasaw Chan K'awiil, and K'ahk Uti' Witz' K'awiil are all compared to one another within the Subterranean level.²⁹ In addition, the post-interment spaces, the areas “in-between” the tomb chamber and the superstructure, are also examined. The Terrestrial level of chapter 3 contains an analysis of the architectural footprint and design profile of the monuments. In chapter 4 the Celestial level corresponds to the superstructure, which is an entity distinctly related to the Subterranean level.³⁰ Analyzing the physical aspects of these monuments through the use of themes allows for new questions to be asked of the archaeology and architecture, and furthermore this method encourages synchronic comparisons among the monuments.

Part 2 is a discussion of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 as complete objects that concretized themes of renewal, transformation, and convergence. Temple 26 will be discussed as the Cleft Mountain of Mesoamerican myth, a place of renewal and site of the ancestors' cyclical birth and rebirth. The cleft in this symbolic temple-mountain is denoted by the line or “fissure” of the hieroglyphic stairway. The superstructure of Temple I can be considered a re-creation of Burial 116, as is evidenced by both its structure and archaeology. Inside the confines of the darkened space was a burial in the floor, and above, carved on lintels were two portraits of the deceased king. Like a cave, the shrine's interior was a place of ritual and transformation. At the Temple of the Inscriptions, parallel iconographies between the imagery on the sarcophagus cover and the superstructure pier reliefs depicted the convergence between parent, child, and ancestor. As I compare component parts of each structure and examine these temples in their entirety, the symbolic

³⁸ In the remainder of the dissertation I refer to these three kings by shortened versions of their names: Janaab' Pakal will be called Pakal, Jasaw Chan K'awiil will be Jasaw, and K'ahk Uti' Witz' K'awiil will be Ruler 12.

function of these monuments becomes clear. These three funerary temples symbolized a continuum for the living in service to the future and in their forms, spaces, and imagery depicted a continuous progression of life and rebirth.

The progeny of Pakal, Jasaw, and Ruler 12 are representative of this continuum of cyclicity and transformation. The reflexive messages of convergence depicted in the reclining images of Pakal and Kan Bahlam, the spaces of Jasaw and his son Yik'in Chan K'awiil (Ruler B), and the sculpture and inscriptions of the hieroglyphic stairway built by Ruler 13 (son of Ruler 12) and Ruler 15 (more than likely a relative of the previous rulers) highlight a narrative that is explicitly intergenerational.³¹ These three sons are responsible for the messages of the superstructures, which can also be considered effigies of their fathers' burials. The sons of the deceased kings were responsible for their fathers' transformations from rulers to ancestors. Performing mortuary ritual and creating a space that echoed the burial chamber were most likely essential means of ensuring both their fathers' change of status and their own.

³¹ Coe, Shook and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 6*. They allude, through mention of the style dating of Lintels 2 and 3 by Proskouriakoff, that these objects were later than previously thought. And the whole superstructure may have been completed by Yik'in Chan K'awiil (Ruler B) (71–72). Correspondingly, Kan Bahlam most likely sponsored the superstructure from the Temple of the Inscriptions.

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

Part 1 of this dissertation consists of a formal analysis of the art and architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions from Palenque, Temple I and Temple II at Tikal, and Temple 26 from Copan. This examination demonstrates the value of thinking about these structures in their totality as three-dimensional entities. Maya mortuary monuments encased the royal burial of a king but also had greater symbolic functions. In order to comprehend the conceptual features of these monuments, the physical, historical, and formal aspects must be examined.

Incorporating archaeology into this formal analysis is essential. Although archaeologists consider the stratigraphy of monuments a record of history, my focus here is on how this cultural stratigraphy contributed to the overall meaning of these temples. Similarly, the iconography is also considered a foundation for meaning and like the archaeology, supports the larger interpretations of this dissertation, which are presented in part 2.

Formal analyses are not merely descriptions, but have an explicit point of view; therefore this section will not be an exhaustive discussion of every form, object, or building history of these four structures. It is a focused examination leading to an analysis of the ways in which these mortuary monuments were meaningful in the eighth and ninth centuries. As I discussed in the introduction, I will analyze these monuments according to a tripartite

cosmological organization.³² In the subterranean section, chapter 2, the burial chamber and associated tomb furniture will be considered as an ensemble; this same approach will be employed in the discussion of the post-interment spaces of these structures. The examination of the terrestrial levels in chapter 3 reviews the building histories of the monuments. This chapter is concerned with the processes of constructing these temples and their surface imagery and design. The final chapter of part 1 is an examination of the Celestial level, or the superstructures of the monuments. The art and architecture of the superstructures is both public and private, and analyzing these spaces has been challenging, yet these shrines have proven to be some of the most significant features of the temple. The melding of archaeological, architectural, historical, and iconographical analyses in part 1 demonstrates that these monuments marked sacred space through structural continuities from the Subterranean through to the Celestial realms.

³² The post-interment spaces analysis of chapter 3 does not strictly adhere to this three-part analysis. It is outside the cosmological frame, and this topic came about because of the wealth of evidence that supports a secondary feature of the royal interment.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL

Archaeological investigation provides empirical evidence of the mortuary function of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26.³³ The tomb chambers from these monuments housed the remains of each city's ruler: Pakal from Palenque (Temple of the Inscriptions), Jasaw of Tikal (Temple I), and Ruler 12 (Temple 26) at Copan. Archaeologists Ruz Lhuillier, Aubrey Trik and William Coe, and William L. Fash excavated and tunneled into each subterranean structure, respectively, and located or "rediscovered" the burial chambers. One of the most distinct features shared by all three subterranean structures is the corbel-vaulted room that encased the interment of each of these kings. Ancient Maya royal burials were elaborate places; the architecture of these chambers was complex, and great effort was expended to construct, decorate, and finally to bury these interments.

In this chapter I examine the burials of Pakal, Jasaw, and Ruler 12 and their associated subterranean spaces. This investigation is different from previous explorations of Maya elite interments because emphasis is placed on inter-site comparisons. This multi-site approach is a new style of analysis that interprets the "subterranean level" as a discrete entity. The subterranean can be considered as both a foundation for the larger monument and also explored as a locus directing and influencing ritual and human movement. The contents of the burials, their structures, and building histories are well documented in archaeological reports and the aim of this chapter is not to repeat this information but rather to comment on and look for meaningful patterns among these three interments. I compare and contrast these

³³ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*; Fash, *Scribes*; Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, vol. 2.

subterranean funerary environments not through a historical or chronological perspective but from a holistic point-of-view.

Although varied, I propose these spaces worked as an ensemble that was read and understood by the Late Classic Maya as complete statements. Eventually the subterranean level was rendered invisible but its cosmological and ideological power remained a viable force seen and experienced in the terrestrial and celestial levels of the future structure. Subterranean spaces were not inert or frozen and the archaeological and architectural evidence suggests that messages from the royal interment resonated throughout the monument. The burial, like the entire funerary temple was the sum of many parts that were related and self-referential, and when considered thematically meaningful, the subterranean moves beyond its “utility” and becomes more of a statement. The subterranean chapter details the ingredients or components of these statements, which are fully interpreted in chapter 6. In order to explore The Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 as entities that reflected intergenerational convergence, transformation, and renewal the source of these messages requires detailed examination. These structures housed the remains of a king and as such functioned as a dynastic center, an engine of change, and a cyclical continuum.

In general, the architecture of royal burials was subterranean, and these spaces were constructed within an excavated cavity of earth. At the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I, the interments of Pakal and Jasaw formed the foundation of the great temples that covered them. In contrast, the burial of Ruler 12 within Temple 26 was interred within the sub-floor of a previous building whose field name is Chorchá. Today we can consider the Chorchá structure and its royal interment as the center of a highly complex and multi-layered

building (it encased or was built around the Yax, Motmot, Papagayo, Mascarones structures), later it was subsumed by three additional structures (Esmerelda, Temple 26-sub, and final phase Temple 26). The subterranean realm of Temple 26 was therefore extensive. Like geologic stratigraphy, the various cultural levels observed in the archaeological record from Temple 26 could be considered part of its history, but more importantly for this study, they represent a need to create a sense of “place.” Ruler 12’s burial is within the symbolic subterranean level of Temple 26 and the Chorchá structure. The cist burial of Ruler 12 is the subterranean level and the corbel-vaulted upper chamber represents the post-interment phase of the burial. The internal architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions and a monumental cache covering Burial 116 at Temple I is considered an analogous post-interment space and like the Chorchá structure’s vault, they are discussed as discrete expressions or places.

The remains of these rulers were laid out in an elevated sarcophagus or on a platform and adorned with rich accoutrements surrounded by burial furniture.³⁴ The placement and design of the burial chambers, the treatment of the principal decedent, and the iconography of the burial furniture can be read as codes that illuminate ancient Maya funerary practices. This chapter is the first level of a three-part discussion of the monuments of these well-known ancient Maya rulers. Their interment in the earth or an “earthly stratum” initiated the process of transforming the deceased from historical figure to ancestor.

³⁴ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*; Fash, *Scribes*; Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, vol. 2. The term *burial furniture* refers to objects such as secondary human interments, animal remains, ceramics, marine items, precious stones, sarcophagi, wooden platforms, benches, and niches, etc.

Subterranean Level:

The Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico

The final inscription from the westernmost hieroglyphic panel in the superstructure at the Temple of the Inscriptions pronounced that the great *ajaw*, or divine ruler of Palenque, K'inich Janaab Pakal I, died in August of 683.³⁵ The succeeding lines state that his son and heir, Kan Bahlam, would give care to his body.³⁶ As this subsection on the subterranean spaces of the Temple of the Inscriptions demonstrates, the death of an ancient Maya king was an event that transformed both the cultural and physical landscape of his city. This change was most clearly seen in the construction of mortuary monuments, like the Temple of the Inscriptions, but new dynastic narratives and ideologies were also adopted. The architectural design and sculptural decorations from the burial chamber within the Temple of the Inscriptions depict a concern with giving care to the body of the king and in creating a meaningful space for ancient visitors.

Under the aegis of Pakal (615–83 CE), the community that was Palenque transformed from a vulnerable kingdom characterized by an uneven dynastic succession into a formidable city. Diplomatic ties with other cities such as Tikal and Copan were solidified through the efforts and charisma of Pakal.³⁷ Pakal the man and the myth may have become synonymous with his city and its very identity. Blending the mortal and the legendary into a cohesive statement was one of the many functions of the Temple of the Inscriptions and its tomb chamber.

³⁵ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 162.

³⁶ Michael Carrasco, "Mask Flange," 230.

³⁷ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 162.

Analyses of the subterranean level of the Temple of the Inscriptions have fallen into four categories: archaeology, sculpture, epigraphy, and bioarchaeology of the human remains.³⁸ This subsection employs literature from the above areas and combines it with perspectives gleaned from my own field experiences. Re-creating the building chronology of these spaces is not the intent of this examination, although the architectural history is mentioned, emphasis is placed on suggesting how and why these spaces were constructed and used as an ensemble. The “use-value” of the tomb chamber, its interment, the tomb furniture, the carved imagery, wall friezes, caches and internal stair is explored from a point-of-view ritual function. Descriptions will not always be in chronological order, which is a perspective that diverges from archaeological reports and previous discussions. My assumption is that the internal architecture was open and used for many years, possibly a K’atun (20 year period), after the final interment and sealing of Pakal inside his sarcophagus had been completed. When interpreted through this lens the archaeology, imagery and architecture becomes the setting for ceremony that involved the movement of people and rites of transformation. Furthermore, these forms and spaces expressed shared themes that were later amplified in the designs and sculptures from the superstructure from the celestial level. My intent in this subsection is to describe formal elements of the architecture and imagery and the possible interactions between these visual experiences within the tomb chamber.

³⁸ The most comprehensive exploration of the temple and its material culture was completed by Ruz Lhuillier; however, the works of Merle Greene Robertson, Linda Schele, Peter Mathews, and Floyd Lounsbury, as well as recent works in epigraphy by Geraldo Aldana, Michael Carrasco, and Stanley Gunther have added new interpretations to our knowledge of the narratives and history surrounding Pakal.

Subterranean Spaces

The building history of the Temple of the Inscriptions has been documented by Ruz Lhuillier in his book *El Templo de las Inscripciones* (fig. 9). This nine-tiered pyramidal structure was constructed in one building phase, the chronology of which is similar to Temple I from Tikal, but quite different than Temple 26 at Copan. Construction began with the excavation of the tomb chamber. This early stage was built under the sponsorship of Pakal. The walls and floor of this subterranean room were lined with flagstone, and then the sarcophagus was lowered inside this open cavity (fig. 10).³⁹ The eight sub-platforms and superstructure of the temple were constructed around the excavated chamber and its monolithic stone sarcophagus.⁴⁰ Pakal's son and heir, Kan Bahlam, completed the structure by finishing the superstructure; in addition he most likely commissioned the exterior sculpture and the inscription panels, as well as some of the interior tomb decorations.⁴¹ The burial of a king and the construction of his burial monument involved a long process. Ruz Lhuillier and other scholars have found evidence that the completion of the building occurred after Pakal's demise; however, Pakal in life and in death may have influenced the design of the structure.

In excavations from 1949 to 1952, Ruz Lhuillier discovered in the central room of the superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions a hidden staircase descending from the floor of the shrine down to the center of the structure (fig. 11 and 12).⁴² The interior stairway had a trajectory that descended to the west, then stopped abruptly at a landing, turned east, and continued its descent into the building's subterranean spaces. A two small masonry galerías

³⁹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 89, 216.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 89. Ruz states that there are 8 platforms. The superstructure can be considered as the 9th level.

⁴¹ Robertson, *Temple*, 44, 54; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 165.

⁴² Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*.

or shafts leading west connected the stairway landing to the exterior of the temple.⁴³ Ruz surmises these holes were used to provide both light and air.⁴⁴ Their construction, which consists of a well-crafted vaulted ceiling, is in a manner similar to the interior stairway. The careful construction of both the stair and its ventilation and light “ducts” is an indication that the internal architecture was most likely a site of ritual for years after the initial closing of Pakal’s sarcophagus.

At its terminus, the stair became a paved corridor that ran parallel to the mountain that abutted the temple, and it was also parallel to the east-west portico located high above in the superstructure.⁴⁵ The end of the east west corridor was marked by a masonry space resembling a box and adjacent to it was a triangular-shaped door. This box effectively marked and sealed the triangular door (fig. 13). Inside the box, which was actually a sarcophagus, were the remains of several individuals who had been dispatched as part of an exegy (companion) sacrifice.⁴⁶ Pakal’s burial chamber lay beyond the exegy sacrifice through the triangular door. The previously constricted spaces of the staircase and corridor gave way to an open vaulted chamber (fig. 14). The landing at the top of the short staircase that descended into the crypt afforded a view of the burial chamber. The carved sarcophagus, sections of the wall friezes, and massive cut-stone vaulted ceiling were visible to a person entering or standing at the entrance to the chamber.⁴⁷

⁴³ Ibid., 89. See Ruz’s figures 137-139.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 42–52.

⁴⁶ Ruz, *El Templo*, 91, 227; Tiesler and Cucina, eds., *Janaab’ Pakal of Palenque*, 102.

⁴⁷ The figures modeled in stucco on the walls of the crypt were not all clearly seen from this vantage point, a detail noted by Robertson (*Temple*, 56). However, there are figures lining both sides of the descending stair and one figure at the extreme north end of the chamber. This north central figure could have been in the direct line of sight of a viewer standing on the raised platform and viewing the room.

Tomb Chamber

The burial chamber of Pakal can be described as an open cavity surrounded by the dense fill and masonry of the surrounding monument. Eventually, the internal architecture composed of the east-west corridor and the switchback staircase was completely filled in and rendered invisible.⁴⁸ In contrast, the tomb chamber was an open room that had been preserved within the solid mass of the temple. The floor and ceiling of the chamber span both the subterranean levels and the terrestrial; its depth is approximately 1.44 m below the plaza level, and the total height is approximately 1.5 m above the ground level.⁴⁹ The tomb chamber's orientation was north–south, which mirrored the orientation of the whole temple (fig. 15). Both the internal architecture and the exterior temple's mass are orientated on average between 15 to 20 degrees northeast of magnetic north.⁵⁰ The tomb chamber may have been understood as the physical and conceptual foundation for the monument, a feature that defined the temple's overall purpose and was its spatial guide.⁵¹

The tomb chamber's flagstone floor is elevated 30 cm on the south side and is therefore lower on the north end of the chamber. A massive cut-stone buttress extends out from the north side of the sarcophagus; presumably this platform was flush with the cover and may have been used to support the lid prior to its permanent placement on the stone box.⁵² The walls of the chamber, which frame the sarcophagus cover, are adorned by niches

⁴⁸ There is some debate as to the chronology of the final interment of the corridor and stair. I believe this action was part of the processes of interring a king, and the completion of these rites may have taken many years. Therefore the crypt was most likely open for many years and possibly a *k'atun*.

⁴⁹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 83. I have made some estimates based on Ruz's descriptions.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 84. Crypt is 18 to 20 degrees East and the temple is 15 degrees East.

⁵¹ The concept of "foundation" is not literal but more of symbolic construction, more like a seed for the growth of the larger structure.

⁵² Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 83. Although not mentioned by Ruz in his written text, in figures 179 and 180 there appears to be a slight "tilt" of the sarcophagus in favor of the northern end. This feature would make sense

(a total of four niches in the east and west walls, two niches per side), and inside these alcoves are bas-relief stucco figures. These figures cannot be seen from the entrance in the same way as the sarcophagus cover imagery, but the two seated figures placed on either side of the stairway and the third seated figure at the north end emphasize the visual narrative of the entire chamber. Furthermore, a visitor moving within the chamber could have observed the standing figures from the niches, thus a sculpted narrative would have surrounded him or her.⁵³ The dynamic between ritual and space in the tomb chamber can be further observed in the vaulted ceiling: the stone vigas and cross-vaults, although utilitarian, are nonetheless visually dramatic and constructed of materials that would last an eternity. As has been previously demonstrated in the construction of the internal stairs, this parallel and interior architectural had a use-value long after the initial exequies for Pakal had been complete. After fourteen hundred years the tomb chamber is still an environment that bids a visitor to experience its space and read its imagery.

That the chamber was *designed to be seen* is highlighted by a flight of five steps that led a visitor down to the level of the sarcophagus where a 2.75 m long flagstone landing, a *descansillo*, occupied the space between the south side or end of the sarcophagus and the final step of the staircase.⁵⁴ Ruz Lhuillier believed that this false floor or elevated landing was a later addition to the crypt and was constructed at the same time as the switchback stair and corridor (fig. 16).⁵⁵ The landing, raised up by eight supports, essentially created a

when rolling the cover into place on the sarcophagus. It would work to facilitate a more complete view of the carved imagery, as it would be lower in the south facing a viewer at the entrance.

⁵³ There are two stone buttresses that extend out to the east and west sides of the sarcophagus, which most likely prevented ambulation around the entirety of the chamber; however, this imagery could have been visible from several other angles.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 83. Who would have been the visitor? I believe that this space was exclusively used by Kan Bahlam and other immediate members of Pakal's family, in addition to high ranking religious specialists.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

“bridge” between the stair and the sarcophagus lid and gave the north–south axis of the crypt a continuous masonry surface.

The architecture of the tomb chamber, well documented by Ruz Lhuillier’s drawings, reflected the construction techniques of the ancient Maya and the needs of mortuary ritual. The overall structure of the chamber may have been a result of ceremonial factors, which would include decisions regarding the chamber’s elevation, scale, vaults, niches, and tomb furniture. For example, the raised landing or *descansillo* could have been one of the last elements added to the room as it afforded easy movement from the interior corridor to the chamber and sarcophagus. In this way, the unusual attention paid to the entrance and view of the chamber as well as the imagery on the sarcophagus cover suggests that this space was open and used in ritual after Pakal had been interred.

Interment: The Body

Pakal was found on his back, adorned with minimal clothing and jewelry. This more conservative ritual treatment (with the exception of the mosaic jade mask) contrasted with the elaborate box-within-a-box that contained his body. The sarcophagus, which is a solid stone container, had been carved out to accommodate the nestling of his entire body within it, and then it was sealed twice.⁵⁶ Although Pakal’s entire body was treated in a reverential manner befitting his role as a ruler, there were specific aspects of the interment and points on the body that were emphasized (fig. 17).⁵⁷ The remains had been left intact and were placed

⁵⁶ A fascinating parallel exists between the style of closing the sarcophagus of Pakal and the Motmot offering/complex, which will be examined later in the subterranean section on Temple 26.

⁵⁷ There is no doubt that the individual interred within the sarcophagus is the ruler Jaanab’ Pakal I; his identity has been established through epigraphic means (see Mathews and Schele, “Lords of Palenque,” 63–75; Lounsbury, “The Inscription,” 5–19).

in an extended position with the head oriented to the north and feet to the south.⁵⁸ Ruz Lhuillier found the entire body sprinkled with cinnabar, a form of mercury sulfide.⁵⁹ The interior cavity of the coffin was also painted entirely in cinnabar, including the walls and inner recessed lip.⁶⁰ Although the carved cavity was shaped to look like a human figure, distinguishing between body and the cut stone may have been difficult because the whole space was visually united and appeared as one object beneath a blanket of red powder. The sprinkling of cinnabar over the body and inside walls of the sarcophagus could have been the last ritual action taken prior to sealing the deceased inside his coffin. The final appearance of Pakal, in his recognizable and corporal form, might have been intentionally obscured in a veil of red dust blending in with the surrounding pigmented stone.

In life, costume emphasizes select parts of the human anatomy, and a similar interest in adorning the dead is seen in mortuary traditions. The most complex, precious, and “animated” item decorating Pakal was a jade mosaic death mask; it depicted the ruler with open eyes and with breath emanating from his mouth (figs. 18 and 20). The strategic arrangement of other prized items from the earth and sea bedecked his head, neck, lower arms, hands, pelvic region, and feet.⁶¹

According to inventories published by Ruz Lhuillier, the head of the deceased ruler received the most adornments, and within this region the face and mouth were embellished with intricate objects. There were two types of precious materials placed over his face: items that accentuated his mouth (the bead and the buccal mask) and those that emphasized his

⁵⁸ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 201. Ruz Lhuillier states that although there are no rules as to the position and orientation of the body in Maya mortuary contexts, at Palenque the remains are usually placed with the head to the north and the body in a supine position.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 56, 85, 206, 227.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 190, 201–09.

whole visage (the portrait mask). Placed directly inside the decedent's mouth was a semi-spherical and precious green jade nugget.⁶² Also found beneath the jade portrait mask was a buccal mask lining the outside edge of the decedent's lips, constructed of a shell frame and covered with pyrite.⁶³ This mask did not obstruct but rather accentuated the area of the mouth by delimiting the outline of the lips. (fig. 19).⁶⁴ Covering this construction of gold pyrite and white shell was a layer of cinnabar (mercury sulfide), which highlighted the visual unity of the corporal arrangement.⁶⁵ These elements were then covered by the mosaic portrait mask.

Mosaic Mask

The death mask of Pakal has long been considered a portrait of the deceased ruler (fig. 20).⁶⁶ Its naturalism and lifelike quality are due in part to an interest in figurative realism at Palenque as well as to the manner in which it was constructed. It was applied directly to Pakal's face, as remnants of lime plaster have been found on the bones of the face.⁶⁷ The mask is composed of two hundred jade fragments of varying colors and intensities.⁶⁸ The individual mosaic elements or tesserae of the mask were predominantly a rich dark color; in addition, this collection of stones may have included pieces that were heirlooms or reused from other jewelry objects. Evidence of reuse can be seen in numerous stones containing drill

⁶² Ibid., 156. Jadeite is a term for this precious green stone found in Mesoamerica, which should not be confused with Asian jade (nephrite). In Mesoamerican archaeology these stones are also commonly known as "green steones."

⁶³ Ibid., 152, 157, 161–62. The buccal mask was directly beneath the jade mosaic mask.

⁶⁴ The buccal mask covering characterized by a rectangular design and rounded corners almost appears as a bone armature surrounding the mouth, reminiscent of the jaw line of the *cauac*, or the Maya skeletonized earth monster.

⁶⁵ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 161.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 190, 201–09; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 127. The mask from Figure 20 is the most recent reconstruction of the burial mask. Although, not known by Ruz (his version is slightly different) it is, in my opinion, the most life-like version and has been reconstructed using advanced techniques by INAH scholars.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 154.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 152.

holes and others that have sculpted features of faces or abstract patterns.⁶⁹ Reclaiming these pieces from former objects may have infused the mask with powerful memorial significance as well as giving it a sense of history; the act of construction itself could also have been reverential.

The ruler's face was re-created in a permanent material directly on his corporeal face, and adjustments would have been made to ensure a more exact rendering of the ruler's physiognomy.⁷⁰ Meticulous attention was paid to the forehead, eyes, mouth, and nose. One is struck by the naturalism of these features and the entire face, which has a sense of depth in the cheekbones and chin. The animation of the visage was further augmented by the use of shell for the eyeball and obsidian for the iris. Ruz Lhuillier notes that black paint had been applied to the obsidian, thus enhancing the illusion of lifelike pupils.⁷¹ Typical elite Maya forehead deformation is emphasized by a group of large jade *tesserae* that create a planar surface. The mask's mouth is open, and the lips are composed of stones placed at an angle that protrudes outward.

The mask is an ambitious and successful work of art; however, its function as a ritual object cannot be underestimated. This realistic depiction of Pakal's face, constructed in jade, has been "awake" and breathing for over a millennium, which gives it a distinct supernatural quality.⁷² A carved upright Greek tau or Maya *ik* sign was placed inside the mask's mouth.

⁷³This unusual feature, which signifies *espíritu*, or breath, life, and soul, was rarely, if ever,

⁶⁹ Martínez and Nadal, "La Restauración, 13."

⁷⁰ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 154.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 152–54.

⁷² The study of jade mosaic burial masks is an area that has yet to receive the attention it deserves. There are variations in the form and iconography of these objects, and this diversity may be an indication of changes in the perception of the ruler.

⁷³ This interest in emphasizing the mouth (through the intricacies of jade and coral in the mask and the pyrite outline in the buccal mask) lead to an interesting conclusion that the ruler's speech even in death remained

included in a burial mask.⁷⁴ The ik glyph could be considered a sign that expressed a type of exchange or communion with the living.⁷⁵

Head

The mosaic mask is the most dramatic of Pakal's accoutrements associated with his head; however, there were other objects surrounding the skull in Ruz Lhuillier's inventory.⁷⁶ He notes the existence of a diadem or crown found in association with the mosaic mask.⁷⁷ It was composed of forty-one circular jade pieces, and it may have been adorned with a carved plaque of a *zots*, or bat-face figure (fig. 21).⁷⁸ Also found in association with the diadem assemblage were artificial Baroque-style pearls constructed from mother-of-pearl remnants.⁷⁹ Hollow jade beads found at the top of the skull may have been used to contain hair in an elaborate coiffeur. Complementing this rich decorative arrangement were large jade earflares that extended approximately 10 cm outward from Pakal's head. They were square carved plaques pierced by long tubes of stones.⁸⁰ The plaque was incised on the front with petals in the four corners creating an X, and when combined with the earflare opening, it became a quincunx. On the reverse side of the square plaque was a series of carved hieroglyphs

relevant. Coggins examines the Ruler as speaker in "Pure Language and Lapidary Prose," 99-108, and in "The Measure of Man," 209-244.

⁷⁴ The ik notation used to depict breath and soul is commonly seen in painted imagery and incised sculpture, but this representation in the mask is unique. It also appears on the east-west walls of the superstructure shrine. Thus, this flexible and important symbol was used in many contexts. Clemency Coggins has pointed out that this sign may have also represented carved teeth. This custom was common among the ancient Maya elite.

⁷⁵ The first reconstructed version of the mask from 1954 does not include this feature. This representation is illustrated in López, "Rostros Mayas," 63. The mask's dimensions are 22.2 cm by 17.5 cm. In addition, the ik sign could be compared to speech scrolls seen in other examples from Maya art and most commonly from the central Mexican codices and in murals from Teotihuacán.

⁷⁶ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 154-62.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* See Ruz figure 218.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 158. Also see figures 20 and 22.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* See Ruz figure 226.

encircling the central hole.⁸¹ Schele and Mathews have deciphered the short text that marked “them as the property of the Chak gods.”⁸²

Torso

The most recent reconstructions of Pakal’s costume from the burial are derived from Ruz Lhuillier’s excavations reports and in situ photos showing a clustering of jade at the neck, chest, wrist, hands, and feet. Snugly adorning the decedent’s neck were two strands of differently shaped beads composed of squash, petals, and flower buds. An additional necklace composed of a nine-strand cascade of tubular jade beads was also found over the decedent’s chest.⁸³ Many of these items show evidence of reuse, like the fragments from the mosaic mask.⁸⁴ Multiple jade bead bracelets encircled the wrists of Pakal.⁸⁵ Thus, the torso of the king was bathed in jade.

Hands and Arms

A concern with distinguishing between the left and right sides of the body is evidenced by contrasting objects placed in the palms of Pakal. In general, the adornments of the head and neck were bilaterally symmetrical, as seen in the sculpted jade rings placed on each of the decedent’s fingers, but a message of symmetry may not have been the goal. In his left palm Pakal clasped a solid jade cube, and a jade sphere was found cupped in his right palm.⁸⁶ This interest in handedness has been documented in other elite burials in Maya imagery (fig. 18).

⁸¹ Ibid., 159. These items may have been included in a woven fabric or turban, now disintegrated, associated with the body.

⁸² Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 127.

⁸³ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 156. Each strand contained twenty-one of these beads. See Ruz 224.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 156.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid. Joel Palka has recently discussed the symbolism of handedness in ancient and contemporary Maya art and culture, Palka, “Left/Right Symbolism,” 423-439.

Legs and Feet

Beaded jade wristlets adorned Pakal's forearms, and similar anklets decorated his legs. He was most likely interred wearing a loincloth of woven cotton.⁸⁷ A small (6 cm) jade figurine may have been positioned in the center of the garment (fig. 22).⁸⁸ Another small jade figurine was located adjacent to Pakal's left foot.⁸⁹ Ruz Lhuillier identified this smaller work as an image of the Late Classic Sun God.⁹⁰ (fig. 22)

The lower or southern portion of Pakal's body contrasts with the elaborateness of the upper or northern region. Although organic material may have covered his legs and feet, there appears to be little in the way of adornment in this area. In reconstruction drawings of Pakal, large jade beads are depicted near the outside edge of each foot. With the exception of the burial mask, Pakal appears to be dressed as he might if he were still alive: the entire assemblage was a re-creation of the idealized royal figure of Janaab' Pakal in life, buried under a layer of cinnabar.⁹¹

The blood red coated interment of Pakal was then carefully sealed by a sculpted stone cap, which rested on the ledge of the inner-cavity and sat flush within the sarcophagus. This stone was shaped as the positive component in contrast to the negative space of the sarcophagus' open cavity (fig. 23). The cavity where Pakal's remains were placed was carved into the monolith and the stone seal was carved to appear like an abstracted human form, which reflected the shape of the opening. The north and south extremes of the cap were

⁸⁷ Bernal "K'inich Janaab' Pakal," 21; "Maya Room" catalog of objects and map in *Arqueología Mexicana*, special edition, 15 (2003): 71.

⁸⁸ Bernal "K'inich Janaab' Pakal," 21; "Maya Room" catalog of objects and map in *Arqueología Mexicana*, special edition, 15 (2003): 71.

⁸⁹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 157.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ I thank Clemency Coggins for reminding me that cinnabar or mercury sulfide is a transformative substance, which is both physically and symbolically appropriate in a burial.

drilled with two holes that may have facilitated moving it into position, and later the holes were filled in, which completed the sealing off of Pakal's earthly remains.

Tomb Furniture: The Sarcophagus

The sarcophagus was the center of the tomb chamber, and its large scale must have been dramatic for a viewer peering into the chamber. It was composed of a monolithic stone with a hollowed out center and a large flat cover. The stone slab or sarcophagus measuring 300 cm by 2.10 m, and an equally massive lid, measuring approximately 380 cm by 2.2 m (fig. 24).⁹² The carved lid was approximately 80 cm longer and 10 cm wider than the sarcophagus. Each was made of separate blocks of limestone; however, they can be considered together as a complete unit or object. This stone box is unique in the art history of the ancient Maya, as the entire object was sculpted. Bas-relief carvings carpet both the cover and the edges of the lid, while the sides of the actual sarcophagus and its legs are carved in a narrative style. The height of the whole object including supporting pillars, the sarcophagus and cover, is approximately 1.50 m in elevation from the chamber's paved floor.⁹³ A series of stone supports concentrated on the north end of the sarcophagus functioned as a raised area from which the lid was rolled onto the limestone box.⁹⁴

Composition of the Cover Imagery

The cover imagery is dense and complex—its well-crafted and varied style and composition dominates the imagery of the tomb chamber and also creates a visual tension that distinguishes it from the surrounding imagery. The works from the sides and the walls are more static, conventionalized, and appear almost like a patterned figurative frieze. The scene

⁹² Ibid., 84.

⁹³ Ibid., 90.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

on the lid has a narrative quality and a sense of movement. Included in this carpet of imagery is one portrait of Pakal that can be read as a polysemic image, one with multiple meanings. The deceased king is depicted in several guises, all of which are related to his role as a divine ruler and ancestor. A continuous written text carved along the outer edge serves not as a “caption,” but as an augmentation of the visual information from the cover. These inscriptions recount the historical narrative of Pakal’s family.⁹⁵ In addition, the glyphic text from the edge may have linked the visual narratives of the cover and sarcophagus walls together as a unified statement.⁹⁶

The sarcophagus lid imagery is vertically oriented along a north–south axis. A visitor would have entered from the south end of the chamber and looked north, in order to take in the entire cover imagery. The “top” of the sarcophagus is located on the north end, and the “bottom” is at the south end. This visual orientation is reflected in the composition and iconography of the sarcophagus cover imagery and can also be observed in the orientation of the decedent’s body (head to the north and feet to the south). The entire cover was blanketed in mercury sulfide or cinnabar, reminiscent of Pakal’s interment.⁹⁷ The chalky red surface served to unify and to flatten the cover’s visual program, further differentiating it from other objects in the tomb chamber. Ultimately, the sarcophagus cover was the focal point of the burial chamber, due to its central location, elaborate bas relief imagery, and red painted surface. Thus, the whole carved box and cover were positioned in such a way as to be *seen*.

⁹⁵ This text has been deciphered by Floyd Loundsbury and appears in Robertson, *Temple*, 64, 65; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 117–19.

⁹⁶ Interpretations of this text and a longer discussion of its relationship to the surrounding figures appear later in this chapter.

⁹⁷ Ruz Lhullier, *El Templo*, 65, 227. No one knows if the entire sarcophagus was dusted with cinnabar, though evidence suggests that only the lid, the interior walls, and its contents were.

The cover's imagery includes forms that are recognizable; however, these visual conventions belie an ambiguity of sequence in the visual narrative. This is characterized by a dense composition composed with overlapping and obscured images, repeated motifs, and abstract forms. This style is indicative of Late Classic narrative imagery as well as some hieroglyphic inscriptions. Mary Miller and Stephen Houston rightly suggest that one way to read complex iconography is to peel away component parts, identify, discuss, and then reassemble, as though these images were akin to hieroglyphs.⁹⁸ In the following analysis of the cover imagery, each part of the composition will be examined as part of a group of interrelated formal elements.

Line. The imagery is organized around four intersecting axes that essentially provide the framework for the whole composition. The first axis is the central north-south line, which anchors a series of overlapping figures. This line guides the viewer's gaze down toward the south end of the cover. (fig. 25). Three horizontal lines intersect the central axis, they are formed at the north by the body of the bird and at the south by the flourishes that extend out from the plate or pedestal, and lastly by the arms of the cruciform creating a Roman-styled cross (fig. 26). A third line, articulated by the double-headed snake, interweaves through the arms of the cross and further enlivens the surface imagery. The fourth line is subtler than the others, and its form is characterized by the diagonal of Pakal's reclining body. This diagonal axis crosses the vertical axis in the southern or lower region of the composition and is oriented north to south (fig. 27). These lines facilitate comprehension of the cover's imagery by organizing and guiding the viewer's gaze.

⁹⁸ Miller and Houston, "The Classic Maya Ballgame," 49, 50.

Cruciform. The cruciform design is a leitmotif at Palenque. Its depiction on the sarcophagus cover is similar to later versions from the Cross Group, and it is depicted in the interior tablets from the Temple of the Cross, Foliated Cross, and the Sun, all of which contain a variation on the cruciform theme. Pakal's son and heir, Kan Bahlam, sponsored these structures and presumably their sculpture.

The juxtaposition of the cruciform and the diagonal lines of Pakal is a central feature of the cover composition. These lines can be considered a type of armature that serves to anchor the cover's imagery. The cruciform is bejeweled and appears almost animate. Its textured surface is decorated with designs, such as a face and abstracted "bark," that appear almost like glyphs. A Tzuk face/sun face peering out of its trunk.⁹⁹ Although the cruciform is primarily seen in the northern or top half of the cover imagery, its organizing presence is carried throughout the whole composition.

Bicephalic Serpent. At right angles to the cruciform's trunk is the sinuous form of the serpent, which is depicted interwoven within the arms of the cross. This bicephalic animal has a segmented body that appears encrusted with jewels. Although its form is curvilinear, it looks stiff and lacks the vitality and animation of a living animal.¹⁰⁰ In Maya imagery, the bicephalic serpent is linked to the ceremonial serpent bar and to accoutrements of rulership. This abstract, yet potent and familiar, symbol is depicted being held aloft by an anthropomorphized cruciform/tree.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 114; Carlson and Landis, "Bands, Bicephalic Dragons, and Other Beasts," 118. They identify the face in the trunk as an aspect of the sun.

¹⁰⁰ It appears more like jewelry or a costume element. Interestingly, this jewel-encrusted figure could be compared to the bejeweled serpent-protector from Lintel 2, Temple I, Tikal.

¹⁰¹ See Clancy, "Classic Maya Ceremonial Bar," 7–45.

The composition of the snake is bilaterally symmetrical. The two heads on either side of its draped body are the same, but the figures emerging out of their mouths are different. The serpent heads, like their body, have jewel-like attributes and supernatural features. Their jaws are open wide with protruding fangs, and their exaggerated flaring snouts curve up and frame the arms of the cross. Emerging out of each gaping maw is a small bust figure. The left or west figure is a K'awiil, a patron deity of the Palenque kings.¹⁰² Coming out of the right or eastern maw is the “Jester God” who is another symbol of Maya rulership.¹⁰³

Bird. A bird perched at the top of the cruciform gives the cross motif a more arboreal quality. The bird is depicted as a supernatural with an anthropomorphic face. He is elaborately adorned with a long pompadour-style coiffeur, and his avian body is richly detailed with feathers, embedded in his long tail is a possible glyph. In addition, Greene Robertson has identified an inverted serpent face and maw in the area of the torso.¹⁰⁴ The bird lacks a lower mandible, and in its place is a tied mat element. His wings and feathers are reminiscent of both avian and reptilian appendages, and his tail is a complex of feathers that extend out, almost as a counterbalance. This character has largely been identified as Vucub Cacix, the Principal Bird Deity, the false sun deity from the *Popul Vuh*.¹⁰⁵ In addition, Vucub Cacix, or the Principal Bird Deity, also appears prominently in the interior sculpture programs of the Cross Group buildings, although he is not in direct contact with the cruciform motif.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² K'awiil is a figure who is prominent in image and text at Palenque, in particular, and is also seen at other Western Maya sites, such as Yaxchilan. This being is referenced more often in the texts of Copan.

¹⁰³ See Friedel, “The Jester God,” 67–78.

¹⁰⁴ Robertson, *The Temple*, figure 130.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 60; Friedel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 70–71.

¹⁰⁶ For a detailed discussion of this avian figure see Guernsey, *Ritual and Power in Stone*. More work needs to be done on the possible interrelationships between the iconography of the sarcophagus cover and other Palenque imagery that features the cruciform, namely the bas-reliefs from the Cross Group.

Figure of Pakal

The focal point of the entire composition is the carved figure of Pakal. In this analysis, Pakal's unusual posture will be closely examined (fig. 28). The lines of his body and its position at the center of the cover's dense imagery render Pakal's figure the protagonist of this visual narrative. Pakal's form, depicted as a diagonal entity, breaks with the predominantly vertical and horizontal orientation of the cover. His body lies at the intersection of the cruciform and the open maw (positioned at the base of the composition), and he is located on a plane in front of these elements, yet his body is also depicted in relationship with these features. The sloping movements of Pakal's figure are in contrast with the rectilinear stasis of the other motifs.

Pakal's reclining body appears to float in space but is actually being supported by a plate decorated by a *kin* (sun) sign and displayed upon an altar or pedestal. Displayed on the plate is a group of symbols and objects associated with sacrifice. Pakal's body appears to float just slightly behind these three items, on the left is a conch-shell implement (knuckle duster knife), in the center a stingray spine, and on the right a death glyph/icon. A zoomorphic skeletalized face functions as a pedestal for Pakal's body. This visage is a cauc face, which can also be identified as a *witz* monster mask. The cauc monster face, more commonly seen as jowly and with thick features, is depicted on the cover as selectively defleshed. He displays a toothy grin that is emphasized by his skeletal mandible, bony cheeks, and nose element, but his eyes are shown as alive and animate. The cauc head is adorned with a quincunx or *kin* sign, and a pair of inverted *Ajaw* motifs act as earflares (fig. 29).¹⁰⁷ This figure is a common motif in Maya iconography, and it is closely associated with

¹⁰⁷ This motif can also be called the quadripartite monster.

the mountains, earth, stone, temples, and the numinous powers of rulership.¹⁰⁸ In other images of the cauac/witz monster at Palenque, depicted in the Tablets of the Cross and the Foliated Cross, this earth deity is shown in a similar if not identical position. However, he is not depicted in the skeletal manner as seen on the sarcophagus cover.¹⁰⁹

Costume. Pakal is depicted in a profile view that emphasizes the shape of his body, jewelry, and coiffeur. Although he was in his eighties when he died, Pakal's portrait is an idealized image of the deceased ruler, and he is shown in his youthful prime. He wears only a skirt or kilt and belt, presumably made of jade beads constructed to look like openwork net. Adorning his head and chest are elite Maya accoutrements: earflares dangle from his earlobes, on his chest is a beaded necklace, and at its center is a skeletal turtle.¹¹⁰ He wears a necklace that is counterbalanced by 2 strands of jade beads that extend down behind him. The necklace at his chest falls in a customary manner, but the counterbalancing beads appear to float in midair; an indication that he is in motion. His belt, wristlets, and anklets are composed of jade beads and carved hollow tubes. At his waist is a belt buckle shaped like a skeletal cauac face that is reminiscent of the cauac/witz pedestal below. Pakal's head, which is tilted, reveals a characteristic elite Maya profile. In Palencano portraits, the nose is highlighted, most likely by a cosmetic extension. Hovering in front of his nostrils is a chip like object that has been identified as a sign for espíritu, or breath.¹¹¹ Pakal's coiffeur is an assemblage of twisted strands of hair, jade ornaments, and accoutrements of K'awiil, such as the "smoking axe," which is shown extending out from the center of his pompadour. Pakal's

¹⁰⁸ Benson, "Architecture as Metaphor," 183.

¹⁰⁹ The cauac/witz monster was also used as a pedestal for the stucco figures from the pier reliefs on the exterior of the temple's superstructure shrine. These images will be discussed later in this study in comparison with the sarcophagus cover.

¹¹⁰ Robertson, *The Temple*, 57.

¹¹¹ Houston and Taube, "An Archaeology of the Senses," 265-267; Houston, Stuart, and Taube, *Memory of Bones*, 142-48.

eyes are depicted as though they were open, but in contrast to the mosaic portrait mask from the interment directly below in the sarcophagus, these eyes lack a detailed pupil. His mouth is shown slightly open while his facial expression is passive and trance-like.

Posture. Pakal's body is in motion. His figure appears to rise and fall in space; this effect is enhanced by the contour lines of his legs, back, head, arms, and hands. His body is tilted laterally, his head is arched backward, and his legs and hands are opposed, bent into positions like that of a newborn. The left leg extends slightly outward, and the right leg is drawn up close to his torso; his right arm is tightly bent toward the chest and is countered by the left arm, which is in a wider relaxed pose. In turn, the sole of the right foot is twisted toward the picture plane and the viewer, whereas the left foot points down in a reverse position. The mudra-like gestures of his hands (right hand flexed, left has the thumb and ring finger touching) echo the opposing movements of his legs and arms.

Pakal's body appears suspended between states of existence. He is supported by the sacrificial plate and cauac/witz mask/pedestal, and this whole ensemble is superimposed on the cruciform tree.¹¹² The angle of his head, swaying necklace, and gently floating jewel-like forms all contribute to the impression of an environment that is both otherworldly and viscous. Pakal's portrait carved on the limestone block is both kinetic and frozen; he appears to be participating in a narrative that has been placed on pause, and what is shown is only one frame of the film. Thus, Pakal and every part of his body seem to be responding to an unknown stimulus.

¹¹² Robertson, *The Temple*, 62. Robertson's detailed formal analysis mentioned that the figure of the king appears "suspended" between the heavens and the underworld.

Open Maw

Below or south in the arrangement is a great serpentine skeletal maw that forms the base of the entire composition and frames half of the cover imagery (fig. 30). The mouth is abstracted and can be considered both cave like and architectonic. Its incisors and canines mirror the horizontal crossing of the tree or cruciform, while the fangs and outer skull bones draw our attention up toward the reclining figure of Pakal who is framed within its bony walls. The maw's design accentuates the reclining figure of Pakal. Like the cauac/witz pedestal, the maw appears to be selectively defleshed. This is suggested by the depiction of both skeletal surfaces and the thick skin typical of a serpent.¹¹³ When viewed head-on, the maw becomes an open gullet with framing thoracic bones. Like an ancient Maya "Jonah," Pakal is shown inside the throat of an earth monster. This composition is reminiscent of the theme of emergence commonly depicted in Maya iconography, and examples include bust figures emanating out of bicephalic serpents (or other reptilian animals) and figures coming out of shells or emerging from clefts in the earth. The inclusion of the open maw at the base of the carving complicates the lower half of the cover imagery. The open maw can be read in multiple ways, creating the possibility of two perspectives: the first is aligned with the predominant vertical axis, and the second view intersects at right angles through the axis and into the composition. The second perspective places Pakal at the edge of an interior space that the viewer can see in three dimensions. Both points of view, the vertical and the interior three-dimensional view, place the body of Pakal at the center of a junction between spatial realms.

¹¹³ This fleshy aspect is alluded to by the motifs at the lower right and left corners.

Floating Objects

Contrasting with the grounded symmetry of the figural program are the seemingly random jewel-like motifs floating in the background. These designs may signify a mortuary context; similar imagery has been identified in otherworldly or funerary locations. Comparative examples of these motifs are seen painted on the walls of the Early Classic Burial 23 of Rio Azul and Burial 48.¹¹⁴ They were also carved into the panels from the Temples of the Cross and Foliated Cross at Palenque.¹¹⁵ Recently Karl Taube has identified these motifs as signs for breath or soul.¹¹⁶ The jewel-like object that extends outward from Pakal's nose may have the same meaning as these seemingly random images, as is evidenced by its shape and proximity to the nostrils.¹¹⁷ The four-part or quatrefoil motifs have been interpreted by Coggins as a version of the Maya completion sign, while the others might be diagnostic of the Celestial sphere.¹¹⁸ These motifs have an efficacy that goes beyond their decorative qualities and may signify breath, soul, and time. As has been demonstrated in the iconography of the central figures (Pakal, cruciform, maw) concepts of change and transformation are also suggested in these small floating objects and in subsequent imagery associated with the sarcophagus and cover.

Border

The designers of the lid chose to place the central imagery within a delimiting frame rather than extend it to the edge of the cover. This border runs around the periphery of the cover

¹¹⁴ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 36.

¹¹⁵ See Clancy, "Text and Image," 17–32.

¹¹⁶ Taube, "Flower Mountain," 69–98.

¹¹⁷ Robertson, *The Temple*, 61.

¹¹⁸ For a discussion of the completion sign and interpretation of these images depicted in the cover, see Coggins, "Classic Maya Metaphors," 64–84.

and is 22 cm or 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in wide.¹¹⁹ The border was distinguished from the more narrative imagery within the sarcophagus cover through the use of specific formal elements. A series of small vignettes are contained in “cells” that frame the entirety of the central image. A double frame-line, two sets of narrative imagery that are composed of abstract symbols and small portraits, and shallow-relief carving contributed the creation of a more patterned and rhythmic space. On the east and west sides are small symbols associated with the sky while delimiting the north and south ends are a series of tiny images depicting elite individuals. Profiles of six people are depicted; however, there may be some repetition of these individuals. This juxtaposition between heavenly bodies and the faces of elites creates an interesting comparison and iconographic tension. A closer examination of the border reveals that its messages are separate yet related to the center composition.

Skyband. Along the east and west sides are individually depicted “cells,” each containing a motif that most likely symbolizes aspects of the sky (fig. 31). Skybands are seen in painted polychrome pottery, illuminated books, painted on walls and carved on benches, stleae, thrones, and ceremonial bars.¹²⁰ The skybands are composed of symbols for well-known aspects of both Maya astronomy and the earthly world. Included in this array of motifs are symbols for the moon, Venus, sun, sky, and serpents that were associated with the sky among Yucatec Maya.¹²¹ Interspersed within this structure are abstracted faces that have been read as sun deities or Tzuk visages, which can be compared to the face depicted within the trunk of the cruciform in the center imagery.

¹¹⁹ Robertson, *The Temple*, 62.

¹²⁰ Carlson and Landis, “Bands,” 115.

¹²¹ Miller and Taube, *The Gods and Symbols*, 148-151; See Elizabeth Olton, “The Murals from Structures 5 and 16” Serpents have had a long association, seen in many ethnographies, with the sky in Maya ritual and belief.

Border Portraits. The linearity and abstraction of the skybands from the east and west sides are in contrast with the north and south ends of the cover, which are inscribed with a series of figurative portraits (fig. 32). There are three portraits per side; each figure is placed within a half-quatrefoil frame oriented toward the cover's interior imagery. An individual observing the cover could read the portraits from the southern end only if he or she walked around the sarcophagus cover and looked toward the entrance. The composition and orientation of the border imagery provide some evidence that the sarcophagus cover could have been seen from several angles within the tomb chamber. The individualized border portraits display different coiffures, jewelry, cosmetic noses, headdresses, and other accoutrements.¹²² Their hands are emphasized and are included in every portrait with the exception of the south-central figure; this person has a small head in the place of his hands.¹²³

Although figurative, the border portraits should be discussed in relation to the skyband and also as a component of the entire sarcophagus iconography. The figures are posed with their heads tilted slightly backward, giving the impression that they are looking up and outward. Their visages (facing *in* and looking *outward*) also indicate that they may have been in a Celestial or supernatural location. The connection between the portraits and the skyband is also seen in the consistent inclusion of a double vertical border separating each band.¹²⁴

¹²² Four of the six portraits are shown with cosmetic nose "extensions" diagnostic of Palencano elites as seen on the central image of Pakal.

¹²³ For larger images of these figures see figures 153, 156, 159, 163, 167, 169, Robertson, *The Temple*.

¹²⁴ Chinchilla Mazariegos, "The Stars," 43. The north border does not include these double vertical lines, instead the skyband extends around the corner of the northern end.

Flanking the sides of the profiles are glyph blocks that identify the figures by name and rank.¹²⁵ Heinrich Berlin read these names and linked them to individuals depicted on the support legs of the sarcophagus box.¹²⁶ Alternatively, Schele and Mathews propose that the individuals depicted are historical figures who were associated with Pakal.¹²⁷ In a recent examination of the border portraits (and portraits from the support legs), Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos has questioned the Schele and Mathews interpretation.¹²⁸ Although Chinchilla Mazariegos, agrees with Schele and Mathews that these figures were noblemen of Pakal, and were most likely administrators of the warrior-priest class, he considers the context (skyband) and their individual frames (quatrefoil) an indication that these noblemen were deceased and had taken on the guise of supernatural figures.¹²⁹

In Maya iconography full quatrefoils usually signal a portal, or access point, to the “otherworld” or Underworld, and Chinchilla Mazariegos suggests that these signs were also associated with celestial beings or stars. The presence of a bisected quatrefoil (the north and south end each contain three half quatrefoils) may serve to further complicate Chinchilla Mazariegos’s findings by raising the question of whether these figures are fully Celestial/ancestral or in the process of transforming. Coggins has pointed out the inclusion of half and full completion signs in the background “floating motifs” from the cover.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 111.

¹²⁶ Berlin, “Glifos Nominales,” 1–8.

¹²⁷ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 111. The central figure in both the north and south borders is the same individual, Chak-Kan, while the western sides depict Yul-Sahal, and an individual named Mut is shown on the opposite eastern side. Schele and Mathews consider Chak-Kan and Mut the keepers of the holy books, *Ah K’ul Hun’ob*.

¹²⁸ Chinchilla Mazariegos, “The Stars,” 43. He questions the Schele and Mathews decipherment of the center figures’ names and reads the north-central figure’s name as Chak Chan Ajk’uhuun, the south center as Yax Chan Ajk’uhuun, the two eastern figures as “Jewel” Muut Ajk’uhuun, and the two western portraits as Yuk Sajal.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 41, 42. The rank of *sahal* has political associations whereas the *ajk’uhuun* may be associated with religious instruction or priestly duties.

¹³⁰ Coggins, “Classic Maya Metaphors,” 74.

Temporal processes, such as transformation and cyclicity, are repeated themes throughout the sarcophagus lid.

Inscriptions from the Edge of the Lid

An inscription made up of four phrases, corresponding to each side, was carved on the outside edge of the sarcophagus lid, which measures 25 cm wide (fig. 33).¹³¹ As Robertson has completed an extensive visual analysis of this inscription, I will not go into the style and form of these glyphs; however, an interesting question is, was there a relationship between text and imagery on the sarcophagus?¹³² Images are the primary form of communication on the sarcophagus, and in the whole chamber there is an explicit interest in communicating through visual narrative rather than written language. Reasons why this glyphic text was included will become more apparent when the inscriptions and imagery from the superstructure or Celestial level are discussed in chapter 5.

According to Floyd Lounsbury's reading, the inscription begins on the south edge (bottom), continues counterclockwise around the east, north, and west sides, then circles back to the south.¹³³ The narrative recounts the dynastic family tree of Pakal with names and death dates of eight generations of relatives.¹³⁴ Facing the entrance to the burial chamber, on the south end, is the culmination of the text: the birth and death dates of Pakal himself.¹³⁵ Mentioning both Pakal's birth and death dates on the sarcophagus cover indicates two significant features: the "beginning" and "end" (birth and death) are actually equalized and represented as more of a cyclical process rather than a finite period of time. Secondly, these

¹³¹ Robertson, *The Temple*, 64.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 64–65.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹³⁴ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 117–18. Stanley Gunter has recently completed a decipherment of the inscriptions from the sides of the sarcophagus (Gunter, "The Tomb").

¹³⁵ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 119.

dates were explicitly profiled by their location and made visible for a viewer entering the tomb chamber. This is another example of the implicit use-value of this internal space of the temple. Messages depicted in these contexts will be seen in the parallel space of the superstructure and were understood through both iconography and movement.

Support Legs

Carved in bas-relief on the exposed sides of the four corner support legs is a series of images that can be described as a combination of inscriptions and imagery (fig. 34 and 35). The entire composition of this program is difficult to see because the support abutments obscure the imagery, which wraps around the two exposed sides of each leg. The reliefs measure approximately 45 cm in height.¹³⁶ Like much of the imagery from the sarcophagus, these reliefs are contained in a frame, in the shape of an *ek'* sign or star sign.¹³⁷ Nestled inside these *ek'* signs are “portrait” heads.

Berlin has suggested that the border portraits from the edges of the cover and the portraits from the support legs might be depicting identical individuals.¹³⁸ Chinchilla Mazariegos expanded this idea by looking at both glyphs and iconography. He notes that the figures from the legs are encased in glyphs representing stars whereas the portraits from the border are juxtaposed with heavenly bodies. According to Chinchilla Mazariegos this series of individuals is the “stellar retinue” of Pakal.¹³⁹ Like their king, these royal vassals have been transformed; however, the subtle distinction between these two groups, namely their frames and locations, should not be ignored. Although these individuals are depicted as having already changed from human/historic to Celestial/supernatural beings, the degree of

¹³⁶ Chinchilla Mazariegos, “The Stars,” 44.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹³⁸ Robertson, *The Temple*, 63–64; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 111.

¹³⁹ Chinchilla Mazariegos, “The Stars,” 54.

change is what may have been shown in the contrasting contexts. When juxtaposed, these two groups demonstrate a successful transfer from one state of being to another. As will be seen in the next series of portraits, this iconography of change continues on the exterior walls of the sarcophagus.

The Sarcophagus Sides

Carved along the four sides of the box is a double line or band that serves to organize the composition. The inclusion of the band suggests that it delineates a Terrestrial level below which, marked by *caban* (earth) signs, is the Subterranean world (fig. 36). The top of the composition (within leaves of the trees) could be defined as the Celestial realm. The double terrestrial line is broken and split into clefts by the emergence of bas-relief portrait busts that are depicted sprouting out of the Subterranean level described as “earth.” Each portrait bust is closely associated or fused with a tree. Scholars have interpreted this composition as an “ancestral orchard” that enframes the sarcophagus of Pakal.¹⁴⁰ The busts appear within a V or cleft, from which each torso emerges, as though a Maya digging stick had made the hole from which they emerge. These polysemic images are also reminiscent of the sarcophagus cover’s vertical axis, which can be identified as a cruciform, tree, and axis mundi. Like the axis from the top or surface of the carved cover, these figures are depicted as spanning both the lower, middle, and upper levels of their composition, which in turn correspond to a tripartite view of the cosmos.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Robertson, *The Temple*, 66; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 122–23; McAnany, *Living*, 43.

¹⁴¹ Although speculative, the “celestial” level in these portraits could be the headdresses of these individuals. In reviewing the imagery all are composed of flowering plants, and animals (avian, feline, and reptilian) all creatures that were transformative and spiritually potent for the ancient Maya. They are also animals that could span the three levels through flight, climbing, and swimming.

Many scholars, including Robertson, Schele and Friedel, and McAnany, have explored the meanings of these bust figures. This short examination synthesizes their ideas and considers their epigraphic and iconographic findings within the larger context of the entire sarcophagus and its cover, a much needed perspective. Like other imagery from the sarcophagus cover (the body of Pakal, cruciform/tree, open maw, and border portraits), location, pose(s), and adornments of these figures are essential communicative elements, as are the portrait busts.

Identity of Tree/Bust Figures. Six generations of Pakal's ancestors are depicted in the bust figures along the sides of the sarcophagus.¹⁴² According to Schele and Friedel, the lineage is not entirely dynastic but familial and thus is an intimate picture of Pakal's family.¹⁴³ The northeast and southeast sides of the sarcophagus depict Pakal's mother, Lady Sak-K'uk', correspondingly, the northwest and southwest ends depict his father, K'an-Mo' Hix.¹⁴⁴ Pakal's maternal grandfather, Pakal I, is depicted on the west side in the north position, while his (maternal) great-grandmother Lady Yohl Ik'nal is shown twice, in the middle of the west side and again on the east side, north slot.¹⁴⁵ Pakal's more distant relatives, Kan-Bahlam, K'an-Joy Chitam, and Ahkal Mo'Nahb are portrayed on the middle east, west-south position, and south position on the eastern side, respectively.¹⁴⁶

Botanical Portraiture. The imagery from the sarcophagus may have been closely tied to the documentation of bloodlines and to the illustration of political legitimacy, but this is only part of the story. The inclusion of specific trees within this polysemic characterization

¹⁴² Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 121; Schele and Friedel, *A Forest*, 220–23.

¹⁴³ Schele and Friedel, *A Forest*, 222.

¹⁴⁴ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 121; Schele and Friedel, *A Forest*, 220.

¹⁴⁵ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 121; Schele and Friedel, *A Forest*, 220.

¹⁴⁶ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 121; Schele and Friedel, *A Forest*, 220. For a better illustration of these interrelationships see figure 3.26.

of Pakal's ancestors reveals that there may be other messages to decipher. McAnany has observed that many of the trees depicted in the portrait imagery are "inherited species," for example, cacao.¹⁴⁷ These species of plants and trees may have been used as markers of land possession.¹⁴⁸ In this way, the "orchard of ancestors" works as a metaphor for royal inheritance.¹⁴⁹ McAnany expresses the connection between rule, ancestors, and agriculture as a "genealogy of place," which she links to several archaeological examples.¹⁵⁰ In a more metaphysical sense, the relationship between ancestors, progeny, and trees foreshadows the future and the continuation of a line, whether it be arboreal or human.

Above and Beneath the Sarcophagus

The carved lid was adorned with jade and pigment after its closure. According to Ruz Lhuillier the southern edge (facing the entrance) of the cover was dusted with cinnabar while the top was adorned with precious costume pieces.¹⁵¹ Three mosaic jade masks and nine precious stone axes were arranged on the north side of the cover (Fig. 22).¹⁵² Most likely, these were personal items belonging to Pakal and may have been components of a belt.

Three groupings of offerings were cached beneath the sarcophagus and placed on the crypt floor. These offerings represent both utilitarian goods and architectural sculpture.¹⁵³ The first cache was more centrally located while the second cache had been deposited in the southern region closer to the entrance of the chamber.¹⁵⁴ The middle cache contained five plates, three tripod plates, and two semi-cylindrical vases. The second cache consisted of two

¹⁴⁷ McAnany, *Living*, 43.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 75-78.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁵¹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 85.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 151.

¹⁵³ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 53; Robertson, *The Temple*, 73.

¹⁵⁴ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 53; Robertson, *The Temple*, 73.

enigmatic sculpted stucco heads modeled as though they had been crafted from life (fig. 37). These works were placed on the floor toward the north.¹⁵⁵ The heads may have been painted red and appear to have been removed from a larger sculptural context, such as a roof-comb.¹⁵⁶ The chronology of these offerings is unknown, but they may have been deposited after the interment of Pakal as a result of tomb reentry rituals, activities that might have been more commonplace than is usually assumed for Pakal's tomb.

The larger of the two sculpted heads was carefully modeled and has individualized physiognomic features, indicating it was a portrait. Several scholars have identified this sculpted head as an image of Pakal.¹⁵⁷ The eyes, lips, and especially the cheekbones reflect these distinctive characteristics. The other sculpted head, which is smaller, has more regularized features and is not as finely constructed.¹⁵⁸ Ruz Lhuillier notes that both heads have perforated ear lobes, an indication that they may have been adorned with jewelry and other lifelike accoutrements.¹⁵⁹ He also considers the smaller face as more feminine, which could represent the consort of Pakal; however, Robertson considers these features indicative of a youth and considers it a portrait of Pakal as a boy-king.¹⁶⁰

Robertson has postulated that these sculpted and presumably portrait heads came from the medallions of House A from the Palace.¹⁶¹ Her interpretation is consistent with the coloration of humans on architectural sculpture, which she suggests were painted red.¹⁶² Both stucco heads are life sized: the first and more finely made is 49 cm by 17 cm, and the second

¹⁵⁵ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 54; Robertson, *The Temple*, 73-74.

¹⁵⁶ Robertson, *The Temple*, 73-74.

¹⁵⁷ Robertson, *The Temple*, 73; Martin and Grube, *The Chronicle*, 162.

¹⁵⁸ Martin and Grube, *The Chronicle*, 163.

¹⁵⁹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 163. The visages of these individuals have been compared by Ruz Lhuillier to the personages from the Tablet of the Slaves.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*; Robertson, *The Temple*, 74.

¹⁶¹ Robertson, *The Temple*, 73.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 51-53.

is 29 cm by 21 cm.¹⁶³ A tantalizing detail Robertson notes is that House A and its portrait gallery were constructed during the reigns of Pakal's sons, Kan Bahlam II (684–702 CE) and K'an Joy Chitam II (702–11 CE).¹⁶⁴ Thus, these stucco heads may not have been deposited beneath the sarcophagus until many years after Pakal's death.¹⁶⁵

Figures from the Walls

Encircling the central area of the burial chamber are nine over-life-size figures that were modeled in stucco and adhered to its walls. The composition of the nine figures is regularized: all have a fixed gaze and similar costumes, making them look like a formation of ghostly dynasts. In contrast to the bust figures from the sides of the sarcophagus, the figures are depicted as still and permanent. Two seated figures flank the entrance of the burial chamber and are located on either side of the four risers leading down to the crypt (fig. 38). The third seated individual is on the north wall of the chamber, directly above the masonry supports at the far end of the coffin. This individual sits cross-legged and gazes out onto the whole burial chamber. The remaining six figures stand upright in the cross vault niches and therefore are not immediately apparent to a visitor entering the chamber (fig. 39).¹⁶⁶

The nine figures that surround and “guard” the sarcophagus appear to be anonymous and may be significant as symbols of past dynasts rather than portraits of ancestral rulers. Schele states that these figures reflect the Palencano dynastic succession and not merely blood ancestors of Pakal.¹⁶⁷ These figures were not portraits of past dynasts; there seems to be an attempt at creating not a distinct individual, but more of a generalized and uniform

¹⁶³ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 163.

¹⁶⁴ Robertson, *The Temple*, 74, states that Kan-Xull II was responsible for House A construction. Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 164, have identified Pakal's sons as the sponsors.

¹⁶⁵ Robertson, *The Temple*, 74.

¹⁶⁶ Robertson, *The Temple*, 86.

¹⁶⁷ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 130.

personage.¹⁶⁸ Each figure does brandish ceremonial accoutrements of rulers, and there is some individuality to these weapons and costume elements. Their headdresses are multilevel and stacked with the visages of deities and anthropomorphized glyphs.¹⁶⁹

The number nine is perhaps one of the significant features of this series of figures. The Nine Lords of the Night were individuals who ruled the darkness and were associated with the cycles of time. Nine was also the number of levels in the Underworld and was often incorporated into the design of burial monuments. The Temple of the Inscriptions has nine distinct sub-platforms that progress up toward the superstructure; the same basic design is also seen at Temple I from Tikal. In a style that inverts this form and its iconography, nine may have also been the number of subsumed structures found within the final phase of Copan's Temple 26. These examples demonstrate that nine has funerary significance, and this number became a powerful symbol both in architectural design and in sculpture, and it could be representative of the Underworld or a world beyond the experience of this one.

Summary of the Subterranean Level, Temple of the Inscriptions

The previously unstable history of Palenque was transformed in the tomb chamber of Pakal into a vision of a vibrant, fertile, and unending dynasty. The deceased king was placed directly inside his stone sarcophagus without benefit of tomb furniture usually associated with classic Maya elite burials, such as a dais, jaguar pelts, woven mats, or a collection of polychrome ceramics, a feature that distinguishes Pakal from his ancient Maya contemporaries. The sculpted stone cap physically sealed the coffin; therefore, the carved

¹⁶⁸ Robertson, *The Temple*, 76. Robertson has completed an extensive discussion of the costume elements of each figure. She believes that if the calcite deposit was not as thick, these nine individuals would be identified. A more detailed analysis of these figures is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 87, 89. More research needs to be done on these figures; in fact, a close study of the iconography and possible glyphs might reveal more information about their specific identities.

cover acted as a secondary seal. The massive carved stone lid was added to the monolith, but what was the function of this secondary cap? The cover had no practical value except to tell a story and work as a second replacement for the deceased king. As an object the cover and sarcophagus became joined and should be considered an ensemble whose messages are self-reflexive. Finally, themes and iconographies from this object are repeated in the spaces and messages from the superstructure.

An “iconography of change” is depicted throughout the interment and in the design of Pakal’s tomb chamber. This message can be observed in a series of juxtapositions between life and death, young and old, and past and present. Many of these messages are communicated through a visual language that uses the earth and cycles of growth and renewal as its symbols. These comparisons can be observed in the interment of Pakal, as seen in the deceased king’s corpse and the idealized portrait of the king on the sarcophagus cover. The jade portrait mask suggests an added tension—in effect Pakal was supplied with a new visage, one that was breathing and awake. His body was then bathed in cinnabar, a chemically transformative substance that gave his body a red glow and was also reminiscent of blood. These items served to create an image of a living and idealized Pakal: the king was buried as an ageless version of himself. This representation or depiction of an immortal corpse was augmented by the portrait from the cover, which presents the king in the pose of an ever-changing infant.

The imagery from the cover can be described as a separate microenvironment that contrasts with the interment. His flexed, diagonal pose is an unusual posture in Maya visual culture, especially for a ruler’s portrait. Its iconography depicted a cyclicity tied to the rhythms of the human body, agriculture, and time and changed the old king into an infant

version of himself. This polysemic figure is depicted as reborn, but also as the center of a cosmological realm framed by a cruciform tree and an entrance to the Underworld.

Iconographies from the cover and sarcophagus are repeated in the imagery from the Pier Reliefs above, in this way the imagery and space from the internal architecture, present a set of visual cues as to how the movement of people and ritual, effected the efficacy of these expressions.

The forms of ancestors on the walls of the sarcophagus emerge from the earth as trees in reference to Pakal's past, and this is also depicted on the legs with additional ancestors who are morphed into stars. These ancestor figures are joined by the nine dynasts who adorn the walls of the chamber, and this ensemble of former dynasts and ancestors could have formed a group of witnesses to the transformation of Pakal from a deceased king to an immortal ancestor. The presence of living and human witnesses is made clear by the caches of jewelry on the top of the sarcophagus and the stucco heads beneath. These objects may have been deposited during multiple tomb reentry ceremonies.¹⁷⁰ The space of the tomb chamber was thus permeable, its message of change intentional, to be read long after the earthly demise of Pakal. In this instance, the polysemic image of Pakal can be read as a portrait, an image of K'awiil, the Maize God, a sacrifice or K'ex or a squirming, infant.¹⁷¹ In my interpretations of Pakal from the cover, which will be detailed in chapter 6, I focus on this image as a component part of a larger message of intergenerational convergence.

¹⁷⁰ Simon and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 168.

¹⁷¹ This complex image has been interpreted by many Maya scholars, including Robertson, *The Temple*, Schele and Miller, *Blood*; Schele and Freidel, *A Forest*; Schele and Mathews, *Code*; Martin, "Baby Jaguar"; Miller and Martin, *Courtly Art*.

Subterranean Level: Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala

The Tikal Project (1957–69), sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania Museum, was not the first foray into the jungles surrounding Tikal; it was, however, the most extensive archaeological expedition to date in the Americas.¹⁷² The Tikal Project has furnished scholars with an immense amount of information about the Great Plaza, including the North Acropolis, later the North Terrace, the plaza floor, and, importantly, Temples I and II (fig. 40).

The North Acropolis was the primary burial site of Classic rulers at Tikal until the early eighth century. The extensive construction campaigns at the North Acropolis are the result of almost a millennium of modification and intense growth. Today, the structures of the North Acropolis appear as a series of compact groups of pyramidal temples. Their construction histories reveal growth through the layering and renovation of previous buildings. The foundations of these structures consist of two platforms (the Northern Platform and the North Terrace), both of which elevate and emphasize their respective temples. The North Terrace is the platform for a line of temples that face south toward the Great Plaza and Temples I and II.

A sumptuous tomb was found in the subterranean spaces beneath Temple I. This structure is located on the east side of the Great Plaza, facing west. Its “partner,” Temple II, located on the west side of the plaza, faces east.¹⁷³ Although Temple II is considerably smaller, both temples share a similar architectural style. No royal burial has been found in association with Temple II, and scholars are still defining its function. The inclusion of

¹⁷² Harrison, *The Lords of Tikal*, 37.

¹⁷³ A detailed examination and interpretation of Temple II, however valuable, is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Temples I and II within the Great Plaza radically changed the focus and form of the ceremonial core of Tikal. Previously, the North Acropolis and the Central Acropolis were the dominant architectural programs (on the north and south ends respectively) with the construction of Temples I and II (east and west sides of the plaza respectively). This new design template also marked the end of monumental constructions on the North Terrace and the North Platform. Later, other large masonry temples would all be constructed to the west, east, and south of the Great Plaza district.

The Great Plaza, Platform 5D-1

The plaza floor marked the lowest point in the core area of Tikal. Staircases descended down to it from the North Acropolis and the Central Acropolis, in this way it was positioned as a performance space visible from many different angles. Its lower elevation and planar expanse allowed for contrasting experiences of the built environment, characterized by the extremes of vertical and horizontal, open and closed, all of which can be observed in the built environment surrounding the Great Plaza. The earth in which the ruler Jasaw chose to build his monuments had only been altered three times prior to the seventh century; this expanse and its humus may have acted as both a buffer and link between the burial temples of the North Acropolis and the elite residences of the Central Acropolis.

Plaza Floor

Although most art history does not include an analysis of the earth or layers of dirt, this short section includes what we would call humus but the focus here is its cultural aspects. The Great Plaza's floor was extensively documented by Coe and this information has rarely been explored since he published Tikal Report #14 in 1994. My interest in this particular

substratum is based on the writings and ideas of Pogue Harrison and Coe's investigations.¹⁷⁴ Emphasized in this dissertation is the perspective that "invisible" or buried material culture maintains its potency and does not erase it; the subterranean levels of mortuary monuments and their resonance as well as the histories of the Great Plaza illustrate this observation.

The final plaza floor was resurfaced in the eighth century, probably corresponding to the constructions of Temples I and II.¹⁷⁵ Used as a substrate for precious deposits, caches, and a burial temple, this new pavement was an essential part of the process of construction. These subterranean spaces are presumably invisible, but as I argue in this study, invisibility does not strip an entity of its potency. The plaza floor dates roughly fifteen hundred years before the construction of Temple I, which was built on plaza floor 1 2B (5D-1-1st-B).¹⁷⁶ This is considered the last of the four floors.¹⁷⁷ Floor 1 contained four different levels and several mini-pavements; Coe characterizes these pavements as "numerous and baffling alterations and additions."¹⁷⁸ A functional floor containing all these features in random order appeared strange to Coe but could be interpreted as a support for architecture, a space for people to gather, and a place composed both of "earth" and of history, which was itself sacred.

The significance of the floor can be seen in three aspects of its structural composition. First, the building chronology of the plaza floor indicates that it was largely independent of the North Acropolis and the North terrace.¹⁷⁹ This suggests that it was considered a separate architectural entity, although it was closely associated with other platforms. Secondly, in

¹⁷⁴ My information comes from Coe, *Tikal Report 14 Vol. 1*.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:12, 184.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, I: 167, 191.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:191-192.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:184.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:165, 184..

contrast to the volume and depth of the North Acropolis, the plaza floor was quite shallow. Its four separate phases of construction were all completed to a depth of less than two feet.¹⁸⁰ Thirdly, the floor may have been thought of as significant beyond a simple pavement, as there is evidence of extensive ritual use such as remnants of charcoal and numerous caches, all embedded and buried in its various surfaces.¹⁸¹ According to Coe, all four platforms or floors of the plaza have these ceremonial marks.¹⁸²

The archaeological record demonstrates that the plaza floor was not simply a collection of dirt or fill but part of a constructed space that had symbolic importance. One notable inclusion to the dynamics of the floor was a deposit of shale “on or near the uppermost floor” in the area surrounding Temples I and II.¹⁸³ Although this set of deposits was composed of items generally found in caches, its presence and concentration near these structures signifies an unusual attention paid to the earth that would later support these temples. For example, in Floor 2 (the pavement before the final floor of Temples I and II), Coe mentions the possibility of “task lines” in the sub-floors beneath the area that would be Temples I and II.¹⁸⁴ These events may have been signaled by features buried in the floor and alterations made in its surface, foreshadowing new construction. As the archaeology of the plaza demonstrates, the plaza floor had both surface area and depth. Over centuries people

¹⁸⁰ The interment of offerings in plaza floors is not unique to Tikal; there are several instances of this practice in Copan as well.

¹⁸¹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 1:169.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 1:167–96. The floors are identified consecutively from earliest to last, as 4–1 (sub-sections of the individual floors are labeled A, B, C, etc.). Clearly more work needs to be done on the degree of “sacrality” of the plaza floor, as opposed to the plaza, as a space of ritual and public display. However, the prevalence of caches both independent of Temples I and II and in close proximity to these structures supports an interpretation of the floor(s) as an entity that was considered sacred.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1:192.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:178.

traversed its surface. They resurfaced and remade it. The plaza floor's structural history suggests it was a sacred space, like a temple composed of multiple subsumed platforms.¹⁸⁵

Subterranean: Temple I

Temple I was constructed on the surface of plaza floor 1 2B (fig. 41).¹⁸⁶ Floor 1 2B, according to the excavation records of the Tikal Project, was the last pavement of this ancient plaza. Temple I, unlike Temple II, had an earlier structure beneath it and a deep foundation that descended several meters into the earth of the Great Plaza. This excavation, which descended through the earlier structure and into bedrock was necessary for the construction of a subterranean room where the ruler Jasaw was to be buried. Thus, Temple I, like the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, was initially conceived of as a burial monument honoring the decedent interred in its sanctified earth.¹⁸⁷

In 1958 Aubrey Trik, lead archaeologist of the team excavating Temple I, realized the burial was excavated through and beneath the ruins of a much earlier building.¹⁸⁸ This chronology is suggested by the burial's intrusion into Floor 1 2B, as well as the excavation and destruction of an earlier structure.¹⁸⁹ Its relationship to Temple I is unknown; there were no burials, caches, or deposits found in its vicinity.

Burial 116 was located 8 m north of the structural centerline of Temple I (fig. 42).¹⁹⁰ In total, the burial chamber was 5.2 m below the level of the plaza, and a substantial section

¹⁸⁵ This discussion of the history of the plaza floor is possible because of the extensive excavations and research completed by Coe and his team. A more detailed analysis of the floor is not possible here, but I direct the reader to *Tikal Report 14*, vol. 1.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:193.

¹⁸⁷ There was a previous structure in the vicinity of the future Temple I. This much earlier building was demolished. It is difficult to consider this structure as being subsumed in the same style as seen in the North Acropolis structures.

¹⁸⁸ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:604, 609.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2:593.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:604.

of bedrock was excavated in order to complete the chamber's construction (figs. 43 and 44).¹⁹¹ The burial was contained inside a room walled and vaulted with masonry. Like the tomb chamber of Pakal from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Jasaw's interment was oriented north-south. A burial dais that supported the ruler's body was positioned along the east wall with a sunken aisle to the west. The walls of the chamber were faced with a 2 mm layer of gray plaster that had been meticulously applied to all the surfaces.¹⁹² An aperture left in the vault was used as an access and regress into the room below, and before being sealed the vault was painted with a dark mud and marl mixture.¹⁹³ Three capstones were then put in the ceiling, closing off the tomb, and the central stone bore on its base (toward the tomb interior) a solid red painted disk.¹⁹⁴ A large deposit of precious materials had been spread over the top of the three stones. This secondary layer of tomb furniture will be examined later in this chapter.

Interment

Inside this corbel-vaulted chamber buried beneath Temple I were the remains of Jasaw (fig. 45).¹⁹⁵ Jasaw was between sixty and eighty years of age or in his fourth k'atun (20 year period) at the time of death.¹⁹⁶ Interestingly, Pakal was also in his fourth k'atun when he died.¹⁹⁷ Previous descriptions of Jasaw's remains have concentrated on the material of the tomb furniture, grouping items according to type and using detailed reconstruction drawings

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Today his remains are in the Tikal site museum.

¹⁹⁶ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 457; Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:605.

¹⁹⁷ Tiesler, Blos, and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 21-35. In addition, Harrison points out that both Pakal and Jasaw "fulfilled their role as Great Men" because of their age at death (*The Lords*, 143).

as guides for the entire assemblage.¹⁹⁸ In contrast, this discussion places at its center the possible interrelationships between Jasaw's body and its associated tomb goods. As in my previous analysis of Pakal's interment and discussion of his mortuary furniture, I will consider Jasaw's burial as a whole. The types of objects included and their placement will be explored as a visual language that communicated ideas about death and the afterlife.

The interment and surrounding tomb furniture of Jasaw create a complex visual arrangement of objects from the land and sea. Some organic materials and possibly foodstuffs were also included. Because of their decomposition, many of these items are lost to us today; however, what is left reveals discernable and interesting patterns. In reconstruction views of the interment these arrangements appear like rings of objects or, as Coe states, a "magic circle."¹⁹⁹ As I understand Coe, this circle would be the placement of offerings in a consistent arrangement around the body and it most likely denotes a meaningful structure.²⁰⁰ Creating levels and segregating "types" of objects could be compared with methods of delimiting sacred space and creating layers of information, similar to the narrative images surrounding Pakal's body.

The Body

Jasaw was placed in a fully extended and supine position with his hands to his sides and head to the north (fig. 46).²⁰¹ The skeletal remains were in poor condition due to the damage caused by part of the tomb chamber collapsing.²⁰² Jasaw's body was elevated and displayed

¹⁹⁸ See Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 604–9.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 608.

²⁰⁰ Coe is not clear exactly what he means by this term but there is a pattern in the arrangement of items. The circle may also be more closely associated with items placed on the petate that lay beneath the deceased.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 604.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

on a dais.²⁰³ A sunken aisle, a location for additional burial offerings, took up the left or west side of the chamber. Adorning the decedent was a rich combination of organic and inorganic materials. The remains of perishable goods are seen in shadowy smudges from foodstuffs or other items.²⁰⁴ Nonfood items include remnants of a feline pelt, leather, imprints of wood, and several woven objects.²⁰⁵ More stable items such as stone/lithics, shell, minerals, ceramics, bone, plaster and stucco, and pigment chips are more easily discernable.

Jasaw's body was laid out on a raised platform (on the bench or dais), which may have been made of wood, as is suggested in the patterns on the stucco remnants. In addition, a large *petate*, or woven grass mat with fringes, and jaguar skins were probably also draped over the raised surface (fig. 47).²⁰⁶ Trik notes that a large expanse of brown decay beneath the body represented a feline pelt, possibly jaguar.²⁰⁷ The inclusion of jaguar pelts or a feline skin laid beneath the body is a feature also seen in Burial 23 from Temple 33 1st and Burial 195 from Temple 32.²⁰⁸

Head and Neck

In a style similar to that of Pakal, the head, neck, and chest of Jasaw displayed the largest concentration of carved jade and shell assemblages (fig. 48). Jasaw's head was circled with a diadem of nine square jade plaques. A set of matching three-piece earflares with an associated rod served to visually balance these adornments.²⁰⁹ Some jewelry was not worn, but placed very near the body, for example, a set of jade earflares had been placed west of the

²⁰³ Trik, "The Splendid Tomb," 10; Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:605.

²⁰⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:607.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Harrison, *The Lords*, 143.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 607.

²⁰⁸ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:539.

²⁰⁹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606; Harrison, *The Lords*, 143.

shoulder, and its mate was found on the deceased's forehead.²¹⁰ Surrounding his head were a variety of marine materials; cushioning his head, arranged almost like a protective skullcap, was a heavily altered *Spondylus* shell.²¹¹ The predominance of materials from the sea is a distinctive feature of this interment. The colors and textures of the various types of marine animals and shells combined with the costume elements and jade must have created a sumptuous image. The dominant colors would have been green, red, and pink, and in contrast with Pakal's interment they were not covered with cinnabar. Interestingly, many of these same marine animals and shells were found in a cache associated with the center beam of carved Lintel 3, which spanned Doorway 3 in the superstructure shrine of Temple I.

Jasaw's neck and torso were adorned with three carved jade necklaces. The first was a multistrand assemblage of fifty-six elongated beads.²¹² The second was a grouping of pearls and nacreous or mother-of-pearl beads found near the neck and chest with a possible composite nacreous shell pendant.²¹³ The third necklace may not have been worn but could have been placed on the decedent after interment and appeared like a beaded pectoral. This swag of 120 graduated spherical jade beads was draped over Jasaw's chest and abdomen and terminated in a bowl outside the immediate area of the remains, on the bench to the west.²¹⁴ These necklaces were markers of his role as ruler and may have been depicted on Stela 16 (fig. 49).²¹⁵ Like Pakal, Jasaw was buried in sumptuous items that he could have worn in life.

In contrast to other burials at Palenque, Tikal, and Copan, the decedent was not blanketed in cinnabar; rather, a more calculated dusting of red was concentrated in the north

²¹⁰ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606.

²¹¹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606, 607. These include modified and unmodified *Spondylus*, *Bryozoa*, and *Arca zebra* shells.

²¹² Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606.

²¹³ *Ibid.*; Harrison, *The Lords*.

²¹⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606; Harrison, *The Lords*, 142; Trik, "The Splendid Tomb," 8.

²¹⁵ Miller, *Maya Rulers*, 57.

or head region of the burial. Traces of cinnabar were found on the northwest corner of the mortuary bench (on the petate), beneath Jasaw's skull, on the undersides of select skeletal parts, in addition remnants of a red-hued textile were also found in this vicinity.²¹⁶ Targeted areas of cinnabar are a trait also seen in Burial 23 from Temple 33 1st; the decedent in this interment was dusted with cinnabar in the throat area.²¹⁷ Burial 23 may be the tomb of Jasaw's father, Nuun Ujol Chaak (Shield Skull).²¹⁸

The Lower Body

The lower half of Jasaw's body was dressed in more jade jewelry and marine materials. His wrists and ankles were decorated with tubular jade bracelets or cuffs, and placed under the right wrist was a pair of *Spondylus* shells and other marine materials.²¹⁹ On the left index finger was a *Spondylus* bead, and in association with the right hand was a jade bead.²²⁰ In the pelvic area was an assortment of imitation and real stingray spines, a lump of *Bryozoa* (coral), and fish vertebrae, and several marine and jade objects were placed in relation to the knees and between the thighs.²²¹

Upright bivalves were strewn around the body in lines or organized groupings arranged below the waist of the decedent. Coe notes that the majority of shells had been modified. Many were perforated with one or two holes, hinges placed upright, and the interiors scraped.²²² Of particular interest are the six shells that outline the hip, leg, and foot

²¹⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:607.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:539. This is a feature that completely stumped Coe.

²¹⁸ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:539; Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 40.

²¹⁹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Ibid.*

on the left or west side.²²³ Coe states that there is an obvious emphasis on the right-left (east-west) deposition of grave furniture.²²⁴ This distinct feature is also shared by the interment of Pakal, for example, he grasped a jade cube in his left hand while in his right hand he held a jade sphere. In the interment of Jasaw, an interest in directionality and balance is seen in the various adornments encircling the head and in the inclusion of a jade bead and shell bead in each of the open hands.²²⁵

Tomb Furniture Radiating Out from the Body

Surrounding the entire corpse were twenty-nine spherical jade beads that may have formed the perimeter decoration of a loosely woven fabric draped over the whole corporeal arrangement.²²⁶ Corresponding to the above arrangement are materials at different distances from the body in a series of bands and were most likely placed on the surfaces of jaguar skins and petate mat. The closest ring of grave furniture is composed of objects in close proximity to the body, and these items were placed on jaguar skins and are more delicate. A group of exotic items that came from the sea were concentrated in a region associated with the body, while around the head was a number of once articulated jaguar phalanx bones.²²⁷ Farther away, items arranged on the petate make up the second band. Included in this zone are 7 polychrome vessels; most notable are two nearly identical plates, one placed directly above the decedent's head and one at his feet. The arrangement of the plates also marks the north-

²²³ Although upon closer inspection it is clear that a similar pattern on the right side could have existed but was moved.

²²⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 606, 607.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid., 2:605.

²²⁷ Ibid., 2:606.

south axial line of the burial. The third zone consists of objects placed in the sunken aisle or bench to the west.

Jade Mosaic Vessel

East of the decedent's head, placed on a petate, was the expertly crafted mosaic cylinder vessel (fig. 50). At the time of excavation, the mosaic vessel's binder had decomposed, and it had to be reassembled. The vessel, like the mosaic mask of Pakal, was composed of rectangular shaped jade pieces, attached to a now decomposed wooden frame by individual pins.²²⁸ There is no doubt that this vessel was specifically associated with Jasaw, because carved onto its lid is his name.²²⁹ Another indicator of possession could be the carved portrait head functioning as both a knob and additional honorific marker. This small head depicts a male face with all the characteristic markers of an ancient Maya elite, including cranial deformation and an extended nose, earflares and a voluminous feathered bird headdress. Near this vessel were found some unmodified obsidian flakes.²³⁰

Tomb Furniture—Grave Aisle

Adjacent to the burial, on the west side of the chamber, was a sunken aisle. Coe notes that the north end of the space may have been reserved as a staging area for the arrangement of burial goods, and the southern end was the location for additional offerings.²³¹ The materials in the aisle, from what can be surmised, are of a terrestrial nature rather than items of marine life, which are plentiful in the area surrounding the body. A close examination of the tomb furniture from the aisle is beyond the scope of this study; however, the items from the aisle

²²⁸ Martin and Grube, *Chronicles*, 47.

²²⁹ Harrison, *The Lords*, 145. In the later Burial 195 from Temple 5D-37, an analogous mosaic vessel was found, but its portrait knob depicted a female.

²³⁰ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:605.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 2:607.

are of three types: highly crafted polychrome ceramics, mosaic disks, and the spectacular cache of carved bones and other implements at the south end near the decedent's feet.²³²

Cache of Carved Bones

One of the most significant offering from the aisle is a cluster of bones and one jade object bundled and possibly placed on a tray or box (fig. 51).²³³ Like the ceramics from Burial 116, these bones have already been analyzed and interpreted by Coggins, and a comprehensive analysis of their forms and subjects will not be presented; however, there are significant themes from a selection of the carved bones that will be more closely analyzed here: bones carved with the “Paddler” narrative scene and those with carved inscriptions or images that have a relation to funerary practices and ritual, as well as items/implements that are closely related to Jasaw.²³⁴ These carved texts and imagery may reference the afterlife and mortuary tradition, while the “Fishing” scenes, although significant, may not have a such a direct correlation to cycles of life and death.

Coggins states that this collection of incised bones is distinctive among elite burials at Tikal or anywhere else in the Pre-Columbian world.²³⁵ The bones were found tightly packed, and they were positioned parallel to one another. The entire ensemble was then dusted with cinnabar, and a jade figurine was placed face down on the top of the collection.²³⁶ According to Coe, this cache may have been part of the personal effects of the ruler. Included were

²³² Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 A*: 61, 62. There is an enormous amount of ceramics associated with Burial 116. A detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Furthermore, there are two excellent examinations of these ceramics, see Coggins, “Painting and Drawing”; and Culbert, *Tikal Report 25A*.

²³³ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606; Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 A*: 61. Coe states that Trik in his field notes describes the substrate of the assemblage as containing remnants of green stucco and a brown “gook.”

²³⁴ Also see Culbert, *Tikal Report 25A* and Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 A & B*.

²³⁵ Coggins, “Painting and Drawing,” 458. For an extensive discussion of these bones see Coggins’s dissertation, “Painting and Drawing,” 458–91.

²³⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 606. Coe quotes from Trik’s field notes, stating that the figure may have fallen and landed face down. This may have occurred when the vaulted ceiling of the tomb chamber collapsed.

small tools (tweezers) and items used in public display or ritual (scepters). Extraordinary images were carved in the surface of a select group of these bones. The incised imagery was emphasized by cinnabar pressed into the curvilinear groves.²³⁷ Although there were no human bones in this collection a detailed study of the osteology of carved bones (from several contexts, i.e., Bur. 196) human or otherwise is needed.²³⁸ The imagery from the cache of bones is primarily focused on depicting stories. Human and anthropomorphized figures are the protagonists in these scenes; however, there is a significant collection of smaller items, which are only decorated by vertically orientated hieroglyphic inscriptions. Other carved bones sharing a vertical design orientation are spatula-like objects with a decorated flat end. These objects almost look like small staffs or other elite performative accoutrements. Bones with carved narrative scenes have been identified as long bones and are horizontally oriented. Inscriptions adjacent to the imagery, placed above or to the side, augment the narrative scenes. The size and relative softness of the objects may have contributed to a more liberated and calligraphic style.

Bones Inscribed with Writing. The majority of these bones are long, thin, delicate shafts, and Coggins notes that fourteen bones include twenty-one different Calendar Round dates.²³⁹ She observed that the collection could have chronicled the death dates of various individuals, some of whom could be historical figures and others living outside of human or “mortal” time.²⁴⁰ Included in these inscribed bones are the emblem glyphs for Copan and

²³⁷ Coggins, “Painting and Drawing,” 458.

²³⁸ Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 A*, 61. There were no human bones but white tailed deer, birds, jaguar and other mammals’ bones have been identified.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 459. This is a theme that is also expressed in the inscription panels from the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque.

Palenque (fig. 52).²⁴¹ These bones may have had value as a portable set of records and as objects infused with supernatural properties.²⁴² It is significant that many of the inscriptions recorded death dates.

Figurative Carved Bones. The scenes, some of which are fragmentary, illustrate episodes or individual characters from myth, legend, or events related to the Late Classic period. The carving style is flamboyant and is characterized by dramatic gestures and much detail rendered by a superb thin, descriptive calligraphic line. The subjects and protagonists are some of the most emotive images in Maya art and line functions as a visual guide, cueing the viewer's gaze and his or her emotions. Although these carved objects were probably used in ritual associated with Jasaw or other rulers during their lifetimes, there is a clear reference to the Underworld and concepts of birth and rebirth, which is appropriate for furnishings associated with a burial.²⁴³

Paired sets: captive figures. One of the finest examples of the figurative carved bones holds the poignant image of a partially nude, he wears a loincloth, but has been stripped of his finery, and bound male captive with an identifying inscription (fig. 53 and 54). This figure is seen in mirror view on two long bones. Coggins notes that they are the "ultimate naturalistic expression of the Maya artist."²⁴⁴ These practically identical representations could have been used as commemorative scepters in ritual; when held as a pair, the two captives face one another. The inscription on the bones mentions a lord from the city of Hixil, and he may be related, a grandson or grandfather, to a divine lord from

²⁴¹ Ibid.; Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 46-47.

²⁴² Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 459; Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 46-47.

²⁴³ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 467-68.

²⁴⁴ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 466.

Calakmul called Split Earth.”²⁴⁵ The text to the right of the main inscription recounts a battle in November 695 CE in which the lord Split Earth is named as the victor.²⁴⁶ Coggins also suggests that these two bones representing prisoners may be associated with dates and events mentioned in the inscriptions from Lintel 3, Doorway 3, Temple I, found inside the superstructure’s shrine.²⁴⁷ The inscriptions from Lintel recount a pivotal battle between Tikal, under the rulership of Jasaw, and Calakmul. Tikal was victorious and this event marked a new era of revitalization for the city.²⁴⁸ Coggins’ observation is significant because it demonstrates consistencies between narratives from the carved bones and inscriptions from the superstructure of Temple I. In addition, these connections also reveal a concern with linking the superstructure to Burial 116.

Paired sets: cartouche deity figures. Like the two prisoner bones, these cartouche deity figures also mirror one another; however, they are not portraits and depict the faces of divine characters (fig. 55). Crowning the top of the carved bones are “3 upward-growing water lilies” whose stems were included in the cartouche designs.²⁴⁹ Placed immediately beneath the blooming lilies is the profile image of a youthful and idealized male. His visage is reminiscent of the Tonsured Maize God, a symbol of vitality and renewal.²⁵⁰ Working as a foil for the active and youthful personage is a second figure below. Coggins has identified this individual as the Jaguar God of the Underworld or the “Night Sun in the Underworld.”²⁵¹ The juxtaposition between the Maize God and the Jaguar God of the Underworld is particularly salient within the context of a burial. Coggins discusses some of the more

²⁴⁵ Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 111.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Coggins, “Painting and Drawing,” 467.

²⁴⁸ Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 45-46.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 467.

²⁵⁰ Taube, “Classic Maya.”

²⁵¹ Coggins, “Painting and Drawing,” 467.

unusual glyphs and suggests that these and others may recount the birth or rebirth of a deceased Maya lord.²⁵²

Four unpaired long bones. The remaining three carved bones do not have mates. Their shapes are reminiscent of scepters, and the imagery depicts figures associated with divine rule and the unique talents of the Maya elite. These scepters include clear references to sacred rule by featuring imagery of K'awiil. Considered as a collection, these carved scepterlike bones or objects are meaningful as instruments of rule.

One carved bone of the scepter style deserves extra analysis. The K'awiil image displays an unusual posture that is reminiscent of the position of Pakal on his sarcophagus cover. (fig. 56) The imagery of this work makes three allusions to the mortuary imagery found in Pakal's burial. If the K'awiil figure is seen in a recumbent pose, then the image is strikingly like the image of Pakal on his sarcophagus cover. Moreover, his left leg, bent toward the viewer and exposing the sole, is in the exact position of Pakal's leg as depicted on the carved lid. Lastly, the general appearance of the K'awiil from the bone is almost an analogue to the composite image of Kan Bahlam /K'awiil from the stucco reliefs on the exterior of the shrine from the Temple of the Inscriptions. (fig. 109, 112) These motifs, which are comparable to those from Palenque, raise questions as to the depictions of K'awiil and associated references to the divine aspects of the ruler, both in life and in death. Coggins has stated that some of the Palencano-style imagery on these bones could be due to a "carving style spread through the medium of portable bones," as well as from gifts or exchange between the two rulers or cities.²⁵³

²⁵² Ibid., 468.

²⁵³ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 469.

Furthermore, Coggins has observed that the K'awiil figure is named Stormy Sky or Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II.²⁵⁴ The inclusion of this object in Jasaw's cache of bones calls attention to his relationship to his great predecessor who lived in the fifth century and died in 456 CE.²⁵⁵ Jasaw may have considered himself the heir to the work and accomplishments of Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II, and this scepter was one of many material references he made to this unique relationship (others include the ritual interment of Stela 31 inside Structure 33 2nd and the construction of Temple 33 1st). Thus, the imagery of this bone makes references to what Jasaw considered his ancestors: Pakal would have been a political ancestor and Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II was his dynastic ancestor. By linking the inscription on the carved bone to Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II, Coggins, links this ancestor to Jasaw in a direct manner. Relationships between rulers and their ancestors may have been familial, dynastic but also one that is more spiritually powerful such as a "convergence" between the generations, a theme that will be further discussed in chapter 6.

Journey in a canoe. The collection of carved bones that depicts a mythic journey is valuable for this study because these images demonstrate the importance of a tripartite cosmos and, most likely, illustrate a story that has explicit funerary overtones (fig. 57-a, b, c). In her detailed analysis, Coggins interprets the iconography and the inscriptions from the "journey" theme—this would include identifying the canoe's location, and she states that these scenes are taking place in the watery Underworld.²⁵⁶ Her interpretations inspired my reading of the journey-themed carved bones and specifically my view that they depict a

²⁵⁴ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 465; Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 32.

²⁵⁵ Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 34. It is also important to note that Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II was interred in Temple 33, Burial 48.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 487.

larger tripartite narrative. This interpretation considers the journey scenes as a related ensemble that is connected together by a tripartite cosmological organization.

This mythic journey appears on seven bones: there are three paired sets and one single carved bone.²⁵⁷ These scenes, which include a variety of supernatural passengers piloted by the Paddlers, are extremely ancient.²⁵⁸ The cast of characters and the general composition of the narrative remain the same throughout the journey, which could be an indication of its widespread use.²⁵⁹ All of the scenes depict a story or myth that takes place in or near a canoe, the type used for centuries by both the pre-Columbian and contemporary Maya. The style of the carved imagery is similar to what has been previously discussed. Coggins has carefully examined these carved narrative scenes and her work will not be repeated here; instead, I consider possible interrelationships between the iconography and its context.²⁶⁰

The characters, anthropomorphized animals, the youthful maize deity, and the Paddler Gods from this collection are some of the most vivid and imaginative figures in Maya art. These individuals are depicted participating in some type of canoe journey; they appear to be escorting a maize deity into the afterlife.²⁶¹ The image of the youthful Maize God is most likely a thinly veiled reference to a deceased king, perhaps Jasaw, or an earlier

²⁵⁷ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 487. Coggins has observed that three or four different artists incised the bones.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 487. David Stuart has identified the Paddlers from these and has associated them with the act of royal bloodletting. He also identifies them as the "Jaguar" and "Stingray" Paddlers. And he directly links their presence with blood and scattering by the ruler. Stuart, "Blood Symbolism," 89-90.

²⁵⁹ Christopher Donnan, from the Fowler Museum at UCLA, has done work on narrative scenes from fineline painted vessels from the Moche in Peru. These narrative scenes, depicted on the sides of bowls, etc., depict a similar consistency in the composition, characters, and forms of the story.

²⁶⁰ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 474-77.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 471.

dynast.²⁶² A progression through time and space may be depicted via the positions of the canoe and poses of the passengers; for example, one image shows the boat tipping down beneath the water while the other depicts a smooth lateral movement, and in yet another carved image, the boat may be traversing the sky.²⁶³ Although the contexts of these three scenes may be different (Subterranean, Terrestrial, and the Celestial sphere), they depict a related narrative.²⁶⁴

Coggins has identified the narrative as part of a larger death mythology, which still remains relatively obscure.²⁶⁵ The carved scenes may represent three stages in the process of death and renewal, and, in this way, each image illustrates a related but slightly different phase of the story. In the following discussion, themes concerning journeys to the Underworld or Subterranean world, the Terrestrial world (corresponding to the surface of the water), and to the Celestial realm are explored through an examination of three scenes from the cached bones.²⁶⁶

Journey: Sub-marine (fig. 57-a). The sub-marine theme is seen on the paired bones carved with canoes descending into the water and presumably falling toward the Underworld. This scene is illustrated on two long bones that are mirror images of one another. The dugout canoes are depicted diagonally in a sharp decline into the water, and this composition cuts across the shaft of the two bones. The diagnostic signs for water appear at the base of the carved bone: a stacked motif (like little platformed canoes) and a cutaway view of a shell.²⁶⁷

²⁶² Taube, "Classic Maya Maize God," 171-181.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 480.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 471. Coggins has suggested that these narratives could have been born out of a manuscript tradition.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 482.

²⁶⁶ In her detailed analysis, Coggins interprets the iconography and the inscriptions from the "journey" theme—this would include identifying the canoe's location. Her interpretations inspired my reading of the journey-themed carved bones and specifically my view that they depict a larger tripartite narrative.

²⁶⁷ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 478.

The canoe contains passengers who are in various stages of descending into the water. In the middle of the boat, and seemingly paddling toward their Underworld destination, are the oarsmen or Paddler Gods.²⁶⁸

Journey: Terrestrial (fig. 57-b). Another subcategory in this collection of funerary imagery is represented on the pair of bones containing scenes of a journey on the water's surface or a more "terrestrial" level. These paired bones, unlike the earlier scenes, each show two oarsmen, one at the bow and the other at the stern. The style is slightly different than in the other canoe scenes: the line is more calligraphic, a wider range of emotions has been depicted, and there is more costume and textural detail present. It is hard to determine whether these additional features were due to the individual artist's preference or skill or if these inclusions had to do with layers of meaning.

Journey: Celestial (fig. 57-c). Coggins has suggested that this last carved bone might depict a journey in a Celestial boat that is shown traversing the Upperworld.²⁶⁹ This particular carved bone has no mate and has been carved in a style that is different from the other two paired canoe reliefs. This bone is also in poor condition and features of the narrative are missing. The quality of the line and the manner in which the scene is depicted are reminiscent of the other unpaired carved bones.²⁷⁰ This distinct visual language is more like imagery from Palenque, a significant observation made by Coggins.²⁷¹

Although the general subject of this scene is identical to the other carved boat scenes, there are clear differences in the depiction of the boat, in the order of riders, and in a lack of water iconography. A main focus of the scene is the boat, which is larger than in the other

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 477, 478.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 482.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 480. This carved bone is in particularly bad condition, and some of details are missing.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 482.

versions of the narrative, and it has been reconfigured to look more like a purely ceremonial vessel rather than a utilitarian form of transport. The figural element is present in the form of a Paddler/oarsman, the Maya lord (Maize God), and some of the anthropomorphized animals; however, in this variation on the theme, they are not emphasized. It appears as though the boat is the focal point of the scene. These are subtle visual differences from the other canoe scenes.

Depicted on this last bone is a canoe that appears more like an ornate platform than a boat. The stern of the vessel has been raised up and extends out in an angle, whereas the prow resembles the elaborate open maw of a supernatural snake. The serpent figure has the regularized features of this fantastic entity, including large squared eyes, a heavy brow, and a long snout with fangs. The snake's maxilla is similar to the one seen in the Paddler's headdress. In the place of the lower jaw is a crossed-bands cartouche and flowing beard. Coggins has pointed out that the serpent's beard is shown streaming away as if it was being pulled in the wake of the moving boat.²⁷² This is a significant observation because the oarsman is depicted as back paddling; he is working in opposition to the presumed movement of the boat. This means that he is either trying to change directions or to stop, or that the vessel is not in water but floating in the sky, like a Celestial vessel.²⁷³ Furthermore, this serpent sculpture has been linked by Coggins to the east, thus, like the Celestial boat it resembles, it is linked to the rising sun and rebirth.

²⁷² Ibid. Another interesting feature is that the paddle is missing, and the oarsman only holds a shaft of the oar. This may be due to the poor condition of the image or may represent an iconographic detail that is unknown.

²⁷³ Ibid. Coggins has associated this vessel with Venus, the east, and the act of ascending to the sky. The sides of the boat are adorned with Lamat, or Venus, signs. The serpent head in the prow is stylistically similar to the Celestial serpent from House E at the Palace in Palenque Pakal's building and is also associated with Venus signs.

The carved bones from Burial 116 contain some of the most aesthetically important imagery in Classic Maya art due to their acute depictions of emotion: the heartrending, the contentious, and the humorous. In addition, these narrative scenes may depict ancient Mesoamerican stories and were of a cosmological nature.²⁷⁴ Of particular interest in this study are the articulations, through the narrative of the Paddlers and Young Lord/Maize God scenes, of the three levels of the cosmos.²⁷⁵ The funerary references are appropriate for the context where these carvings were found, and the images along with the inscriptions reveal that these objects belonged to Jasaw. Many of the works were probably exequial gifts in honor of his death, and other carved bones may have been part of his personal effects used while he was alive.²⁷⁶

Summary of Subterranean Level, Temple I

The subterranean realms of Temple I convey several important themes that are illustrated in the archaeological record of the Great Plaza and in formal features from the interment and tomb furniture from Burial 116. The plaza floor can be considered sacred earth, and the interment of the king beneath its surface was an ideological decision. Rather than being interred in the North Terrace or the North Acropolis, Jasaw commenced a building campaign that would change the focus of the site and initiate new burial practices. A conscious departure from past mortuary traditions is also seen in the orientation of the royal burial in

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 458–88. Notes that these images are reminiscent of many images in Maya art seen in both the painted books and in sculpture.

²⁷⁵ More work needs to be done on these carved scenes. In this discussion I talk about them as an ensemble however the individual iconographic details should also be re-examined. Carrasco, “From Field to Hearth,” 12, mentions the role the Jaguar and Stingray Paddler’s play in the creation myth of the Maize God.

²⁷⁶ Although the Fishing Scenes carved on the bones are significant space does not permit me from delving into an analysis of these works. There are many other carved pieces (both bone and stingray spines) that need further analysis. I tried to limit this examination to imagery of narratives I could link to the afterlife and mortuary themes. There is a cyclicity depicted in the fishing scenes and these themes could be linked to the continuum of life.

comparison with the orientation of the surrounding monument. The decedent from Burial 23 was buried in a north-south direction, and Temple 33 was also organized north south. Jasaw's Temple I was different because it combined two different axes: the temple was organized in an east-west direction while the burial was north south. The juxtaposition of these axes could indicate that Jasaw's interment was read as the center of an intersection in the Great Plaza of the north-south and east-west cardinal directions.

The burial of Jasaw and the construction of Temple I over his interment also referenced past funerary traditions while creating a link to the future. Similarities between Jasaw's tomb and Burial 23 demonstrate this funerary lineage. Coggins mentioned the similarities between Jasaw's tomb and that of Burial 23 from Temple 33, which is presumed to be the burial of his immediate predecessor and father.²⁷⁷ Analogous features such as the presence of jaguar pelts and a restrained or targeted application of cinnabar are distinctive similarities between the two burials. Two unusual post-interment expressions—a red disk painted on the inside of the central capstone from the chamber's corbel-vaulted ceiling and a large deposit of lithics—will be discussed in more detail in succeeding section on post-interment spaces, but in this discussion they highlight an intergenerational connection between Jasaw and his ancestor.²⁷⁸

The carved bones from the cache at the southern end of the west alley are a distinct set of objects. Carved bones, although rare, are not unheard of in ancient Maya elite contexts; however, these objects in their breadth of styles and narrative content are unusual. Three aspects of the bones are important for this study: their glyphic content that include mortuary references and death dates from Palenque and Copan, maize deity scepters, and the canoe

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 456.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 373.

scenes.²⁷⁹ The youthful Maize God, depicted in the scepter-style imagery and in the journey scenes, refers to an idyllic or “apotheosized” Jasaw. In his social guise as a deity/ancestor he is also an emblem representing cycles of renewal in life and death. A similar comparison between cycles of life, death, and rebirth is depicted in both an agricultural and royal context on Pakal’s sarcophagus cover. The larger narrative seen in these carved images and in the interments of these two kings is a depiction of the dualities between life and death, Underworld and Terrestrial world.

The arrangement and composition of Jasaw’s tomb furniture suggests an interest in layering of objects and the articulation of cosmological levels, which is a common feature of elite interments. I discussed the juxtaposition of various materials within the Pakal’s interment, and a similar system may be at work in the burial of Jasaw. As Coe has stated, Jasaw was the central entity in an arrangement that included a “magic circle” of precious objects surrounding him. Observable in the arrangement of items is an interest in segregating materials from the land and sea, or at the very least creating a visual dialogue between these types of material. For example, jade jewelry items were in close proximity to the body while shells and marine items radiated outward in a circle. One notable exception is the shell “skullcap” that cradled his head. The placement of feline skins beneath the body could indicate that the decedent was wrapped in these pelts, and they could also symbolize a vertical cosmos with these animals representative of the Terrestrial level. Tomb furniture from Jasaw’s burial are more “typical” of Maya royal burials and they contrast with the relative sparseness of Pakal’s burial, which did not include these goods. It is important to

²⁷⁹ Martin and Grube, *Chronicles*, 46.

note that both sets of tomb furniture reveal a narrative that concerned the marking of space through the body of the king and ideas of transformation.

Subterranean Level: Temple 26, Copan, Honduras

In this section the central focus is the subterranean history of Temple 26, which includes its construction history from its inception in the early fifth century to the interment of Ruler 12 and the three additional structures that encased the royal burial. The interment of Ruler 12 within the Chorchá Structure, a sub-construction of Temple 26, challenges the notion of “subterranean” (fig. 58). Technically, the interment of Ruler 12 was not excavated into the earth; therefore it contrasts with the tomb chambers of Pakal and Jasaw. Instead Ruler 12 was interred in a structure that had an extensive building history, as it was constructed over several subsumed buildings. The actual burial cist intruded into the sub-floors of two previous structures, Mascarones and Papagayo, while the upper chamber may have marked the foundation of three subsequent constructions.²⁸⁰ Furthermore, Ruler 12’s burial is suspended and elevated above the earth, yet the tomb and interment worked as a foundation for the future, in the same way as the burials of Pakal and Jasaw.²⁸¹ In this example it is important to note that these mortuary monuments were understood as physical structures, but they may also have been comprehended on a conceptual level. A description and discussion of the history of this building is necessary in order to understand the burial of Ruler 12—Smoke Imix.

The Origins of Temple 26

The building history of Temple 26 is tied to the origins of the city of Copan. This chronology dates to the founding of the Classic period dynasty by K’inich Yax K’uk’ Mo’ in the fifth

²⁸⁰ Fash, *Scribes*, 111.

²⁸¹ This burial is reminiscent of Burial 23 from Temple 33 2nd at Tikal.

century CE.²⁸² The construction of Copan's Principal Group, which includes Temple 26, began with a group of three contemporaneous building programs (including a large stucco platform spanning the ceremonial precinct and Temple 16-sub).²⁸³ Structure 10L-26-sub (the archaeological designation for Temple 26's eight earlier constructions) was the furthest north construction of this initial group.²⁸⁴ The two earliest building programs within Temple 26, Yax and Motmot, also share a construction history with the adjacent ball court.²⁸⁵ Yax and Motmot initiated a new a vertical axis design scheme that would continue four centuries into the future and would be echoed in the design and decoration of final phase of Temple 26. This axial position was emphasized by the Yax and Motmot structures through the orientation of their architecture and with the placement of certain cached deposits.²⁸⁶ Fash has observed that there was a distinct continuity between decoration and function in the history of Temple 26, and he links these stylistic continuities with its function as a "dynastic temple."²⁸⁷ In this way, the original pattern established by the Yax and Motmot structures defined the space, style of architecture, and mode of communication that were later articulated in the final structure of Temple 26.²⁸⁸

Sub-structures of Temple 26

The earth that was to become Temple 26 began as a large stuccoed plaza floor on the north side of the Acropolis. This surface worked as the platform for both Temple 26 and the ball

²⁸² Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage"; Sharer and others, "Early Classic"; Stuart, "A Foreign Past"; Stuart, "The Beginnings," 230.

²⁸³ Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 151.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 66; Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 153; Fash and Fash, "Building a World-View," 130.

²⁸⁶ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 78.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

court, which was located immediately north of the temple.²⁸⁹ Yax was the first structure built on this location; it and the Motmot structure marked the early northern border of the ceremonial precinct. The archaeology of the structure revealed a distinct style of construction: Yax was made of cut-stone masonry rather than adobe.²⁹⁰ This feature made it exceptional among other contemporaneous buildings in the early Principal Group. Cut-stone masonry required more care, planning, and expense than adobe. Moreover, being constructed of stone masonry, Yax was framed in a more elaborate and durable manner, and this method may have endowed it and all future constructions with added significance.

Yax Structure

The placement of Yax anchored several sacred points of reference both in the larger Principal Group and among the structures that later became the final phase of Temple 26. As Fash has shown, Yax established the original central axis of the succeeding eight constructions of Temple 26 (fig.59). This supports the idea that Yax represented the place of *origin* of the great temple. Paralleling this interpretation is the notion that Yax may have also marked the *origin-place* of the dynasty.²⁹¹

During excavation of Yax, Fash discovered a sculpted stucco U panel axially placed on its eastern back wall.²⁹² Oddly enough this image was not destroyed when the building was dismantled to make way for the construction of Motmot.²⁹³ The U panel's longevity lends additional support to an interpretation of its significance as a marker of space and of the

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 67.

²⁹⁰ Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 162.

²⁹¹ Ibid. There is archaeological evidence that Yax and early sub-constructions of Temple 16 shared a spatial connection that was laid down at this time. Archaeologist Robert Sharer suggests that the Yax-Hunal axis was a "sacred core" anchoring the early Principal Group. Hunal is the field name of the earliest structure of Temple 16. The exploration of these relationships would be an interesting line of research, but one beyond the scope of this dissertation.

²⁹² Ibid., 68. There is no image available of the U.

²⁹³ Ibid.

future. After Yax was dismantled and incorporated into the Motmot structure, not only was the panel preserved, but it was also further highlighted by a burial cache of two adult males deposited at its eastern wall.²⁹⁴ Moreover, Yax’s overall orientation was toward the west, as denoted by a stair that could have opened up to a courtyard, and later this same orientation is seen in the final phase of Temple 26, which, in turn, opened up to the large Court of the Hieroglyphic Staircase.²⁹⁵

Motmot Structure

After Yax, the next building program was the Motmot structure. As opposed to other coeval buildings from the early ceremonial precinct that had been built in a Teotihuacan style, like Hunal from Temple 16, Yax and Motmot were built in a “new Maya-style” (fig. 60).²⁹⁶ Motmot shared several traits with Yax: it was built of cut-stone masonry, oriented to the west via an open stairway, and had the beginnings of a courtyard to the front and south.²⁹⁷ This Maya form of architecture can be seen in the addition of apron moldings and four modeled stucco skybands visible on Motmot’s east and west sides (fig. 61).²⁹⁸ Based on ceramics, radiocarbon dates, and associated hieroglyphic texts, Motmot was built during the time of the founder K’inich Yax K’uk’ Mo’.²⁹⁹ The earlier Yax structure was used as a foundation—its general footprint and parts of the elevation were intact—but most of the structure had been leveled to make way for Motmot.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 76; Fash and Fash, “Building a World-View,” 133. The Fashes examine the iconography and preservation of Rosalilia in a comparative interpretation.

²⁹⁵ Sharer and others, “Early Classic,” 162.

²⁹⁶ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 74, 75; Sharer and others, “Early Classic,” 164.

²⁹⁷ Sharer and others, “Early Classic,” 162.

²⁹⁸ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 74, 75; Sharer and others, “Early Classic,” 162.

²⁹⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 81.

³⁰⁰ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 76.

A large Maya sun deity mask with a bird emerging from a Yax sign was found on the central axis of Motmot's east wall.³⁰¹ Fash has interpreted this image as a pictorial representation of Copan's founder's name, K'inich Yax K'uk 'Mo'. The sun deity mask was located on the same vertical axis as the Yax U panel.³⁰² As has been previously mentioned, a burial cache of two adult males marked this location as well.³⁰³

The Motmot Complex: Offering and Floor Marker

Located in front of the Motmot structure, the Motmot complex consisted of a cist, the floor marker, and ritual offerings,³⁰⁴ and this collection of material amplified the messages of dynastic origin and sacred landscape seen in the Yax and Motmot structures.³⁰⁵

Fash and his team excavated a 1 cu m cylindrical, stone-lined cist immediately adjacent to Motmot's west wall where it had been excavated in antiquity out of the paved floor of the early plaza (fig. 62).³⁰⁶ The cist was sealed by a capstone of tuff.³⁰⁷ It was oriented on Yax's buried central axis and on the same general north-south line as the first ball court.³⁰⁸ A variety of organic and inorganic materials were deposited inside the cist. The materials may have been organized in a layered stratigraphy that was periodically burned or darkened by fire.³⁰⁹ The remains of a woman had been interred in the circular cist; her body

³⁰¹ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 75. No image is available of the sun deity mask.

³⁰² Ibid. For an interesting comparative image, see Stuart, "Beginnings," 225.

³⁰³ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 76.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 72.

³⁰⁵ The term *Motmot complex* is of my own invention, and I use it because in the context of this dissertation, I am interpreting the Motmot offering, floor marker, and its associated caches as an ensemble.

³⁰⁶ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 66, 68. For a detailed description of the archaeology of this interment, materials, and contents, see 67–76; Ibid., 68.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 70.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 68.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 69.

was placed in a flexed position then deposited with a deer skull and a decapitated human skull.³¹⁰ This combination of human and animal remains was the first level of the offering.

The woman's upper skeleton, combined with ceramics, and a puma skeleton could be interpreted as another level of deposition as in this group there was evidence that these pieces had been singed by fire.³¹¹ Fash believes that this woman was initially placed in a flexed position, and then at a later date her remains were disturbed and used in a ceremony.³¹² In a later ritual, the whole burial was sealed by a capstone and another offering was deposited on its surface, consisting of the entire skeleton of a deer placed on a set of scutes outlining the shape of a reptile.³¹³ Like the offerings below there was again evidence of burning.³¹⁴ This remarkable cache can be read as a meaningful ensemble that communicated ideological messages in three dimensions. Processes of burning and reentering ceremonies may have altered some of the "syntax" or structure of the deposit, but its core meaning remained the same.

A final carved marker (on which yet another offering was made) was subsequently installed over the capstone.³¹⁵ The final marker is known as the Motmot floor marker; upon its face was a double portrait of two elite Copan figures and a short inscription. The composition of the Motmot floor marker is remarkably compact and reveals an efficient use of both written texts and imagery (fig. 63). The composition consists of three separate but complementary images carved in low relief and framed by a quatrefoil cartouche. The floor marker depicts two individuals, seated on the edges of the quatrefoil, facing one another

³¹⁰ Ibid. The principal's bones had been disarticulated.

³¹¹ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 69.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid., 70–72.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 70–74.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 74.

across a central panel of hieroglyphs. Each figure holds a ceremonial bar in his arms, and they are both adorned with elaborate headdresses that symbolically represent their names.³¹⁶ Pictured on the left side is Copan's founder, K'inich Yax K'uk' Mo'—he is easily identifiable because in his headdress is a K'uk and a 'Mo'—and the opposite figure is a portrait of Ruler 2 (Popol Hol).³¹⁷ The double vertical line of hieroglyphs appears reminiscent of those on a carved stela. Fash and Stuart have shown that the floor marker commemorated several events denoted on the "stela" by the inclusion of the date 9.0.0.0, (435 C.E.) which marked the ending of a *bak'tun*, or a four-hundred-year period.³¹⁸ The text also states that the founder and his son dedicated a series of buildings including the Motmot structure.³¹⁹ An additional feature in the text that may further illuminate the meanings of the cist burial immediately below is the "tied deer hooves expression," which has been translated as denoting deer sacrifices.³²⁰

The Motmot marker may have been left uncovered in the west plaza for a time; however, the Papagayo building eventually subsumed the marker and the associated Motmot structure. Prior to covering over the entire Motmot complex, a series of exotic offerings was placed on the top of the marker; they were of precious materials and may have had a cosmological meaning. Arranged on the stone were four jade earflares that were positioned at the cardinal points, several layers of pigments, and a three-stone arrangement used as a small

³¹⁶ Stuart, "The Beginnings," 231; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 72.

³¹⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 83.

³¹⁸ Stuart, "The Beginnings," 231.

³¹⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 81-83.

³²⁰ Fash, *Scribes*, 81-83; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 72. Other rites mentioned in the Motmot marker's text include, the presence of fire and a food offering.

hearth where *Spondylus* shells, jade, and feathers had been burned.³²¹ Later, this deposit was sealed with another circular stone and covered with fill.³²²

As I mentioned previously, an interment of two males marked the back or east side of the Motmot structure, which in turn highlighted the much earlier U relief from Yax. Burial XXXVII-1 (37-1) was located in a cist grave at the foot of the sun deity mask, mentioned earlier.³²³ The second burial (37-2) was also a cist interment due east and located at a higher elevation than the previous grave.³²⁴ Fash found a robust young male in the second interment, and placed in his mouth, as though he were a king, was an offering of a carved jade bead.³²⁵ This series of ritual offerings and interments created a sacred axis by maintaining the eastern foundational vertical line.

Although the purpose of the Motmot complex (the burial, its offering, and the two capstones) is unknown, it should be considered in its entirety, as a mortuary monument. It may be a sacrifice that worked to mark sacred space in a way that was similar to the previous interments in Yax. The offering may have also commemorated the progression of time, which is a theme depicted in the marker's imagery and inscription. The marker's texts and iconography allude to the founder, K'inich Yax K'uk' Mo', and his son, Ruler 2 (Popol Hol), overseeing the turning of the bak'tun and related rituals.³²⁶

Papagayo Structure

Papagayo was a structure associated with Ruler 2 (Popol Hol); its construction ritually encased the previous buildings sponsored by his father (Yax, Motmot, and the floor marker)

³²¹ Ibid., 76.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid., 71, 74.

(fig. 64).³²⁷ According to Fash's schematic diagram, Papagayo was not only superimposed over Motmot but also extended outward to the west and east. Like Yax and Motmot, Papagayo housed important caches and was decorated with an iconography that recalled ideas of origin and centrality. Found on the east side of the structure were the remnants of a carved stucco crocodile or caiman figure. The presence of this animal's image, often associated with the fertile surface of the earth, may have been a feature that reiterated the place of the temple as a location of origin and creation (fig. 65).

Papagayo Sanctuary

It is significant that the most recognizable aspect of the Papagayo structure is its spacious sanctuary room.³²⁸ This interior shrine was constructed directly over the Motmot complex, as well as the earlier Yax structure (fig. 66).³²⁹ The space of the chamber acted as a commemorative frame highlighting the historic and sacred vertical axis defined by the earlier constructions; however, these previous expressions were not frozen in time but were reinterpreted by the son of the founder, Ruler 2 (Popol Hol). In effect, Ruler 2 created a space that paralleled and augmented the earlier constructions of his father.

Stela 63. Planted upright into the earth along the east wall of Papagayo's interior sanctuary was carved Stela 63. Scholars believe this sculpture had been created for this particular context, as is evidenced by its pristine state of preservation (fig. 67).³³⁰ Stela 63 and its inscription could be interpreted as a second-generation version of the Motmot floor marker. The front of the stela has a large, Early Classic-style Initial Series glyph followed by

³²⁷ Ibid., 85, 88, 95.

³²⁸ Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 174.

³²⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 85; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 76; Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 174.

³³⁰ Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 174.

the Long Count date of the pivotal ninth bak'tun, which ended 9.0.0.0.0. and was first listed on the Motmot marker.³³¹ Carved into the original north- and south-facing sides is a row of five cartouches each. The date of Stela 63's dedication and that of Papagayo may have been in the mid-fifth century (465 CE).³³² Furthermore, the inscription on the broad face includes a Lunar Series and the founder's name, K'inich Yax K'uk' Mo'. The text along the north side of the stela notes that Ruler 2 (Popol Hol) is the son of the founder.³³³ The southern inscription names the monument/stela and declares its existence, thus the two sides are more dedicatory and relate to the stela itself as a "stone tree."³³⁴ The central inscription established a direct line with a critical moment in time that was celebrated earlier in the Motmot marker imagery and inscription. Furthermore, the Stela 63's presence may have accentuated and helped to unify the spaces of Motmot and Papagayo.

A relationship between Stela 63 and the Motmot marker is also seen in their composition. The Motmot marker has a three-part organization: a two-line inscription (reminiscent of a stela) in the middle of the image, flanked on either side by two figures who face the text. In Stela 63, a centrally placed text is flanked by a series of glyphs in cartouches that are arranged on the sides of the stone, whereas the Motmot marker's three-part composition is flat across its surface.

The Motmot marker and Stela 63 were objects that were available for public view for a finite amount of time and later covered over by subsequent constructions.³³⁵ The temporality of their presence may have been planned and could have been a source of power.

³³¹ Fash, *Scribes*, 82–83; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 76; Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 174–75; Stuart, "The Beginnings," 240.

³³² Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 174. Quoting Fash.

³³³ Fash, *Scribes*, 82.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ Motmot was encased by Papagayo, and Stela 63 was buried in Chorchá. Motmot was available for viewing for a much shorter time than Stela 63, which could have been seen for over century.

Although Stela 63 and the Motmot floor marker could be considered an unlikely pair, as their shapes were in contrast with one another and a viewer would have interacted with them differently, they should nonetheless be considered in relation to one another. This is due, in part, to the similarity of their compositions and messages, but also because of their complementary contexts.³³⁶

Stela 63 and the Papagayo Carved Step. The Papagayo building enjoyed a long tenure of use. Fash has documented this history in his excavations of the sanctuary chamber. Papagayo may have been used by three rulers, which would have equaled two centuries.³³⁷ This longevity is unusual and is evident in the significance of the structure and its location. Evidence gleaned from deposits in the Papagayo sanctuary chamber indicates that Ruler 2's (Popol Hol) successor, Ruler 4 (K'altuun Hix), performed a rededication ceremony.³³⁸ At this time, Stela 63 was broken into three pieces: the first break occurred at the end of the Long Count series (preserving the top portion and most of the date), and the second split separated the last cartouche (north and south sides) and the Lunar Series at the bottom of the stela.³³⁹ The base of the monument remained in situ along the east wall, and the broken shaft was deposited on its south side, lodged between the front (west) and back (east) walls of the building (fig. 68).³⁴⁰

The rededication of Papagayo also included the refurbishment of the sanctuary chamber. Ruler 4 (K'altuun Hix) may have sponsored the fracture of Stela 63, but he did not

³³⁶ An intriguing connection between Stela 63 and the Motmot marker may be found in the relationship between stelae and their altars. Although separated by time and space, this conceptual relationship deserves more thought. Flora Clancy alerted me to this possible interrelationship in July 2009.

³³⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 89; Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 181.

³³⁸ Fash, *Scribes*, 89; Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 181.

³³⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 82.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 83; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 78.

ignore its original location. He placed a hieroglyphic step at the base of the stela.³⁴¹ Both new constructions obscured what few glyphs were left on the stela. According to Fash, these structural changes helped to preserve the carved base of Stela 63 from further destruction when the area was later ritually burned.³⁴² A new stucco floor anchored the deposit composed of both the step and the stela, and it was built “lip-up to the base of the glyphic step.”³⁴³

The hieroglyphic inscription on the riser was designed to be read from right to left.³⁴⁴ Although the inscription has been damaged, the name of the fourth ruler, K’altuun Hix, is included in the text.³⁴⁵ Appropriately, a phrase within the text refers to Copan as a location of origin or *pu*, “bulrush.”³⁴⁶ Another offering from the sanctuary that may also refer to origin is seen in the deposition of two carved macaw heads from the first ball court, Ia (fig. 69).³⁴⁷ This early ball court, as I previously mentioned, was coeval with the Motmot structure. Sculpted on the exterior walls of Motmot were skybands, a symbol that might have signified it as a center. In addition, Motmot celebrated the turning of the bak’tun and perhaps the formal establishment of a new dynasty. The combination of these additional elements—inscribed step and macaw heads all placed within the chamber—reestablishes this spot as sacred to the origins of Copan. These offerings are another example of reframing past narratives for a new generation. The carved step may have replaced Stela 63, but it did not erase its potency, rather it amplified its ancient message.

³⁴¹ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 78.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁴³ Fash, *Scribes*, 83; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 76, 78.

³⁴⁴ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 76, 78. Fash alludes that the carved step may have been created for this location.

³⁴⁵ Stuart, “The Beginnings,” 231.

³⁴⁶ Stuart, “The Arrival,” 465–513; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 78.

³⁴⁷ Sharer and others, “Early Classic,” 185.

Mascarones Structure

The Mascarones structure was built directly behind Papagayo, and its style was that of a pyramid-temple that combined both its size and breadth to encompass the earlier structures subsumed beneath.³⁴⁸ Repeating the western orientation of the previous structures, Mascarones's outward face included a central stair and stucco sculpture.³⁴⁹ The composition and structure of these facade elements may have been a prototype of the final phase of Temple 26.

Mascarones rose behind Papagayo in a manner that framed and profiled the earlier building. Papagayo was not dismantled but partially encased in and augmented by the larger structure of Mascarones. These buildings could be considered a compound construction: the Papagayo structure was the first level, and it included a stepped terrace, while the Mascarones facade worked as the second level and has another set of steps (see fig. 64). Although each building was structurally different, they complemented one another, and unlike the previous sub-structures, these buildings were simultaneously used.³⁵⁰ Mascarones had a threefold purpose: to create a large and dramatic space for public ritual and performance, to enfold Papagayo and its sacred inner sanctuary, and to preserve and highlight the sacred axis laid down by the founder years before.

Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar consider the stucco mask found by the Carnegie Foundation archaeologist Gustav Stromsvik on the sub-structure of Mascarones to be yet another reference to the sacred axis.³⁵¹ Maya architectural sculpture was often very symmetrical, and therefore they believe there could have been other masks on the east and

³⁴⁸ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 78.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

south sides of the building.³⁵² Interestingly, at the base of the mask were the remnants of a skyband, leading the team to consider that this decoration was parallel to the four skybands decorating its predecessor, Motmot, and “codified” in the text of the marker.³⁵³

Chorcha Structure

The Chorcha structure encased much of Papagayo to its west and the Mascarones structure on its eastern side (fig. 70).³⁵⁴ Chorcha appears to have had three tiers of stairs on its western facade. Although most of the Papagayo structure was completely subsumed, its west facade and the doorway that led to the interior sanctuary were preserved. Chorcha is similar to Mascarones in that it too was like a compound building. In this way, Papagayo became like an archive of the precious objects of the dynasty, cared for as a place of pilgrimage and preserved in these later constructions.

Ruler 12 sponsored the construction of Chorcha, and it dates to the Late Classic period. The design of Chorcha dramatically departed from that of previous buildings on this site. Rather than accentuating size and height, it was more horizontal and open (fig. 71). It was a large gallery-style building reminiscent of ceremonial structures from the Puuc region of Yucatan, which were coeval. Fash estimates that at the summit of Chorcha, there were eight rectangular columns creating seven doorways on both its front (west) and back (east) sides.³⁵⁵ Chorcha appears to have been a decidedly public building that had an open colonnade placed atop an extensive series of stairs. This public function can be seen in the

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Sharer and others, “Early Classic,” 193.

³⁵⁵ Fash and others, “Setting the Stage,” 80. Fash’s extensive excavations of Chorcha have determined that the structure was located 30.5 m north-south by 6 m east-west. The structure can also be compared to the style of adjacent ball court to the north.

exposed platform from the south end of the structure, which was a visual foil for the closed-off space of the Papagayo shrine at the base of the complex.

Tomb Chamber

In the year 695 CE, Ruler 12 died.³⁵⁶ The city of Copan most likely experienced some trauma with the demise of the 5 K'atun ruler. Ruler 12's age at his death was comparable to those of Pakal and Jasaw, and the significance of their long reigns is seen in the extensive and rich tomb furniture in their complex burials. The elaborate nature of Ruler 12's interment is reflected in the design of the entire tomb, which is composed of a sealed burial cist below and an upper chamber with a vaulted ceiling/roof (fig. 72). The burial cist was constructed with cut-stone masonry and is intruded into the foundation of the Chorchá structure.³⁵⁷ Above this sunken space was a large and relatively open vaulted room that may have been completed and dedicated after the initial royal burial.³⁵⁸

The available information, including drawings, photos, and Fash's published descriptions, suggests that these compound-chambers were locales for both the living and the dead. Entrance to the sunken floor of the burial cist was by a set of stairs that descended down from the upper chamber, leading in a south to north direction.³⁵⁹ These steps were later sealed when the exequies for the decedent(s) had been completed (fig. 73).³⁶⁰ The roof of the burial cist was flush with the upper chamber's floor; eleven monolithic capstones spanned

³⁵⁶ Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 200, 203; Fash, *Scribes*, 112.

³⁵⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 111. Fash has used the term *cist* as opposed to *burial chamber*. Although there are cut-stone walls, a stone floor, and a masonry ceiling, this interment lacks a vaulted ceiling, which is a common feature of in-chamber interments. Cists are not always associated with burials, as they can contain an offering, therefore I denote this interment with the term *burial cist*.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 108, 111–12; Fash and others, "The Trappings," 153; Fash, *Scribes*, 111; Martin and Grube, *The Chronicles*, 202. Rectangular in plan, the burial cist measures 7 × 2 × 1.5 m high.

³⁵⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 106.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

the ceiling of the burial and created part of the floor of the upper chamber.³⁶¹ A huge corbeled vault acted like an umbrella covering both levels of the chamber.³⁶² These separate yet related spaces may have functioned as locales for ritual that encompassed interment rites and post-interment ceremony. In this section of chapter 2, I will consider only the immediate spaces of the burial of Ruler 12. The second chamber of the interment will be examined in chapter 3.

Burial XXXVII-4 (37-4)

Pakal's, Jasaw's, and Ruler 12's interments are dramatically similar. A close examination of these three burials reveals a concern with the layering of materials (in Pakal's case, a layering of imagery), and I argue that this style of organization had cosmological significance.

Although a tripartite view of the cosmos is referenced in the imagery and tomb furniture of Pakal's and Jasaw's interments, the clearest example of this perspective can be observed in the architectural design and material culture of Ruler 12's burial.³⁶³ "This separation into levels reflects both the Mesoamerica-wide fascination with the vertical levels of the world"³⁶⁴ and their relationship to the role and body of the ruler, both in life and in death.

The Body

Orientation and Context

A cocoon of clay (strikingly suggestive of birth/rebirth) encased the body of Ruler 12. An interest in the segregation of the body from other tomb furniture and the sealing of the corpse into a container or modeled material is not an unusual practice, and the same tradition can be seen in the sealed sarcophagus of Pakal and in the spatial boundaries articulated by matting,

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid, 111.

³⁶³ Ibid., 160–66.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 160.

woven cloth, and tomb furniture present in Jasaw's interment (fig. 74).³⁶⁵ In Ruler 12's burial, this style of interment was a leading cause in the damage to his mortal remains.³⁶⁶ Impressions on the underside of the clay covering indicate that the body had first been bundled in a woven fabric or placed on matting.³⁶⁷ A layer of unfired clay was then applied to the entire body. David Pendergast has reported a similar use of clay in the burial of the principal from Tomb B-4/7 at Altun Ha.³⁶⁸ A similar deposition of the body was seen in Burial 24, Temple 33, at Tikal.³⁶⁹ As Fash and others state, this unfired clay wrapping created a microenvironment that through its acidic properties intensified the decay process.³⁷⁰ This cocoon may have been intended to protect or act as chrysalis or a type of sarcophagus, nevertheless, the decedent decayed rapidly. Thus, there were only a few intact bones available for examination, and the body is discussed in terms of organic "zones" as opposed to specific anatomical details (fig. 75).³⁷¹ By using the limited physical evidence available, Fash and his team surmised that the body had been positioned along a north to south axis with the head placed to the north,³⁷² as were the remains of Pakal and Jasaw.

Tomb Furniture

Offerings in direct contact with the body included organic and inorganic items, which is typical for elite Maya interments. Many of same types of materials were also found in the

³⁶⁵ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 383. An interesting and possibly analogous example comes from Temple 33, at Tikal, and Burial 24. Coggins notes that the decedent may have been buried in a similar mass of mud or unfired clay.

³⁶⁶ Fash and others, "The Trappings," 160; Fash, *Scribes*, 112. Fash uses the same term, *cocoon*, which is apropos as a descriptor for the body deposition. In addition, this term has metaphoric import referring to renewal or rebirth.

³⁶⁷ Fash and others, "The Trappings," 160.

³⁶⁸ Pendergast, "Altun Ha," 168.

³⁶⁹ Coggins, "Drawing and Painting," 383.

³⁷⁰ Fash and others, "The Trappings," 162.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 160.

³⁷² Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 194.

burials of Pakal and Jasaw. Organic offerings include probable costume elements, animal remains, and wooden accoutrements. Like Pakal and Jasaw, Ruler 12 was placed on an elevated platform (fig. 76). This mortuary structure was made of wood, like the platform used to support Jasaw's remains. Inorganic matter that has been retrieved consists of precious stones, marine adornments, and a dusting of cinnabar.

Body Adornments. An extensive array of jade jewelry had been placed on the decedent.³⁷³ A headdress made up of eleven large pearls, possibly attached to a gray matted, fibrous material, was found in association with the head area.³⁷⁴ Near this region was an elaborate jade earflare composed of carved petals, plugs, and beaded counterweights.³⁷⁵ A collar/pectoral made up of four carved jade plaques and tubular beads adorned the neck and chest of the deceased.³⁷⁶ Also present in this zone was evidence of polychrome paint fragments that were most likely from the wooden dais. Close to the abdominal area was a collection of two stingray spines and two obsidian blades that had previously been mixed with a red pigment.³⁷⁷ Near the feet zone, or at the south end of the interment, were additional pieces of carved jade.

The next stage of body preparation was a second dusting of cinnabar, which was followed by enveloping the form in jaguar skins; the exact arrangement remains unknown.³⁷⁸ The archaeological team found thirty-six feline phalanges (feline claws), which could indicate that two jaguar pelts had been deposited over the body. Feline remains were concentrated in the north and south ends of the interment, corresponding to the axial line of

³⁷³ Fash and others, "The Trappings," 165.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 162.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 163.

³⁷⁸ Fash and others, "The Trappings," 165. There was a preponderance of the color red used both in the form of cinnabar dust and in red paint, therefore we do not have exact knowledge of the various stages of the ritual.

the burial.³⁷⁹ There was also evidence of a finely plaited grass matting found beneath the body.³⁸⁰

Tomb Furniture Surrounding the Body. Two significant items found in association with Ruler 12's body require special attention and analysis. The first object is what Fash has interpreted as a painted staff made of some organic material arranged in a line along the north-south axis, next to the body and placed on or near a gray fibrous material.³⁸¹ The second items was a multitiered dais (see fig. 76). The base of the dais consisted of a painted stone slab, and above it were two painted wooden platforms.³⁸² These platforms supported two sets of offerings: the upper level supported the body, and the second and lower level housed a group of perishable and precious objects.³⁸³ Covering the painted stone dais was a layer of materials that most likely were associated with the wooden dais above. These specimens have been intricately researched by the Fashes and Harriet Beaubien of the Smithsonian Institution, and like the remains of Ruler 12, only "regions" or sections of the dais can be discussed with any certainty.

The upper painted platform was predominantly painted red, but other colors were present as well, such as green, yellow, white, and black.³⁸⁴ This upper tier was painted on both the top and bottom sides.³⁸⁵ Some recovered paint specimens still retained a polychrome design; this was seen in fragments close to the raised dais, which had a surface exhibiting

³⁷⁹ Ibid. There is no definitive evidence as to exactly where these pelts had been draped, but they were clearly associated with the body of Ruler 12, whether they were placed over the clay cocoon or were in direct contact with the remains.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid., 162.

³⁸² Fash, *Scribes*, 112.

³⁸³ Fash and others, "The Trappings," 153, 166.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Fash, *Scribes*, 112.

“freely painted decorative motifs” on both sides.³⁸⁶ The second concentration of painted stucco and wood fragments probably corresponded to the lower painted platform. This subsequent construction was also painted red with additional traces of a 10–12 cm wide polychrome band. The polychrome band was limited to the northern region, while the southern region remained red with no additional painted designs; only the top portion of this platform had been painted.³⁸⁷

Deposited on the lower painted platform was a rich collection of marine items arranged in a concentrated group. The remains of cloth and cordage were found in the immediate area, leading Fash and others to conclude that the objects had once been gathered in some type of bag.³⁸⁸ The offering included both vertebrate and invertebrate animals: fish vertebral bones, shell fragments of sea urchins, sea sponge, sea star, sea fan, tiny bivalve shells, and several *Spondylus* shells.³⁸⁹ In addition there were several small pearls and little stone fragments.³⁹⁰ Adjacent to the bundled items were *Spondylus* shells positioned at various points within the northern region of the platform.³⁹¹ According to evidence presented in the drawings and description of the interment, the color red was a dominant feature. Furthermore, the whole interment was covered in cinnabar, and although there were discrete layers, the extensive use of red could have unified the disparate elements.

Fash has interpreted this unusual offering and interment as evidence of a ritual that may have re-created the cosmos. The cache of precious and exotic marine objects was

³⁸⁶ Fash and others, “The Trappings,” 161

³⁸⁷ Ibid. Fash and others have also determined that some of the fragments were layered in pairs, thus some objects were painted on both sides.

³⁸⁸ Fash and others, “The Trappings,” 161.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 164. The *Spondylus* shells appear, from available information in the diagram, to be scattered around the chest and feet zones. They may have fallen in this position due to seismic activity or degradation of their substrate. We cannot determine at this time where their original location might have been.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

located beneath several layers of material (multiple dustings of red pigment, a wooden platform, woven matting, a feline pelt wrapping, and the cocooned decedent), and its significance is not diminished by this presumed invisibility. According to Fash and others, this grouping was a powerful statement and may have symbolically functioned “as the substrate upon which all other layers of the world were symbolically represented by other types of offerings.”³⁹²

Wall Niches. Inside the narrow tomb chamber/cist were four niches positioned at the level of the floor. These four corners of the burial cist may have housed an array of offerings placed in accordance with the four cardinal directions.³⁹³ The deceased ruler’s wrapped and cocooned body could be deemed the fifth or central node in this quincunx arrangement. According to Fash and others, earthquake activity scattered the tomb offerings randomly over the floor, and what could have been a patterned arrangement is today lost.³⁹⁴ This is most acutely seen in items that could have been in the four wall niches, large, squared-off spaces made of cut-stone masonry that may have also been painted red.³⁹⁵ The southeast niche contained two vessels, a *Spondylus* shell, and a cluster of crystalline stones.³⁹⁶ In the southwest niche three ceramic vessels were found in situ.³⁹⁷ On the floor of the southern region were more vessels, plus several *Spondylus* shells, a stingray spine, and a bone fragment.³⁹⁸ Located in association with these bowls was a distinctive polychrome painted vessel whose image Fash has interpreted as a scribe depicted in profile.³⁹⁹

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Fash, *Scribes*, 111.

³⁹⁶ Ibid. Fash postulates that these items, in another context, would have been associated with divination.

³⁹⁷ Fash and others, “The Trappings,” 164.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.; Fash, *Scribes*, 106–7.

Exegy Sacrifice. Two exegy sacrifices were interred along with the remains of Ruler 12. These two figures were located in the south or feet zone and were not on the elevated dais. The offering consisted of the intact remains of a young child and a twelve-year-old boy.⁴⁰⁰ These individuals' bodies were not as degraded as Ruler 12–Smoke Imix's remains because they were not encased in a clay coating.⁴⁰¹

Esmeralda

Esmeralda⁴⁰² is the comparatively massive stepped and pyramidal structure constructed to encase the Chorcha building and bury the entire Mascarones sub-structure, which was located to the east.⁴⁰³ This structure is also named Temple-26 3rd due to its size and profile, which are similar to the last two phases of the temple. The Esmeralda structure ushered in the tradition of constructing monumental temples that were to be the hallmark of Copan's ceremonial precinct. The son and heir of Ruler 12, Ruler 13 (Waxaklajuun Ubaah K'awiil), sponsored its construction.

Esmeralda may have been a reflection of the unique architectural vision of its sponsor, Ruler 13. Fash has described the structure as a “sanctuary on high” because its western and more public face lacked any access from below; for example, there was no front central stairway.⁴⁰⁴ Essentially, Ruler 13 transferred the front facade from the west side of the structure (facing the courtyard) to the east side, which faced a smaller and more intimate

⁴⁰⁰ Fash and others, “The Trappings,” 164.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid. Offerings of this type are not uncommon; however, in this example there is no evidence of how they died.

⁴⁰² Híjole structure, which may be located on the east side of Temple 26 within or between the Chorcha and Esmeralda structures. Research surrounding this building is unpublished. My understanding of this building is based on my own experiences as a member of the Copan Field School and participating in archaeological fieldwork in 1998.

⁴⁰³ Sharer and others, *Early Classic*, 186.

⁴⁰⁴ Fash, “Religion,” 13.

open space.⁴⁰⁵ The first hieroglyphic stairway is associated with Esmerelda, and it was originally constructed on the top of the structure's eastern facade.⁴⁰⁶ Stuart has read these early hieroglyphic steps, and according to his decipherments, the inscription states that Ruler 13 dedicated the hieroglyphic stairway fifteen years after the death of Ruler 12.⁴⁰⁷ Fash believes that this first version of the hieroglyphic stairway was a biography of Ruler 12, honoring his life and accomplishments, as constructed by his son and heir.⁴⁰⁸

The architectural history of Temple 26 defines a predominantly west-facing monument. Moving the facade from the west to the east created a more intimate environment for viewing the first hieroglyphic stairway and its associated decorations. The transformation of the facade to the east and its eventual return to the west is evidence that the temple and its footprint and history were singularly powerful. Ruler 15 (K'ahk' Yipyaj Chan K'awiil) later removed the first set of inscribed risers from the top of the east facade and inserted them into the base of the western facade, where they were integrated into the design of the final hieroglyphic stairway.⁴⁰⁹

Summary of Subterranean of Temple 26-Sub and Burial XXXVII-4

Temple 26 is composed of nine distinct layers containing buildings, caches, several burials, and an elaborate royal interment. The approach of this analysis is twofold: first, these previous structures were significant for the creation of meaning and together articulated a sacred axis, and second, the burial of Ruler 12 was a subterranean deposit because the earlier

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 139.

⁴⁰⁸ Fash, "Religion," 13.

⁴⁰⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 139.

sub-structures formed a layered history as do the layers of the earth. The efficacy of Ruler 12's burial comes from this cultural stratigraphy.

The cultural stratigraphy profiled in this subsection is highlighted by the architecture of the sub-structures, but also by sculpture adorning their surfaces and offerings buried in their foundations. A message of dynastic origin linked to the sacred landscape established by the first sub-structure, Yax, was depicted in the decoration and construction of Motmot. Yax's and Motmot's distinctive Maya building style along with the Motmot burial cache, the sculptured U design, and founder's sun-deity pictograph contributed to distinguishing these two structures as representative of a new spatial and architectural order at Copan. The Motmot complex was continuously reused over many years (contents rearranged, burned, and reburied), and like in ceremonies of tomb reentry, this burial cache was celebrated as a potent marker. The commemoration of the turning of the bak'tun, read in the inscriptions and imagery from the floor marker, and the presence of the three-stone hearth effigy arranged on its final capstone, are indications that this complex was meaningful as a creative and renewing presence in the sub-structures of Temple 26.

The past and present were juxtaposed through both the construction of space in the Papagayo sanctuary and in the messages from the Motmot marker and Stela 63. Stela 63's location within the Papagayo shrine against its eastern wall harkens back to significant features of both the Motmot and Yax structures (the U and sculpted founder's name) and supports a notion of convergence between time and space. These messages imparted by features of architectural design and ritual articulated dynastic continuity but not in the abstract. The Papagayo shrine was constructed directly over Yax, Motmot, and the Motmot complex, and this small room was left open even after the large Mascarones structure

encased it. Inside this space dynastic renewal ceremonies were held, and evidence of these rites are seen in the inclusion of the hieroglyphic step, the repositioning of Stela 63 (and its alteration and burning), and the restuccoing of the chamber's floor. Fash and others estimate that the Mascarones and Papagayo structures were in use for at least two generations, and during this time the entire structure may have become a pilgrimage site.⁴¹⁰

Although the Chorcha structure was stylistically different from the previous sub-constructions, clear references to the sacred founding of the city and the Motmot complex are seen in its archaeology. In a circular offering placed on the floor of Mascarones between it and the back wall of Papagayo, a group of jades, cinnabar, and a *Spondylus* shell, all of which had been burned, was found.⁴¹¹ These remains can be considered parallel to those found on the top of the Motmot floor marker, and the similarities of these two sets of burnt offerings was most likely not a coincidence. In this example from Temple 26, architecture is used as a narrative tool that articulated and strengthened messages of transformation and renewal at Copan. This form of spatial iconography is seen at the Temple of the Inscriptions and at Temple I as well.

Subterranean Level: Post-interment Spaces

Post-interment space is a term that describes the built or ritual environment in the immediate vicinity of the burial chamber or crypt. The examples from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 are varied and can include complex architectural spaces or extensive caches. Their most distinguishing features are being situated in an area outside of but contingent with the burial chamber, extensive alteration of space, evidence of ritual, and “invisibility.” These spaces and expressions were related to but also served to delimit the

⁴¹⁰ Fash and others, “Setting the Stage,” 78.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

interment of the principal decedent. This is seen in the practices of closing off, back filling, and/or burial of the post-interment space, which was done in all three contexts. The ephemeral nature of these post-interment spaces is revealed in their “destruction” through their burial. An interesting juxtaposition is created between the unobstructed void that is the actual burial chamber and the dense mass of the temple. Through an examination of the archaeological record of the “in-between spaces” of the post-interment, the lengthy and deliberate processes of ancient Maya royal burial become more apparent.

The post-interment spaces within the Temple of the Inscriptions from Palenque, Temple I at Tikal, and Copan’s Temple 26 are all quite different when they are considered separately, but when these expressions are compared to one another and considered as evidence of discrete ritual processes, their spatial and thematic (conceptual) commonalities become apparent. The designers of the Temple of the Inscriptions created an internal architecture that linked the burial chamber to the world of the living above in the superstructure shrine. Paradoxically, the most durable feature of this architecture may have been a diminutive masonry tube that physically connected the sarcophagus to the central room of the upper shrine. An analogous expression at Tikal takes the form of an immense offering of flint and obsidian may that have connected the royal burial with the Great Plaza floor, located many meters above. Ruler 12’s tomb in Temple 26 encompassed a burial cist, and over it was the upper vaulted chamber. A virtual population of incense burners occupied the upper chamber. These objects were placed above the sealed burial cist, and a lone *incensario* was placed outside this room at the apex of the vault. Uniquely associated with the space of Ruler 12’s burial and the lineage of Copan, these incensarios also served as yet another type of physical link between the royal interment and the environment of the living.

These three expressions may have been motivated by a need shared by the survivors of Pakal, Jasaw, and Ruler 12 to maintain a connection to the past.

The following examples suggest that the interment and commemoration of a ruler was a process that consisted of many stages. The description and analysis in this chapter uses a perspective that progresses outward from the interior of the burial chamber. This approach will highlight these post-interment spaces not within a literal archaeological or chronological framework but as part of an ongoing process of mortuary ritual. According to recent work by David Stuart and Markus Eberl, the epigraphic record provides evidence of episodic burial ceremonies.⁴¹² Time becomes important when examining post-interment spaces, as they are all expressions of ritual that occurred after the initial *muhkaj* events (burial) of the royal person. The architecture and associated material culture of these three environments suggest that the royal exequies as a *conception* may have been as significant as the actual interment.⁴¹³

Post-interment Spaces: The Temple of the Inscriptions

The post-interment spaces of the Temple of the Inscriptions are a type of internal architecture. This space could be called liminal because it bridges the structural and symbolic distance between two significant parts of the temple (the tomb chamber and the superstructure shrine). The presence of the psychoduct (masonry tube), the several offerings embedded into the fill of the east-west corridor, and the interior stairway may be indications that the physical and conceptual values of these spaces were significant. The structure of the

⁴¹² Stuart, “The Fire”; Eberl, *Muerte*. A more in-depth discussion of these burial processes can be found in chapter 5.

⁴¹³ Tomb reentry events are the clear examples of this ritual phenomenon. Although this is a rich area of research and one that needs more detailed analysis and interpretation, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Important work has been completed on this subject, most notably by Fitzsimmons, *Death*.

Temple of the Inscriptions' post-interment space consisted of the threshold and corridor leading to the tomb chamber and a switchback-style stairway leading up to the superstructure.

Interior Passageway

Plaza Floor Level

Egress from Pakal's burial chamber was via a short north-south ascending stair and through a triangular door.⁴¹⁴ The door of the tomb chamber had the same shape and profile as its vault and measured 1.62 m at its base and was 2.36 m high and 19 cm in width.⁴¹⁵ Notches on both sides of the stone facilitated its movement or repositioning, and although the top portion fit tightly into the vault, at its base the door was intentionally left ajar, in order to accommodate the masonry tube (psychoduct) that would eventually travel from the tomb chamber through the doorway and out to the corridor.⁴¹⁶ After the final exequies were complete the triangular door was painted on its "outside" face with a layer of stucco, which may have served to seal the door. A stone box constructed against the threshold to the tomb chamber also obscured the presence of this doorway; however, as can be seen in Ruz Lhuillier's drawing, the northwest side of the door remained slightly open (fig. 77).

South of the burial chamber and its triangular door was an interior passageway that ran east and west at the level of the plaza floor or ground level. The interior passageway was used in two ways: the first was to create a thoroughfare to and from the burial chamber (prior to the sealing of the crypt's entrance); the second purpose was to mark the sacred space surrounding the royal burial and to provide a location for post-interment/exequial ritual.

⁴¹⁴ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 48.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Evidence of ritual is suggested by the presence of several caches or offerings buried in the passageway and by the psychoduct that progressed along the floor of the corridor. The first deposit was a stone box placed directly at the threshold of the crypt (in front of the triangular door), and the second was a cist offering found suspended in the fill that would eventually seal up the entire corridor. With the exception of the psychoduct, these offerings were most likely deposited at the time the whole corridor was ritually buried.

The threshold deposit consisted of a stone box that partially blocked access to the tomb chamber's triangular door.⁴¹⁷ Inside the 1.0 × 1.4 m masonry box were the bones of five or six individuals who were identified by Ruz Lhuillier as primary interments.⁴¹⁸ Vera Tiesler and Andrea Cucina recently reexamined these remains and have determined that the individuals include an infant/toddler, a subadult, and three adults (one female, one male, and the other of indeterminate sex).⁴¹⁹ Close inspection of a thoracic vertebra reveals evidence of cut marks, while on other bones there was evidence of perimortem burning and sprinkling of red pigment.⁴²⁰ In general the bones have been difficult to examine due to damage caused by the collapse of the box's lid and the accumulation of calcite deposits.⁴²¹ The size of the box and placement of the bodies has led some scholars to propose that this offering was a communal burial and not the result of an attendant or exegic sacrifice.⁴²²

Definitive evidence that proves what type of offering this was may never be found; however, it is clear that the box was placed in the corridor after the burial chamber had been

⁴¹⁷ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 49–50; Tiesler and Cucina, eds., *Janaab' Pakal*, 107. The north and east walls of the passageway formed part of the structure of this offering with its northern border being the crypt door. To the west was a 36 cm tall stone that formed the fourth wall of the container.

⁴¹⁸ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 55; Ruz Lhuillier, *Palenque*, 193, 194; Tiesler and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 107; Weiss-Krejci, "Victims, 374-377."

⁴¹⁹ Tiesler and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 109.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 111–12, 119–22.

⁴²¹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 50–51; Tiesler and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 109.

⁴²² Weiss-Krejci, "Victims," 375-376.

sealed, and at least one person died violently while the others' bones were treated with fire and pigment.⁴²³ The question that is most salient for this dissertation is, what is the ritual value of this post-interment deposit?

The second offering from the corridor was also contained within a masonry box, but rather than being associated with the floor or a raised platform, this cache was suspended in the fill (fig. 78 and 79). This inter-wall offering, located a short distance to the west of the chamber entrance, was found embedded into the wall of fill that sealed off the passageway from the ascending western stairs.⁴²⁴ The second offering contrasted with the previous deposit because it contained nonhuman materials and was located approximately 1 m below the ceiling vault of the corridor.⁴²⁵

Objects from this offering were placed in an arrangement of radiating arcs sprinkled with cinnabar.⁴²⁶ On one side of the offering were three small plates (13.6 cm in diameter) stacked atop one another; they were decorated with a green band on the outside, and the interiors were painted ocher in color.⁴²⁷ In another arc adjacent to the plates were three perforated conch shells; inside each shell was a dusting of cinnabar and carved pieces of jade and pearl.⁴²⁸ Placed in a line around the perimeter of the shells was a collection of six jade beads, also dusted in red; in addition, the base and walls of the offering box were painted with the red dust.⁴²⁹

Two features of this second offering are reminiscent of the interment of Pakal: the first is the dusting of cinnabar, which covered the contents of this cache and the physical

⁴²³ Tiesler and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 124.

⁴²⁴ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 48, 49.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

structure of the cist. This is a distinctive trait seen in the treatment of Pakal's remains and the interior cavity of his sarcophagus. The second feature is the presence of jewelry and precious marine materials. Cinnabar, shell, pearls, and jade had been deposited in both the interment of the king and also in the inter-wall offering, but were not present in the exegy burial from the base of the tomb chamber threshold. Pakal's burial and the inter-wall offering share similar features, although one contained a human and the other contained nonhuman materials.

Through a comparison of the contexts and contents of the royal interment, exegy burial, and inter-wall offering (suspended in fill at the bottom of the stairs), a pattern can be discerned. The inter-wall offering could have marked the closure of the interior passage, whereas the exegy burial may have served to commemorate the eventual sealing off of Pakal's burial chamber at the tomb threshold. Cinnabar and jewelry were not found within the exegy burial, and their absence could have indicated that these individuals had been stripped of their belongings and identity markers. Their presence in the vicinity of Pakal's tomb was most likely not the result of a "collective tomb burial," as proposed by Weiss-Krejci, but sacrifice.⁴³⁰ In addition, their bodies were unceremoniously packed into the cist burial, which, according to Tiesler and Cucina, is another feature of sacrifice.⁴³¹ In these two examples, the ritual of interring the royal person can be seen as a temporal process reflected in the offerings or deposits and in their spatial arrangements.

Stairs

The switchback stairs connecting to the central chamber of the superstructure shrine functioned as access to and regress from the interior of the temple. Like the east-west

⁴³⁰ Weiss-Krejci, "Victims," 376.

⁴³¹ Tiesler and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 122.

corridor, this space would eventually be buried in fill marked by caches suspended in the dirt. The psychoduct, however, maintained continuity and an open space within the fill, as it outlined each tread ascending up to the superstructure (fig. 80).

The central chamber in the superstructure functioned as the entrance (or exit) to the internal architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions. Six sets of plugged holes on the face of a paving stone provided an indication as to the purpose of the flat stone as both a floor and an entrance (fig. 81). Ruz Lhuillier and his team found the outline of a corbel vault buried in fill, and then after they excavated the rubble, a staircase came into view.⁴³² This stair descended at a straight angle forty-five steps toward the west.⁴³³ The flight of steps abruptly stopped at a landing and then turned toward the east, descending twenty-seven additional steps.⁴³⁴ Ruz Lhuillier has noted that the staircase, although having been buried for over a thousand years, was in surprisingly good condition.⁴³⁵

Top of Stairs

There were three offerings grouped together at the top of the interior staircase: two offerings were deposited in masonry boxes while a third offering was placed alone in the fill. Suspended in vertical levels in the fill near the top of the stairs, these offerings could be considered an ensemble of items and the penultimate ritual expression before the stairway's closure. Ruz Lhuillier and his team found these objects almost immediately after they had pulled up the floor slab, and they may have been the last offerings associated with the interment of Pakal before the final closure of the space.⁴³⁶

⁴³² Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 80.

⁴³³ Ibid.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

⁴³⁶ Ibid, 36.

The offerings will be discussed in descending order from the perspective of the excavators, for example the first cache mentioned in the archaeological record will be number one in this study (however, according to the perspective of the ancient Maya, this cache would have been last). These offerings have been mentioned in analyses of the Temple of the Inscriptions, but because of their relatively modest features they have not been closely examined. The offering number one, buried in fill immediately beneath the flagstone cover, was constructed like a cist with cut-stone walls, a paved floor, and five stones forming the lid or top (fig. 82). Although Ruz Lhuillier does not give the dimensions, his description and drawing give the impression that the deposit was about the size of one of the stair treads. An interesting feature of this first offering is its almost empty state; all that was found was a small piece of jade surrounded by cinnabar and dirt, while the stones along the sides of the cist were painted in stucco.⁴³⁷ Offering number two was found in close association with the first in a hole within the fill, directly beneath the floor of the superstructure shrine.⁴³⁸ It consisted of a lone button or carved bone ornament. Offering number three in this vertical series of deposits was placed at the level of the second step of the interior staircase. One flat stone sealed this cist, and surrounding stones were irregular. The interior cavity was smaller than those of the first offerings, but the overall size was similar. The material found in this deposit was also minimal, but it contained more than the previous offering (for example, an irregularly carved stone painted in cinnabar), and placed over its top surface were two jade earflares.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁷ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 36. Ruz Lhuillier does not state with any certainty if this is a jade bead or another type of stone.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

The “empty” or restrained nature of these offerings creates a challenge when one is attempting to interpret patterns and meanings. Perishable items were likely included in the deposits, and until analogous examples are found in the archaeological record or in ethnographies, it is a problematic exercise to attempt a reading of each deposit. Susan Gillespie acknowledges this issue by stating that perishable or invisible materials are “difficult to incorporate into the interpretations of the social statuses and social organization.”⁴⁴⁰ What is significant is that this series of offerings, like the previous deposits from the corridor, appear to be marking space, specifically thresholds, entrances, or exits. These three offerings were the last to be buried before the internal staircase was physically closed.

Psychoduct

The interior spaces of the Temple of the Inscriptions, which include the burial chamber, passageway, and the staircase, are all linked together by the psychoduct (a stone and stucco tube). According to Ruz Lhuillier, the origin of the psychoduct was the sarcophagus, and its terminus was at the top of the steps, directly beneath the floor of the superstructure (fig. 83).⁴⁴¹ This conduit was carefully and elegantly constructed, and it explicitly represents post-interment rituals and highlights the need to examine the interiors of the temple as component parts of a larger spatial expression.⁴⁴²

⁴⁴⁰ Gillespie, “Body and Soul,” 68.

⁴⁴¹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 62, 92. Robertson has postulated that the psychoduct continues on up through the floor and extends to the front of the temple where it finally ends (or begins) at the foot of Pier C.

⁴⁴² Psychoducts are known in two other contexts at Palenque, both of which were associated with burials. Other examples from Palenque are from Temples XX and XVIIIA, in addition to a burial within Temple III at Calakmul.

The structure of the psychoduct is in two materials: modeled stucco (*serpiente hecha de cal*) and stone masonry (*tubo de mampostería*).⁴⁴³ The duct is approximately 4 cm square.⁴⁴⁴ In his excavations of the burial chamber, Ruz Lhuillier found the remnants of the psychoduct entering and exiting from a carved hole in the left side of the south wall of the sarcophagus.⁴⁴⁵ After exiting from the sarcophagus, the psychoduct then progressed south on the horizontal descansillo, or false floor, and up the short staircase, tracing the profile of each step and exiting the crypt area through a gap in the monolithic triangular door.⁴⁴⁶ The form of the psychoduct, at this stage, was of modeled stucco, but as it progressed along the floor on the north side of the passageway it changed to a cut-stone masonry tube.⁴⁴⁷

The psychoduct ascended (or descended) the staircase following the profile of the steps. It was constructed of small pieces of long stones forming a rectangular tube bonded together by stucco.⁴⁴⁸ As it ascended the first flight of steps (those oriented to the west or closest to the burial chamber), the psychoduct was on the north side of the staircase, and as the stair moved upward toward the east and the central chamber of the superstructure shrine, the tube was positioned on the south side.⁴⁴⁹ As the staircase drew nearer to the floor of the superstructure, the psychoduct changed again from cut-stone masonry to molded stucco. Its direction was also modified from being attached to the south wall to the center of the stair

⁴⁴³ These are Ruz Lhuillier's terms.

⁴⁴⁴ Ruz Lhuillier does not provide an estimate of the size; this estimate is based on my observations and photos.

⁴⁴⁵ Robertson, *The Temple*, 35.

⁴⁴⁶ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 92. The descansillo appears to have had two purposes (both were most likely to assist in post-interment ritual). It helped a visitor view the expanse and decorations of the chamber and was a platform for the psychoduct.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 82.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid. When one is descending the stairs the psychoduct will be on the right side and when ascending the stairs the masonry tube is on the left.

and suspended in fill.⁴⁵⁰ This occurred right before the level of the superstructure, between the fourth and fifth steps. This modeled version of the psychoduct was never found by Ruz Lhuillier, rather, there was only a hole in the fill of the stair because the stucco disintegrated when it came into contact with the outside conditions (fig. 84).⁴⁵¹

Summary: Post-interment Spaces, the Temple of the Inscriptions

The interior architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions dramatically conveys both a ritual and symbolic function. The tomb chamber, east-west corridor, and interior stairs were significant to the mortuary rituals of Pakal, and these spaces were open, possibly for years, after the initial interment or *muhkaj* ceremony of the king was completed. These ceremonies may have included what is now considered tomb reentry, but for the ancient Maya these spaces could have been open for decades or several *k'atuns* after initial interment. The burial chamber of Pakal was sealed and marked by sacrifice and fire, as seen in the charring of the exegic sacrifice victims. Caches suspended in the fill of the east-west corridor and at the “beginning” and the “end” of the stairway indicate that these spaces were sacred and that the very act of burying this internal architecture was ritualized.

The most enduring and enigmatic feature of this post-interment space is the psychoduct. It was constructed of modeled plaster and cut-stone masonry, thus great care was given to its design and preservation, yet it had no structural purpose, and like the caches it was associated with the internal architecture of the temple. However, unlike the caches, which marked a specific location or area in space—this object formed a continuous link

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 82.

between the open spaces of the burial, the hidden spaces of the interior, and the public spaces of the superstructure's shrine.⁴⁵²

Post-interment Spaces: Temple I

Post-Interment activities from Temple I are different from those at the Temple of the Inscriptions because rather than an internal architecture associated with the tomb, at Tikal there is an *expression* that transforms the usual environment around the burial. Furthermore, these changes were part of the series of processes, like those seen at the Temple of the Inscriptions, linked to the exequies of the ruler. Jasaw's burial in a vaulted chamber was eventually sealed by three capstones.⁴⁵³ The central capstone, described by Coe as extra large, was also painted on its underside with a solid bright red disk, 22 cm in diameter.⁴⁵⁴

The central painted capstone sealing Burial 116 became the focal point of the post-interment offerings associated with the royal tomb.⁴⁵⁵ On or above the level of this capstone was an offering of charcoal, potsherds, and a large collection or horizon of lithic material consisting of flint and obsidian. This esoteric collection, as Coe described it, filled the space between the capstone of Burial 116 and the plaza floor.⁴⁵⁶ These layers of materials were all in association with the burial and covered an area of "no less than 12 m."⁴⁵⁷ Coggins has

⁴⁵² There is also convincing evidence that a form of the psychoduct progressed through the superstructure and reappeared at the base of Pier C in the portico. This intriguing aspect of this object will be discussed in chapter 5.

⁴⁵³ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:604.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.* As has already been mentioned in chapter 2, a similar red painted disk appeared on the capstone from Burial 23 inside Temple 33. The difference between the two red circles is that the one from Burial 116 was applied with dry pigment whereas the disk from Burial 23 was painted onto the surface.

⁴⁵⁵ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 380. An interesting post-interment ritual for Burial 23 could be the interment of Stela 31, which was partially broken, burned, and installed in a chamber from the superstructure shrine of 33 2nd.

⁴⁵⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:607, 608, 609. This material intermittently covered the area of Units 24, 23, and 21.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

also observed that Burial 23 from Temple 33 2nd was also overlain by a deposit of flint and obsidian chips, although this offering was not as extensive as the one from Burial 116.⁴⁵⁸

Coating the top surface of the central capstone from Burial 116 was a stratum of densely packed charcoal, but there was no evidence of in situ burning.⁴⁵⁹ Covering the charcoal was a thin deposit of obsidian flakes with flake blades extending over both the west and south sides of the capstone and spreading to the adjacent slabs.⁴⁶⁰ Flint flakes were also thickly inserted into the northern edge of the capstone.⁴⁶¹ Interspersed in this same fill was a variety of pottery sherds; one notable example comes from a broken Zacatel Cream Polychrome cylinder vessel that Coggins has identified as of the same type found on the west aisle adjacent to the decedent within Burial 116.⁴⁶²

Although this deposit could be described as a collection of random, tossed-in lithic scraps, there do seem to be specific areas of concentration within the entire offering, which could be an indication of a more carefully planned placement. Hattula Moholy-Nagy has observed that flint and obsidian offerings were always cached together.⁴⁶³ This pattern of including large deposits of debitage on or around the burial chambers is seen elsewhere at Tikal—at least nine other interments from the Terminal Preclassic to the Late Classic have this characteristic.⁴⁶⁴

Coe describes these materials from the Burial 116 example as having been deposited in clearly delineated clusters, some of which consisted of approximately 3240 grams of

⁴⁵⁸ Coggins, “Painting and Drawing,” 456–57.

⁴⁵⁹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:607, 608, 609.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶² Coggins, “Painting and Drawing,” 546.

⁴⁶³ Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 A*, 21.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 39. This is an area that needs more study.

obsidian in a 60 cm layer or 476 flint pieces in a meter-wide group.⁴⁶⁵ Two features that could indicate a pattern are present in the associated offerings from Jasaw's interment. First, this offering is part of a tradition of caching lithic debitage immediately outside high status burials. The second pattern may reflect a concern with the natural environment: the location, depth, and volume of the lithics could be read as imitating flint and obsidian deposits or veins found in the mountains and quarries of Mesoamerica.

The offering of flint and obsidian is distinctive because of the sheer mass and amount of material. Coe estimated this deposit to contain approximately a ton of flint flakes and a quarter of a ton of obsidian.⁴⁶⁶ Chert or flint was a locally quarried stone, while obsidian came from the Guatemalan highlands, most likely El Chayal.⁴⁶⁷ In any other context these groupings of flakes of flint and obsidian could be deemed the result of knapping and thus more utilitarian in nature; however, deposited amid the fill of a royal tomb this debitage is transformed into a "social" artifact. Moholy-Nagy has defined social artifacts as objects or material meant for display.⁴⁶⁸ In this example the value of the extraordinary deposit may come not from the intrinsic value of the debitage, but from the mass and volume of the offering and its location, which spanned the roof of the tomb chamber to the plaza floor.⁴⁶⁹

Coe states that the consecratory and votive importance of some of these caches, like the offerings around Burial 116, was not random but was organized around some "emic rules."⁴⁷⁰ There is some debate about whether utilitarian or waste objects/materials can be

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:607-609. Coe states that this deposit was not completely excavated, and there was most likely much more material cached than has been previously reported.

⁴⁶⁷ Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 A*, 5.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 10. This is a subtle observation that needs more research. Later in the discussion of the utilitarian/ritual objects, Moholy-Nagy contradicts herself.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 18.

considered sacred, and Moholy-Nagy has defined these expressions as “opportunistic not obligatory.”⁴⁷¹ She has assumed these caches represented convenient ways of disposing knapping waste rather than offerings of a ritualistic or sacred nature.⁴⁷²

Summary: Post-interment Spaces, Temple I

A reexamination of the physical circumstances of this deposit yields some alternative perspectives. Namely, the transportation and deposition of tons of small, razor-sharp pieces of stone is neither easy nor convenient. Furthermore, a more opportunistic locale for this waste would be near the actual workshops rather than the ceremonial center of the city. Lastly, a pattern has been established with other burials and their associated debitage caches, and this tradition appears to be more than just a method of easy disposal. These offerings are unique to Tikal; examples have been found elsewhere, but they lack the same concentration as seen here at Burial 116. This lithic “horizon” occupies a place within the scholarly literature that challenges our methods of interpretation. A closer examination of the form of this immense cache makes it appear as though it was akin to architecture because it altered and virtually created a new environment, yet its value appears to be in formal structure and the continuity it engendered by linking the spaces of the burial with the plaza.

Post-interment Spaces: Temple 26, Chorcha Structure

As seen in Pakal’s tomb chamber and Jasaw’s vaulted tomb, the architecture and surrounding environment (both symbolic and literal) worked to support a series of post-interment rituals and expressions, the remnants of which have been documented in the archaeological record.

As has been previously discussed, the Chorcha structure housed Ruler 12’s burial cist and a

⁴⁷¹ Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27 B.*, 35.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.* However in part A, Moholy-Nagy concedes that these large deposits of unworked lithics may have been due to symbolic or social values attached to the actual raw materials (21). This is an area that clearly needs more research and interpretation.

second upper vaulted chamber. Ruler 12's interment, like all the interments in this study, was reflective of the processes of burial rather than the "moment" of corporal interment. Thus, the closing of Ruler 12's burial cist (Burial XXXVII-4) marked the "opening" or beginning of a new set of rituals that were in association with the royal interment.

Like the three capstones sealing Jasaw's burial (and to a slightly lesser degree, the triangular door sealing Pakal's tomb chamber), the large capstones of Ruler 12's interment also became the focal point of post-interment ritual expressions. The burial had been excavated into the floor of an interior chamber of the Chorchá structure.⁴⁷³ The burial's ceiling became the floor of the upper chamber. In contrast to the space of Pakal's burial chamber, which when sealed was augmented by the east-west corridor and staircase, or Jasaw's burial closed by a capstone and sealed by a horizon of lithic debitage, Ruler 12's burial was instead encased in an earlier building, essentially redefining this prior structure as a funerary temple.⁴⁷⁴

The Chorchá interior chamber was supported by an expansive corbelled, vaulted room (see fig.72).⁴⁷⁵ Six square masonry columns defined the east and west limits of the room, creating a set of niches along these walls.⁴⁷⁶ This mirrors the niches seen below in Ruler 12's burial crypt and is also reminiscent of the recessed spaces of Pakal's tomb chamber. The set of large capstones, oriented east–west, had been placed over Ruler 12's cist burial and formed a sunken floor in the center of this space. The design of the cist and its relationship to the Chorchá vaulted chamber was organized in such a way that the ruler's

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 111.

⁴⁷⁴ Fash, *Scribes*, 111. From the information provided in published reports, I am unclear if the large vaulted chamber above the cist was reconstructed to meet its new needs as part of a mortuary complex. This structure was eventually subsumed by the large Esmeralda structure.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 202.

interment was the central focus of the tomb and the chamber above. In essence this burial is in two parts: the interment is a cist excavated in the floor of Chorchá structure and the upper level, directly beneath the vaulted ceiling. This expansive room's floor is the ceiling of the cist and this space may have formerly been a room in Chorchá that had been re-used for this mortuary context

Ceramic Effigy Incensarios

Twelve modeled ceramic incense burners were excavated from this upper vaulted chamber. These incensarios may have been arranged according to the four cardinal directions with the body of the king (beneath in the cist) symbolically forming the center of the arrangement. Concentrations of these objects were found in the south, northeast, northwest, and north ends of the room.⁴⁷⁷ The use of these incensarios was part of a secondary set of rituals associated with the exequies of Ruler 12 and the sealing of this entire tomb chamber.⁴⁷⁸ Fash notes that the incensarios were found broken within the fill of the Chorchá vaulted chamber and that after censuring ceremonies were finished, the incensarios were then ritually smashed and buried (fig. 85).⁴⁷⁹

Although there were other ceramic offerings present, the most extraordinary finds are the twelve polychrome effigy incensarios. These large burners consist of two parts: the base and the lid, which had been sculpted to look like a bust portrait of a Copán elite. The lids range in size from 75 to 61 cm high and 39 to 31 cm wide.⁴⁸⁰ Depicted on these lids are the portraits of twelve fully modeled and seated male figures. Special attention has been paid to

⁴⁷⁷ Fash, "Il progetto," 77. This layout is according to the locations of incense burner remnants. Fash believes the incensarios were smashed after use and buried in the fill.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., 77.

⁴⁷⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 106-07, 111. Seven of these incensarios sealed the entrance to the tomb on the south side

⁴⁸⁰ Orefici, *Catalogo*, 239-40.

the ritual insignia of these personages, including costumes, headdresses, and jewelry; some figures wear buccal masks, while others have unadorned faces. The figures' individualization has been heightened by the use of paint.⁴⁸¹ In addition, this polychrome slip gave these physiognomic and costume elements arresting animacy. The elaborate turbans are visual markers of Copan rulership.⁴⁸² An interest in highlighting the royal regalia, thus focusing attention on the adornments of the head and chest, is a style reminiscent of the dynastic figures depicted on the Late Classic carved step from Temple 11 and Altar Q (immediately before Temple 16). This manner of depicting past figures and ancestors is also clearly seen in the portraits from the sides of Pakal's sarcophagus and even in the depictions of the Nine Lords from the walls of the tomb as well. Fash has identified these portrait incensarios as a sculptural king list or "royal family portrait in clay."⁴⁸³ Eleven effigy burners were found in the immediate vicinity of the Chorchá chamber, while the last and twelfth incensario was excavated from the top of the corbel vault, outside the room.⁴⁸⁴ Unlike some of the other portraits from Pakal's burial, these sculpted bust figures were not identified by any glyphic inscription. The identities of these portraits are based on their formal qualities, context, and certain iconographic devices, for example, goggle eyes adorning the founder of the Copan dynasty. Fash observes that the eleven effigy lids within the upper chamber depicted ancestral kings, so that this offering represents a narrative history of Copan's royal dynasty.⁴⁸⁵ Henderson also notes that the ceramics from Ruler 12's burial were "unrefined" when compared to the incensarios from the upper chamber. This variation in the artistic

⁴⁸¹ Henderson, "Dishes," 20.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁸³ Fash and others, "The Hieroglyphic Stairway," 112.

⁴⁸⁴ Fash, *Scribes*, 112; Henderson, "Dishes," 17.

⁴⁸⁵ Henderson, "Dishes," 15.

“quality” of ceramics could indicate that the effigy censer lids were the primary vehicle of narrative among Ruler 12’s burial furniture.

Two of the twelve incense burners deserve special attention because they portray identifiable rulers, and the context of their placement within the vaulted chamber suggests the processes of post-interment ritual. One of these incensario lids depicts the founder of the Copan dynasty, and the other is a portrait of the twelfth and last ruler, whose burial crypt is below the Chorchá structure.⁴⁸⁶ The incense burner associated with the founder, K’inich Yax K’uk’ Mo’, highlights his most diagnostic feature, the goggle eyes, which are akin to those of the Central Mexican deity Tlaloc (fig. 86).⁴⁸⁷ His headdress is also distinctive from many of the other dignitaries, as it is round like the wrapped turbans, but the sides are thick and flat.⁴⁸⁸ This portrait is comparable to his depiction on Altar Q (Late Classic) from the West Courtyard in front of Temple 16. The presence of this effigy lid helps to define the history of the dynasty and marks its beginning or birth. The Yax K’uk’ Mo’ censer was located in the West Offering section of the tomb furniture grid.⁴⁸⁹

The twelfth censer was segregated from the other effigy censer lids and was positioned at the top of the Chorchá structure’s corbeled vault; presumably it was separated from the others for ritual reasons.⁴⁹⁰ The vessel was placed atop the last capstone of the Chorchá chamber vault and thus represents the last offering for the mortuary complex.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁸⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 106-07.

⁴⁸⁸ Henderson, “Dishes,” Database of the Ceramics from Burial XXXVII-4, Vessel #2.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Henderson, “Dishes,” 17–30. Henderson provides an excellent assessment of this twelfth incensario and convincingly proposes its meanings.

⁴⁹¹ Henderson, “Dishes,” 23.

Fash states that this censer was not fired until days after the initial exequies of the deceased king.⁴⁹²

Lucia Henderson, who wrote her honors thesis on the ceramic offerings from Ruler 12's tomb, has interpreted the context of the last effigy lid and the elderly visage of its portrait as indicators that this censer and lid represented the twelfth ruler. Positioned at the top of the Chorchá chamber vault, the twelfth ruler's censer could have been read as an axis mundi that signaled the deceased ruler's transformation into an ancestor.⁴⁹³ In addition it has a distinct mouth, in it are only two teeth. Henderson interprets the lack of teeth as an indication of advanced age.⁴⁹⁴ Ruler 12 was known to have died after his eighty-fifth birthday. This feat was significant, and highlighting his age in the sculpted portrait would have been appropriate.⁴⁹⁵ Lastly, Henderson has observed that this is the only censer lid that is depicted with both an open mouth and evidence of burning inside; thus, she believes this object was "imbued with life" via fire and smoke, elements that the Maya related to spirit and breath.⁴⁹⁶

The effigy censers from the upper chamber surround the deceased king and are most likely portraits of former dynasts, not conventionalized depictions. A similar arrangement is seen in the carved ancestral orchard from the walls of Pakal's sarcophagus, and as depicted in this imagery, Pakal was buried amid his predecessors. Like the images from Pakal's sarcophagus wall, the depictions of these ancestors are also in a changing and transitory state. Incensarios are containers and conduits of fire and scent, and Taube suggests that both fire

⁴⁹² Ibid.,24, quoting Fash.

⁴⁹³ Henderson, "Dishes," 24.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid. There is not a high quality image of this censer, and I would direct the reader to Henderson's honors thesis and the vessel catalog included in the appendix of the document.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., 25.

and smoke had transformative powers for the ancient Maya.⁴⁹⁷ Parallel relationships between the deceased king and his ancestors are not depicted in imagery at Tikal, but in the built environment of the Great Plaza. Jasaw was buried in a temple that mirrored the design of other mortuary monuments of his predecessors. Correspondingly, ancestors surrounded Jasaw; these past dynasts were not seen in imagery but through their mortuary architecture. In the post-interment spaces of Ruler 12's burial, a potent interrelationship is depicted between the dead king and his dynamic and transforming ancestors, a pattern that can be discerned in the interment of Pakal and the architecture of the Great Plaza at Tikal.

Summary: Post-interment Spaces, Temple 26, Chorcha Structure

Copan's dynastic history, buried in five previous, subsumed layers and buildings beneath Chorcha, was honored and reactivated in the eleven portrait incensarios that surrounded Ruler 12's cist burial. The post-interment ritual of progressively firing these incensarios and placing the twelfth ruler's burner at the top of the vault dramatically demonstrated the significance of mortuary ritual and the sacredness of these architectural spaces. As a group of sacred objects, the incense burners located outside the immediate area of the interment in two places may have marked a ritual progression upward.

The Chorcha structure, like the interior architecture from the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I, conveyed continuities between the interment and spaces that were occupied by the "future" of Copan. The last incensario to be used, which has been convincingly interpreted as a depiction of Ruler 12, was located outside the immediate area of the interment; it marked a post-interment expression of cyclicity, which is denoted in the transformed image of the king at the top of the vault (placement and the use of fire were

⁴⁹⁷ Henderson, 25-26. Quoting Taube.

methods of indicating that this image and perhaps the king had changed status from man to being reborn as an ancestor).⁴⁹⁸ Continuity through space and time, which is the theme of this chapter, is suggested by considering all twelve portrait censer lids as an ensemble, which through their arrangement and iconography linked the dead with the future.⁴⁹⁹

Summary of Post-Interment Spaces

Post-interment spaces and expressions from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and the incensarios in the Chorchá structure suggest an interest in physically linking the dead with the future. As these spaces and their ritual expressions reveal, they are not directly associated with the burial, but they may have acted as a type of buffer or an in-between area. At the Temple of the Inscriptions, the internal architecture was a parallel structure complementing and echoing the structure of the surface. The stairway and corridor guided visitors through the space of the temple. Construction of the psychoduct may have been the initial expression of these post-interment rites, and like the architecture it articulates a path to and from the tomb chamber. When buried, this stone conduit retained its shape and literally and conceptually connected the tomb chamber to the superstructure. That this internal architecture had a potent symbolic function is demonstrated by the presence of several caches suspended in the same fill that eventually buried the corridor and stair.

The deposition of several tons of lithic debitage above the vault sealing Burial 116 created a different internal architecture. This expression displaced the earth, and instead of constructing a type of void (that was later filled in), this offering was a concentrated and

⁴⁹⁸ Carrasco, "From Field to Hearth," 25, 2627 notes that heat caused by censers or the sun's rays cause the rebirth of mythic individuals like the Hero Twins from the Popul Vuh and maize plants. When expanded this analogy works in the context of the re-birth of Ruler 12 as denoted by the lighting of his censor and perhaps this symbolizes the invigoration of the entire dynasty, as well.

⁴⁹⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 112–13. This last burning and ritual may have simultaneously worked to also commemorate a new construction sponsored by Ruler 13. As Fash states, the firing of these burners may have served to cleanse and create a conceptually new environment.

dense mass. Spanning the burial to the final pavement of the Great Plaza floor, this lithic horizon expressed a similar continuity between the royal interment and the upper levels of the funerary temple. The process of depositing this amount of stone chips may have been lengthy and was public; however, eventually it, too, became a conceptual and symbolic presence.

The Chorcha structure and its vaulted chamber represent a void that at a later date was filled in and subsumed by the Esmeralda structure and Temple 26 2nd and the final phase monument. Chorcha, unlike the other two architectural spaces, was converted into a funerary structure by context and ritual. The portrait censers and the smoke that emanated from their lids helped to redefine the upper chamber. Placing the last censer outside the vaulted room created both a physical link to the later structures and a conceptual permeability that appears to be an essential feature of mortuary ritual at Temple 26 and also at the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I. In sum, the post-interment spaces from these three burials can be considered *mediums* of renewal and harbingers of the future.

Subterranean Level: Conclusion

In formalist analyses that do not evaluate the material image or embodiment of a building, . . . the un-figured floor remains a blank slate on which the “plan” is simply inscribed. A different approach, taken here, is to pursue the archaeology of the philological, geologic, and cosmogonic associations intrinsic to the material.⁵⁰⁰

This quote is directed toward scholarship from the Western tradition, but what is important for this chapter is the emphasis placed on material culture found beneath the earth’s surface. In the examples from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, the earth is treated as a potent environment, a foundation for the future, a place that is sacred. The act of

⁵⁰⁰ Barry, “Walking on Water,” 627.

burying a king or a cache served to amplify its meanings. Mortuary monuments have a distinct relationship with the earth, and this is most clearly expressed in the act of excavation and deposition of a deceased ruler.

Returning to the initial question or challenge of this section, which concerns the efficacy of subterranean entities, I argue that these interments marked the beginning of a process that embraced the cycles of life. In the burials of Pakal, Jasaw, and Ruler 12, references to the earth are common, in both the structures of these spaces and their iconography. Pakal's interment references this Subterranean level in its structure beneath the South Plaza, but also by the iconography of his sarcophagus. On the sides of the sarcophagus, Pakal's ancestors surround him and sprout forth from a continuous ground line that is carved on all four sides of the stone box. Jasaw's burial chamber was excavated out of many floors in the Great Plaza. Perhaps the act of breaking through the last pavement of the plaza floor and embedding the deceased king far below was akin to sowing the earth for the future. Ruler 12's burial cist was 2 m beneath the level of the vaulted room within the Chorchá structure; therefore the earth of his interment consisted of the sub-levels of Temple 26. In these examples from Palenque as well as from Temple I and the Chorchá structure inside of Temple 26, there is a relationship between the foundational humus of the temple-pyramid and the concept of societal and dynastic renewal in the body of the king/ancestor. Lastly, the section on post-interment spaces provides evidence that resonances expressed in the tomb furniture and architecture of the tomb chamber were cultivated and activated by the living and most likely served the living for a while after the initial interment.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TERRESTRIAL LEVEL

This section examines the Terrestrial features of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26. In 1956 Michael Coe stated that ancient Maya mortuary structures “were dedicated to the future life of certain individuals.”⁵⁰¹ The Terrestrial level of these structures was a public expression of mortuary ritual, but it was also reflective of how the patrons of these structures viewed themselves and their future.

Davis, who has interpreted Roman imperial funerary monuments, has demonstrated that these structures comprised a separate genre of architecture.⁵⁰² A similar approach should be applied to discussions of Maya mortuary architecture. Although these temples share many formal traits with other large and costly buildings, the function and meaning of mortuary monuments are different. The Terrestrial level of the Temple of the Inscriptions from Palenque, Temple I from Tikal, and Temple 26 at Copan is dramatic and includes a certain codified design. Continuities observed between the Subterranean and post-interment spaces of the monuments are reconfigured in the Terrestrial levels.

Sections and subsections in this chapter detail the contexts, forms, styles, and architectural developments of the Terrestrial levels. The terms *temple* and *pyramid* are applied interchangeably.⁵⁰³ The word *temple* can be problematic, but in this instance it is meant to describe a sacred structure composed of multiple subplatforms.⁵⁰⁴ This chapter, like

⁵⁰¹ Coe, “The Funerary Temple,” 393.

⁵⁰² Davies, *Death and the Emperor*, 1.

⁵⁰³ Loten, *Tikal Report 34*. Vocabulary used in this analysis is from Loten’s examination of the architecture at Tikal.

⁵⁰⁴ Recent analyses of Maya ceremonial architecture come from Carrasco, “Mask Flange,” 156-206, which is historical and traces the development of these structures. Simon Martin’s discussion in “Court and Realm: Architectural Signatures,” 168-194 is more theoretical in that he looks at language and function. Both works present new perspectives on the built environment.

the previous chapter, will concentrate on architectural elements that support a holistic view of the monuments.

Characteristics of Maya Mortuary Architecture

Ancient Maya burial monuments are public structures that are massive in scale, and their presence often determined the organization of cities. Although there are differences in the designs and profiles of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, each of these structures shares features in common with the others. For example, these monuments were constructed within an environment that had great history. These historic environments were comprised of natural landforms (mountains, caves, and valleys) and also of the built environment. The architects of these monuments chose to orient the funerary temples in close association with the sacred past, which was understood as part of both the built and natural environments. The Temple of the Inscriptions' south face was literally constructed into the side of what may have already been a sacred mountain. Likewise, Temple 26's south side is fused with the Central Acropolis, a massive mountainlike platform.⁵⁰⁵ In addition, Temple I was constructed on the same plaza floor as Temple II. This floor is actually a layered series of stucco pavements forming part of the platform that supports the massive temple-mountains of the North Terrace and North Acropolis.⁵⁰⁶ Temple-pyramids have been referred to as mountains, but they are decidedly human made, and the intention behind their construction may not have been to imitate nature but to create a dialogue with it.

Interred inside the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple 26, and Temple I were private royal burials; however, the exterior facades of these temple-pyramids are singularly public.

⁵⁰⁵ George Guillemin, "Development and Function of the Tikal Ceremonial Center" offers a well organized formal description of the center of Tikal, its spaces and architecture.

⁵⁰⁶ Another historically imbued structure is a ball court, and Temple 26 and Temple I were both constructed in close proximity to these structures.

An exterior profile dominated by the angles and shadows created by a series of steps or subsumed platforms characterizes the outward appearance of these monuments. The extensive use of cut-stone masonry seen in the exterior facings, interior walls, and in the architectural sculpture added to the drama and the mass of the buildings. The surfaces of these temples were finished with stucco and were most likely smooth and blemish free, as the structures were continually refurbished with lime plaster and then often painted a warm reddish hue. The viewer did not see the gray porous textures of the stone; instead a kind of perfection may have been achieved through the application of lime plaster and paint, characteristics not seen in nature.

Rather than being closed off in courtyards, these three monuments extend outward toward open plazas, which were accessible to groups of people.⁵⁰⁷ Each of the three mortuary monuments includes sculptural decorations of diverse types and forms; however, commonalities include a preponderance of human and zoomorphic forms. This imagery is enhanced by carved hieroglyphic inscriptions seen at the Temple of the Inscriptions and in the hieroglyphic stairway of Temple 26. What is interesting about these written programs is their length, complexity, and placement on or in a mortuary structure. These two narratives are considered the longest in the ancient Maya world, and, significantly, they adorn mortuary structures. At Tikal, written inscriptions are not the focus of the exterior decoration, although inside the superstructure shrine are wooden lintels containing hieroglyphic narratives along with a complex pair of images.

The monumentality of these structures is accentuated by the sheer mass of their designs and the size of their footprints. Architectural historian Spiro Kostoff has described

⁵⁰⁷ Awe, Campbell, and Conlon, "Preliminary Analysis," 25–30.

the scale of ancient Maya mortuary temples as “imperial.”⁵⁰⁸ Augmenting this sense of size and height is the gradual diminution of the stepped platforms that eventually lead to the superstructure at the summit. Marking the central axis was a single stairway. This organizing line should be considered both utilitarian and sculptural. Its steep and narrow treads formed a point of access for both the superstructure at the top of the temple and the plaza floor below. As seen all over Mesoamerica and especially in Maya architecture, these stairways were most likely used as locales for public ritual and performance. The most dramatic example of this characteristic can be seen at Temple 26, but the relationship between stairway and sculpture is also present at the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I.

Terrestrial: The Temple of the Inscriptions

Mountains, streams, and broad vistas are the defining features of the visible realm of Palenque. The plan of the city was a response to these natural phenomena. Palenque’s central ceremonial precinct was built on a narrow plateau bordered on the north by the expanse of the Chiapan Gulf Coast plain and on the south by two mountains (El Mirador on the east and Sierra Don Juan to the southwest), intersected by the Otolum River.⁵⁰⁹ The vistas afforded by the naturally elevated position of the plateau were augmented by the height of the Palenque’s temples. The Temple of the Inscriptions superstructure and the palace tower are examples of a Palencano interest in creating a high point from which one or more individuals could take in extraordinary views of the environment. Although the natural landscape of Palenque was a central aspect of the cityscape, its hills and river had been nonetheless modified to conform to the design of the city and its architecture.

⁵⁰⁸ Kostoff, *A History*, 436.

⁵⁰⁹ The Otolum was controlled through an extensive aqueduct built during the Classic period.

Form and Style

The Temple of the Inscriptions displays many typical characteristics of Maya mortuary architecture, but there are several distinct features that set it apart from the other structures in this discussion (see fig. 2). During its construction, the temple's mass was incorporated into the mountain rising at its south face. It was also constructed in relation to the uneven ground of the mountain's base. The structure's uneven ground-line and mass give it the appearance of a mountain. Correspondingly, the predominant feature of the structure is its horizontally oriented mass, which is accentuated by the huge footprint of the building. The massive scale is further defined by its rise from the earth on nine platforms that, in turn, support a superstructure designed like a long rectangular porch. All these features create an overwhelming physical presence. In this example the human made and the natural are fused.

The sculptural components of the Temple of the Inscriptions consist of the central stairway, *alfardas* (balustrades) and imagery from the piers of the superstructure, and a *crestería* (roof-comb).⁵¹⁰ Like most Maya mortuary temples, the central axis of the structure is marked by a stairway; this north-south line provides access to the superstructure and leads the viewer's eye upward. The stair also creates a visual and rhythmic contrast with the nine tiers of the superimposed platforms. These stairs stop at the floor of the superstructure whose basal platform forms the ninth level. In the seventh century large expanses of the structure would have been painted red, as was the custom.⁵¹¹

⁵¹⁰ The *crestería* was most likely an important sculptural component in antiquity, but today they are gone, and only a latticelike mass of stucco stone remains.

⁵¹¹ Robertson, *The Temple*, 23.

Architectural Development

Between the years of 1947 and 1958 Ruz Lhuillier concentrated most of his efforts on the archaeology and restoration of the Temple of the Inscriptions. As has been previously stated, the temple was built up and around the subterranean tomb of Pakal. Overseeing the initial construction of the building was Pakal himself, who according to Schele and Mathews may have spent the last eight years of his life on this project.⁵¹² Their calculations suggest that construction began sometime around 675 CE. Ruz Lhuillier notes that there were three phases of construction within one building campaign.⁵¹³ In contrast to most stepped-pyramid structures, but like Temple I of Tikal, a one-stage construction was unusual as most funerary temples and other monumental Maya structures were the result of years of reconstruction and refurbishments.⁵¹⁴ And, like Temple I, the Temple of the Inscriptions remained untouched by future constructions.

The first phase of construction included a series of platform terraces on all four sides of the structure (fig. 87a). The stepped appearance of these subplatforms would remain throughout all the construction phases. The number of terraces varied according to the elevation of the ground, for example, the north and east sides of the temple had eight levels while the south and west sides had six and three levels, respectively.⁵¹⁵ At this time the interior stairway was complete, as was the basic structure of the burial chamber.

⁵¹² Schele and Mathews, *Code*, 97.

⁵¹³ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 65–66.

⁵¹⁴ A more comprehensive discussion of mortuary tradition needs to be completed at Palenque. The practice of subsuming structures within one another appears not to have been common, although recent investigations from Temple XX state otherwise, and this structure may have a sixth-century burial, as noted by the Stuarts in *Palenque*, 140. Other mortuary structures that appear to be single constructions include Temples XIII (smaller building could have formed part of the tomb chamber) and XII. Temple I does contain an independent substructural nuclear structure, but this building appears not to have been used as an entity in the way the substructures from Temple 26 functioned.

⁵¹⁵ Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 67.

The superstructure of the temple was supported by the last and ninth platform, which was completed by the end of the first construction phase. A stairway linked the ninth terrace with the superstructure, and in turn, there was a visual continuity between it and the main central stair. This stairway was constructed directly above the stepped terraces of the facade, and it extended outward into the plaza. Stairs that project out from the subplatforms were the rule at Palenque.⁵¹⁶

According to Ruz Lhuillier, there is evidence as early as the first phase of construction that some of the walls had become weakened and sloped; this is seen on the west side where extensive fill had become unstable.⁵¹⁷ Therefore, although the temple had a finished appearance, a buttress had to be applied to the west side of the structure. A more concerted effort to shore up the exterior walls of the temple's subplatforms marked the second phase of construction (fig. 87b). Superimposed on all four sides was a series of three buttresses placed over the platforms. This changed the appearance of the temple, and it became more linear and planar.⁵¹⁸ However, the buttresses did not cover the corners of the first eight subplatforms because these points were indented, which created four inset corners and revealed the original terraces.

Further refinement of the general profile and design of the temple characterized the third and final phase of construction. The four inset corners were accentuated with additional cut-stone masonry decorative elements (fig. 87c).⁵¹⁹ Three small flights of steps were added to the southwest mountainside. Steps of this type may have facilitated the performance of

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 73.

ritual by creating alternative avenues for priests to access the upper levels of the temple.⁵²⁰

The facade staircase was widened and finished with the inclusion of two large alfardas on either side; these flat stones were not carved like the alfardas directly beneath the superstructure.

Solar and Geometric Hierophanies

An interesting feature of the Temple of the Inscriptions that is rarely discussed is the play of light across its surface. Illumination by the sun was no doubt part of the site planning of Palenque, bolstered by an understanding of the cardinal directions and geometry. Ruz Lhuillier has observed that many structures from this core area, including the Temple of the Inscriptions, are oriented 15 degrees northeast of north.⁵²¹ His drawings show that the burial chamber may not have been oriented exactly like the temple, but was organized around a north-south axis (fig. 88). Parallel orientations between the temple and tomb indicate an interest in maintaining spatial and directional consistency, which is also seen in the mortuary temples to the west of the Inscriptions; for example, Temple XIII and the burial inside were also orientated north-south.⁵²² Repetition of the north-south axial line in the architecture echoed the orientation of the interment, thus creating a focal point, and may have emphasized a unity between the spaces of the temple. Furthermore, the northern light that illuminated the facade would have had a consistent power throughout the day, but with the changing seasons the light would have changed dramatically.⁵²³

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 75. Ruz Lhuillier states that this section of the sub-platforms was in excellent condition, and he was able visualize and project the changes done in the third phase more easily by using the south side as a guide.

⁵²¹ Ibid., 67.

⁵²² Malvido, *La Reina*; Stuart and Stuart, *Palenque*, 183. Another burial was also discovered in Temple XII.

⁵²³ Christopher Powell, personal communication, fall 2004.

Peter Harrison has done extensive studies of the sight lines and planning in Late Classic cities.⁵²⁴ In his examinations of the architecture at Palenque he has determined that alignments existed between central axial points on the facades of structures; several of these convergences are associated with the Temple of the Inscriptions.⁵²⁵ Integral right triangles defined and organized the space and created sacred connections between structures.⁵²⁶ The Temple of the Inscriptions represents the centerpiece of one triangle that created a triadic arrangement between the Palace and Temple XI. The surface of the Temple of the Inscriptions and its location were indicative of cycles of change (seen in the diurnal movements of the sun) and of its role as a sacred center within the city.⁵²⁷

Summary: Terrestrial, the Temple of the Inscriptions

In my review of the formal characteristics and the architectural development of the Temple of the Inscriptions, several features have become clear. The nine-stepped pyramid dominated the south end of Palenque's North Plaza. Its final design was the work of Pakal's son, Kan B'alam, but undoubtedly Pakal dictated many of the architectural decisions. The monument was constructed to complement both the mountain at its south and to present a human-made mountain that functioned as a royal interment. Efforts to preserve the appearance of the nine subplatforms (or, at the very least, their corners) is evidence that these platforms were meaningful for understanding the function of the monument.

⁵²⁴ Harrison, "Ancient Maya Architecture," 96. As Harrison states, more work needs to be done on the significance of building orientation. What he has discovered is that in the Early Classic the predominant orientation was 15 degrees east of north, while in the Late Classic the orientation changed more toward magnetic north. This organization suggests to Harrison that the Maya may have used a magnetic device.

⁵²⁵ Harrison, "Spatial Logic," 244, 250. The alignments are between the Temples of the Sun and Foliated Cross and the Temple of the Inscriptions.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 251.

⁵²⁷ Alonso Mendez, Edwin L. Barnhart, and Christopher Powell, "Astronomical" Discuss astronomical hierophanies seen in the Temple of the Sun from Palenque.

The Temple of the Inscriptions also created a new anchor for the city by accenting both the natural environment and the north-south axis, denoted by the mountains and Chiapan plain, and in this way it also inaugurated and sanctified new ground for a series of later mortuary structures to be built on its west side (Temples XII, XII-A, and XII). In addition, the temple was aligned to capture northern light and its seasonal changes. Shadows appearing on the architecture in annual cycles may have had symbolic significance. Lastly, its structure created and accentuated sacred geometric interrelationships with other structures.

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Terrestrial: Temple I

The ancient city of Tikal lies in the Department of the Petén in north-central Guatemala. Tikal remained an active city from the second through the ninth centuries.⁵²⁹ Tikal, unlike Copan and Palenque, is situated in a low-lying plain containing occasional hills and flanked on the eastern and western borders by swamplands and steeply cut ravines. The map of the site's core reveals a checkerboard pattern of buildings, reservoirs, and gullies all existing together and creating a variety of mini-environments. Kubler described these contrasting forms as "island cities" or "archipelago cities."⁵³⁰ The site core of Tikal could be defined as one of Kubler's "island cities." It is composed of three distinct and dramatic spaces that come together to form a vibrant and unified environment.⁵³¹

⁵²⁸ Harrison, "Spatial Geometry," 244, 250; Mendez, Barnhart, and Powell, "Astronomical Observation," 5, 6. This article focuses on the solar hierophanies from the Temple of the Sun in the Cross Group to the east of the Temple of the Inscriptions. The authors present important discoveries that link the movements of the sun to the iconography and space of the temple.

⁵²⁹ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 24–53.

⁵³⁰ Kubler *The Art*, 207.

⁵³¹ I would argue that today this central core area is vibrant as well and becoming increasingly so. Tourists, scholars, and contemporary Maya all congregate among these massive stone structures. Although this space is fourteen hundred years old and the ancient rituals and iconography of these buildings are an ongoing area of study, this place continues to awe visitors and experienced scholars alike.

The Ceremonial Precinct

As defined by Coe, the Ceremonial Precinct includes Temples I and II, the North Acropolis, and the North Terrace, and this expanse is known as Group 5D-2 (fig. 5).⁵³² Temple I was the latest addition in this architectural history that spanned a millennium. These two stepped pyramids face one another across the middle of the Great Plaza. To the north of the plaza, the North Acropolis and the North Terrace stand on plinthlike platforms of varying levels. In the eighth century these temples must have appeared like red stalagmites. The Central Acropolis on the south side of the Great Plaza, a residential complex, is not considered part of this precinct but was nonetheless essential in the creation of the site core. Its long horizontal mass contrasts with the vertical complexities of the North Acropolis.

The Great Plaza

The Great Plaza was both ceremonial and quotidian; a space that commemorated the history and the dead while it was simultaneously a place of civic importance. Temples I and II, a small ball court, and twenty-seven stelae with fifteen adjoining altars are embedded in the sunken earth of the plaza (see fig. 40).⁵³³ Stelae and their altars or pedestals are concentrated on the north side of the plaza and in front of Temple I. They are also placed as a series along the south perimeter of the North Terrace (Stelae, 8, 18, 9, 15, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14). A line of stelae is similarly organized on the North Terrace in relation to Temple 34 (Stelae 3 and 4), Temple 33 (Stela 5), Temple 32 (Stelae 6 and 7), and Temple 29 (Stelae 7 and 40).⁵³⁴ Many of the lozenge-shaped stelae were not carved, and today they appear blank; two

⁵³² Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:1.

⁵³³ Flora Clancy, in her book *Sculpture in the Ancient Maya Plaza*, prefers the term *pedestal* in reference to the word *altar*.

⁵³⁴ For a detailed discussion of these monuments and comparisons with other stelae from the Early Classic see Clancy, *Sculpture*.

examples of this type are placed in front of Temple I. Stelae were not just planted into the floor but were embedded in it, which required a process that included ritual and ceremony. These ceremonies are documented in the numerous caches found in association with these objects.⁵³⁵

The space of the Great Plaza became, after the construction of Temples I and II, more private and less of a mall. In geographic terms, the eighth-century plaza resembled a protected valley, as was suggested by the lower elevation of the floor compared to the height and mass of the North Acropolis and Central Acropolis. Moreover this specially demarcated space served to distinguish Temples I and II from the surrounding built environment.

The implications of these architectural expressions from the eighth century are most clearly seen in the dramatic change in the orientation of the site's center. The plaza's primary axis was altered from a north-south orientation to one that was east–west. Temple I, the later of the eighth-century structures, reflects the design of structures on the North Terrace, specifically, Temple 33 (5D-33).⁵³⁶ The construction of Temples I and II transformed the space of the plaza and also created an arrangement between the temples and Temple 33 on the North Terrace. The triadic plan of Temple 33 and Temples I and II was based on design, scale, and shared ideological features, some of which have already been discussed in chapters 2 and 3 (fig. 89). These subtler parallels are seen in the burials and caches inside these monuments.⁵³⁷

Corresponding to this change of orientation was the adoption of a new style of mortuary monument, which can be defined as a pyramidal structure built in one phase and

⁵³⁵ Jones and Satterwaite, *Tikal Report 33, Part a*. These offerings are documented throughout the text.

⁵³⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14, 2:601*. Harrison, *Lords*, 128.

⁵³⁷ A more direct relationship between Temple 33 and Temple II has yet to be established. More work needs to be done to establish if there are shared types of caches and structures between these two buildings.

physically independent of surrounding constructions. Examples of this new style are Temples I, II, III, IV, and V (Temple V was the first constructed and it set the pattern)⁵³⁸. The clustering of Temples III, IV, and V on the western half of the site core further emphasizes this distinctive design.⁵³⁹ Such abrupt changes in the built environment initiated by a single dynastic leader denote new messages at work in the eighth century.

Jasaw and his architects used history, represented in the mortuary temples of the North Acropolis and North Terrace, to bolster the present and future of Tikal. In the eighth century, the Great Plaza and its mortuary architecture were transformed according to the new vision of Jasaw. The form and location of Temple I initiated this change through its construction directly on the plaza floor, which broke with the long-held tradition of building on the North Acropolis. Rather than use the sub-imposition of layered constructions to reference ancestors, the construction of Temple I signified and honored the past through a design that reflected and expanded upon the architectural styles of structures from the North Acropolis.

Temple I

Temple I is one of the most recognizable of Maya temples; it has been featured in countless calendars, tourist pamphlets, television shows, and even motion pictures (see fig. 4).⁵⁴⁰ The University of Pennsylvania from 1958 to 1963 initially investigated the structure. Although Temple I is in close proximity to Temple II, the North Acropolis, and the Central Acropolis,

⁵³⁸ Personal communication Clemency Coggins (March 2010).

⁵³⁹ Harrison, *Lords*, 141. Harrison details the interrelationships between structures 5D-33 1st (North Acropolis) and Temples I and II. This arrangement created a triadic formation that was most likely planned by Jasaw and visually referenced other similar arrangements in the city.

⁵⁴⁰ Those readers who have seen the film *Star Wars* will recall the “rebel base,” which was a city of stepped-stone pyramids amid a thick jungle. A colleague of mine and one-time Tikal guide, the late John Montgomery, recounted the time he drove George Lucas to Tikal and showed him around the site for the first time. The trip clearly made an impression on the director.

it is primarily known as a stand-alone structure and often depicted in a stately and solitary manner. Coe defines the final phase of Temple I as a structure that was awesome in its size, but also a structure that dominated the space of an already dramatic locale. The structure's steep stair, relatively narrow width with deeply stepped terraces, and its overall verticality gave it a unique stature. This style of architecture would later come to define seventh- and eighth-century monumental structures, and Coe describes it as "decisively 'Late Classic,' indeed quintessentially so."⁵⁴¹ The traits that Coe referred to were seen in pyramid-temples from the Petén or from the eastern Maya lowlands of Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize.

Temple I appears like a solid entity, austere and static with limited sculptural decoration and interior spaces. The roof-comb functioned like a false front, projecting upward to create surfaces for sculpted messages and further accentuating height and mass. Kubler compares this exceptional feature to the back of a throne; the superstructure is the seat and the pyramid the dais.⁵⁴²

The verticality of Temple I is also emphasized by the architectural decoration and the play of light and shadow on its surfaces. Nine massive stepped platforms define the profile and overall shape of the temple. These steps are decorated with cut-stone chamfers with 45-degree cuts that visually elevate the apron moldings toward the summit, thereby accentuating both the vertical and horizontal components.⁵⁴³ A small superstructure sits at the summit of the nine levels of the temple. Linking the superstructure and the subplatforms is a steep central staircase. This stair does not have any alfaridas that frame the length of the stair,

⁵⁴¹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:589. Coe also notes that the archaeologists' desire to consolidate and partly reconstruct the temple was based more on a fascination and passion for the building than any "problems of an intellectual sort."

⁵⁴² Kubler, *Art and Architecture*, 215.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 212. These tiers are particularly evident at Tikal but can be seen in other seventh- and eighth-century architectural styles as well.

similar to the Temple of the Inscriptions.⁵⁴⁴ The uninterrupted visual flow of the facade's stair emphasizes the building's overarching sense of monumentality and creates strong shadows.⁵⁴⁵

Architectural Development

Temple I in its final phase spanned the space between the Great Plaza and the East Court. The building history of Temple I was limited to two construction phases, while the plaza floor where it resides had been refurbished and modified for centuries. Archaeological evidence suggests a previous Early Classic structure (Structure 5D-1-2nd) may have existed; however, its placement and architectural development remain conjecture because of lack of information.⁵⁴⁶ Temple I has been defined as a single-phase structure, constructed in one building campaign.

The building's envelope has four layers consisting of an interior core and three "skins" or walls corresponding to different masons' stairs, which were found on the sides of the structure. The multiple layers and building phases indicate that Temple I most likely took many years to construct. The interior core of the structure was a solidly formed nucleus, which is similar to one found in Temple II (fig. 90).⁵⁴⁷ In addition, Coe discovered evidence that the three layers covering the core were each finished with smooth plaster and later

⁵⁴⁴ As has been previously mentioned, the Temple of the Inscriptions has small area at its base that is framed by unadorned alfordas.

⁵⁴⁵ Today we see monochromatic structures, but in the Late Classic these buildings would have been painted. The varied colors and especially the decorated roof-comb changed the temples' appearance and may have served to punctuate the whole arrangement.

⁵⁴⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:592. At 10 m into the excavation workers came across three courses of cut-stone blocks positioned in a north and south direction. This wall, possibly the "first" structure, was built upon the penultimate floor level, right beneath the current pavement, and was accompanied by several other architectural features. Interpretation of this structure is further hampered by the fact that Burial 116 and Temple I intruded on it and eventually destroyed it.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 595.

painted in red hematite.⁵⁴⁸ This feature of the temple is both fascinating and confusing. Coe does not explicitly state what the purpose of these nuclear red substructures were, and reading his report one assumes that these were an elegant armature for the final phase of the temple.⁵⁴⁹ The top platform of the substructure (the base of the superstructure) was not painted but covered in white stucco.⁵⁵⁰ Painting these previous surfaces or three subcores may have been important to protect the delicate limestone during the lengthy period of construction.

Although there are obvious practical reasons for painting over these three building cores, the act of finishing these internal segments is also unusual. Rituals associated with the construction of a royal mortuary structure may have required the covering over of these layers with paint. Correspondingly, “history” and time were no doubt comprehended differently; in an emic view, the “finishing” of each building stage may have been vital to the construction process. Distinctions between interior and exterior space may have been slight, thus even the “core” of the structure was part of sacred space. These levels of construction, like the “ages” or “stages” in life, could have represented generations in time cyclical.

Exterior

Cut limestone was the dominant material used in final-phase construction, and later it was sealed by a thin coat of hard white stucco. Coe found no evidence of paint on the exterior surface, and there was no sign of successive coating (in contrast to its interior cores);

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., 598. Coe notes that the stairs had red paint over smooth stucco, and he surmises the surrounding area was painted as well.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., 595. More work needs to be done on these substructure armatures and to discover if any others were found at Tikal or elsewhere.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

however, he notes that resurfacing may have required removing previous layers.⁵⁵¹ The monument is slightly oblong in shape and constructed of nine levels that measure 3 m high and are inset at the corners approximately 75 cm.⁵⁵² Crowning the nine layers of the substructure is the small superstructure.

Accentuating the east-west orientation is an axis that bisects the front and back of the building. This line is denoted in the architecture on the east side by the back outset and on the west side by the center stairway.⁵⁵³ Both axial lines project outward from the exterior and are framed by the nine levels that consistently encircle all four sides of the monument. In turn, the broad stair extends further into the plaza, creating a steep entry, and provides access to the less public spaces of the superstructure.⁵⁵⁴ The excavation crews found only the first three risers of the stairs and had to reconstruct the remainder of the steps, however, the interior archaeology supports the presence of the broad stair, which was the last structural feature to be built on the temple's exterior.⁵⁵⁵ Correspondingly, the north and south sides have short diagonal stairs connecting the talus levels at the second, fourth, and sixth levels—there are twelve total. The central stair and possibly the side steps were used for ritual and performative purposes, a feature Temple I shares with the Temple of the Inscriptions.

Temples I, II, and 33

Coggins has suggested that Temple II was constructed in honor of Jasaw's wife and consort.⁵⁵⁶ Her interpretations are further supported by Harrison's observations that the axial

⁵⁵¹ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:597.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 601.

⁵⁵³ Loten, *Tikal Report 34*, 84. Loten believes these outsets like apron moldings may have had an iconographic significance.

⁵⁵⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:596.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁶ Coggins, "Drawing and Painting," 550. Clancy alternatively states that Temple II could have been constructed to honor Jasaw's mother ("A Formal Analysis," 183).

lines between Temples I and II form an alignment with Stela 16 and Altar 5 in the North Enclosure of the Twin Pyramid Group N.⁵⁵⁷ The arrangement between the temples and the sculptures created parallels within space that symbolized a familial relationship. Linking together monuments that honored Jasaw and Lady Twelve Macaw/Lady Lachan Unen Mo' created a continuous visual and spatial discourse between ceremonial space in the Great Plaza and outlying areas. These monuments served the collective memory of Tikal, but they also recognized the convergences between a husband and a wife, and as will be seen later in this dissertation, between a son and his parents.

The lucidity of eighth-century Tikal architecture owes much to careful planning and an interest in designing symmetrical forms and stylistic continuities. An essential structure in this organization is Temple 33, which is one of the most complex and extensively researched buildings at the site. This brief analysis of the structure is intended to provide a context for some of the spatial iconographies of the Late Classic city plan. Temple 33 1st, the final phase, rose to a height of almost 34 m.⁵⁵⁸ The temple was constructed on the sacred north-south axis of the site core and was centrally located on the North Terrace.⁵⁵⁹ In this arrangement Temple 33 marked both a predominant axis of the city and the center of the ceremonial precinct. Later this structure would form the north axis of a triadic arrangement composed on the west by Temple I and on the east by Temple II.⁵⁶⁰

Temple 33 functioned as a mortuary monument, a dynastic shrine, and perhaps was a type of reliquary for sacred objects. Scholars agree that Temple 33 is a memorial to the past

⁵⁵⁷ Coggins, "Drawing and Painting," 145. Stela 16 is a grandiose portrait of Jasaw as a mature and powerful ruler. Altar 5 may depict an unprecedented image of the exhumation of Lady Lachan Unen Mo's bones.

⁵⁵⁸ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:528. The structure was heavily damaged by time and the elements, and after a detailed analysis and excavation Coe and his archaeologists decided to demolish the final phase and bolster and display the earlier structures, 33 2nd and 33 3rd.

⁵⁵⁹ Harrison, "Maya Architecture," 219.

⁵⁶⁰ Harrison, *Lords*, 145.

glories of Tikal.⁵⁶¹ Deep in the foundation of Temple 33 3rd is Burial 48; the decedent has been identified by Coggins as Stormy Sky/Sihyaj Chan K'awiil.⁵⁶² He was the dynastic ancestor of Jasaw and a ruler of mythic proportions. There is evidence that Jasaw modeled his rule after and may have positioned himself as the inheritor and reincarnation of this great predecessor.⁵⁶³ Two hundred years later Temple 33 2nd was built, and within it, amid evidence of rituals of fire and offerings, was Stormy Sky's Stela 31.⁵⁶⁴ The tomb of Jasaw's father, Burial 23, was excavated soon after the burial of Stela 31.⁵⁶⁵ The creation of sacred space through burial and caching of precious or meaningful objects effectively transformed Temple 33 into a reliquary for Jasaw and his lineage. The structure was built by Jasaw and was the first of the tall and grand pyramids that would characterize the landscape of the city.⁵⁶⁶

Summary: Terrestrial, Temple I

The construction of Temples I and II reoriented the spatial organization of the core of Tikal. This change was dramatic enough that it could be considered revolutionary and indicative of an ideological shift. The height and mass of Temple I, which was emphasized by multiple and graduated platforms, and an immense roof-comb, created a clear emphasis on verticality.⁵⁶⁷ The interior architecture was also distinctive: an independent core structure may have functioned as an armature, but it also may have had meanings beyond engineering.

⁵⁶¹ Harrison, *Lords*, 145; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 34–36.

⁵⁶² Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 187; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 35.

⁵⁶³ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 444, 449.

⁵⁶⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:507, 510; Harrison, *Lords*, 35.

⁵⁶⁵ Coggins, "Drawing and Painting," 380-81; Harrison, *Lords*, 127.

⁵⁶⁶ Harrison, *Lords*, 126, 128; Harrison, "Maya Architecture," 219.

⁵⁶⁷ Temple II, although much shorter than Temple I, has a presence that is both earthbound, as it is only three platforms high, but also quite vertical.

Temple I also references the past in its structure and through spatial relationships among other structures in the site core. Both its Terrestrial and Subterranean levels are similar to analogous expressions in Temple 33, from the North Terrace. Temple I's design is similar to that of Temple 33, and Burial 116 shares several distinctive features with Burial 23. The triadic arrangement between Temples I, II, and 33 creates a powerful pattern linking these structures together, while geometric lines connecting the North Group and Temples I and II create another spatial and symbolic configuration. These two spatial arrangements illustrate familial bonds (dynast, father, and son seen in connections between Temple I and Temple 33) and the possibility of contractual or marital relationships (North Group and Temples I and II). Jasaw's changes to the central core of Tikal did not erase the past but built upon it. Intergenerational convergences are also depicted in the architectural history of Temple 26 and in the imagery from Pakal's sarcophagus cover.

Terrestrial: Temple 26

Temple 26 today rests under a canopy that protects its western facade, but this cover also obscures the grandeur of the hieroglyphic stairway and accompanying sculpture program. In the 1990s architectural conservators concluded that the preservation of the facade was worth the inconvenience of an altered view of the building. In the seventh and eighth centuries, Temple 26 would have been one of the first structures a visitor entering from the northwest, an entrance marked Stela J, would have seen. As a visitor moved west through the north plaza and toward the Court of the hieroglyphic stairway, the great temple's mass and its intricate sculptural facade would slowly come into view (fig. 91).

Temple 26's western facade is composed of twelve graduated, stepped platforms, and centered on its west face is the elaborate and distinct hieroglyphic stairway. The monument is

not a true freestanding pyramid like Temples I and II; rather it is open on three sides and fused to the Acropolis on its south side. The Temple of the Inscriptions has a similar form as it is connected to the mountain on the south and on the west to Temples XIII, XII-A, and XII. The “interior” spaces of final-phase Temple 26 are composed of eight previous and consecutive layers or substructures from the fifth century CE.⁵⁶⁸ This extensive building chronology has been carefully documented by Fash in his forthcoming book; therefore, some aspects of both the Early and Late Classic building chronology of Temple 26 are missing from this chapter.

The subsumed layers of Temple 26, a feature that contrasts with previous examples from Palenque and Tikal, are varied in design and history; however, the articulation of an ancient axis remained a constant in their design.⁵⁶⁹ Temple 26’s subsumed structures were singularly designed to preserve and make coherent this historic axis, a design that is repeated in the inscriptions and form of the final-phase hieroglyphic stairway.

Temple 26 is one of three large pyramidal monuments within the Acropolis (Principal Group) at Copan.⁵⁷⁰ All the monuments were completed during the second half of the eighth century within a short span of one another. (Ruler 15 finished the construction of Temple 26, while the other structures were completed by his successor, Ruler 16.) Temples 16, 11, and 26 create a triangular arrangement that could have helped to define the boundaries of the Acropolis.⁵⁷¹ The mass, volume, and height of Temple 26 is on par with the structures of the

⁵⁶⁸ According to current archaeological knowledge and printed material there are eight interior levels.

⁵⁶⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 150,51.

⁵⁷⁰ *Principal Group* is a term commonly used by the archaeologists at Copan to describe the primary ceremonial structures surrounding the Acropolis. For purposes of clarity, I will use the more easily recognized term *Acropolis*.

⁵⁷¹ These three temples, like Temples 33, I, and II from Tikal, may have been component parts of a sacred triadic arrangement. More work needs to be done on this interpretation, and Temple II has not been excavated, a research project that would be necessary to this scholarship.

Acropolis, but rather than being closed off from view it was placed in an open plaza that was adjacent to the main ball court of the city. The front of the structure faces west, toward the Court of the Hieroglyphic Stairway. Seated between the privileged environment of the Acropolis and the vast Great Plaza beyond, Temple 26 may have been designed as a spatial and symbolic “bridge”; thus, it differs from related monuments in the Acropolis (Temples 16 and 11) and is similar to the more open and public features of the Temple of the Inscriptions, from Palenque, and Temple I, at Tikal.

Final-Phase Temple 26

Unlike any other structure included in this discussion, the stairway and main facade of Temple 26 are almost entirely composed of imagery (fig.92). Cut-stone blocks arranged like a mosaic and carved risers create a complex sculptural program. Textures move from bas-relief hieroglyphic inscriptions to full-round seated figures who are embedded into the carved script as though they are participants in the narrative on the stairs. A large altar anchors the base of the stair, and the ruins of a superstructure that collapsed in antiquity crown it.

Highlighting the centrality of the facade of Temple 26 is an ancient vertical axis that can be traced through the building’s long history. The mosaic sculpture of the stairway and alfardas was inserted into the graduated platforms and was not constructed over them, as has been seen at Palenque and Tikal. This juxtaposition of textures between the plain talus of the platforms and the intricate imagery from the central stair/axis created added visual movement and shadow that would transform the structure’s appearance throughout the day. This decoration, with its array of sculpture and glyphic inscriptions, unequivocally invites visual interaction, yet the structure could only be fully “read” when an individual stood directly in

front of the temple. The composition and imagery would have been recognizable but not legible unless seen up close (or unless an orator read them aloud).

Hieroglyphic Stairway

The staircase contains sixty-three steps inscribed with hieroglyphs and other relief imagery. Each riser is approximately 28 cm tall and 35 cm wide.⁵⁷² Carved on the staircase are twenty-two hundred individual glyphs.⁵⁷³ Interspersed among the carved risers are relief-carved panels of reclining full-figured humans, and embedded in the narrative are regally adorned individuals carved in three dimensions. Written in this text and bolstered by the majesty of the sculpture is the story of the Copan dynasty.⁵⁷⁴

The hieroglyphic staircase has been remarked upon in academic and travel journal literature for over 150 years. Sometime between the early modern era and the mid-nineteenth century part of the upper portion of the stairway slid down the western face of the structure.⁵⁷⁵ This landslide caused the first fifteen risers, from the top of the structure, to tumble and land in a heap at the base of the temple (fig. 93).⁵⁷⁶ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, sponsored several expeditions to the site. The Peabody, under the guidance of George Gordon, excavated the carved stairway and photographed the risers and embedded sculptures (fig. 94). The Carnegie Institution embarked on a program to restore the stairway. Unfortunately it was more concerned with bolstering the temple's unstable fill and reconstructing the stairway, and because knowledge of the hieroglyphics was limited, the risers were replaced in no particular

⁵⁷² Rivet, *Maya Cities*, 105.

⁵⁷³ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 208.

⁵⁷⁴ Stuart, "The Beginnings," 246 ; Stuart, "A Foreign Past" 374-75, ; Fash, "Religion and Human," 12 ; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 208.

⁵⁷⁵ Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, 154-55.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

order using concrete. Later work by the Peabody Museum and the Honduran government attempted to preserve and restore the inscriptions.⁵⁷⁷ In 1985 William Fash of Northern Illinois University, along with Barbara Fash, started the Copan Mosaic Project. One of the many goals was to categorize, clean, and restore the millions of pieces of sculpted stone used as components in the distinctive west face of Temple 26. Today, when one wants to see the sculptured facade, one must stand right in its midst and look up at a sharp angle. Although hieroglyphic stairways are not unique in the ancient Maya world, this is the longest known inscription of its kind, and according to epigrapher Berthold Reise, it is equivalent to twenty stelae in magnitude and elaboration (fig. 95).⁵⁷⁸

The final-phase hieroglyphic stairway was the result of two separate carved staircases being joined together by the fifteenth ruler during the eighth century.⁵⁷⁹ This mixture of ages, texts, and styles makes for a provocative fusing of messages. The first stairway was most likely constructed as a posthumous narrative honoring the accomplishments and legacy of Ruler 12 and was mostly likely sponsored by his heir, Ruler 13. Interestingly, its final dedication date was fifteen years after the death of Ruler 13.⁵⁸⁰ The honoring of a dead king by his heir or later descendants is a practice seen in Palenque at the Temple of the Inscriptions and at Tikal. Gaps in the chronology may have been due to lengthy processes of the ruler's exequies and because of the time it took to construct such monuments.

The stairway that is currently being restored is the version that the fifteenth ruler constructed by fusing the carved risers from the east side with a new narrative on risers from

⁵⁷⁷ Fash, *Scribes*, 53–56.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁵⁷⁹ Fash, "Religion and Human," 13.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

the western face.⁵⁸¹ According to Stuart, there are specific stylistic differences between the two carved stairways, in addition to slight variations in glyphic information.⁵⁸² Evidence provided by the archaeology and carving styles presents a strong argument that this lengthy hieroglyphic statement was the result of two stages.

The texts on the staircase have eroded over time, making decipherment a challenge for epigrapher David Stuart and Barbara Fash, an artist and director of the Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions at the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, who are currently restoring, documenting, and reading these inscriptions. Stuart has described the summit of the structure as the origin point of the facade sculpture and inscriptions.⁵⁸³ He believes that the inscriptions recount a detailed record of the Copan dynasty, specifically noting its Late Classic function as the funerary temple of Ruler 12.⁵⁸⁴ Therefore, the messages read on the steps may be a kind of king list, which can be compared to the portrait censers from Ruler 12's post-interment spaces, as well as the imagery from Altar Q.

Style. For the modern visitor to Temple 26, the images and writing on the glyph blocks are exceedingly difficult to see because the details of some have been entirely obliterated by erosion. But how much of this inscription could be read by the ancient Maya? Barbara Fash has partly answered this question by suggesting that there may have been an outset platform located in the upper section that projected out from the steps. This architectural device may have provided better access to the glyph blocks for an orator.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸¹ Ibid. The Getty has provided substantial funds and has solicited and paid for experts to work at the temple.

⁵⁸² Stuart, "A Foreign Past," 380.

⁵⁸³ Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, 162; Stuart, "The Arrival," 498.

⁵⁸⁴ Stuart, "The Arrival," 496.

⁵⁸⁵ Stuart, "A Foreign Past," 380. The question of legibility may eventually prove to be unanswerable, but it remains worth asking because it could lead scholars to explore how the viewer read the narrative, both in glyphic and plastic forms. Today there are stairs that line the sides of the stairway but do not touch them, and these metal steps "hover" over the carved risers. Perhaps a similar device was used in antiquity.

The first fourteen risers from the plaza level were found in situ, and the carved glyphs are smaller and incised with a fine calligraphic line, while the later carved risers have larger glyphs that are more rounded and “balloon-like” (fig. 96).⁵⁸⁶ These two styles are evidence that several hands carved the glyph blocks and that the stairway was constructed in several stages. The final phase of the hieroglyphic stairway was completed after his death, but since his reign was so closely associated with inscriptions and sculpture, styles from his aegis may have remained in vogue.

Sculpture from the Hieroglyphic Stairway. Five tenoned, seated figures create a visual line progressing up and down the central axis of the stairway (figs. 97 a-e).⁵⁸⁷ Currently, scholars have not found a specific reading order for these figures. Their forms and location mark the center of the temple’s western facade and command attention. These slightly larger-than-life-sized figures average 220 cm in height.⁵⁸⁸ They were physically inserted into the steps and appear to be sitting on the risers.⁵⁸⁹

The following features characterize the seated figures: they all face forward (west), their shoulders and arms are in a balanced frontal posture, and they are adorned in elaborate costume and headdresses. These accoutrements include necklaces, ear-spools, intricate collars of stone beads, and the addition of complex woven fabrics. Some figures wear olivia shells while other have decorative bands. In addition each figure is wearing an intricately designed and decorated loincloth. As Baudez has noted, only the Peabody Museum’s figure

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid., 308–81.

⁵⁸⁷ These five figures are usually discussed as a discrete group; however, it is also important to note that Statue Six at the top of the staircase could have been part of this line of figures.

⁵⁸⁸ Baudez, *Maya Sculpture*, 221.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

was found in situ, therefore the other four statues were reconstructed from sculptural elements that fell or were out of place on the stair.⁵⁹⁰

The most dramatic of the costume elements are the headdresses. Figures One, Two, and Four all have reptilian/serpentine maw headdresses that engulf their heads and give the impression that they are emerging from a numinous place (figs. 97 a,b, d).⁵⁹¹ Figure Four is actually framed by a whole fanged mouth, so, in effect, his entire person appears to be transforming from within the stairway or the interior of the temple. In contrast, Figures Three and Five have headdresses that extend high over and around their heads (97 c, e). Figure Three looks as though he is wearing some type of architectonic structure. It is composed of a mixture of lines and angles, some of which look like the Mexican year sign. The opposite can be seen in Figure Five's headdress, which looks more flexible and might have been made of tightly bound feathers that are arranged in an arc. Decorating this round frame is a design motif similar to another Mexican year sign. These descriptions give us a sense that these personages represented unique individuals or perhaps, at the very least, important "types" who looked out upon the courtyard below.⁵⁹²

Statue Six. Statue six is a freestanding figure set on the sixty-sixth step of the stairway and positioned directly below the short staircase leading to the ruined superstructure. This statue will be discussed separately because it differs from the other seated figures in the following ways: the figure is separate from the hieroglyphic stairway; it stands rather than sits in the stair; it is adorned with a smaller headdress and more

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ These figures are numbered one through five, counting up from the base of the temple toward the summit and superstructure.

⁵⁹² In addition, their presence within an extensive hieroglyphic inscription is notable. With the inclusion of these figures, how is the written text altered or supported? Furthermore, do these individuals act as visual foils for the hieroglyphic stairway, or are they imparting an alternative narrative? These questions are important but currently beyond the scope of this study.

conservative costume; and lastly, the style of the carving is not as refined as the previous sculptures (fig. 98). The formal features of the figure are some of its most unusual aspects. At Copan there is a tradition of deeply carved stelae; however, this object is more like a statue, and no hieroglyphs or detailed iconography are present. In this way Statue Six is outside the typical artistic canon of Copan.

Presumably the figure stood before the now collapsed superstructure of Temple 26. Although technically not part of the stairway program, Statue Six nonetheless dramatically carries on the vertical axis of the seated figures. Baudez has described the statue as possessing a youthful countenance, which is in contrast to the seated statues below who appear more mature.⁵⁹³ The figure is posed in a stiff frontal stance with clearly defined shoulders, but missing its arms, although there is evidence that the arms have broken off and may have been depicted crossed over the figure's torso. His headdress is shaped like an open-mouthed jaguar, a common costume element seen in several of the seated figures below, but Statue Six's headdress lacks the detail and dramatic scale of the other figures.

The axial line of seated rulers and the statue at the top may have together formed a group portrait of Ruler 12. The deceased king could have been depicted in multiple guises befitting the position of a divine king of Copan. As with most of the imagery and texts from the west facade of Temple 26, this iconography needs further research.⁵⁹⁴

Prone Figures. There are seven reclining or prone figures interspersed within the written text of the hieroglyphic stairway.⁵⁹⁵ Gordon has interpreted their attitudes as akin to

⁵⁹³ Baudez, *Maya Sculpture*, 227. The face of the statue is heavily eroded so it is difficult to determine its age or identity.

⁵⁹⁴ Eluid Guerra, an artist from CRIA, mentioned this interpretation to me in July 2006; he stated that this idea originally came from David Stuart.

⁵⁹⁵ Baudez, *Maya Sculpture*, 230–31.

“standing figures shown horizontally.”⁵⁹⁶ He is the first scholar to examine these figures, and he notes that they are placed within the written text in a seemingly random manner. This would mean that their presence either interrupted the flow of the written text or perhaps augmented the text’s meanings (fig. 99).⁵⁹⁷ These images may also have had an ancillary relationship to the text, in which they were tangentially related to the inscriptions. Baudez has observed that some were placed in relation to the seated statues along the center axis, while others were positioned to the sides of the stairway.⁵⁹⁸ Determining the exact location of these figures is a challenge because there was only one prone figure, which originated on the fifth riser that was in situ after the landslide.⁵⁹⁹ The insertion of these comparatively large, life-size reliefs creates another level of complexity for the scholar looking for meaning in the main facade of the temple.

Mosaic Borders. Viewed from afar, the borders look like skeletalized claws, emerging at the very top of the stairway and terminating at its base. The alfarda frame was designed with an interest in consistency and repetition of form, and at the same time, the patterned motifs enclose the stairway in an almost offensive or defensive position (fig. 100). Clearly this motif presents a message that draws attention to the texts inside the stair while it creates an illusion of movement. Mary Miller stated that it was an intertwining border, and Karl Taube likened the decoration to the appendages of a centipede.⁶⁰⁰ From afar, the abstract appearance of the border looks more unified and appears to be composed of several repeating and related bird- or serpentlike parts. The viewer can see both animal forms and defensive

⁵⁹⁶ Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, 162.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁸ Baudez, *Maya Sculpture*, 217.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁰ Miller, *Maya Rulers*; Taube, personal communication, summer 1998.

daggerlike designs; this changing morphology makes the border less of a pattern and more like an active element of the facade.

Altar

At the bottom of the hieroglyphic stairway and positioned along the same east-west central axis is a monolithic zoomorph (figs. 101, 102).⁶⁰¹ These amorphous but carefully formed and sculpted boulders are common at Copan and are often identified as altars.⁶⁰² The surface of the altar is inscribed with a design like a tableau of images. There are two sculptural programs that may have been intended for two different audiences. The first set of images is from the top of the altar and appears to be oriented for a viewer standing above on the hieroglyphic stairway. This image is organized around a centrally placed cruciform or tree that is adorned with intertwining cords. Although badly damaged, there may also be a faint outline of an open maw and human figures. The second program is concentrated on the western side of the altar. This image is composed of a mosaic of twelve large blocks creating a zoomorphic face.⁶⁰³ The entire face is actually composed of three cohesive sections. The upper third is decorated with carved ripples that appear like scales or gums, and on the sides of this element are curvaceous motifs that could be eyebrows. Two blank blocks, flanked by more curvaceous features, make up the middle section. In the bottom third, the blocks are intricately carved with motifs that may represent a combination of the Mexican year sign conflated with curls and skeletal heads. The side blocks are carved with a design that folds in and is reminiscent of the thickened gums and skin of the mouths of reptiles.

⁶⁰¹ Miller, *Maya Rulers*, 219. The altar was damaged during the landslide, and Baudez believes that it may have been vandalized sometime in the twentieth century.

⁶⁰² Zoomorphs are most prevalent at Quirigua, a site near Copan.

⁶⁰³ Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, 158. Gordon makes small mention of this construction but does not go into details, and this is another aspect of the sculpture that needs to be documented on site.

In 1987 an offertory cache was discovered beneath the altar. The offering could have been part of the completion ceremony for the west facade of the temple, including the stairway sculpture.⁶⁰⁴ A stone cap directly under the altar sealed the cache; it contained a lidded ceramic censer enclosing pieces of jade, a lanceolate flint knife, a shell, ash and carbon, and lastly a number of stingray and sea urchin spines.⁶⁰⁵ Three eccentric flints, also part of the cache, are shaped like supernatural figures in profile (fig. 104). The eccentric flints depict figures with a “flaming” torch protruding from their foreheads, and radiating out from their bodies are motifs similar to other representations of smoke, mist, and breath.

The iconography of the altar is still being debated. Erosion has prevented scholars from agreeing on what this object may have looked like in the eighth century. A reconstruction by Proskouriakoff depicts the sculpture as though it was a snout or maw resting on the ground with its tongue extending onto the plaza floor. Stuart, who excavated the cache beneath the altar, reads the altar as an inverted head facing up, and the cached items would therefore be interred inside its brain.⁶⁰⁶ Regardless, this altar creates a vivid punctuation mark for the end (or beginning) of the central stairway.

Summary: Terrestrial, Temple 26

Temple 26 is a temple-pyramid that although attached to the Acropolis, was architecturally distinct, a feature that is highlighted in its design and style of decoration. Unlike comparable temples (Temples 16 and 11) its facade is decorated with an extraordinary array of textures, narratives, and figures made from stone, and this sculptural program enhances and frames a large central stairway. Late in its history its public face was moved from the west to the east

⁶⁰⁴ Fash, *Scribes*, 147.

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 149.

side, a decision more in keeping with the closed courts of the Acropolis to the south. Transferring the hieroglyphic steps back to the west side was a huge task that returned the temple to its original orientation and emphasized its public role within the ceremonial core of Copan. These Classic period renovations also indicate that the temple marked a meaningful place in the ceremonial precinct of Copan.

The architectural history of Temple 26 is important to review if one is to understand the building. The subsumed structures were not mute foundations but structures that expressed meaning and contributed to the building's unique potency in the history of Copan. The significance of the structure and its history is accented in the preservation of the sacred east-west vertical axis, which is articulated in its many subsumed structures and most dramatically denoted by the hieroglyphic stairway. The mass and abundance of imagery suggests that the monument's decoration may have functioned to elicit a response in the viewer that went beyond formal and iconographic and into the realm of experience.

Terrestrial: Conclusion

Explicit features of the architecture and design of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 contributed to activating an experience of the future for the viewer and making these messages comprehensible. In the structure and decorations of these three temples the death of a king is reinterpreted as the literal and conceptual foundation for the future. Maya mortuary monuments are structures that are concerned with honoring the dead, and this past is framed in a context of cyclicity, not in a frozen state of nostalgia. These concepts will become clearer in the final chapter of part 1, which is a discussion of the Celestial levels of these temples; however, concepts of the future and intergenerational cyclicity are depicted in certain aspects of the Terrestrial level as well.

In the architecture of the Terrestrial level from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, and Temple I at Tikal, the concept of the “future” is subtly depicted, whereas at Temple 26 at Copan it is more explicit. At the Temple of the Inscriptions multiple buttresses were needed to shore up the sides of the structure; however, inset corners of the subplatforms were preserved. Safeguarding these eight insets (the ninth being the very top platform) denoted the type of monument and its significance. The very construction of Temple I, which defined and limited the east-west axis of the Great Plaza, looked to the future because it (and Temple II) broke with the past and introduced a new orientation for the city and a new form of mortuary monument. Furthermore the triadic arrangement between Temples I, II, and 33 is reflective of lineage cyclicity. Temple 26, unlike the other monuments, includes a hieroglyphic inscription on the stairs of its subplatforms and a series of seated ruler figures. These two styles of communication, visual and textual, depicted a vibrant dynasty with continuities to the past and future. There is ample evidence that the construction of these monuments transformed their respective cities’ ceremonial precincts. Thus the core areas of these cities were defined by an architecture housing the dead—burial temples that were a joint effort between the king and his heir, emphasizing familial and structural continuities.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CELESTIAL LEVEL

The interment of the king was a process accompanied by months, perhaps years, of ritual. Correspondingly, the completion of the funerary temple was also a process, and the very presence of the superstructure provides evidence of these practices. Previous chapters in part 1 of this dissertation have examined the Subterranean, post-interment, and Terrestrial levels of these monuments; the Celestial level—the tops of these buildings—completes the monument both from an architectural and a symbolic perspective.

This chapter is an examination of the superstructures of the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, Temple I from Tikal, and Temple 26 of Copan. As has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, Late Classic monumental funerary architecture is surprisingly consistent and includes the burial, stepped platforms, and a crowning superstructure. The superstructures from the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I were both constructed on the last and ninth stepped subplatforms of their respective monuments. In contrast, Temple 26 has twelve subplatforms, and its superstructure would have formed the thirteenth level of the temple.⁶⁰⁷ The significance associated with the numbers nine and thirteen cannot be underestimated as, according to Maya mythology, there were nine levels of the Underworld and thirteen levels of the Upperworld. Integrating these symbolic numbers in funerary architecture may have intensified messages of transformation between states of existence as well as the visual power of these temples.

The superstructure contrasts with the other elements of the mortuary temple because it was designed to be both public and private. The tomb chamber and the Terrestrial level

⁶⁰⁷ This small structure was destroyed in antiquity.

were decidedly private or public, but not both, and thus the superstructure was a culmination and a fusion of these spaces. The Celestial or superstructure level, along with the Subterranean and Terrestrial levels, was designed to engage a viewer on a physical and ideological level. Its small, cavelike interior spaces could have been a parallel for the equally small and cavelike spaces of the royal interment.

Sculpture adorning the superstructure is varied: at the Temple of the Inscriptions bas-reliefs on the piers frame the entrance to the shrine's interior. The superstructure of Temple I had an enormous roof-comb that towered over the Great Plaza and the whole city, and at Copan a series of mosaic-styled sculptures and abstract symbols may have adorned its entablature.⁶⁰⁸ These sculptural programs are all stylistically different, but their context, composition, and dramatic forms reveal that they functioned to communicate unequivocally to a broad audience. In contrast, the shadowy interior spaces of these superstructures had multiple vaulted rooms that were close and dark and, paradoxically, adorned with complex imagery and inscriptions. Embedded in the floors of the superstructures of the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I were hidden deposits that paralleled or marked the interment below. The histories of these mortuary monuments suggest that the superstructures may have been conceived by the deceased kings but were actually constructed by their heirs.

Celestial: The Temple of the Inscriptions

The superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions is a building designed in the style of the western Maya lowlands, typified by a pronounced horizontality and emphasized along its east-west axis by a lattice roof-comb, mansard roof, and, below these features, a north-facing portico. Its interior space is divided lengthwise with three chambers along its south wall and,

⁶⁰⁸ Fash, *Scribes*, p.145-46.

to the north, an open portico gallery with six piers. The piers and their five open doorways organize the north facade of the superstructure (fig. 105). The axis of the central staircase intersected the nine subplatforms of the temple and continued through the portico becoming the interior (north-south) corridor and ending at the south (exterior) wall of the central chamber. This axial line, along with the evenly spaced doorways of the portico and attendant pier sculptures, created visual balance and symmetry.

The sculptural program of the superstructure was originally painted with reds, blues, and yellows, and remnants of these colors can still be detected on parts of the stucco.⁶⁰⁹ For an eighth-century viewer in the North Plaza, these vibrant colors would have brought the imagery and iconography of the sculptures to life. The imagery from the roof-comb and temple piers was composed of both cut-stone and limestone stucco. This technique allowed for a lyricism in the sculpture, which complemented one aesthetic mission of Palenque—an interest in narrative. The sculptures from the superstructure tell a story, but only when they are considered as a group; alone the pier images appear more static and esoteric (fig. 106). Today much of the facade sculpture has eroded away, although the figures decorating the piers have maintained their basic appearance.

Superstructure Sculpture

Alfardas

Nine steps separate the substructural basal platform from the portico of the superstructure. Alfardas frame these steps that contrast with the lower level of the central stair. These carved images are damaged, and what is seen today is an eroded contour line that describes two figures depicted in a frontal posture, facing each other across the stair (fig. 107 and 108).

⁶⁰⁹ Robertson, *The Temple*, 97.

Their bodies take up most of the stone's surface, and their heads and headdresses are obscured, but some costume elements can be clearly seen. Their chests are adorned with pectoral decorations in the shape of oversized Calendar Round glyphs. Loincloths of knotted fabric and beads are their only costume element. The slabs and their imagery are slightly larger than life size, and the proportions of the carved figures are considerably larger than an average ancient Maya adult. Robertson believes that these figures are not in their original context and were most likely transferred to the temple's stairway from another location.⁶¹⁰ These reliefs can be compared to the captive and humiliated figures from the East Court of the Palace.⁶¹¹

Exterior Pier Reliefs

Framing the five doorways of the superstructure are six piers. The four piers in the center are decorated with life-size figures who stand in frontal poses and hold or present an infant figure in their arms. The pier imagery is designed in such a way as to be easily comprehended from a distance. As one approaches the temple and ascends the central stair, the figures disappear from view. They reappear only after one reaches the small platform of the eighth level, which is positioned at the base of the superstructure. The two piers at the extreme east and west ends are badly eroded and may have contained only hieroglyphic inscriptions.⁶¹² Although the stucco-sculpted piers are not in the pristine condition of the seventh century, we can still make out prevailing formal features, which are emphasized by a standardization and repetition of primary visual elements. Included in each relief is a number

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹¹ Ibid. Images of captive and humiliated figures are also associated with Temple 26, Copan, in the horizontal prone figures from the stairway and at Temple I, Tikal, with the famous carved bones of captives from Burial 116. Donald Robertson in "Some Remarks on Stone Relief Sculpture at Palenque, 103-124.

⁶¹² Ibid., 29.

of basic elements: a skyband frame, a zoomorphic pedestal that supports a standing adult who holds an infant, and the cradled infant that one leg turned into serpent.

The visual drama of these figurative reliefs is also heightened by their coloration. Robertson has done extensive work on the use of color and its application at Palenque.⁶¹³ She surmises that the standing figures and background were painted in various hues of red while the reclining infant figure was painted in a jade blue/green, and the scales from the serpent foot were accented in a light brown, tan, and green (fig. 109).⁶¹⁴ Feathers and beads adorning the figures were painted in a similar deep jade green, as was the skyband border.

The use of certain formal features, such as complementary colors, the skyband border, and the repetition of standing figures holding a reclining infant, created a theatrical and comprehensible series of sculptures. Maintaining an uncluttered pattern of images, like a frieze, created a unified set of messages. The coloration of the infant emphasizes its unusual reclining posture. When juxtaposed against the red-hued adult, the infant and the whole tableau of five sculpted piers become a highly legible set of images that together created a narrative. Each pier image (standing figure, infant, and skyband border) had individualized characteristics; however, the works' messages are most clearly amplified by looking at the piers as an ensemble. Furthermore, the superstructure, pier imagery, and interior spaces echoed messages from the royal tomb chamber below.

The six sculpted piers can be examined as three complementary pairs. These three sets are denoted by similarities in composition and form. The two outermost piers (A, F) define the exterior borders of the series and are nonfigurative while the four interior piers (B–E) depict figures. Previous discussions of the imagery have usually explored the piers

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

progressing from B to E or from left to right, but this discussion will consider the figurative reliefs as two sets of paired images. Piers B and E (fig. 110) will be considered as a pair, as will Piers C and D (fig. 111). The forms and orientations of the sculpted stucco figures accentuate the middle entrance and the central axis of the superstructure's interior.

Paired Piers: A and F. Piers A and F are on the northeast and northwest corners of the structure; in effect these piers work as a frame for the figurative piers in the center of the program. Only eleven glyph blocks remain on Pier A and only one on Pier F. Robertson cites Proskouriakoff's reading of several glyphs from Pier A as "death expressions."⁶¹⁵ Remnants of the inscriptions on Pier F may refer to Kan Bahlam, the son of Pakal.⁶¹⁶ Robertson notes that these piers were carved on panels, painted red, that were later applied to the sides of the structure.⁶¹⁷

Paired Piers: B and E. Piers B and E flank the outside east and west borders of the frieze. Each pier depicts an adult male in a frontal position—their torsos are depicted in a three-quarter angle, and their faces are shown in profile. Robertson has remarked that Pier B has one of the best-preserved standing figures, measuring 165 cm, which was within the scale of an ancient Maya adult.⁶¹⁸ The figures are adorned in loincloths, and there is only a hint of jewelry on the Pier B figure. Pier E has only a shadowy remnant of both the standing figure and the reclining infant; however, this figure's headdress is in remarkably good condition. Embedded within the elaborate serpent-jaguar headdress of the Pier E figure is the name Kan Bahlam (Serpent-Jaguar).⁶¹⁹ In addition, both Piers B and E share the same type of

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid., 50.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 30.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid. Robertson states that the image most likely represents the ancestor rather than the son of Pakal.

zoomorphic face depicted as a pedestal at the base of the relief. Robertson states that this particular mask was the Quadripartite Monster, an emblem of rulership, and this same supernatural face was also depicted on Pakal's sarcophagus cover.⁶²⁰ The figures both hold an infant with a serpent leg in their arms.

Paired Piers: C and D. Piers C and D frame the main entrance into the superstructure (figs. 112, 113). Pier C is better preserved than its counterpart and, rather than depicting an adult man, shows a woman in a long beaded skirt. The imagery from Piers C and D is essential in our comprehension of the larger messages of the superstructure. Although both sculpted images are damaged, important features are preserved. One such icon is the presence of the "smoking celt," which is depicted protruding from the head of the infant on Pier D.⁶²¹ This motif is diagnostic of K'awiil, a figure that is closely associated with Maya rulership and which could be interpreted as a sign of divine rule among the Late Classic Maya. Another important feature found by Robertson is an "inset stone band" in the floor of the superstructure.⁶²² She traced this line from the central chamber, in the back of the superstructure, north toward the portico ending at Pier C.⁶²³ Robertson has rightly interpreted it as symbolic of an umbilical cord.⁶²⁴

The imagery from Piers C and D presumably depicts a woman and a man who each hold an infant and also a symbol of Maya kingship. Their figures flank the central axis of the superstructure and thus highlight the passage leading into the central chamber. Further signifying this sacred path is the masonry umbilical cord found at the base of Pier C. This

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 48.

⁶²¹ Ibid., 42.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 35.

center axis's association with the central chamber is significant, as this space was most likely the most sacred room in the superstructure. Inside the central chamber was the middle panel of the inscriptions, and its floor contained the hidden flagstone entrance leading down to Pakal's burial.⁶²⁵ The superstructure and its shrine was a place that communicated to a viewer through inscriptions, iconography, and forms embedded into its structure.

Superstructure Interior

One enters the superstructure shrine through the facade portico, passing by Piers C and D. This central north-south passage organizes the interior space of the superstructure (fig. 114). The south wall of the central chamber marks the end of this passage. Two smaller rooms flank the east and west sides of the central chamber, and they are accessed through doors open to the portico to the north. The south wall of the center chamber supports a large inscribed panel; the southeast and southwest walls of the portico support similar panels. The relationship between the exterior stairway, the central north-south passage, and the central chamber's hieroglyphic panel may have marked both a sacred horizontal and vertical axis. This organization also helped to define the messages of the superstructure.

The interior spaces of the shrine are relatively large and well illuminated by ancient Maya standards. In this respect the Temple of the Inscriptions' superstructure contrasts with Temple I from Tikal, and presumably with Temple 26. The broad and open portico allowed light to come into the interior (north-south) corridor, as well as the southern chambers. In addition each vaulted chamber was further illuminated by the typical Palenque cut-out

⁶²⁵ The central inscribed panel contains an interesting and significant inscription because although the main subject of the narrative is ritual, some of the biography of Pakal is also present. Pakal's life is recounted in more detail on the west panel.

masonry “window” in the shape of a small square. Although these openings were small, they did allow for some light and air to pass through.

Framing the central passageway is a program of carved objects. A visitor would have passed through the parallel portico piers adorned by Figures C and D to face the two inscription panels attached to the exterior (north) wall of the superstructure. These panels flank the central doorway, one on the east side and the other on the west. The passage continued into the central chamber, at the rear (south) of the superstructure. On the south wall of this chamber was another carved panel, and adjacent to this panel, immediately to the east, was the flagstone that covered the interior stairway, which may have remained open for many years. In essence, the architecture and plan of the superstructure worked to highlight the presence of the central chamber and its distinctive interment and offering, which is the tomb of Pakal. As one passes through the outer doorway with its sculpted piers and progresses south past the portico inscription panels, the space of the shrine becomes progressively more dark, close, and sacred.

Inscription Panels

The Temple of the Inscriptions’ name refers to the hieroglyphic text from the three interior panels that, along with the carved risers from Temple 26, are the longest continuous narratives in the ancient Maya world.⁶²⁶ The inscriptions from the wall panels would only have been visible when a viewer stood in or traversed through the portico gallery of the superstructure. According to Schele and Mathews, the entire inscription is a continuous narrative, but composed of three themes that correspond to the three separate panels. The easternmost panel presents a dynastic history of Palenque and links this chronology to k’atun

⁶²⁶ Temple 26’s inscription is longer, but it has not been translated because the inscription is composed of glyph blocks that today are out of order.

endings. This section has been compared to the Late Postclassic Books of Chilam Balam.⁶²⁷ The western panel focuses on the life and reign of Pakal, and the deceased ruler is described both as mortal and immortal. The last section of the panel give the death dates of Pakal and continues by stating that his son, the new king Kan Bahlam, gives special care to his father's tomb. Prior to the demise of the king, a section in the middle of the panel describes a prophecy in which the king returns in the year 4772 CE, a full eight thousand years after his death.⁶²⁸ In contrast the central panel (and the first section of the west panel) is grounded in ritual rather than dynastic history or biographical details of Pakal. The celebration of period endings through rituals concerning the patron gods of Palenque is the focus of this most private inscription panel.⁶²⁹

Although the inscriptions are read as though they were a continuous narrative, progressing from the east to west, each panel contains a related but discrete theme.⁶³⁰ This perspective could provide for added functions, uses, and reading orders. Gerardo Aldana acknowledges that the inscriptions were a long narrative, but he has also demonstrated that there were a variety of ways the story could have been read by a viewer.⁶³¹ An example of this type of narrative flexibility can be observed in Classic Maya fan-fold books, which also allowed for a variety of reading orders. Although more research needs to be done in this area, considering the content of the inscription in comparison with the context and design of the interior of the superstructure could shed light on how this space may have been used in the Late Classic.

⁶²⁷ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 108.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, 102–8; Aldana, 128.

⁶³¹ Aldana, *The Apotheosis*, 71-104.

Summary: Superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions

The superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions was designed for public ritual and human interaction. The five doorways of the north facade's portico create an open space between this porch and the more sacred chambers inside the structure. Piers adorned with life-size figures frame the four doorways leading to the east-west portico. The imagery from Piers C and D and the stone umbilicus, found at the base of Pier C, highlight a continuous iconography also depicted in the imagery of the tomb chamber. A woman and man are depicted, their postures mirror one another, and each holds a reclining infant; these images are portraits of two royal figures, but they also represent universal symbols of renewal.

Progressing through the outside portico, a visitor was guided inside the shrine via a north-south corridor leading to the central chamber. Attached to the south wall of the chamber was an inscribed panel, the carved texts of which recounted sacred rites performed with the Palenque patron gods, and the content of this inscription was a slight departure from the other two, which were more historic and biographical. Adjacent to the panel in the floor was the threshold to the stair that would have directed a visitor through the internal architecture of the temple and to the tomb chamber of Pakal. In this description I have recounted a sacred route taken by visitors through the superstructure and also suggested the messages associated with this experience. Caches buried in the interior stairway and subterranean corridor revealed that this interior was accessible for a while and was later ceremoniously buried in fill. The architecture and design of the superstructure suggest that it was a sacred place of ritual, but it also encased the entrance to the tomb of Pakal.

Celestial: Temple I

Temple I was constructed in the style of the central Maya lowlands. The gradual diminution of the nine stepped platforms, its pyramidal shape, and its roof-comb serve to emphasize its pronounced verticality. Temple I's design is reminiscent of the mortuary monuments from the North Acropolis and the North Terrace, especially Temple 33. However, its mass, elevation, and stand-alone placement in the Great Plaza were markedly different from its predecessors. These innovative features would prove to be a template for future funerary temple constructions at Tikal.

A square platform supports the superstructure and its huge roof-comb. The central staircase contributes to a unified appearance by connecting the space of the plaza with the space of the superstructure. This axis was continued in the superstructure's shrine, becoming the passage that organized the interior spaces of the superstructure, composed of three vaulted chambers consecutively spaced and connected by doorways spanned by carved wooden lintels.

Superstructure Sculpture

The superstructure from Temple I is approximately 15.5 m in elevation with a roof-comb that rose another 8 m (fig. 115).⁶³² The subplatforms and superstructure are separated by a small platform that extends out in all directions. A thin vertical groove that forms a narrow gap in the north and south walls delineates the eastern and western sections of the superstructure. The eastern portion is slightly higher than the western section, and each zone has its own entablature.⁶³³ These structural changes might be due to changes in the elevation of the

⁶³² This is an approximation derived from Coe's figures of the temple and its superstructure.

⁶³³ Loten, *Tikal Report 34*, 86. Loten refers to this area as the "upper zone." The term *entablature* will be used in this dissertation.

interior space, or they may function as an additional support for the extensive roof-comb.

There is evidence of an awning that hung over the front of the shrine. Coe surmises that this covered porch was extensively used for ritual in both the dry and rainy seasons.⁶³⁴

Imagery from the superstructure's entablature and roof-comb has been badly damaged; only remnants survive of both the stonework and stucco.⁶³⁵ Coe remembers that loose plaster of "vegetal colors," red, green, and possibly blue, was falling off the facade.⁶³⁶ The south side of the entablature is the best preserved, and the decoration can be described as composed of framed moldings, decorated recesses, and intaglio detailing.⁶³⁷

The roof-comb is much more expansive than the entablature and is recessed from the roofline of the superstructure. This difference in elevation and placement accentuates its imagery, and it appears like a giant mass rising up from the superstructure. In the center is an enthroned individual wearing a crested headdress and surrounded by royal accoutrements.⁶³⁸ Flanking this figure and cascading down are fanglike teeth, mouth volutes, eyes, and a cauc or witz head, Coe surmises this lateral sculpture could be part of a royal serpent bar.⁶³⁹ What can be determined today is an interest in broadcasting an image of a powerful and elaborately adorned individual who literally sits in the sky and is omnipresent. This seated image of a paramount personage corresponds to depictions of the enthroned ruler from Lintels 2 and 3 from within the shrine of the superstructure.

⁶³⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:601.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:599. The imagery is composed of a thin plaster coating over cut-stone sculpture. Coe admits that an understanding of the sculpture is lacking, and some pieces of the facade may be in storage or gone. He also states that the overall height and design of the roof-comb is a matter of conjecture as well.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.* Coe also found evidence of over-under knot motifs and featherwork. Coe, however, does not note where these decorations are located.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

Superstructure Interior

The interior of Temple I is composed of three small and consecutively arranged chambers linked together by a corridor, which is oriented west to east. The intersection between the central west-east axis and the north-to-south-oriented chambers created three right angle crossings or doorways. Spanning these crossings are wooden lintels, and the doorways between Chambers 2 and 3 (Doorways 2 and 3) have carved wooden lintels. The chambers have high and narrow corbel-vaulted ceilings, and when compared to the doorways, the rooms are more like dark slits.

Although the superstructure was designed around axes and right angles, this geometric design belied an environment that was emotive rather than intellectual. For example, the interior of the superstructure becomes progressively smaller and darker as one progresses farther inside the space, moving east. The floor inclines at a gradual angle toward the ceiling, and the space becomes more constricted. Interred in these unusually thick floors were caches and a human burial.⁶⁴⁰ A viewer was surrounded by evidence of ritual. The surface of the floor of Room 2 was randomly charred with copal, and another example of burning can be seen in the step to Room 3, which was almost completely incinerated.⁶⁴¹ Moving through this progressively darker space were the elaborately carved lintels, spanning the doors of Chambers 2 and 3. All of these features contributed to the creation of a rarified and private space.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid., 2:603.

⁶⁴¹ Ibid. In addition, there were many oval depressions in the floor of Room 3 that were also burned.

Cache 37

Directly beneath the front step leading through Doorway 2 (Lintel 2 is above) is Cache 37.⁶⁴² It is a small repository and was found largely untouched and unsealed (fig. 117).⁶⁴³ Inside the 19 cm × 27 cm space were four apple-shaped balls of copal, 8 cm in diameter.⁶⁴⁴ They were painted blue, possibly covered with cornhusks, and each had a protruding stick that may have functioned as a wick.⁶⁴⁵ The cache was covered over but only by a light dusting of fill. Adams and Trik found this surprising, especially since it was left undisturbed.⁶⁴⁶ The cache could have been used as an offering or storage and is dated to the Postclassic.⁶⁴⁷

Cache 49 A and B

This unusual cache was found in association with Lintel 3, which spanned Doorway 3. Cached in the north and south ends of the center beam of the lintel (Beam c) were presumably two offerings (fig. 118).⁶⁴⁸ In the middle of the nineteenth century, explorer Gustave Bernoulli and his team removed whatever remained of Lintel 3.⁶⁴⁹ By pulling the wooden beams out, 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—sponge, sea shells, coral, seaweed, coquina (butterfly-shell clam), and stingray spines—and all the materials were coated with

⁶⁴² Ibid., 2:609.

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid. The blue paint may be the same as was used in Room 3.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ Adams and Trik, *Tikal Report 7*, 118.

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

cinnabar.⁶⁵⁰ No other deposits appear to be associated with Lintel 3, and no other beams in Temple I have traces of this type of offering.

Doorway 3 Floor Deposits

Surface excavations conducted by Adams and Trik revealed a rectangular pit cut into the lime-concrete floor. In the 1950s this area had been filled with naturally falling debris, but Coe surmised that this was once a cache or burial, which has since been looted.⁶⁵¹ Two complete stingray spines, one partial spine, and several pottery shards were found adjacent to the pit and may have been included in the original burial context.⁶⁵² In conjunction with investigating Lintel 3 directly above, archaeologists worked to uncover the nature of the offering in the floor below. Excavation progressed to the foundation of the superstructure (the top of the pyramid, summit of the subplatforms), which extended to a total depth of approximately 2.58 m.⁶⁵³

Burial 5

Coe and Trik divided the excavations into three units that corresponded to changes in the composition of the floor. Unit 1 was the natural collection of debris that has been discussed previously. Unit 2 was 85 cm below the floor level, and this new unit was marked by striking changes in the substance of the fill, such as large amounts of a soft brown material, charred chips of sapote wood, and rodent trash.⁶⁵⁴ Intermixed in this matrix, in “meaningless confusion,” were human bones, pottery, obsidian flakes, and large amounts of copal resin with one ball containing a jade bead. This collection was labeled Burial 5; however, the

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ Ibid., 121.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., 120. The soft brown material was bat dung.

original placement and pattern of the skeleton and tomb furniture have been lost.⁶⁵⁵ A fire pit, on the west side of the cist burial, had been clearly indicated by the severity of the blackened material, and this thin line of burned items separated Unit 2 from Unit 3.⁶⁵⁶

The tomb furniture and the human remains of Burial 5 were in disarray at the time of excavation. Skeletal material was found scattered and incomplete, but the decedent has been sexed as female.⁶⁵⁷ Evidence of relative high status can be seen in the following features: one jade bead in an unfired ball of copal, the presence of four flaring, polychrome, tripod vessels, three (or more) censers, and a group of utilitarian vessels. Perhaps the most important feature of the burial is its location within the inner chambers of Temple I, a royal mortuary monument.⁶⁵⁸ The burial has been dated to the Postclassic.⁶⁵⁹

Burial 6

The lowest level, Unit 3 (closest to the last of the subplatforms), contained Burial 6. This interment has been dated to the Late Classic, coeval with the construction and original use of Temple I (figs. 119, 120). The tomb was not part of the original construction of the shrine; therefore, it was intrusive in the fill of the platform.⁶⁶⁰ Burial 6 was of the cist type, constructed of exceptionally rough-hewn stones placed in equally rough lime mortar.⁶⁶¹ In antiquity, perhaps at the time of the Burial 5 interment, this burial was looted. The north side

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid. The contents of the burial, regardless of whether it was organic or inorganic material, had been smashed and broken, and some items were burned.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., 121. According to Adams and Trik, 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, the illumination of the fire would have brightened up the imagery of the lintels and they might have been more easily read.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., 122.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., 121.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.

of the grave's roof had been broken, and Unit 2 had intruded into this space.⁶⁶² Beneath the southern end of the burial were limited remains: fragments of human bones and sherds of one of the tripod plates found in Unit 2.⁶⁶³ There was considerable confusion as to what bones and tomb furniture belonged to Burial 6, the sex of the individual could not be determined, and only one vessel could be assigned to the interment.⁶⁶⁴ One of the most interesting features of the burial was the presence of a “heavy deposit of lithics”—flint chips secured in mortar above the roof of the interment.⁶⁶⁵ This post-interment expression is strikingly similar to the lithics (flint and obsidian) found in association with Burial 116, the tomb of Jasaw. Correspondingly, this layer of lithics is reminiscent of the earlier Burial 23, from Temple 33, identified as the father of Jasaw, Nuun Ujol Chaak.

A New Interpretation of Burials 5 and 6

Coe later reexamined Burials 5 and 6 and has surmised that they are actually one interment dating from the Late Classic period.⁶⁶⁶ He believes there was one principal occupant, a woman.⁶⁶⁷ The other human remains may have been a result of the caching of bones and were considered not a burial, but more of a “problematical deposit.” Coe proposes that the woman was heavily shrouded and placed in a stone cist; she was adorned with a jade necklace of which only a copal-encrusted bead survives.⁶⁶⁸ Coe's new interpretation of Burial 6 significantly changes our understanding of how the space of the superstructure may have functioned in the Late Classic period.

⁶⁶² Ibid.

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid., 123.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid., 121, 124. Adams and Trik note that the practice of “dusting” the top of a cist or chamber burial with lithics is unusual. They cite similar instances of this type of expression from Early Classic Uaxactun from Burials A20 and A22.

⁶⁶⁶ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:603.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., 2:604.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid.

Doorway 2 and Doorway 3 Carved Lintels

Carved lintels spanned the doorways of the most private spaces of the superstructure's interior (figs. 121 and 122). Lintels are numbered consecutively from the plaza entrance to the innermost doorway; therefore Lintel 1 spans the threshold of the facade doorway, while Lintels 2 and 3 span the two interior doorways. The wood used for the beams comes from the zapote tree, an extremely hard and durable type. Clear evidence of this hardness is in the legibility of the carved imagery and glyphic inscriptions even after fourteen hundred years.⁶⁶⁹ Scholars assume that the beams were carved from freshly felled and moist logs prior to installation, as the dried zapote is brittle and hard.⁶⁷⁰ Thus, these lintels were constructed of a material of great durability, but also from a material that was correspondingly difficult to carve.

Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite have observed that installation of the carved beams was a complicated process. Each beam represented a component part of a larger scene that was blocked out by the artist/designer and carved as one continuous narrative sequence. Careful setting and alignment of the beams was vital if the imagery was to be coherently read by a viewer. There is evidence that during the installation, the beams were protected by being wrapped in woven mats/fabrics and palm leaves because these left impressions in the adjacent stucco show leaf and textile patterns.⁶⁷¹ (Another feature that may have signaled

⁶⁶⁹ Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 6*, 43. The beams were most often fashioned from halved logs; the zapote is a straight-stemmed tree whose grain runs in consistent lines, creating a relatively smooth surface. The archaeologists from the 1960s expedition had trouble felling the trees and fashioning replacement beams, and they were using modern equipment.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.* The Maya used stone tools such as obsidian flake-blades, scrapers of flint or obsidian, and drills and abrasives for applying a finish.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

how precious were these lintels and the ritual of their installation was the presence of Cache 49, which was buried in the north end of the lintel bed associated with Lintel 3.)⁶⁷²

The westernmost or first lintel from Temple I was made up of two plain beams. Doorway 2 had four beams, and five beams are estimated to have spanned Doorway 3.⁶⁷³ The deeper thresholds of the two interior doorways may have allowed for the inclusion of a wider lintel and more imagery. Doorways 2 and 3 could also be considered liminal spaces of transformation and sites for ritual. A decorated “ceiling” of carved lintels would have enhanced the sacred nature of these passages.

Historiography. Research completed in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite is the basis for this discussion of the archaeology of the carved lintels. Their research was built upon work previously done by Alfred Maudslay, Teobert Maler, and Sylvanus Morley.⁶⁷⁴ The earliest documentation of the lintels comes from the published expedition reports of Modesto Méndez (corregidor of the Department of Petén) and Ambrosio Tut.⁶⁷⁵ Included in their reports were renderings of some of the carved imagery by artist Eusebio Lara.⁶⁷⁶ Two beams from Lintel 2 have survived and remain in situ.⁶⁷⁷ Fragments from Lintel 3 were purchased by collector J. W. Boddam-Whetham in the late nineteenth century (later given to the British Museum), while the Swiss explorer Bernoulli removed several pieces and gave them to the Basel Museum für Völkerkunde.⁶⁷⁸ Therefore documentation and analysis of the lintels is dependant upon nineteenth-century sources as well as work done in the 1960s.

⁶⁷² Ibid., 29.

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁴ Maudslay, *Archaeology. Biologia Centrali*; Maler, *Explorations*; Morely, *The Inscriptions of Peten*.

⁶⁷⁵ Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 6*, 29.

⁶⁷⁶ Coe and Shook, *Tikal Report 6*, Figure 21.

⁶⁷⁷ Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 6*, 23.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.

Rather than consider the carved lintels from Temple I as planar upright objects, as they would be viewed in a museum, this study recontextualizes this imagery and discusses their forms as though they were installed in the doorway. By proposing a reading of the imagery from the perspective of a viewer within the superstructure shrine, standing beneath the beams of Doorways 2 and 3, I am able to ask new questions about the meanings of these works. Wooden lintels support voids in masonry structures, but when they are carved, their simple utility becomes complicated. The carved lintels may commemorate an event, yet upon closer inspection, the imagery is seen to be more complex and may depict multiple ideas.⁶⁷⁹ In their original context, the images (portraits of Jasaw) “hovered” above the viewer in a close and dark environment. Although the carved lintels were not cached or hidden away beneath rubble or fill, there was no direct line of sight from which to read their imagery, thus, the effect was a quasi-invisible visual narrative. Within this perspective, questions of context and form take on greater importance.

Formal Characteristics. This examination draws upon the scholarship of Trik and Shook, Coggins, Clancy, and Kubler. Based on a close examination of the carved lintels, it is clear that the dominant form of communication is the imagery. Lintel 2 has a short text, and Lintel 3 has an inscription in its upper right (west) side but when these inscriptions are compared to the expansive figurative composition surrounding them, the hieroglyphs appear lost in the imagery. This overriding emphasis on the visual image over the text is manifested in compositional repetition, such as repeated figurative and architectural forms, and the complexity and variation of line, which can be calligraphic, descriptive, deeply incised, or shallowly carved. Differences in line and texture created a carved surface that was active and

⁶⁷⁹ Clancy discusses the complexities of the carved lintels from Temple I in *The Monuments*, 120–23.

danced before the viewer, especially in the ambient flickering light that may have originated from torches. Information imparted through imagery may have been more appropriate and more visible in the uneven light of the superstructure's interior spaces. The compositions from both Lintels 2 and 3 are like identical templates that frame and present larger messages.⁶⁸⁰ Kubler stated that they were “doubled portraits” of Jasaw.⁶⁸¹ The superstructure and especially the areas of Doorways 2 and 3 may have been spaces of cognition, but they were also spaces that engaged viewers through their emotions.

Lintel 2. Lintel 2, above the second doorway, originally consisted of four carved beams (see fig. 121). Today Beams a and b are still in their original position while c and d are missing.⁶⁸² The width of the doorway is 2.47 m, and its thickness is 1.24 m.⁶⁸³ Therefore what we see today is missing 50 percent of its visual, and possibly epigraphic, information. Imagery is still preserved in the complete western half of the lintel, which is the section that a viewer would have first encountered.

The predominant forms and shapes depicted in the surviving beams consist of a seated royal person, a group of mosaic-encrusted serpent heads, architecture, and hieroglyphic inscriptions. A concentration of imagery occupies the top (north) and the east and west sides of the picture plane. Voids or negative spaces are denoted by recessed surfaces, which are in stark contrast to the raised and deeply cut sections of carved imagery. The scene can briefly be described as a rather fantastic image of the ruler in profile, enthroned within a scaffoldlike structure with supernatural figures looming over and beneath him. The location of this scene is vague; it is not clear from the surviving imagery whether

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., 184.

⁶⁸¹ Kubler, “Doubled-Portraits”, 324.

⁶⁸² Ibid.

⁶⁸³ Ibid., 80.

the seated figure is in a supernatural or timeless place. Several decorative and iconographic motifs appear inspired by the architecture and styles of the great Central Mexican city of Teotihuacan.

Seated figure. The Late Classic ruler Jasaw has been identified as the protagonist in this imagery.⁶⁸⁴ He is depicted facing west and seated on a padded bench or throne. He sits upright in a stiff pose looking straight toward the short seven-glyph inscription. Jasaw's position would have greeted an ancient viewer and guided him or her toward the written text, which plainly denotes his name. Jasaw, however, is adorned in several guises; at one moment he appears in Teotihuacan warrior garb, while a second look reveals the presence of several markers of Maya rulership. Furthermore, in Coe's reconstruction drawing an outline of a deity mask covers the ruler's face, thus providing for a third identity. In this way it is possible that there are three guises depicted in one image.

Costume. Teotihuacano or Mexican references are explicit in the costume of Jasaw.⁶⁸⁵ A helmet that enframes the ruler's head is depicted in the same mosaic-encrusted style as the serpents. The lower portion of the helmet appears like the mandible of some creature, and it extends out from the ruler's chest like a bejeweled collar. The upper portion includes a possible maxilla that sweeps over the ruler's head. This type of headdress is associated with warrior iconography from Teotihuacan.⁶⁸⁶ Placed between Jasaw's feet is an object that depicts an open-mouthed feline, and Kubler has identified this item as a

⁶⁸⁴ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing Styles," 450-53; Clancy, "A Formal Analysis," 176-180; Kubler, "Doubled-Portrait, 324-326."

⁶⁸⁵ Teotihuacano and Mexican imagery permeates the entire lintel, and imagery not associated with the costume of Jasaw will be presented in detail further on.

⁶⁸⁶ Kubler, "Double-Portrait," 325. Kubler links the helmet to imagery at Teotihuacán and in the Maya area, including Lintels 2, 7, and 9 from Piedras Negras; Taube, "The Temple of Quetzalcoatl," 69.

“feathered-jaguar censer.”⁶⁸⁷ This image could also represent a decorative anklet in the shape of the Mesoamerican War Serpent.⁶⁸⁸ In the drawing by Coe, the ruler holds short lances, and these implements are also common in Teotihuacan mural paintings. Depicted below the points are “stylized human-eye forms,” which Kubler notes are also in the Tepantitla murals and are associated with water.⁶⁸⁹ Taube considers these lances only part of an entire set of Teotihuacan warrior implements that would also include the spear-thrower or atlatl.⁶⁹⁰

Although Jasaw has most commonly been described as being costumed like a Teotihuacan warrior, he has several features associated with Maya ruler imagery as well. Adjacent to the short lances (and possibly an atlatl), Jasaw grasps a rounded shield.⁶⁹¹ Analogous representations of these shields can be seen at Tikal in Lintel 3 from Temple I and in Lintels 2 and 3 from Temple IV. The presence of a jaguar pelt draped over his throne is a Maya marker of rulership. Coe reports that Jasaw was interred on a wooden platform that was most likely covered with several jaguar skins.⁶⁹² Costume elements and regalia originating from Teotihuacan, a foreign and mythic city, combined with local Maya imagery reveal Jasaw as a universal warrior and ruler figure.

Serpents. The mosaic-encrusted serpents are another foreign/Teotihuacan motif.⁶⁹³ Towering above and in front of the seated Jasaw are two serpent figures. The left serpent is

⁶⁸⁷ Kubler, “Double-Portrait,” 325. Furthermore, Kubler has observed that this type of censer does appear in Postclassic Chichén Itzá but was not part of Classic Maya imagery.

⁶⁸⁸ Taube, “The Temple of Quetzalcoatl,” 69.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid. Taube proposes that although the ruler’s right hand is unreadable, he was most likely holding the atlatl.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid.

⁶⁹² Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2:606, 607. In addition, all the royal burials from this study—Pakal and Ruler 12—were buried with jaguar skins. Other examples from Copan include the cache of jaguars buried beneath Altar Q and the Palace table from Palenque, which depicts Pakal receiving the Drum major headdress of rule from his mother.

⁶⁹³ Schele and Freidel, *A Forest*, 209, 210; and Taube, “Temple of Quetzalcoatl,” 68-72. The forms of the mosaic serpents resemble the design of similar figures from the Tepantitla murals, and their mosaic surfaces are

partially obscured but is considerably larger than the right serpent. The regularity of the mosaics adorning their faces and open mouths is in contrast with freer depiction of their feathered headdresses. A third much smaller mosaic encrusted serpent head is depicted at the base of the image. Several formal parallels are depicted between the seated ruler and the three mosaic-encrusted serpents.⁶⁹⁴ They all share the same western orientation and are depicted in profile. Jasaw wears a headdress that recalls these elaborate serpents, and he may be dressed as one of these warrior serpent figures. These comparisons may reveal a significant relationship between Jasaw and the mosaic-encrusted serpents.

Platform. Jasaw is shown enthroned on a stepped platform/structure fronted by a decorative staff or pole. Crowning the pole is the second image of the mosaic-serpent. Pictured in the lower left or east side of the lintel is a third mosaic serpent. Significantly, these serpent heads appear to be embedded into the architectonic structure in a way that is reminiscent of the tenoned serpent heads at the Temple of Quetzalcoatl. The decorations on the platform's risers provide additional references to Central Mexican geography and may have been toponymic.⁶⁹⁵ Kubler considered the circular disk, seen on the upright pole and platform, as part of a "folded-triangle sign" of Teotihuacan, while Taube identifies this image as representing a Maya-style mirror.⁶⁹⁶

Inscription. In a style that is different from the other carved lintels at Tikal, the inscription from Lintel 2 is diminutive but also placed in a central position. Satterthwaite has observed that for such a small inscription, the actual text was placed in "a visually more

reminiscent to the Tlaloc/War Serpent headdresses from the Old Temple from the Pyramid of Quetzalcoatl, Ciudadela, Teotihuacán.

⁶⁹⁴ Kubler, "The Double-Portrait," 324.

⁶⁹⁵ Taube. "Temple of Quetzalcoatl," p.72.

⁶⁹⁶ Kubler, "The Doubled-Portrait," 325; Taube, "The Temple of Quetzalcoatl," 72–73.

important position” than was observed in the other carved lintels.⁶⁹⁷ The ruler’s gaze is directed toward the inscription that identifies him as Jasaw Chan K’awiil, Divine Tikal Ajaw.⁶⁹⁸

Lintel 3. Lintel 3 spanned Doorway 3, the most private and secluded space of the superstructure (see fig. 122). In total, it was composed of five beams of varying widths; however, today only the first three beams have been recovered, along with only a fragment of the fifth.⁶⁹⁹ Its length was 3.93 m, width 1.34 m, and height 180 cm.⁷⁰⁰ There is evidence that Lintel 3 was painted, and remnants of red paint were found distributed in various areas of the beams, leading Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite to believe the entire surface may have been painted red with cinnabar.⁷⁰¹ 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 I. The color red, combined with caches of precious items and the presence of a human interment, is significant. As a group, these features combine to mark the space of Doorway 3 as sacred.

Seated figure. On Lintel 3, in contrast to Lintel 2, Jasaw Chan K’awiil is depicted as an enthroned and glorious Classic Maya–styled king. Visual emphasis was placed on details of his costume, royal accoutrements, and sumptuous throne/bench. His portrait on the lintel is reminiscent of his portrait on Stela 16, located in the Twin Pyramid Group N (9.14.0.0.0 or 711 CE). Lintel 3 and Stela 16 are very different works with different viewing experiences,

⁶⁹⁷ Taube, “The Temple of Quetzalcoatl,” 66. In addition, Satterthwaite states that these glyphs are the same size as those from Lintel 3 (Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 6*, 65).

⁶⁹⁸ Schele and Freidel, *A Forest*, 209.

⁶⁹⁹ Coe, Shook, Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 6*, 33, 34.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 44. Coe and Shook are careful to mention that the presence of paint on one group of beams does not indicate that all the other beams were not painted; there is a strong possibility that the other lintels were also red.

but it is important to note that some of the formal features of these two portraits of Jasaw appear codified. Depicted in profile (but clearly legible) is the great beaded jade collar, and overlapping it is a three-piece pectoral. The same pectoral is depicted on Stela 16 (fig. 49). The artists were careful to show the central carved diadem of the piece, which may depict a supernatural raptorial bird or the Principal Bird Deity.⁷⁰² A similar and sumptuous jade collar was recovered from Jasaw's interment, Burial 116.

The mat motif is another element that is depicted in both the carved lintel imagery and reflected in the tomb furniture of Jasaw. The mat motif appears woven into Jasaw's belt and is evident as vertical designs adorning the sides of the throne along with other icons of Maya rulership, such as a draped jaguar skin.⁷⁰³ The associated mat imagery is a clear indication of Maya rulership and when worn on one's person, this marker is indicative of the royal office. The mat was also used in the inscriptions as a way to discuss acceding to the throne, and to be "seated upon the mat" alludes to the act of enthronement on the woven reed mat. In this example the mat motif has been elevated to a sacred symbol of rulership. These powerful icons of divine Maya rule literally surround the body of the king both in life and in death.

Headdress. Radiating out from Jasaw's head is a headdress that is over twice the size of his head. Jade ear-spools frame his face while his forehead is adorned by a mosaic-encrusted headband that is similar to the one he is shown wearing on Lintel 2. Placed along the vertical axis of Jasaw's face and above the headband is a human-sized image of the Maya

⁷⁰² A similar bird is shown, in a gigantic scale, arcing over the ruler in Lintel 3, Temple IV. Also, one could argue that an analogous depiction of this bird is seen at the top of Pakal's carved sarcophagus cover.

⁷⁰³ Clancy (personal communication, June 2009) has noted that these designs replicate Tikal altar periphery designs.

sun deity. Both figures are surrounded by a splash of long feathers, most likely quetzal. Like the image on Lintel 2, Jasaw holds a circular shield in his left hand.

Scepter. In his right hand Jasaw grasps the consummate symbol of Maya rulership, a scepter carved in the image of K'awiil, usually referred to as a manikin scepter. Inclusion of the K'awiil figure in portraits of rulers is further emphasized by the deity's physical presence among tomb furniture in several elite burials. Burial 195 (estimated to date to the early seventh century) and Burial 116 both contain intriguing representations of K'awiil. In Burial 116 there are several long bones carved with the image of K'awiil, and these objects were most likely manikin scepters (fig. 63). The interred scepters can be linked in style to the one held by Jasaw on Lintel 3.

Jaguars. Looming over the enthroned ruler is a fantastic figure of a jaguar—an analogue to the large mosaic serpent of Lintel 2. The jaguar is a focal point because of its dramatic pose, but also because of the deeply cut textures and pronounced use of line. The extraordinary figure of the jaguar is remarkably animated and rendered in a style reminiscent of the calligraphic imagery on painted polychrome vessels.

The giant jaguar, like the other looming figures from Lintel 2, is depicted with a gaping mouth, fangs bared, and standing upright with forelegs outstretched and claws extended. This aggressive pose creates a visual tension when he is compared to the smaller ruler below, who appears vulnerable. At the very least, the two figures are an incongruous pair.⁷⁰⁴ Coggins notes that this figure is a *nagual* (spirit companion) or protector figure.⁷⁰⁵ In

⁷⁰⁴ A striking comparative image is seen carved (though the image is badly eroded) on Stela 10, Piedras Negras, dated 741 CE. In this example a giant jaguar stands behind an enthroned ruler. Clancy identifies the looming feline as an anthropomorphic Water Lily Jaguar who creates a frame around the seated ruler beneath (*The Monuments*, 120–22).

⁷⁰⁵ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 450.

addition, this feline is not typical of a regular jaguar, as he has also been identified as the Water Lily Jaguar, an elite animal closely associated with rulers.⁷⁰⁶ The dominant formal qualities of the giant jaguar often overshadow the figure of the smaller feline, placed directly below the former's open paw. This jaguar can be identified as a Water Lily Jaguar as well; he is adorned with a blossom above his ear and has similar facial features as his larger partner.⁷⁰⁷

Platform. The space or architecture of the scene is enigmatic. On Lintel 2, visual cues link this structure to Teotihuacan. On Lintel 3, much of the lower register or platform from the scene is missing. We can presume that the four basal levels represent a stepped platform analogous to the ones depicted on Lintel 2. Carved into the risers is a series of crossed bands interspersed with one step with a succession of cartouches surrounding Ajaw faces. Unlike the imagery on the steps of Lintel 2, these signs appear to be more opaque, but are mostly Maya. A dwarf stands at the base of the platform; he is shown outside the scene and faces east and toward the ruler. The dwarf may be in a liminal position: he is not included on the platform yet he attends the ruler and is standing directly beneath the inscriptions.

Inscription. The inscription from Lintel 3 is a complicated text, and although several scholars have examined the glyphic information, a clear and comprehensible decipherment has yet to be completed.⁷⁰⁸ The text begins in the center of the lintel's imagery, a location immediately to the west of the giant jaguar's gaping mouth and directly above the seated

⁷⁰⁶ Clancy, *The Monuments*, 123.

⁷⁰⁷ One unusual aspect of this jaguar is that he lacks a mandible, and scrolls gush from the open cavity of his mouth.

⁷⁰⁸ Coe, Shook, and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report No. 6*; Coggins, "Painting and Drawing Styles," 447-453; Schele and Freidel, *A Forest*, 207-210; Freidel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 310-316.

ruler. An observer peering up at the lintel from an oblique angle would not have had much success in comprehending these hieroglyphs, as they would be difficult to see and read.⁷⁰⁹ In contrast, the short text from Lintel 2 would have been more legible. Furthermore, reading visual information placed above in a lintel, whether it is imagery or text, is difficult, especially in semidarkness.

Summary: Superstructure of Temple I

Through its monumental roof-comb, the superstructures of Temple I accentuated the height and the visual drama of the Great Plaza. A considerable amount of effort and materials were expended to create this large structure. Although badly damaged, the sculpted image from the face of the roof-comb depicted a seated individual surrounded by zoomorphic masks and serpentine-like animals. These monumental figures could have been seen from many locations in the Great Plaza and beyond. The enormous scale of the roof-comb sculpture contrasted with the relatively diminutive entrance into the shrine's space below. Inside, the environment is dark and sometimes confusing, and the chambers are narrow slitlike spaces, whereas their doorways are wide. Located within this unlikely space are intricately carved wooden lintels spanning doorways in the most remote areas of the shrine. Found amid these spaces were ritual objects embedded in the walls and floors, and many are coeval with the carved lintels.

Temple I's superstructure was a particularly emotive space. A visitor would have experienced an interior space that became increasingly smaller and tighter as he or she progressed deeper in the structure. Burial 6, a Late Classic female interment, further complicated this space, and the interior of the superstructure could be read as both a place of

⁷⁰⁹ Like Lintel 3 from Temple IV, this text required the reader to be physically engaged with the lintel and its inscriptions for them to be comprehensible.

ritual and a burial chamber. Features of the burial echo those from the burial of Jasaw below in the foundation of the monument. The imagery from carved Lintels 2 and 3 also contributed to making this area of the shrine a densely ritualized and transformative place. Depicted on each lintel was a seated person (Jasaw) who was surrounded by supernatural figures. Inscriptions are present, but they may have been difficult to read in this smoky and transitory environment. Coggins interprets Lintel 3 as a depiction of the Underworld, and Clancy notes that it depicts a “supernatural and repeatable event.”⁷¹⁰ As Coggins points out, there may be several layers of meanings being depicted. The design of the superstructure’s interior, although small and dark, did not discourage visitors but rather encouraged an intimate experience that emphasized emotion over cognition.

Celestial: Temple 26

The superstructure of Temple 26 must be approached differently than similar structures from the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I because the actual shrine no longer exists. By Maudslay’s time in the late nineteenth century, it had been largely destroyed by time and the elements, and there is a lack of documentation of the structure in situ.⁷¹¹ It is difficult to speculate on the design and size of the superstructure; however, Barbara Fash believes that its roof was vaulted and it had an array of architectural sculpture.⁷¹² The structure dates from the final phase of Temple 26. Judging from Proskouriakoff’s illustrations, the superstructure was elevated by a short stairway and had an entablature decorated with sculpture and a central doorway aligned on the same east-west axis as the carved hieroglyphic stair below. One of the prevailing themes of its decoration is visual referents to Teotihuacan. Currently,

⁷¹⁰ Coggins, “Drawing and Painting,” 451; Clancy, “A Formal Analysis,” 186.

⁷¹¹ Stuart, “A Foreign Past,” 387.

⁷¹² Barbara Fash, “Late Classic Architectural Sculpture,” 96; Stuart, “A Foreign Past,” 387.

there is a proposed reconstruction of its facade on display in the Copan Sculpture Museum. Bill and Barbara Fash along with David Stuart have restored a sculptural program that incorporates carved blocks of cut stone from the rubble of Temple 26's summit.

Superstructure Sculpture

Barbara Fash has described the superstructure as “highly decorated,” which would be appropriate for a structure that crowned the elaborate subplatforms of Temple 26 (fig. 123). Fash has recovered six full-round mosaic seated warrior or ruler figures that she believes could have been part of a roof-comb. These figures, like their five counterparts embedded in the stairway, are adorned with Teotihuacan-style accoutrements.⁷¹³ Stylized “monster masks” decorated the corners, front, and east side of the structure.⁷¹⁴ These mosaic masks can be compared to the cauac/witz visages from the superstructure of Temple I. In the Copan manifestation, the image is more abstracted and includes Teotihuacan elements, for example, goggle eyes. Other sculptural motifs from the exterior of the superstructure include what Barbara Fash interprets as a “stylized obsidian vertical roof ornament,” rectangular shields, feathers, fans, and a Maya-styled smaller seated figure.⁷¹⁵ Fash has interpreted the overall theme of the exterior sculpture as militaristic.⁷¹⁶

Superstructure Inscriptions

Although the interior of the superstructure is largely theoretical, Fash and Stuart have proposed a viable reconstruction of the architecture. The vaulted interior space was the location for a most unusual inscription. According to Stuart, a carved full-figured hieroglyphic inscription adorned the interior of the superstructure. Stuart notes that the

⁷¹³ Fash, “Late Classic Architectural Sculpture,” 96.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., 100.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., 96.

“Temple Inscription” is actually complete, which is a surprise because the superstructure is destroyed (fig. 124).⁷¹⁷ Fash and Stuart have concluded that the inscription decorated the vault spring of one interior wall.⁷¹⁸ The style of the writing is distinctive, and the full-figure Maya glyphs appear to have been written both in Maya hieroglyphs and in a Teotihuacan “font.” Stuart believes these inscriptions are significant because of this unique melding of Teotihuacan-inspired imagery and Maya-style writing.⁷¹⁹ Stuart has observed that many of the glyphs in the Mexican style are untranslatable, and he states, “The written message was obscured by an overarching concern with a style that evoked another place and time.”⁷²⁰ In essence, these inscriptions may have been comprehended in a conceptual manner that would have elicited a response of a supernatural or visionary nature.

Summary: Superstructure of Temple 26

The present lack of a superstructure does not preclude analysis of the sculpture and inscriptions from the superstructure of Temple 26 moreover, considering this imagery and text within the overall context of final phase Temple 26 is valuable. The sculpture from the stairway and that of the superstructure were most likely related and could have represented a continuous narrative. An interest in the human form as a subject of this narrative is one way that these two program are linked. The line of five statues in frontal poses, carved in high relief and appearing as three-dimensional works, dominates the imagery on the stairway, and a final standing figure, placed before the ruined superstructure, both punctuated and continued this axis. The exterior decoration of the superstructure included a group of figures

⁷¹⁷ Stuart, “A Foreign Past,” 387. The inscription is on display at the Copan Sculpture Museum at the archaeological site.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ Ibid., 390.

adorning its entablature.⁷²¹ The figures from both contexts are ornamented as Teotihuacan-themed warriors; however, also present are distinct Maya costume features and iconography. Hybridization of Central Mexican and Maya imagery is continued in the hieroglyphic inscriptions from the interior of the superstructure. In this context Teotihuacan may have represented an idealized or “classical past” lauded by the Late Classic Maya from Copan.⁷²² The depiction of Central Mexican elements is also seen in the carved wooden lintels from the superstructure of Temple I.

A second prevailing theme of the stairway and superstructure is transformation. As has been previously discussed, the figures from the stairway, although in a seated position, do not appear static but can be seen emerging from within the stairs and the temple’s interior spaces. Similarly, the inscriptions from the interior of the superstructure, through the adoption of a foreign writing style, were intentionally obscured and may have been comprehended only while the viewer was in a transformed state. Perhaps most important for the current study is the observation made by David Stuart that the inscriptions from inside the superstructure are an indication that the space was considered “otherworldly,” and like carved Lintels 2 and 3 from Temple I’s shrine interior, this imagery catalyzed a vision. The superstructure was a bridge from the very public imagery and iconography of Temple 26’s stairway to a private space containing analogous themes about Teotihuacan and transformation in a context that included hieroglyphic inscriptions and history.

⁷²¹ Fash, *Scribes*, 145-46. Barbara Fash speculates that these figures appeared on the entablature of the superstructure.

⁷²² *Ibid.*, 391.

Celestial: Conclusion

The exteriors of the superstructures from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 were designed to communicate to a large audience in the surrounding courtyards, but their interiors were private spaces for ritual and contemplation. Because these structures crowned mortuary monuments, the exterior sculpture from the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I includes imagery that may have portrayed the deceased king and also communicated themes of intergenerational convergence and divine rule. In contrast to the superstructures from the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I, at Temple 26 the iconography and design of the superstructure was related to Terrestrial level seen below in the stairway's sculpture. These programs visually reference Central Mexican themes, the west to east axial line, which most likely progressed up the stairs of the superstructure, and concepts of renewal.

The private spaces of the superstructures, emphasized by their juxtaposition with the amplified sculpture from the roof-combs, front facades, and entablature, were publicly understood as small doorways leading to dark interiors. The architecture and the experiences this design engendered signified the superstructure interiors as places that referenced the Celestial realm and as transformational spaces. The interior of a superstructure and its interment can be seen as parallel environments. These elevated and "celestial" spaces echoed the messages of the interment, thus creating a locale that was accessible to the living for many years after the ruler's interment had been closed off.⁷²³ This parallelism is suggested at the Temple of the Inscriptions by the composition of the pier reliefs and the sarcophagus

⁷²³ I would welcome the opportunity to test this pattern at Temple 26; however, because so much of the superstructure is missing and the western facade is still being documented, we may never know if this interpretation would work for this structure.

cover. It is also most clearly indicated by the presence of a hidden stair descending to Pakal's burial chamber, which along with the psychoduct creates a physical connection between these two spaces. At Temple I, intriguing similarities between the lintel cache from Doorway 3 and the material culture from Burial 6 create an analogous relationship with Burial 116. The distinct composition of Temple 26's stairway sculpture and the building's history may indicate that there were seen and unseen continuities between the interior and exterior of the monument. This is clearly seen in the preservation of the sacred axis that can be traced to the earliest structures (Yax and Motmot) and possibly reproduced in the orientation and line of the hieroglyphic stairway.

This chapter demonstrates that the superstructure or the Celestial realm of these burial monuments was a space that incorporated themes from the three previous levels—Subterranean, post-interment, and Terrestrial—and as such it was both public and private, a spectacle and an effigy of a tomb/cave.

REVIEW OF PART 1

As monumental form, architecture commemorates a valuable experience by distinguishing one space from others in an ample and durable edifice. Such an edifice does not need to enclose rooms: it may suffice to cancel space by solid masses, or to inscribe space.⁷²⁴

In this brief description, George Kubler observes two features of Maya architecture that are essential for understanding funerary monuments: space is socially constructed and is often motivated by meaning rather than utility, and the experience(s) of architecture is varied and affected by design, environment, and imagery. Comprehending architecture through notions of experience and space is difficult. Part 1 is the foundation for these conceptual interpretations.

Phrases from the ancient inscriptions that refer to death, *och bih* (to road enter) and *och-ha* (to go in the water), link this experience to a journey, and use of this metaphor alludes to cycles of time, whether the life cycle of corn or of humans.⁷²⁵ These cycles are reflected in the architecture and imagery from Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque, Temple I from Tikal, and Copan's Temple 26. As I have demonstrated in part 1, the ceremony of royal interment at these monuments was a process akin to a journey. By tracing out this process through an examination of the Subterranean and post-interment spaces of Pakal, Jasaw, and Ruler 12, I have made clear the importance of these rites and the journeys they initiated. The Terrestrial and Celestial spaces further refined the mortuary rituals by displaying imagery of a ruler reborn. The mortuary symbolism of the nine platforms from the Terrestrial level of the Temple of the Inscriptions and Temple I give way to an iconography of renewal and the

⁷²⁴ Kubler, "The Design of Space," 242.

⁷²⁵ Carrasco, "From Field to Hearth," 20, 24, 29, discussed the need for heat to be present in the birth or re-birth of the Maize God; Stuart, "The Fire," 388.

future depicted in the superstructure's imagery. At Temple 26 the superstructure was most likely the thirteenth platform, which was symbolic of the levels of the Upperworld. The secluded superstructure, like the tomb chamber, was a locale of ritual; however, in this context, it was a place where the living, not the dead, were transformed.

PART 2

INTERPRETATION

Death and Life are opposites that complement each other. Both are halves of a sphere that we, subjects of time and space, can only glimpse. In the prenatal world, life and death are merged; in ours, opposed; in the world beyond, reunited again.⁷²⁶

As Octavio Paz's eloquent passage makes clear, death and life may be understood as parallels that are complementary and ever present. In the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, death and life coexist, yet they do not meet. Depicted in the imagery and spaces of these funerary temples, the themes of intergenerational convergence, transformation, and renewal exemplify the cyclicity of death and life. As I have demonstrated in part 1, these monuments were designed to engage the viewer, set up a series of experiences, and elicit a particular set of responses. This perspective was not enjoyed by the greater population but was exclusive and restricted to intimate family members and important guests.

Part 2 builds upon my previous analyses of the Subterranean and post-interment, Terrestrial, and Celestial parts of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, which have been presented in part 1. The format of part 1 can be considered a rhetorical construct for examining ancient Maya mortuary architecture, and the process of viewing these spaces from a tripartite (Subterranean, Terrestrial, Celestial) perspective was valuable for interpreting the temples in their entirety. In essence, "pulling" these monuments apart allowed me to create tighter comparisons between analogous contexts. Common themes documented in the archaeology, architecture, imagery, and burials suggest that these temples

⁷²⁶ Paz, *Labyrinth of Solitude*, 61.

are a separate genre of architecture. In addition, using the tripartite frame also highlighted discourses existing within these monuments, and examples of this internal system of communication are seen in iconographic and archaeological parallels. Archaeological, architectural, and formal evidence is at the core of this dissertation, where in part 2 I interpret these elements in a thematic manner. Part 2 consists of chapter 5, a discussion of mortuary ritual, and chapter 6, which is a thematic reading of the three monuments. Chapter 5 is grounded in the archaeological evidence from the post-interment spaces of these monuments. Inscriptions that recount the marking of sacred space and mortuary rites will be integrated into this interpretation. Chapter 6 is organized in three sections corresponding to three themes. Although each theme may be found in all three structures, each building has a primary focus, for example, intergenerational convergence at the Temple of the Inscriptions, transformation at Temple I, and renewal at Temple 26.

CHAPTER FIVE

MORTUARY RITUAL

In the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, mortuary rituals created continuity with the dead and their spaces. New research by Eberl and Stuart, which explores ritual as noted in the inscriptions, sheds light on mortuary rites and ceremonies of marking sacred space. Post-interment spaces, as defined in this dissertation, were mediums of renewal and reflected processes of mortuary ritual, processes that fuse the real with the supernatural.⁷²⁷

As I noted earlier, archaeological and epigraphic evidence suggests that tomb reentry may have been common in ancient Maya burial practice, and the interments of Pakal, Jasaw, and Ruler 12 may have been visited multiple times before the final closure. As I also discussed in part 1, chapter 3 post-interment spaces and their expressions were separated from the actual interment by a door, ceiling vault, and by several monolithic stone slabs, respectively, but all of these spaces were unmistakably related to the royal burial. The conceptual permeability of space between the interment and the “outside” was important, and this continuity is denoted by the post-interment spaces. Activating a relationship between the living and dead, accomplished by reentry or through offerings, was a ritual expression that reflected a need by the living to stay linked to the space of the royal interment.

Mortuary ritual can be both read in the inscriptions and in observed in the archaeological evidence as a series of rites and expressions, defined through sculpture,

⁷²⁷ Rappaport, *Ritual and Meaning*, 371, 375. The rites and rituals referred to in this dissertation, specifically in chapters 6 and 7, are what Rappaport defines as “personal religion,” which is separate from institutionalized religion because it is based on experience. I thank Michael Carrasco for referring me to the excellent book.

caches, offerings, and space.⁷²⁸ Eberl has done extensive epigraphic studies of mortuary ritual and has identified three stages in the interment of an elite person. These stages are distinguished from one another by length of time and requisite activities. In phase one the muhkaj rite involved the placement of the body in the tomb chamber.⁷²⁹ This stage may have lasted up to ten days and dealt with the treatment and decoration of the corpse.⁷³⁰ As opposed to the muhkaj, phase two may have included a tomb reentry, the final sealing of the burial chamber, and the sensing with copal (in this way, burning and smoke or a scent appear to be important).⁷³¹ James Fitzsimmons also associates this stage with the removal and scraping of bones.⁷³² Eberl has found examples in which rituals, in this second stage, were performed in conjunction with the end of the Tzolk'in's 260-day cycle or that of the Haab, the solar calendar of 365 days.⁷³³ Phase three was also associated with calendar and cyclical time, but it was celebrated a year or longer after the ruler's death.⁷³⁴ Eberl has found linguistic evidence that this period may have been called *el naah*, and its rites were characterized by the burning of copal incense and fire.⁷³⁵ Stuart has demonstrated that the phrase *och k'ak*, "fire enters," described the dedication of a house with fire; similarly *el naah* reflected the

⁷²⁸ Eberl, *Muerte*, 53–57, 110–16; Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 10, 34, 100.

⁷²⁹ Eberl, *Muerte*, 88–91; Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 33, 64.

⁷³⁰ Eberl, *Muerte*, 111. He has also identified other salient aspects concerning the deposition of the deceased, such as *och wits* (entering the mountain) and *och ch'e'en* (to enter fountain or water). These terms may refer to aspects of this more immediate period of interment. Fitzsimmons also discusses these phrases (*Death*, 163); Michael Carrasco has reminded me that the *ochbih sak ik'* event was another aspect of mortuary ritual and may have been different than the muhkaj event (personal communication, August 2009) and Kerry and Carrasco, "MAK-Portal," 136.

⁷³¹ Eberl, *Muerte*, 116.

⁷³² Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 166.

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, 112–13.

⁷³⁴ *Ibid.*, 115–16.

⁷³⁵ Eberl, *Muerte*, 116; Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 166; Stuart, "The Fire," 390, 393. Stuart *el nah* as a term related to fire and the house. He notes that *el nah* and *och k'ak* are phrases that both describe the "firing" or "censing" of a house.

“censing of a house.”⁷³⁶ The phrases for censing a house and censing a tomb may have been used interchangeably. Houston states that the word and the concept of house or *nah* was considered a metaphor for *tomb*.⁷³⁷ In the final passage from the West Panel at the Temple of the Inscriptions, Pakal’s burial chamber is also referred to as a “house.”⁷³⁸ These examples along with Eberl’s discussion of the three phases of mortuary ritual provide a guide from which to approach uses of fire and burning incense as well as the enigmatic post-interment spaces of these three structures.

As Tiesler has observed, conventional burial classification systems “reduce ritual expression to an aggregate of static material elements.”⁷³⁹ In fact these rites (and their spaces) were a means of communication between the living and the dead. The spaces of these three monuments, which include the burial chamber, post-interment spaces, and the superstructure, exhibited remnants of ritual; some examples were explicit, as in the lighting of incensarios from the Chorchá structure, while others could have been symbolic of smoke and breath, such as the psychoduct from the Temple of the Inscriptions. Incorporating fire and smoke in these rites was a powerful mode of communication and of marking space.

Mortuary Ritual at Temple 26-Sub and the Chorchá Structure, Copan

My ideas about the act of transformation and marking sacred space, noted in Eberl’s and Stuart’s notions of *el naah* and *och k’ak*, will inform the following exploration of processes of convergence and change, signified in features from Temple 26-sub and the Chorchá structure. In these examples the use of fire and burning may have been considered a creative process used to cleanse and prepare space and structures for future constructions.

⁷³⁶ Stuart, “The Fire,” 389, 390, 393.

⁷³⁷ Houston, “Classic Maya Depictions,” 351.

⁷³⁸ Eberl, *Muerte*, 95.

⁷³⁹ Tiesler, “Maya Mortuary,” 153.

Fash and Fash have interpreted the presence of fire and burning amid the Motmot burial and floor marker from the fifth century and the Late Classic royal interment of Ruler 12 from the eighth century as rituals of dedication and purification (see figs. 62 and 63).⁷⁴⁰ The och k'ak ceremony was explicitly noted in inscriptions from the Motmot marker; however, ceremonies of och k'ak are also suggested in the material culture of the Motmot interment/offering prior to and after the 9.0.0.0.0. period ending denoted in the marker's written text. Censing ceremonies, *el naah*, were most likely expressed by lighting the twelve portrait incensarios from in the Chorcha upper chamber, and this rite may also be related to the concept of "censing a house" of the dead.

In the Motmot burial and on its floor marker there are four distinct layers of human remains, tomb furniture, and offerings, while in the Chorcha structure there is a cist burial and above, an open room sealed by a corbel-vaulted roof.⁷⁴¹ The emphasis on layering and verticality may reflect a cosmological perspective. This verticality was most clearly seen in the tripartite organization of the Chorcha burial and its post-interment spaces. The och k'ak from the Motmot marker denotes a period ending and the relationship between a father and son, while the interior burning may have sealed the woman's interment and signified preparations for future constructions and the marking of space.

Rather than burned and charred, as has been previously seen with Motmot, in the Chorcha vaulted chamber the space was entirely censed with copal. Eleven portrait effigy incensarios were arranged in accordance with the cardinal directions on the roof of the ruler's cist burial. Fash has observed that they were all lit simultaneously. The twelfth burner was

⁷⁴⁰ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 69–76.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*

placed in a separate location, on the apex of the vault, and it was fired later.⁷⁴² In the Motmot och k'ak ceremony Ruler 2 honored his father by posthumously depicting Yax K'uk Mo' (Ruler 1) performing the ritual with his son. In a later but arguably related rite, Ruler 13 (the son of Ruler 12) honored the past by using fire and incense to smoke his father's burial and the portraits of his ancestors. The liminality and "in between" place of Ruler 12's incensarios marked both the past and the future of the structure.⁷⁴³ Smoke filled the room and may have functioned to cleanse and renew the space, while it honored the past and prepared for new constructions on this sacred site. The convergence of parent and child (expressed in the rituals of Ruler 2 and Ruler 13) was made real by the performance of ritual within a mortuary context. The acts of burning and censuring may have been different and ephemeral, but these two rites associated with the Motmot complex and Chorchá's upper chamber signified an enduring union between the living and the dead.

Mortuary Ritual at Temple I, Tikal

The evidence of fire and burning at Temple I is less explicit than the examples from the Motmot burial and offering of the Chorchá upper chamber. A symbolic och k'ak ceremony may be represented in the huge 12 m lithic deposit above Burial 116. This "environment" consists of separate layers of flint and obsidian debitage placed over and surrounding the capstones of Jasaw's burial (see figs. 43 and 44).⁷⁴⁴ Similar deposits have been excavated in Burial 23 from Temple 33 and in the superstructure of Temple I associated with Burial 6. Eberl has read the deposit as a great sacrifice or offering along the lines of a *k'ex*, or

⁷⁴² Ibid.; Henderson, "Dishes," 23. Henderson astutely interpreted that last burner as the portrait of the deceased Ruler 12.

⁷⁴³ Henderson, "Dishes," 47, 57.

⁷⁴⁴ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 607.

substitution.⁷⁴⁵ Michael Coe has associated these deposits with the *Popul Vuh*'s Underworld "house of the knives."⁷⁴⁶ Finally, the lithic chips have been compared to an Underworld environment akin to the toothy earth monster or a cave.⁷⁴⁷

Considering this enormous offering as a post-interment expression addresses its distinctly ritual and symbolic messages. When struck, flint creates sparks, which the ancient Maya saw as a form of lightning.⁷⁴⁸ However the most obvious association would be with the creation of fire. Obsidian, a form of volcanic glass that is born of fire, is the other stone found in the offering, and its shiny reflective surface when held up to light is reminiscent of fire. Striking flint with another iron-based stone will yield sparks that can be transferred to a dry material to ignite it, and obsidian is not pure volcanic glass—it contains many other minerals, and the brown and black colors characteristic of Mesoamerican obsidian come from its iron content.⁷⁴⁹ Although there is no evidence of burning in this deposit, the presence of large amounts of flint and obsidian may symbolize fire-making rituals. Like the smoking and burning of the Motmot burial and floor marker and the orchestrated firing of ancestors in the Chorcha chamber, this horizon of flint and obsidian was a physical barrier sealing and marking the royal interment through expressions of fire and burning. In addition its mass, like a type of architecture, displaced the earth and created a new structure, which is also a type of marker.

⁷⁴⁵ Eberl, *Muerte*, 102–3.

⁷⁴⁶ Coe, "Ideology," 227.

⁷⁴⁷ Hall, "Realms," 308; Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 103.

⁷⁴⁸ Schele and Miller, *The Blood*, 46; Hall, "Realms," 308.

⁷⁴⁹ Personal communication from Professor John W. Geissman, chair, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of New Mexico, August 2009.

Mortuary Ritual at the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque

The examples of mortuary ritual from the Temple of the Inscriptions are more indicative of tomb reentry rather than explicit expressions of och k'ak or el naah ceremonies, which are suggested in the material remains from Temple 26 and Temple I. However, there is evidence of post-interment charring and symbolic smoke, and both of these features are similar to expressions from the previous examples.

Tomb reentry rites within the burial chamber of Pakal are strongly suggested by the presence of two sculpted stucco heads deposited beneath the sarcophagus. Although other items were found in association with the sarcophagus (jewelry on the lid and another small cache beneath), Robertson has identified the original provenance of the heads and provided a possible chronology for the deposition of these objects. She believes these portraits came from the architectural decoration of House A in the Palace. This is a significant observation, because this structure was built under the sponsorship of Pakal's sons, Kan Bahlam and K'an Joy Chitam.⁷⁵⁰ If Robertson's attributions are correct, this would mean that the stucco heads were deposited a generation after the death of Pakal (see fig.37).⁷⁵¹

The physiognomies of the two heads depict Pakal as an elegant ruler and as a youth.⁷⁵² These two sculptures can be interpreted as a double portrait of Pakal, depicting two "ages" of the king and revealing transformation within his lifetime. When the sculpted heads are compared to the imagery on the sarcophagus cover, this ensemble of portraits depicts the full range of life, death, and renewal of the ruler.

⁷⁵⁰ Robertson, *The Temple*, 74.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid. Kan Bahlam or Pakal's wife has been suggested as the subject of the other bust figure.

⁷⁵² Robertson, *The Temple*, 73-74, identified the second, younger head as the wife of Pakal. Stuart and Stuart, *Palenque*, Figure 27.

In this example, the caching of these heads (like the debitage mass above Burial 116, and the deity heads from the Híjole tunnel) physically signifies a postmortem ritual that may have been completed months or quite possibly years after the principal's death. Furthermore, deposition of the portraits heads links House A from the Palace to Pakal's burial. The caches placed beneath the sarcophagus convey the processes of post-mukhaj events; in addition the raised landing on the south side of the sarcophagus is yet another feature that is from reentry or a post-interment rite. This landing would have facilitated the viewing of the imagery on the cover and the prominent figure of Pakal carved on the lid. Transformation of the deceased king into an ageless and vital ruler is the result of these juxtaposed portraits from beneath the sarcophagus and from its cover imagery.

The space of the east-west corridor leading to Pakal's tomb chamber was also altered in a post-interment ritual. The exequial sacrifice of five individuals placed in the stone box both marked space and effectively prevented easy access to the chamber beyond. Inside the box, scholars have documented evidence of the burning and charring of select bones. Burn marks directly on the bones are indicative of both a tomb reentry (Tiesler and Cucina presume that these individuals were deposited as fleshed) and of a type of och k'ak ceremony.

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Espíritu refers to breath, soul, and a person's essence and can be understood as a medium of communication between the supernatural and natural. This concept is evidenced twice in association with Pakal's interment: as an ik sign and symbolically in the form of the psychoduct. A jade mosaic mask was placed over the dead ruler's face, and in its mouth was a carved jade ik sign placed between the pink shell lips (fig. 20). Correspondingly, *espíritu* is

⁷⁵³ Tiesler and Cucina, *Janaab' Pakal*, 112.

also evoked by the psychoduct from the internal architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions. A similar representation of this sinuous object is shown in the smoky element in Stela 40 from Piedras Negras (fig. 125).

As depicted in Stela 40, communication between the living and dead, exterior and interior, Terrestrial and Subterranean, and forebear and child is mediated through ritual censuring by Ruler 4 and the animacy of his ancestor.⁷⁵⁴ Clancy has observed that the imagery “intentionally interweaves times and places.”⁷⁵⁵ Thus, this image could be the public depiction of a rather private *el naah* ceremony. One of the most remarkable features of this extraordinary image is the allusion to smoke, breath, snake, umbilicus, and rope in the form of a linear and vertical motif that spans both the tomb and the ledge where Ruler 4 kneels.⁷⁵⁶ The motif of the intertwined smoke and cord depicted in Stela 40 links the living with the dead and connotes ritual, journey, and *espíritu*.

The psychoduct, a sinuous, serpentine, umbilical form that traverses Pakal’s tomb chamber and ascends the internal stairs to the superstructure above, can be compared to the form from Stela 40 where a similar psychoduct may have been depicted, although on Stela 40 its presence may have only been figurative whereas the stone masonry conduit in the Temple of the Inscriptions was actual. Rather than sealing the closed tomb chamber, the psychoduct crossed seemingly permanent boundaries. Like smoke and breath, it was a visual and physical marker of the mythic journey of life, death, and renewal.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵⁴ Clancy, *The Monuments*, 128.

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁶ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 140–41; Clancy, *The Monuments*, 130–31; Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 130–31.

⁷⁵⁷ The psychoduct and its related symbol, the sky umbilicus, have been documented in archaeology, imagery, and in literature from the Classic period until the Colonial era in Yucatán.

Summary of Mortuary Ritual

Mortuary rituals from the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 reflect the physical and conceptual continuities that existed between the interment, the post-interment, and the spaces of the living. The rites were lengthier than previously thought, and evidence suggests that through the act of altering space, either by the obscuring qualities of smoke and incense or through offerings, these rituals facilitated a bond between the ancestor and the living. These ceremonies can also be understood as mediums of transformation. The royal interment and its associated rituals marked a beginning, and they may have also signified the successful transmission of power from father to son or the son's accession of power from the father. "The dead ancestor can thus be considered a 'founder' or axis for further constructions."⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵⁸ Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 104.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A select category of structures whose meaning is dependent upon experience rather than the traditional text-image dialectic confounds our understanding of ancient architecture and its function. Inside these buildings, visitors often had to negotiate between dark, confined, and unpredictable spaces—rarely did natural light penetrate these passages—and imagery appearing on walls, ceilings, or carved on lintels was rendered visible by firelight only. Applying methodologies that include a phenomenological perspective is vital to comprehending the messages of these entities. An example of this category of architecture from the “Old World” would be the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece, while the labyrinthine corridors and Lanzón monolith from the Old Temple at Chavín de Huantar in Peru represent a similar example in the Americas. In the course of asking questions about and examining the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26, I have realized that these structures were engaged with in their entirety.

The earth is a place of decay and growth; the act of burying a king beneath the earth’s surface was a process akin to planting, cultivating, and harvesting corn, acts that were reverential. This cyclical perspective is reflected in the parallels between the subterranean spaces and the superstructures of these monuments. These spaces were not necessarily places of “cognitive thinking,” in contrast they were often best understood through emotion and experience. The architecture and imagery worked in unison to create a parallel iconography of cyclical regeneration.⁷⁵⁹ These observations reveal two significant yet surprising features of these temples: first, the deceased were bodily segregated but they were ever-present in

⁷⁵⁹ I thank Flora Clancy for coining the phrase “parallel iconography,” which properly evokes these extraordinary symbol systems within and without these mortuary structures.

word and image; and second, the monuments communicate less as memorials to dead kings, rather they were meaningful as symbols of continuity.

The Temple of the Inscriptions: A Monument to Continuity

At the Temple of the Inscriptions, the burial chamber, associated imagery, interior corridor, stairway, and the sculpture from the superstructure reflected a parallel iconography of intergenerational convergence. Some of these ceremonies are described in the inscriptions from the West Panel of the superstructure. The hieroglyphic text notes that four months after the death of Pakal on August 28, 683 (about 132 days after the ruler's death or half of the sacred 260-day calendar's cycle), his son Kan Bahlam was enthroned as the new king.⁷⁶⁰ It continues by stating that the new ruler completed the decoration of the tomb chamber and "gave diligent care/caring service to the tomb."⁷⁶¹ This brief and perhaps enigmatic passage denotes the central role of Kan Bahlam in these rituals and his responsibility for the safe passage and transformation of Pakal. Also described in the West Panel inscriptions is the transformation of Kan Bahlam from heir to king.⁷⁶²

Parallel Iconographies: The Piers and Sarcophagus Cover

The continuum of father, son, and ancestor, which is connoted in mortuary ritual from the Temple of the Inscriptions, becomes explicit when the architecture and iconographies of the superstructure and the interior of the tomb chamber are considered as parallel expressions. The converging of parent/child, death/life, and transformation/new birth is depicted in an iconography that is centered on the image of a reclining individual. The imagery from the sarcophagus cover and from the four exterior piers facing the North Plaza depicts this

⁷⁶⁰ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 10.

⁷⁶¹ Carrasco, "Mask Flange," 230.

⁷⁶² Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 108.

repeated motif. This continuum was amplified by supporting images of ancestral figures and symbols of renewal, and this entire program was the center of a narrative of convergence seen and experienced by elite visitors for decades.

The images of the king's body on the sarcophagus cover and the body of his son in the pier reliefs (B, C, D, E) are, in both programs, identically composed (see figs. 24, and 110-113). On the cover, the king is supported by the accoutrements of a Maya ruler as he floats in a viscous liquid. In the pier reliefs, the king is cradled in the arms of standing adults. Physical and formal features increased the legibility of these works. On the piers the king's body was painted green amid a background of red, and the tilt of the sarcophagus cover highlighted the reclining figure at its center. The visual device of the reclining infantlike figure is central to both works, and both works depict the ruler. Technically, Pakal is shown on his sarcophagus, and Kan Bahlam is cradled in the arms of ancestors, but as symbols of intergenerational convergence, these figures become interchangeable and analogous.⁷⁶³

This parallel iconography is further articulated in the environment of the staircase, which invites a visitor to descend and ascend the length of the internal stair, reenacting the experience of life, death, rebirth, and renewal. The psychoduct is another medium linking these spheres together. As Robertson discovered, the visual and symbolic connection between the superstructure and burial chamber becomes more dramatic when one considers that the psychoduct or cosmic umbilicus terminates/begins at the south end of the sarcophagus and at the base of Pier C. Thus, the Temple of the Inscriptions was more than a

⁷⁶³ Stanley Guenter, "The Tomb of Janaab Pakal," 5. Although Guenter does link the images of the infants from the piers to the image of Pakal on the sarcophagus cover he does not interpret this observation. I have independently identified the correspondences between the pier imagery and the sarcophagus cover.

funerary monument commemorating Pakal; it reflected the cyclical phenomena of life, death, and time as interdependent states.

Continuities depicted in images of the reclining infant juxtaposed with his ancestors, and in the sprouting of trees and the ripening of fruit, reflect the sacred bonds of ancestors to their progeny. The supine portrait of Pakal is as striking as it is enigmatic. His recumbent pose is unprecedented for a ruler (see fig. 28).⁷⁶⁴ Maya scholars have linked Pakal's reclining and flexed figure to an iconography of birth, apotheosis, and sacrifice.⁷⁶⁵ The cradled infant from the piers is less ambiguous. Robertson and Schele have interpreted the pier figures as a series of portraits commemorating Kan Bahlam's heir designation ceremony before an audience in the North Plaza (fig. 126).⁷⁶⁶

In the pier sculptures Kan Bahlam is displayed and confirmed as the future of the family line by his ancestors.⁷⁶⁷ Robertson and Schele have identified the woman on Pier C as Kan Bahlam's mother, Lady Tz'akbu Ajaw, and the Pier D figure as his father, Pakal.⁷⁶⁸ Their postures are reflections of each other, as each figure faces toward the entrance and one another. A visitor entering the temple, therefore, passed the pair of figures, one on either side, and would thus have been obliged to acknowledge their positions of honor. The bas-reliefs lining the walls of Pakal's sarcophagus depict an analogous line of ancestors who support the reclining and infantlike Pakal, who is depicted on the cover. Pakal's parents, likewise, are

⁷⁶⁴ Miller, *Maya Art*, 112. Michael Carrasco has noted that this pose is not unusual for the Maize God, however "From Field to Hearth," 18-19, see also Martin, "The Baby Jaguar."

⁷⁶⁵ Robertson, *The Temple*, 56-63; Schele and Miller, *The Blood*, 282-84; Aldana, *The Apotheosis*, 100, 106; Miller and Martin, *Courtly Art*, 199-207; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 132; Taube, "The Birth Vase," 672-75.

⁷⁶⁶ Robertson, "An Iconographic Approach," 133; Robertson, *The Temple*, 42-44; Schele and Friedel, *A Forest*, 235; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 99-100.

⁷⁶⁷ Robertson, "An Iconographic Approach," 133-35; Robertson, *The Temple*, 27-51; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 99-100.

⁷⁶⁸ Robertson, "An Iconographic Approach," 133-35; Robertson, *The Temple*, 42-44; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 99-100.

also singled out and given prominence on their son's sarcophagus.⁷⁶⁹ Pakal's mother, Lady Sak-K'uk', and his father, K'an Mo' Hix, are shown as a pair of anthropomorphized trees on the north and south ends of the sarcophagus (see fig. 36).⁷⁷⁰ Inscriptions carved into the edge of the south end of the sarcophagus lid are positioned directly above the images of Pakal's mother and father—these inscriptions are the birth and death statements of their son. The juxtaposition of their images with the inscriptions poignantly amplifies their relationship to him. Furthermore, these messages of intergenerational renewal are further underscored by their prominence on the sarcophagus's southern edge, which faced the entrance to the tomb chamber.⁷⁷¹ These examples from Piers C and D, the sarcophagus portraits, and the cover's inscriptions present an iconography of lineage that, going beyond a “parentage statement,” expresses the cyclical nature of time and the unification of parent, child, and ancestor.

Parallel Inscriptions: The West Panel and the Sarcophagus Cover

In examples reminiscent of the dynastic history from the hieroglyphic stairway on Temple 26, inscriptions from the sarcophagus lid and superstructure panels explicitly state dynastic ties between deceased rulers and their progeny. As Schele and Mathews have noted, the king lists from the edges of the sarcophagus cover and those from the East and Central panels in the superstructure convey parallel lineage histories.⁷⁷² These two related narratives are organized around the progression of nine k'atuns (twenty-year periods) or 180 years.⁷⁷³ The k'atun series from the inscription panels states the birth and accession dates of former dynasts, while the east, north, and west inscriptions on the sarcophagus cover recount the

⁷⁶⁹ Robertson, *The Temple*, 66; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 121.

⁷⁷⁰ Robertson, *The Temple*, 66–73; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 120–22.

⁷⁷¹ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 120–22.

⁷⁷² *Ibid.*, 117. As I have already noted, although the Central Panel is a discussion of ritual it also contains a set of inscriptions that are related to both the East and West panels (Aldana, *The Apotheosis*, 71–84).

⁷⁷³ Ruz Lhullier, *El Templo*, 112; Wald, *A Palenque Triad*, 6–70; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 101–8.

death dates of the same rulers named in the panels.⁷⁷⁴ By noting only Pakal's birth and death dates, the passage on the cover's south edge breaks with the narrative model, which typically also states a ruler's death date.⁷⁷⁵ By including the birth date of Pakal, the south edge highlights the transformative powers of death, which would include accession events and a new birth (see fig. 33).⁷⁷⁶ Although parts of this inscription remain obscure, it is significant that Pakal's birth and rebirth are emphasized in inscriptions from the sides of the sarcophagus.

The superstructure's West Panel offers another example of corresponding messages that bolster the parallels seen in the iconography of the sarcophagus cover and the pier sculptures (fig. 127). In passages from the middle of the West Panel (lines E, F and G, H), Pakal's implied birth date (set into a period that roughly corresponds to his biological birthday) and his accession or new birth date (corresponding to his political birth) are presented as the centerpieces of a narrative that characterizes his reign—and by association, his dynasty—as never ending.⁷⁷⁷ The implied birth and rebirth dates link two episodes in time: (1) a period of time extending backward, from the seventh century CE to one million years in the past; and (2) a period of time that begins with this same seventh-century date and telescopes four thousand years into the future.⁷⁷⁸ Schele and Mathews state that Pakal's accession on the Calendar Round date of 5 Lamat 1 Mol (615 CE) was explicitly linked to

⁷⁷⁴ Wald, *A Palenque Triad*, 6–70; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 101–8.

⁷⁷⁵ Wald, *A Palenque Triad*, 35–37; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 117; Guenter, “The Tomb,” 57.

⁷⁷⁶ The final three glyphs of the south edge, which immediately follow Pakal's birth and death dates, might allude to an act of succession overseen by ancestors and a Vision Serpent. This reading by Schele and Mathews, and more recently by Guenter, employs a glyphic phrase that signifies change in time and ruler; Guenter, “The Tomb,” 57, 58).

⁷⁷⁷ Guenter, “The Tomb,” 41–44. This date is implied because it is associated with a period ending, rather than the actual calendrical date of his birth. For additional information, see Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 103, 106.

⁷⁷⁸ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 107.

the ancient accession of a distant deified ancestor, and the second episode describes an event in which Pakal will be newly born on 4772 CE, a date that is the product of his implied birth date extended eighty Calendar Rounds (80×52 years) into the future.⁷⁷⁹ This future date coincides with the anniversary of his accession to the throne.⁷⁸⁰ It is significant that Pakal's two "births"—biological and political—are the pivots of this vivid narrative. Lines E, F and G, H of the West Panel describe dynastic convergence over immense spans of time. Pakal, the king of Palenque, is presented as both the beginning and the future of the dynasty, revealing that he is ancestor, ruler, and child.

These examples demonstrate how texts and imagery found on and in the Temple of the Inscriptions communicate parallel narratives of the cyclical movement of time and the coalescence of parent, child, and ancestor, as well as lineage, accession, and renewal. The unified nature of these three narrative programs (sarcophagus, inscriptions panels, and pier sculptures) suggests that the ancient Maya of Palenque may have apprehended the continuity of existence without regard to such boundaries as "visible" and "invisible." By exploring the temple in its entirety, its inner precincts in conjunction with its exterior spaces, these parallel programs emerge as components of a larger message that explicitly confirms the cyclical bond between the death of a king, his rebirth as an ancestor, and the birth of a new king.

Parallels of Agricultural Renewal

Although Pakal was in his eighties when he died, his figure on the sarcophagus cover is of an idealized male in the prime of life; however, the *form* of this depiction is suggestive of a vulnerable newborn.⁷⁸¹ This seemingly discordant iconography, merging death and birth,

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁸¹ Tiesler and Cucina, eds., *Janaab'*, 9.

vigor and fragility, becomes a coherent message when placed in a context of agricultural renewal. Taube has identified Pakal on his sarcophagus cover as the Tonsured Maize God.⁷⁸² Correspondingly, the written text from the southeast corner of the cover edge also names him the Maize God (see fig. 33).⁷⁸³ As this youthful deity, Pakal is symbolic of a fresh and robust maize plant.⁷⁸⁴ In yet another guise, Pakal is adorned with the smoking axe or tube, which is embedded in his forehead; he is depicted as K'awiil, the infantlike symbol of Maya kings.⁷⁸⁵ Schele, Grube, and Martin have noted that part of K'awiil's full title includes the word *ch'ok*, which in Yucatec Maya means "child" or "sprout."⁷⁸⁶ Alternatively, Kan Bahlam has also been identified as K'awiil on the pier sculptures.⁷⁸⁷ Although not all the reclining figures from the piers are intact, the remaining imagery reveals a consistent pattern depicting infants with a left serpent-foot and a smoking axe embedded in their foreheads. The painted green infant from the piers is yet another reference to a new maize sprout or *ch'ok* of the ancestors.⁷⁸⁸ Correspondingly, Pakal can be read as the new *ch'ok* of the ancestral trees that are gathered on his stone coffin; he is the newly sprouting ancestral tree.

Concepts of convergence and renewal are depicted in the representations of the *yax che'*, K'awiil, and the *ch'ok* from the parallel programs of the sarcophagus cover and pier sculptures. An iconography that merges the continuation of human life with agricultural renewal is depicted in an environment constructed to honor a dead ruler. Death and decay

⁷⁸² Taube, "The Classic Maya," 171–81; Taube, "The Birth Vase," 674.

⁷⁸³ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 118; Guenter, "The Tomb," 57.

⁷⁸⁴ Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 116.

⁷⁸⁵ Robertson, "An Iconographic Approach," 135; Friedel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 193–202; Schele and Miller, *The Blood*, 49; Robertson, *The Temple*, 59.

⁷⁸⁶ Wald and Schele, *A Palenque Triad*, 107; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 99; Robertson, *The Temple*, 33, 36–40.

⁷⁸⁷ Robertson, "An Iconographic Approach," 129–31; Robertson, *The Temple*, 33, 36–40; Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 99.

⁷⁸⁸ Robertson, *The Temple*, 51–53.

become the *engines and fuel* for the cycle of life. For the ancient Maya, the ruler symbolized human dependence on the supernatural. Humans experienced this dependency in the uninterrupted movement of time and in the growth of maize. The imagery from the sarcophagus cover and pier sculptures depicts the ruler as the cultivator. In death, he becomes the “activator” and is transformed into ancestor or “advocate” of the sacred cycle.

“I do not have my child; I am in some way my child”⁷⁸⁹

The rituals of interment honored Kan Bahlam’s father and marked the continuation of a lasting dialogue between multiple generations. The discourse between Kan Bahlam, the son and heir, and Pakal, the father, deceased ruler, and ancestor, was unending and timeless.⁷⁹⁰ A similar paradigm is expressed in the Maya belief in intergenerational substitution and sacrifice, known in Yucatec Maya as *k’ex* and among the Tz’utujil speakers as *jaloj-k’exoj*.⁷⁹¹

Ethnographers Robert Carlson and Martín Prechtel, working with the Maya of Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala, have examined the tradition of *jaloj-k’exoj* from both a pre-Columbian and late twentieth-century perspective.⁷⁹² Carlson and Prechtel propose that the tradition of the *jaloj-k’exoj*, although ancient, has shaped the worldview of modern Maya and is a factor in their cultural survival.⁷⁹³ Similarly, Taube, in his influential examination of birth imagery in ancient Maya myth and ritual, recounts ethnographic examples of *k’ex* and relates them to ancient imagery. Taube has interpreted the exposed and vulnerable depiction

⁷⁸⁹ Levinas, *Time and the Other*, 91.

⁷⁹⁰ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 168. Kan Bahlam was declared the ruler on January 7, 684 CE, five months after his father’s death.

⁷⁹¹ Friedel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 193–94; Taube, “The Birth Vase,” 669–75; Carlsen, *War for the Heart*, 47–67; Vogt and Vogt “Levi Strauss,” explores similar themes within a contemporary Chiapan Maya community. I thank Michael Carrasco for referring this article to me.

⁷⁹² Carlsen, *War for the Heart*, 47–67.

⁷⁹³ *Ibid.*, 5.

of Pakal on the sarcophagus cover as the “supreme *k'ex*” sacrifice that would ensure the survival of Palenque and the continuation of his dynastic line.⁷⁹⁴

Taube defines *k'ex* as a type of ritualized substitute-sacrifice that was an integral element in rites marking transitions between states of being or such political change as celebrations of births and royal successions.⁷⁹⁵ These moments of change upset the equilibrium of existence or the continuity of life and lineage; consequently, to counteract the imbalance, the cosmos required a gift in exchange, such as an offering of blood or corn.⁷⁹⁶ The *Popul Vuh*, a fundamental Maya creation story, includes several examples of *k'ex* events in its narrative. The tradition of *k'ex* is also depicted in Classic period painted polychrome vessels and accession stelae.⁷⁹⁷

The theme of the continuity of life and lineage is reiterated in the public spaces of the Temple of the Inscriptions and in the more private tomb chamber. The interior stairway and psychoduct reunite these spheres of the living and dead. The poses of Pakal and Kan Bahlam are key elements in this interpretation. Although Pakal can be interpreted as a polysemic icon, his posture and placement on a plate atop the Quadripartite Monster has led many scholars to identify him as a figure of sacrifice.⁷⁹⁸ He lies on his back, although tensed, on a sun- or kin-marked platter surrounded by offerings, including a shell and a stingray spine. These imported items are commonly excavated in royal interments and are often placed near the deceased; however, in Pakal’s case, they are integrated into the narrative scene. The stingray spine is a tool for royal auto-sacrifice. Thus, there are two references to sacrifice in

⁷⁹⁴ Taube, “The Birth Vase,” 674.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid., 672–74.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁸ Robertson, *The Temple*, 58–62; Taube, “The Birth Vase,” 674.

the iconography: Pakal's recumbent posture on the plate and the stingray spine, which refers to the sacred duties of a living ruler. Combined with the stingray spine, the reclining posture of the former king signifies that he is the k'ex to the future. Although the pier sculptures do not denote a message of sacrifice, this meaning is connoted in the prone posture of the infant Kan Bahlam. Kan Bahlam's pose and the parallel posture of his father are akin to representations of Jaguar Baby infant sacrifices commonly depicted on polychrome painted vessels.⁷⁹⁹ In these examples of k'ex from the sarcophagus cover and pier sculptures, Pakal and Kan Bahlam in their self-reflexive images represent intergenerational convergence and the continuing cycles of life.

Summary: The Temple of the Inscriptions, a Monument to Continuity

Consideration of these images and their meanings warrants another look at the structural and iconographic relationships between the portrait of Pakal on his sarcophagus cover, his image on Pier D, and his cradled son. The convergence of parent, child, and ancestor is touchingly depicted in what could be considered "three" images of Pakal. On his sarcophagus cover—in *death*—Pakal is shown as an infant.⁸⁰⁰ On Pier D, he is a king presenting his son and heir to the public. Finally, the generational convergence comes full circle in the reiterated form of the infant from the pier sculpture: the child Kan Bahlam is simultaneously the future of the dynasty, the future of death, and the result of his infant father's symbolic immolation.⁸⁰¹ The conceptual importance of k'ex becomes apparent when we look at the singular relationship between Pakal and Kan Bahlam on Pier D and the portrait of Pakal from the sarcophagus

⁷⁹⁹ Taube, "The Birth Vase," 672; Martin, "The Baby Jaguar," 56.

⁸⁰⁰ Pakal's image on the sarcophagus cover is exceedingly polysemic, therefore, he is depicted as many things; in this section I am exploring his infant identity.

⁸⁰¹ My interpretation here might present an alternative idea when compared to Karl Taube's from "The Birth Vase," 673. Taube states that "a replacement in the world of the dead" is necessary.

cover. Furthermore, traditions of intergenerational convergence and the unending continuum of death, life, and rebirth are not only depicted in ancient Maya architecture but also still alive in the traditions of contemporary Maya. The opposed entities of the superstructure and burial chamber were joined by the reflexive messages from the visual programs of the tomb chamber and the piers.

Transformation at Temple I

Archaeological and iconographic parallels between the superstructure atop Temple I and Burial 116 exemplify rituals of ancestral transformation that are reminiscent of themes of intergenerational convergence from the Temple of the Inscriptions. At Tikal, portraits of the ancestor (Jasaw) may have been read as loci of change that echoed features from the royal interment below. The environment of Temple I's superstructure was a transformative space where seen and unseen elements solicited profound responses in an elite visitor/petitioner. The imagery from the lintels, the close darkness, and the proximity of Burial 6 in the floor created a potent environment of transformation that would have enveloped a visitor (see figs. 121, 122).

In Temple I, transformation between states of existence was experienced rather than just observed. Although these interior chambers were secluded, archaeological evidence suggests the chambers were powerful spaces where select people congregated at select times. The rooms were darkened by fire, embedded in the floors and ceilings were offerings, and lintels above were adorned with imagery. In contrast to previous scholarship, I interpret the carved lintels and archaeology found in this superstructure as a unified expression that catalyzed the viewer's experience of the ancestor's presence.

Building on ideas presented in part 1 of this dissertation, I examine the superstructure of Temple I as a parallel space of transformation, comparable to the burial chamber. Distinct features of Burial 116 are repeated in the buried offerings and imagery from the superstructure. Similarities between Jasaw's interment buried in the temple's foundation and the subsequent superstructure reveal that the shrine *echoed* certain messages found in the royal tomb. The superstructure and the royal tomb were both spaces where convergence and transformation occurred; they were both activated by the presence of people, dead and alive, as well as the performance of ritual.

Previous interpretations of Lintels 2 and 3 have been grounded in the traditional methods of formal analysis, iconographic examinations, and epigraphic decipherments. These interpretations approach the lintels as discrete, self-contained objects. These lines of inquiry, although essential and significant, *see* the lintels as though they were upright images akin to stelae or carved panels. Seen in this way, they are comparable to historical documents. This study proposes to recontextualize the imagery and interpret the scenes as if they were still in situ. Considered within this ritualized and emotive context, the comprehension of these images, I suggest, may have been less cognitive and more intuitive.⁸⁰²

Traversing the spaces of Temple I's superstructure might seem disconcerting. The chambers are long and narrow with steeply pitched vaulted ceilings, while the two corridors

⁸⁰² Coggins, "The Folds of Ah Kak'ab." In this paper Coggins discusses cyclical events in the lives of the ruler Jasaw, his grandfather (or ancestor), and his son or heir to the throne. Coggins suggests that the lintels from Temple I depict transformational events in the lives of Jasaw and his son. Coggins also introduces a "witness" to these events. This witness is the dwarf depicted at the bottom right corner of Lintel 2. Coggins uses iconography, ethnography, and epigraphy to reach her conclusions, but she considers the context of the lintels in an innovative manner. Coggins's interpretations are significant for this study because she introduces the idea of transformation and witnessing, and she alludes to the space of Temple I's superstructure as a place of change. I thank Flora Clancy for mentioning this paper to me and Clemency Coggins for allowing me to cite this unpublished work.

are comparatively wide with low ceilings. Floors change in height as one progresses farther into the structure, which would also contribute to a feeling of spatial disorientation. The space was further transformed by rituals, remnants of which were found as offerings of copal incense buried in the shrine's floors and swaths of soot found in the passageway and inner chambers. An unusual feature of Temple I's superstructure is Burial 6 interred in the subfloor, and directly above are carved Lintels 2 and 3.

Marking Space at Temple I

The burial of Jasaw acted as a structural and symbolic pivot for the spaces of the superstructure; his presence was both denoted in the iconography of carved Lintels 2 and 3 and connoted in caches embedded in the ceilings and offerings in the floors. The interment of Jasaw in Burial 116 and his double portraits on the superstructure lintels, combined with his visage observed in the exterior roof-comb, created a reciprocal statement of renewal and transformation.

Burial 6 and Burial 116

An unusual feature of the superstructure's interior is the interment located deep inside the superstructure beneath Doorway 3. There are several striking similarities between Burial 6 and Burial 116 (see figs. 119, 120 and 46). Coe considered both Burial 6 and Burial 116 to be respectively deep interments, which was the result of considerable effort on the part of the ancient excavators.⁸⁰³ In addition, offerings of Zacatel Cream-Polychrome tripod-plates were present in both interments. These plates were found in close proximity to the body of Jasaw and also that of the woman from Burial 6. Correspondingly, the orientation of Burial 6 is north-south, which was in opposition to the axis of the shrine but was in alignment with the

⁸⁰³ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 604.

deposition of Jasaw in Burial 116. Another significant connection between the two burials is the offering of lithics found deposited on the top of Burial 6's cist.⁸⁰⁴ This post-interment mortuary expression was composed of an extensive cap of flint flakes numbering approximately seven hundred pieces in total. It appears as though both these Late Classic interments were marked in space by a horizon of stone chips. The debitage offerings from both contexts may have symbolized an identical type of fire ritual, which is yet another substantive link between the two interments.

Cache 49 and Burial 116

Cache 49 was found in the lintel bed from Lintel 3, and it represents another significant connection to Burial 116 (see figs. 118 and 46). The items from the offering were singularly elite in nature and are reminiscent of grave goods from Burial 116. Cache 49 contained precious marine materials, many of which were found in Burial 116. The most notable of these items were the modified and unmodified stingray spines, both cached in Cache 49 and interred in Burial 116. These items are diagnostic of royal burials and the institution of kingship. The orientation of the cache, which was north–south, complemented Burial 6 and Burial 116's organization. According to the mortuary database organized by Welsh and recently updated by Fitzsimmons, most burials at Tikal were oriented north–south.⁸⁰⁵ In this way Cache 49 was part of the parallel/spatial iconographies of 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. Its placement may have served to ritually and physically mark this location as sacred and significant. These archaeological features

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁵ Welsh, *An Analysis*; Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 190–92, 198.

embedded into the structure of Doorway 3 further distinguish this location from others in the superstructure, and indeed among the other superstructures at Tikal.

Parallel Iconographies: Lintels 2 and 3 and Burial 116

Kubler likens the experience of walking through the shadowy passageway of the shrine and peering up at the imagery to viewing a motion picture: “Dark vaulted slots act as quick changes of scenes, like frames between pictures.”⁸⁰⁶ These darkened and enclosed spaces are like a tomb chamber, and the lintels could be compared to capstones. 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.⁸⁰⁷ The environment surrounding Lintel 3, including the presence of Burial 6 directly beneath, its red coloration, and its partnership with Lintel 2, marked the areas of Doorway 2 and 3 as particularly sacred. These features from the doorways mirrored ritually potent spaces from the interment in Burial 116.

The iconography of the lintels also includes references to Jasaw’s interment (see figs. 121, 122 and 46). The most obvious is the double portraits depicting the ruler interred beneath Temple I, which create an immediate connection between the superstructure and the burial. Jasaw is shown on both lintels seated on a drum throne decorated with a woven mat overlain with jaguar pelts. Correspondingly, he was interred on a bench and covered over in woven mats and feline or jaguar skins.⁸⁰⁸ Lintel 3 depicts a large jaguar who looms over the ruler and was fashioned as a protector; in turn, jaguar skins may have enveloped the bench upon which the ruler was placed in Burial 116, and they could have functioned in a similar

⁸⁰⁶ Kubler, “Double-Portrait,” 322.

⁸⁰⁷ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 604 The central capstone was painted on its underside with a red disk.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 607. The presence of dark, decayed material on the bench may have signified that it was draped/wrapped with jaguar pelts.

protective manner. As carved on the lintels, Jasaw is adorned with extensive jade necklaces and other accoutrements, many of which were found amid the tomb furniture of the burial.

The iconography from Lintel 2, with its visual references from Teotihuacan, includes additional features that echo Burial 116. Actually, both lintels depict Mexican and Maya imagery, although Lintel 2 has a predominant number of foreign motifs. Jasaw is depicted in Lintel 2 dressed in a Teotihuacan-style warrior costume. A black and white painted bowl from the interment includes an interesting fusion of foreign and local motifs. Coggins describes the interior image painted on the base as an anthropomorphized Mexican year sign, while the interior walls were adorned with painted 5 Ajaw notations interspersed with more of the anthropomorphized year signs (figs. 128, 129). She notes that some of the ceramics from Burial 116 may have been gifts from afar or made locally by foreign artists.⁸⁰⁹

A third parallel between Lintel 2 and Burial 116 is the presence of several mosaic pyrite mirrors that were depicted in the lintel and found in the ruler's interment. Taube has interpreted the numerous disks seen on the platform and staff from Lintel 2 as pyrite mirrors and has identified the structure as a "House of Mirrors."⁸¹⁰ He suggests this house was a place of transformation and emergence. Pyrite mosaic mirrors were found in Jasaw's burial, and the inclusion of these pieces may have signaled that the tomb and even the entire structure was a place of emergence and transformation.

Spatial Iconographies: Stela 16, Altar 5, and Burial 6

The interrelationships between Stela 16, Altar 5, and Burial 6 are unusual and intriguing (. Viewed as an ensemble, these three expressions may have documented the exhumations,

⁸⁰⁹ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 512.

⁸¹⁰ Taube, "The Temple of Quetzalcoatl," 82. He links the mirror iconography on the Lintel 2 with the House of Mirrors, which is associated with Teotihuacán. The "House" is considered a center of the Teotihuacán world and thus it may refer to the platform and also Temple I as a type of "center."

reinterment, and memory of a woman close to Jasaw (see figs. 46, 49 and 130). Stela 16 and Altar 5 are located within the northern enclosure of the twin pyramid complex, Group N, and both the stela and the altar are dated 711 CE.⁸¹¹ Carved on Stela 16 is a portrait of Jasaw wearing an elaborate costume with a trophy head belt, jade pectoral, and heavy jade necklace; he holds the royal ceremonial bar across his chest. He is frontally posed, but his head is in right profile, revealing the shape and outline of his extensive multitiered headdress. Stela 16 commemorates a k'atun period ending and depicts Jasaw at the height of his powers.⁸¹² Harrison notes that the extensive jewelry depicted adorning the king was most likely interred with him in Burial 116.⁸¹³ At the base of Stela 16 and also at the feet of Jasaw is Altar 5.⁸¹⁴ Carved on the altar is a scene of two men who flank one another; they are dressed in distinctive and ceremonial attire.⁸¹⁵ Depicted between them is a collection of long bones surmounted by a skull. Jasaw is shown standing on the left, and a lord of the city of Maasal is shown kneeling over the bones on the right.⁸¹⁶ Inscriptions encircling the round composition speak of an exhumation ritual of a high-ranking woman from Tikal, and her bones are presumably the ones depicted in the middle of the scene.⁸¹⁷ Most likely, Altar 5's imagery and inscriptions document the exhumation of a wife of Jasaw.⁸¹⁸ In 1963, during archaeological work in the northern enclosure, Christopher Jones excavated a human skull

⁸¹¹ Harrison, *The Lords*, 133; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 44.

⁸¹² Harrison, *The Lords*, 133; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 44.

⁸¹³ Harrison, *The Lords*, 137.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁸¹⁵ Fitzsimmons, *Death*, 166. Jasaw and the lord from Maasal are dressed in the guise of the Jaguar God of the Underworld, and they hold ceremonial staffs associated with fire-making. Thus, this may be related to rites of tomb reentry.

⁸¹⁶ Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 46.

⁸¹⁷ Harrison, *The Lords*, 134; Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 46.

⁸¹⁸ Harrison, *The Lords*, 134. Harrison does note that the name of the woman from the inscriptions on Altar 5 is not the same name as the mother of Jasaw's son and heir, Yik'in Chan K'awiil, Ruler B. This woman died in 703 CE, and her bones were interred at the place of her birth, which was not Tikal. It is believed that Jasaw retrieved her bones and reinterred them at Tikal.

and bones buried deep under the butt of Stela 16.⁸¹⁹ The relationship between Stela 16 and Altar 5 is based on shared circumstances, their shared dates, their images of Jasaw, and the tradition of pairing a stela with an altar; however, the inclusion of a partial interment beneath Stela 16 and the possible depiction of these remains on Altar 5 changes this relationship to one that is both commemorative and funerary.

Coggins, in her interpretations of the inscriptions from Altar 5, states that the text might tell the story of a consort of Jasaw, and in this narrative there is the birth of an heir.⁸²⁰ The woman mentioned in the inscriptions from Altar 5 might be the same as Lady Lachan Unen Mo', whose cenotaph is Temple II. Jones and Harrison both state that the name of the woman from Altar 5 is not the same as that of Lady Lachan Unen Mo'; however, the consort of the ruler may have been known by many names corresponding to her various official roles and multiple titles.⁸²¹ Therefore, the cache of bones deposited beneath Stela 16, identified by Jones as part of a previous, shallow sub-stela offering, might well be the partial burial of the woman mentioned in the text from Altar 5.⁸²²

When the imagery, epigraphy, and archaeology of Stela 16 and Altar 5 are considered in relation to Temple I and specifically Burial 6, the possibility of more explicit connections between them becomes clear. Burial 6 was disturbed in antiquity and was not a complete burial, yet it has been dated to the Late Classic and the decedent interred identified as a woman. According to Coe, she was of a high rank: her remains were heavily shrouded and

⁸¹⁹ Jones and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 33*, 37.

⁸²⁰ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 454–56.

⁸²¹ Jones and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 33*, 38; Harrison, *The Lords*, 134.

⁸²² Jones and Satterthwaite, *Tikal Report 33*, 37. Jones linked this deep buried deposit as a portion of Cache 32. Cache 32 included an offering of incised obsidian pieces and was uncovered in 1931 by Ledyard Smith.

adorned with a jade necklace.⁸²³ It is significant that there are two partial Late Classic burials (one sexed as female) both interred in highly potent but untraditional contexts that are acutely associated with Jasaw. The imagery, epigraphy, and archaeology of Stela 16, its substela offering, Altar 5, and Burial 6, when considered as a related group, seem to present a picture of two people, Jasaw and his deceased consort, who may have been joined together in both the northern enclosure and in Temple I. Thus, Burial 6 is quite possibly houses the partial interment of Jasaw's wife and the mother of his heir.

Conjuring the Ancestor

Parallels of convergence, as I have just discussed, demonstrate that Temple I, when considered in its entirety, had a dynamic presence and represented transformation between death and the rebirth of an ancestor. “Re-contextualization,” what David Freedberg in his book *The Power of Images* called “seeing with old eyes,” is a valuable tool for comprehending these subtle changes and spatial interrelationships. Applying this perspective to the parallel messages from the previous section allows new questions to be asked about relationships between the lintels and the extant archaeology, and how an ancient elite visitor could have seen these images.⁸²⁴ Freedberg actually states that to truly see images with old eyes is quite difficult, as the modern viewer is bound by particular patterns of response, repressions, and history. The lintels' function and meaning should not be separated from the space of the superstructure; correspondingly, questions surrounding the death and burial of a king must be considered within the entirety of the funerary temple.

⁸²³ Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 2: 604. In addition, surmounting this interment were “a few human bones strewn over flint.”

⁸²⁴ Freedberg, *Power*, 431–32.

Clancy 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 towards particular points of view: features that signal *where* to stand to look at the composition and *how* to look at the images it contains. While these compositional features are schematic, abstract, and various, in order to perform the signaling tasks properly, they must be positively related to the actual theme being presented.⁸²⁵

Her observations clarify a methodology from which to interpret the lintels’ imagery and viewing experience. Another approach to seeing and comprehending is based on ethnography and epigraphy. Houston, Stuart, and Taube have done extensive work on the “meanings” of sight among the ancient Maya, and they conclude that such an experience was *procreative* and “positively affects and changes that world through the power of sight.”⁸²⁶ Clancy continues by stating that the object’s relationship with a viewer is reciprocal: it affects the viewer as the viewer affects it.⁸²⁷ Jasaw’s portraits from Lintels 2 and 3 depict the deceased, but as a transformed ruler with his eyes open, and thus he may have been directly engaging with the viewer. The experiences that inevitably surrounded “the seeing” of Lintels 2 and 3 were affected by both the formal features and the creative powers of sight. The imagery from the carved lintels above Doorways 2 and 3 catalyzed two transformations: (1) the change from ruler to ancestor, which was depicted in the lintel portraits of Jasaw, and (2) a more conceptual transformation involving the petitioner who is also an actor in the ritual of

⁸²⁵ Clancy, *Sculpture*, 17.

⁸²⁶ Houston, Stuart, and Taube, *Memory of Bones*, 167, authors’ emphasis. Discussions of the power of sight as a creative/reciprocal experience may be an important avenue to pursue, but they are currently beyond the scope of this dissertation. Aspects of the reciprocal form of sight not mentioned by Houston, Stuart, and Taube (the *y-ichnal* expression from the ancient inscriptions) are context and experience.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*, 170.

transformation.⁸²⁸ These sight experiences were made real by ritual, environment, and actively seeing the lintels as sacred imagery and as portraits of the king.

A long-standing visual trope in ancient Mesoamerica is the ancestral vision, composed of a figure who floats at the top of the picture plane and interacts with a second figure fixed to the ground line below. This imagery is generally read as a scene of vision quest and communion between an elite person and his/her ancestor. Furthermore the elements of these visions and conjuring events are the essences of mortuary ritual (fire, smoke, censuring, and the presence of *espíritu*). Thus these images depict the immaterial that has become the material.⁸²⁹

The carved imagery from the undersides of Doorways 2 and 3 served to amplify the trope of the conjuring scene depicted on the sculpture from Tikal and elsewhere. Formal elements contribute to this sacred dialogue. Most notable is the emphasis placed on imagery rather than glyphic inscription; this is seen in the varied use of line, diverse textures, and in the use 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.

The conjuring scene, commonly depicted on stelae and lintels, is re-created inside the superstructure. On stelae and lintels depicting the supernal ancestor figure, the whole narrative is depicted, including the petitioner and the ancestral vision (fig. 131).⁸³⁰ In

⁸²⁸ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁸²⁹ Tikal has a proportionately large number of the conjuring narrative scenes carved on stelae. Stelae that included this trope are 29, 31, 4, 40, 5, 22, and 19.

⁸³⁰ Carved Stelae 29 and 4 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 is conjuring a supernatural. In other examples from Yaxchilan, Lintel 15 shows a woman as the petitioner (wife of Yaxun Balam, “Shield Jaguar”), and she is conjuring an ancestor figure. The conjuring scenes from Yaxchilan depict the whole ritual with the blood-splattered bark paper and the vision as channeled through a serpent, whereas the images from Tikal lack these

contrast, the conjuring scenes from Lintels 2 and 3 do not illustrate the ritual in its entirety. The double portraits of Jasaw from the two lintels signify the figure overhead, generally depicted above the picture plane in the complete scenes, thus only half of the scene is expressed in this context. The second half of the scene is acted out by the petitioner who becomes transformed into the role of participant in the conjuring ceremony. In the environment of the shrine, the petitioner is an actor and not an observer.

The transformation from petitioner to actor and deceased king to ancestral vision occurs because of the potency of the superstructure and because of the performance of rites, similar to those seen in Lintel 25 of Yaxchilan. These mortuary rituals amplified the already sacred space of the shrine's interior. 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 transformative.

Messages of transformation are seen and were experienced in the parallel iconographies between the spaces of the burial and the surfaces of Lintels 2 and 3, and the related notion of intergenerational convergence is exhibited in the building chronology of Temple I's superstructure. An unusual aspect of the lintels from Doorways 2 and 3 is the incongruity between the "style date" discussed by Proskouriakoff and the dates from the inscriptions. According to Coe and Shook, the written dates from Lintel 3 (Lintel 2's

additional narrative details and are more simplified. In addition, the carved vision question images from Tikal are on stelae as opposed to lintels, a difference in context that may have required contrasting depictions.

inscription only includes a Calendar Round) range from 9.13.3.0.0. to 9.14.0.0.0.⁸³¹ In contrast, Proskouriakoff's examination of the lintels' style cannot confirm these dates, and her estimates are quite different and range from 9.12.0.0.0 to 9.18.0.0.0.⁸³² Correspondingly, Coggins believes these lintels were placed in the superstructures a generation after the death of Jasaw.⁸³³ A consideration of these style dates along with the larger messages of the superstructure and its decoration and archaeology suggests that Jasaw's son or antecedents constructed these powerful discourses indicated by relationships between Burial 116 and Burial 6 and in the intersite connections with Stela 16 and Altar 5. Not only was Temple I viewed as a statement in its entirety, but the tradition of intertemple dialogues begun with the triadic relationships between Temples I, II, and 33 continued with the connections between the Stela 16, Altar N, and Temple I's superstructure.⁸³⁴

Summary: Transformation at Temple I

The superstructure from Temple I was most likely not a place that engendered intellectual analysis or cognitive perceptions, but was rather a locale that solicited emotive transformational experience. Discourses between Burial 116 and the superstructure are delineated in both the structures of these spaces and in the imagery from the carved lintels and the unusual presence of Burial 6. When we look at Temple I as an entire entity, these internal discourses become clear. The monument can be considered as an interactive experience, which goes beyond historic value and is acutely experiential.

⁸³¹ Coe and Shook, *Tikal Report 6*, appendix; Satterthwaite, "Inscriptions," 71.

⁸³² *Ibid.*, 78.

⁸³³ Coggins, "Painting and Drawing," 451.

⁸³⁴ Harrison, *The Lords*, 141. Harrison discusses the spatial connection between Temples I and II and Altar 5. His findings bolster the view that these entities were linked through the partial interment beneath St. 16 and the partial interment identified as Burial 6 in Temple I.

Temple 26: The Cleft Mountain from Copan

The final phase of Temple 26 can be considered the sacred Cleft Mountain, or “origin place” of Mesoamerican myth.⁸³⁵ The monument was simultaneously understood as a funerary monument, dynastic shrine, and symbol of renewal.⁸³⁶ The ancient Maya observer regarded the temple as a constructed mountain, and many of these great stone monuments were considered effigies of the natural sacred landscape; furthermore, they were thought of as a reflection of cyclical and animate features found in nature.⁸³⁷ The analogous relationship between these two sacred environments is at its most visionary and powerful at Temple 26.

Through the ritualized act of *seeing* the temple in its totality, the ancient viewer was able to comprehend the monument as the Cleft Mountain. Although invisible, narratives from the cultural stratigraphy beneath the western facade were enfolded in the iconography of the exterior sculpture and in a viewer’s experience of the Cleft Mountain. Viewing the temple from this perspective, an individual would have seen the prominent carved stairway as the *cleft* in this sacred mountain.

The hieroglyphic stairway from Temple 26 is distinctive among the extant carved stairways of the Late Classic Maya. As has been previously noted, the inscription carved on its risers is the longest of its kind and interspersed within it are supine figures carved at intervals along the body of the text. Embedded in the risers are elaborately sculpted warrior dynasts who sit on the steps and gaze out toward the plaza below. The seated individuals are ancestral figures dressed in the guise of Teotihuacan-style warriors. Jasaw was depicted in

⁸³⁵ Friedel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 123–72; Bernal-Garcia, “The Life and Bounty.”

⁸³⁶ Fash, “Religion and Human Agency”; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, “Setting the Stage,” 78 (they have also identified Temple 26 as a Dynastic Temple). Fash states that Temple 26 is a revivalist structure that functioned to unite the people of Copan after their defeat by the city of Quirigua (*Scribes*, 142–46).

⁸³⁷ Bernal-Garcia, “The Life and Bounty”; Taube, “Ancient and Contemporary”; Friedel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 123–72; Fash and Fash, “Building a World-View,” 134, Carrasco, “From Field to Hearth,” 20.

the same guise on Lintel 2 from the superstructure of Temple I.⁸³⁸ Emphasized by their costume and posture, these five seated figures are not merely decorative appendages to the stairs, but are *in* and *of* the stair and are part of the overall design of the western facade. The hieroglyphic stairway was decorative and ceremonial, and when the formal features, texts, and iconography are approached as an ensemble, its role as the sacred axis or cleft in the mountain is clear.

The Iconography of the Cleft in the Mountain

As a sacred axis and cleft, the stairway is meaningfully accentuated by the presence of the five life-size dynasts. These figures do not appear static but seem to be *emerging* from within the temple-mountain.⁸³⁹ Figures 1 and 2 are located nearest to the base of the temple and are considered to be the most public as they and their accoutrements are at eye level or just above (see fig. 92 and 95). Surrounding seated Figure 1 is variety of rodent heads that may be symbolic of this individual's nickname: 18 Rabbit or Ruler 13.⁸⁴⁰ An analogous seated figure from the staircase (see fig. 97b), who is currently housed at the Peabody Museum in Cambridge, was also identified as Ruler 13. Adorning the steps to his immediate right are inscriptions that hieroglyphically state his name, Waxaklajuun Ubaah K'awiil, or Ruler 13.⁸⁴¹ These two embedded figures depict an identifiable and transformed former ruler.

Ruler 15 constructed the final phase of the staircase long after the death of Ruler 13, who was beheaded during a conflict with Quirigua. His body was not returned to Copan, so honoring the son of Ruler 12 in an elaborate sculptural program and depicting him as a

⁸³⁸ Flora Clancy made this interesting connection in July 2009.

⁸³⁹ Fash, *Scribes*, 150, 151.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁸⁴¹ This information is part of an exhibit at the Peabody Museum and comes from the information cards next to the mosaic sculpture.

commanding ancestor was essential. These posthumous depictions of Ruler 13, son of the primary decedent from Temple 26/Chorcha, articulate messages of dynastic renewal.⁸⁴² In addition, the demise of Ruler 13 is cited in the texts of the hieroglyphic stairway along with the death date and identification of Temple 26 as his father's (Ruler 12) funerary monument.⁸⁴³ These juxtaposed images of the ruler are not unlike the parallel iconographies depicted in the piers and sarcophagus cover from the Temple of the Inscriptions and among the carved lintels and Burial 116 in Temple I.

The highest point of this cleft is marked by a standing, life-size male figure in front of the superstructure, while a large carved altar marks its lowest point (see fig. 98).⁸⁴⁴ Although heavily eroded, the altar at the base of Temple 26 is carved as a witz glyph, which would work to identify the structure as a living and sacred stone-mountain. A complementary view of the witz altar is as a sacred cave that mirrored the burial of Ruler 12 in the Chorcha structure.⁸⁴⁵

A rich offering that included a stone censer, a lanceolate knife, eccentric flints, several stingray spines and other items from the sea, and several heirloom jade pieces was cached beneath the altar located at the base of the stairway (see fig. 101).⁸⁴⁶ Fash and Stuart suggest that its contents are associated with rituals of auto-sacrifice, visions, and ancestor worship.⁸⁴⁷ They interpret this cached ensemble as a motivator for the stairway's

⁸⁴² More work needs to be done on the identities of these seated figures. There is the possibility that all the figures in the stair were portraits of Ruler 13 (personal communication from Eluid Guerra who repeated the musings of David Stuart, July 2006).

⁸⁴³ Fash, *Scribes*, 146–50.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 148–50.

⁸⁴⁵ I thank Flora Clancy for pointing out this other meaning of the witz altar.

⁸⁴⁶ Fash, *Scribes*, 146–47.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

iconography.⁸⁴⁸ Instead of a witz, Stuart and Schele have read the altar as a Tlaloc head that is inverted, and belching forth from its mouth are the five seated Teotihuacan-style warriors/dynasts.⁸⁴⁹ Located in the Tlaloc's brain, the contents of the cache and specifically the overt references to ritual and auto-sacrifice became triggers for the deity's vision of the five ancestors. Therefore, the vision of the Tlaloc is being depicted in the forms and structure of the stairway. The erosion of the altar creates problems when one is trying to identify exactly what is represented; however, these two interpretations are not in opposition: both witz and Tlaloc represent change (natural earth cycles and rain) and mountains.⁸⁵⁰ What is most important about the Stuart and Schele interpretations is that the imagery of the stairway is linked with a visionary experience.

The hieroglyphic stairway was not utilitarian, and its function as staircase was deemphasized in order to highlight its symbolic function as the cleft in the temple-mountain. The stairway was both an axial line bisecting the face of Temple 26 and a focal point for accessing numinous ancestors within the structure. These former dynasts are present in the archaeology of the structure and articulated in the Motmot offering and marker, the Papagayo shrine and its contents, the burial of Ruler 12, the twelve ruler portrait censurs from the Chorchá chamber, and seated Figures 1 and 2 from the hieroglyphic stairway, clearly identified as Ruler 13. By considering both the archaeology and iconography of Temple 26 and its western facade decoration, we can see that the stairway was a marker of sacred space and also denoted intergenerational convergence and renewal.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., 149.

⁸⁵⁰ Miller and Taube, *The Gods and Symbols*, 166–67. Additionally in the Postclassic, Tlaloc was believed to live in caves; his Maya corollary Chak was also a cave dweller.

Experiencing the Cleft in the Mountain

The archaeological record has demonstrated that the earliest building at the future site of Temple 26 initially denoted a sacred axis dating from the early fifth century.⁸⁵¹ This orientation was laid down by the first structure, Yax, and all subsequent structures were aligned to this sacred east-west line. The sculptural program from the ninth and final phase may have served to redefine the ancient axis. It symbolized an active space where elite participants experienced the ancestors through a communion with the past.⁸⁵²

The stairway as cleft was a point of departure for ritually traversing into the world of the ancestral past, and it was a point of entrée into the history and origin of Copan. Moving the hieroglyphic risers from the east facade to the more public west facade ensured that they would find a wider audience. A viewer could have read the carved risers from several angles, that is, from the side, the front, and above. If the ancient viewer saw the carved stairway as a visual touchstone for accessing an interior narrative, and conceptually entering the world of ancestors and numinous forces within, then the act of viewing would have been active and creative. Inscribing the dynasty's story of birth, death, and renewal on a stairway rather than carving it on panels was a choice and was motivated by a need of the elites of Copan to access the past through vision. This narrative, instead of being carved on lintels or stelae, was embedded into the temple-mountain as the sacred cleft, which was a permeable place.

An Ancestral Center

Temple 26 was the place at which a dynasty's history and its origin could be read, performed, and seen. The Cleft Mountain has been variously discussed in the literature as an origin-place

⁸⁵¹ Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 66; Sharer and others, "Early Classic," 195.

⁸⁵² Miller, *Maya Art*, 24; Clancy, *Pyramids*, 95–96, 141. Both authors offer discussions of Mesoamerican monumental stairways. Clancy also postulates how staircases may have functioned as performance spaces.

where humans and gods were born. In the *Popul Vuh*, it is described as the “split mountain” or “first mountain”⁸⁵³ and as a “mountain of sustenance” where maize sprouts and life-sustaining energies emanate.⁸⁵⁴ Scholars have proposed that a V shape, silhouetted on the horizon and formed at the confluence of Cerro Chalcatzingo and Cerro Delgado in Morelos, Mexico, may have been one of the inspirations for the sacred cleft mountain.⁸⁵⁵ These natural V forms or clefts have been interpreted as a “passage between the earthly and supernatural realms,” a birthing passage, or as astronomical markers or orientation points.⁸⁵⁶

The symbolism of cleft mountains was used also to portray the birth of political or dynastic power. In a page from the Selden Codex, a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century central Mexican fan-fold book, a Mixtec ruler is depicted as born from a cleft mountain (fig. 132). The artist chose to portray the moment after the new ruler’s emergence—seen with his still-attached umbilicus. In this painting, the ruler is bound to his “mother” or origin place, the adjacent cleft mountain to which his umbilical cord still is attached.

Correspondingly, Copan’s ancestors are symbolized by the carved hieroglyphic text. Temple 26 functioned both as an origin-place of the dynasty and as the funerary monument of Ruler 12. Written texts from the hieroglyphic stairway celebrate Ruler 12 in life and in death, while his physical legacy was interred in a tomb chamber, buried deep beneath the surface of the earth, and encased in a sacred building.⁸⁵⁷ The eight previous layers of buildings, burials, and caches marked this vista. The cleft symbolizes both the cycle of birth and rebirth and a place—the Cleft Mountain—that effects change and gives rise to

⁸⁵³ Schele and Friedel, “The Courts,” 303.

⁸⁵⁴ Bernal-Garcia, “The Life and Bounty,” 327; Fash and Fash, “Building a World-View,” 133. The Fashes discuss the sacred mountain as a personified structure. In this instance they equate the sacred mountain with the visually animated Rosalilia structure of Temple 16 from Copan.

⁸⁵⁵ Bernal-Garcia, “*Tzatzá*,” 115.

⁸⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁷ Fash and others, “The Hieroglyphic Stairway,” 111.

civilization. Inscribing a narrative on steps invited the eighth-century viewer to interact on a visual and physical level with both ancestors and their origins.

Summary: The Cleft Mountain from Copan

The Temple 26–Cleft Mountain was a monument that invited an ancient elite viewer to participate in physical, visual, and conceptual experiences. The narrative from the central stairway recounted a dynastic history and commemorated the burial of a ruler.

Simultaneously, the axial inscription alluded to cosmological concerns and was a cleft in a constructed sacred mountain. Its meanings were both read and experienced.

Sacred landscapes both constructed and natural were portals for energies to enter and exit as well as places of lineage. Evidence supplied by Fash's archaeological investigations and building history, as well as epigraphic and ethnographic interpretations, reveals a parallel iconography seen in the interior and exterior of the monument that is consistent with the messages of a Cleft Mountain. The iconography of Yax, Motmot, and Chorchá and evidence observed in rituals marking space and the future demonstrate that the site of Temple 26 was a symbolic place of origin for the Copan dynasty.

Conclusion

Themes of convergence, transformation, and renewal are analogous to the cycles of agriculture, time, and human development from infant to adult to ancestor. The Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque integrates renewal and transformation within a statement of convergence, which is depicted in the parallel iconographies from the sarcophagus cover and the pier reliefs. Temple I of Tikal also includes messages of renewal, but through processes of transformation, which are centered on discourses between the burial and the interior of the superstructure. These parallels created an environment where a visitor viewing the carved

lintels in the superstructure would have had a vision of a reborn Jasaw. Temple 26 at Copan is a monument that integrates themes of renewal in its architecture and decoration. This temple can be understood as a mythic Cleft Mountain. Death, renewal, and rebirth are themes often depicted in ancient Maya imagery, and mortuary monuments translated these iconographies into three-dimensional space that was experienced by a viewer/visitor.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

In the years between 683 and 734 CE, the ancient Maya cities of Palenque, Tikal, and Copan experienced great changes, as reflected in the burials of three charismatic and powerful rulers. Until just recently, one could descend the internal stair of the Temple of the Inscriptions and view the tomb chamber of Pakal. Likewise, traversing the excavation tunnels inside Temple 26 has become a popular tourist attraction at Copan. Only Temple I has remained largely impenetrable; several years ago the beloved practice of ascending the stairs and entering the superstructure was banned. Tourists climbing these structures and entering their cave-like interiors are reenacting ritual practices that were witnessed by an ancient Maya audience. The activities of modern visitors are a response to the designs of these monuments, which invite engagement with the architecture in all its dimensions.

Burial temples are paradoxical. They recount and celebrate the most private of events—*death*. Yet these monuments can be considered as the most public genre of ancient Maya buildings and the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 are no exception. My perspective, inspired by phenomenology, semiotics archaeology is combined with traditional art historical methods of formal and comparative analysis, stems from questions that are focused on the symbolic function of these structures and what may have motivated their design. What I present are new insights into the meaning of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26. The structural and decorative programs shared by all three temples signal that they are part of a separate genre of architecture that is specifically mortuary and interactive. Furthermore, these features are also mode of communication.

Themes of intergenerational convergence, transformation, and renewal were evoked in tensions between the exterior and interior spaces, parallel iconographies, relationships between the tomb chamber (subterranean) and the superstructure (celestial), and the singular bond between the deceased king and his heirs. The Temple of the Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 were haunted the dead were segregated from the living yet they were ever-present and the dialogue between them represented continuity.

Emerging out of the formal analysis from part 1 is an enhanced perspective on these monuments as the sum of their Subterranean, Terrestrial, and Celestial spheres. My comparative analysis based on a deconstruction of these temples was not only significant but also necessary because it illuminated both intersite and intramonument relationships. Previous research concentrates on the differences between these three temples; however, in my research I have found distinct similarities between the structures. The exhaustive study from part 1 revealed that these monuments are more than architectural wholes; articulated in their structures, defined as subterranean, terrestrial, and celestial, is an organization of space that facilitated movement, ritual processes, and narratives of convergence, transformation, and renewal.

The structures of these monuments, whether seen or unseen, depict the *experience* of renewal, transformation, and convergence. These monuments enveloped the tomb chamber of three rulers and functioned as the funerary temples; however, the temples also communicated a sublime relationship between parent, child, and ancestor, as well as conveying messages that address lineage, accession, and renewal.

Understood as both burial temples and symbolic entities, these monuments were read through visual codes that in turn were amplified by experience. The symbolic function of

these structures is my concern, and the work of writers like Umberto Eco helped me to define my insights. The Temple of Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 are monuments that were understood through experience; in other words, they were designed to engage the viewer and to elicit a response.

Phenomenologist Emmanuel Lévinas expresses his understanding of death by writing “I do not have my child; I am in some way my child,” and this perspective is apropos when considering the overall meaning of a structure like Temple of the Inscriptions. The temple’s architectural and sculptural programs depict the body of Pakal as polysemic: he is simultaneously depicted on the sarcophagus cover as a baby, the Maize God, K’awiil, and a K’ex or sacrifice. Parallel iconographies from the Piers and Sarcophagus cover denote these convergences; however, this visual narrative can be most clearly understood as one moves through the monument. Thus, Pakal the mortal has been recast as the center or progenitor of a cyclical continuum, and in turn, this iconography is reenacted by a visitor to the temple. As the beginning and future of the dynasty, he is presented as ancestor, ruler, and child.

Temple I from Tikal can be considered a “House of Transformation.” The locale for its rituals of change was the interior of the superstructure, a space that echoed the royal tomb chamber far below in the temple’s foundation. A long-standing visual trope in ancient Mesoamerica is the ancestral vision, composed of a supernal figure who interacts with a second figure fixed to the ground line below and the conjuring scene, commonly observed on stelae and lintels, is re-created inside Temple I’s superstructure. The ruler becomes an apotheosized ancestor and the viewer becomes both a conduit for the vision and a conjurer of this scene. The superstructure’s unusually charged physical environment activated by ritual, the presence of burial 6 (which I propose is the partial interment of Jasaw’s consort), and its

distinct relationship to Burial 116 became, for a petitioner, a unified expression that catalyzed the viewer's experience of the ancestor's presence.

Temple 26 can be considered a portal for accessing the ancestors. I suggest this structure was understood as the Cleft Mountain known in ancient Mesoamerican cosmology as an origin place where humans and gods were born. Although invisible, narratives from the nine construction layers beneath the facade were conceptually visible and enfolded in the iconography, sculpture, and hieroglyphic texts on the temple's surface. These visual codes both accentuate the staircase's axial line and highlight its role as a point of access to numinous and life-renewing energies beneath. Viewing the temple from this imagined point of view, an individual would have seen the prominent carved stairway as the *cleft* in this mountain, representing the origin of the dynasty and a portal to the ancestors.

Although Maya cosmology and Western philosophy have influenced the direction of my research, I did not approach this project with any a priori conclusions, rather it has been the archaeology and architecture that have inspired and sustained me. These structures encased a royal tombs, and they invited the living to engage with these funerary spaces, a perspective quite different than Western approaches to burial architecture. Placed in the centers of their cities, Temple of Inscriptions, Temple I, and Temple 26 were understood in three dimensions as fundamental concepts of convergence, transformation, and renewal were concretized in art and architecture, in ritual processes and by the movements of the people.

In the following prayer, a common one from the Guatemalan village of Santiago Atitlan, the continuum of life is explained through concepts of earth, agriculture, and family. For the Atitecos their "Flowering Mountain Earth" is the center of the known world,

although it is conceptually understood, this place is made manifest in maize plants or trees.⁸⁵⁸

For the ancient Maya the funerary monument is a similar center and core of the community.

Both the Atitecos and the Maya of Palenque, Tikal, and Copan employ both physical and

conceptual structures to express continuities between life and death. They have chosen to

focus energies, prayers, and rituals at a places where “the old becomes new.”⁸⁵⁹ The ancient

Maya constructed expansive mortuary monuments in order to re-create and renew the sacred continuum or k'ex between generations, the ancestors, and the sacred geography.

What was said, lives.
It has become a jewel
and it flowers.
But it is something now lost,
Something relegated to death.
Lost in Dust, lost in earth

It holds us like a baby.
It guards us like a child.
It trusses the World at the edges, like a house.
It holds up the sky.

Giver of life.
Giver of food.
Giver of water.

You who are the great-grandmothers and great-grandfathers,
We are your flowers, we are your sprouts.
We are the ones who fall off the trees,
We are the ones who fall off the vines.⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁵⁸ Carlson and Prechtel, “The Flowering of the Dead” in *War for Heart and Soul*, 51, 52

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁸⁶⁰ Carlson, 1997 p. 5. A common prayer in from Santiago Atitlan, in the Guatemalan Highlands.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1. “Hjole” Tunnel Sculptures from the Copan Sculpture Museum, Copan Honduras (photo by author)



Figure 2. Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (C.E. 682) (photo by author)

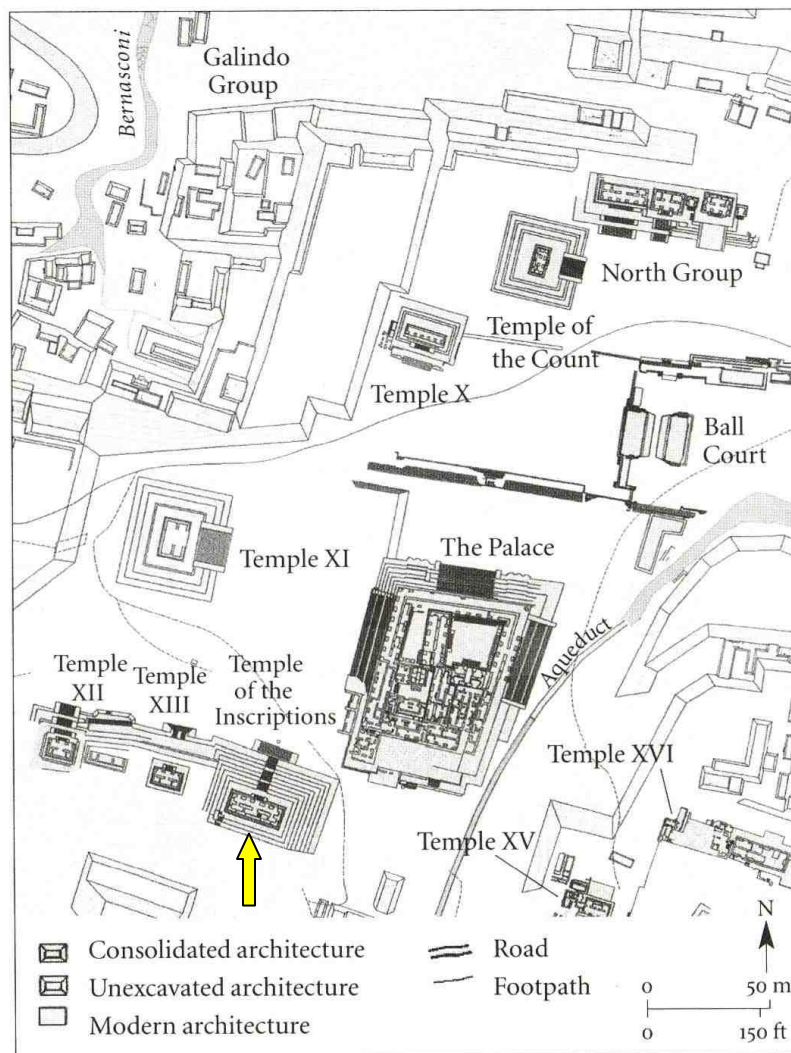


Figure 3. Central Palenque, Mexico, Late Classic period, produced by Edwin Barnhart (1998-2000 in Stuart and Stuart, *Palenque*, 23), the Temple of the Inscriptions is indicated by yellow arrow.

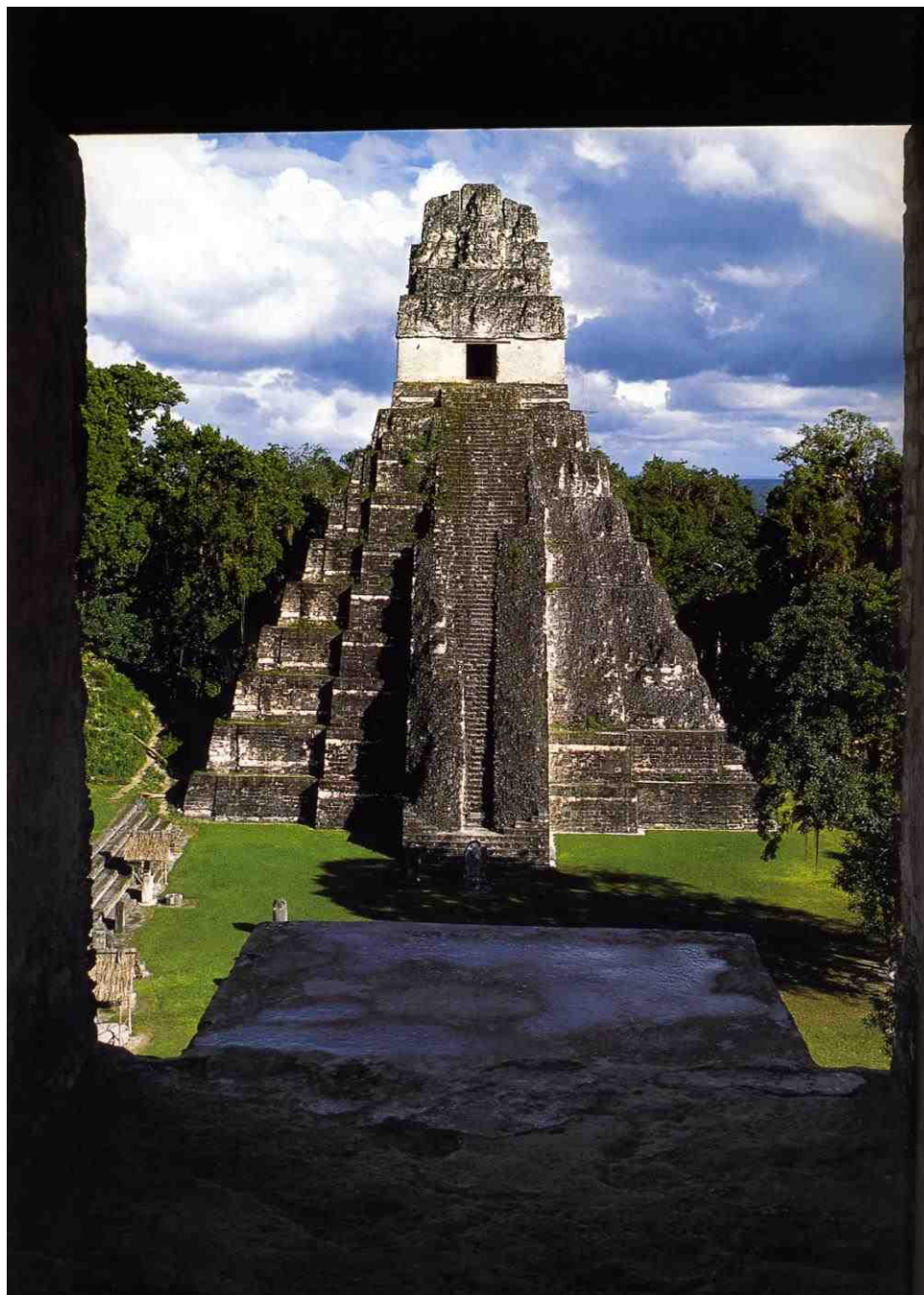


Figure 4. Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (C.E. 734) (Harrison, *The Lords*, 144, fig. 84)

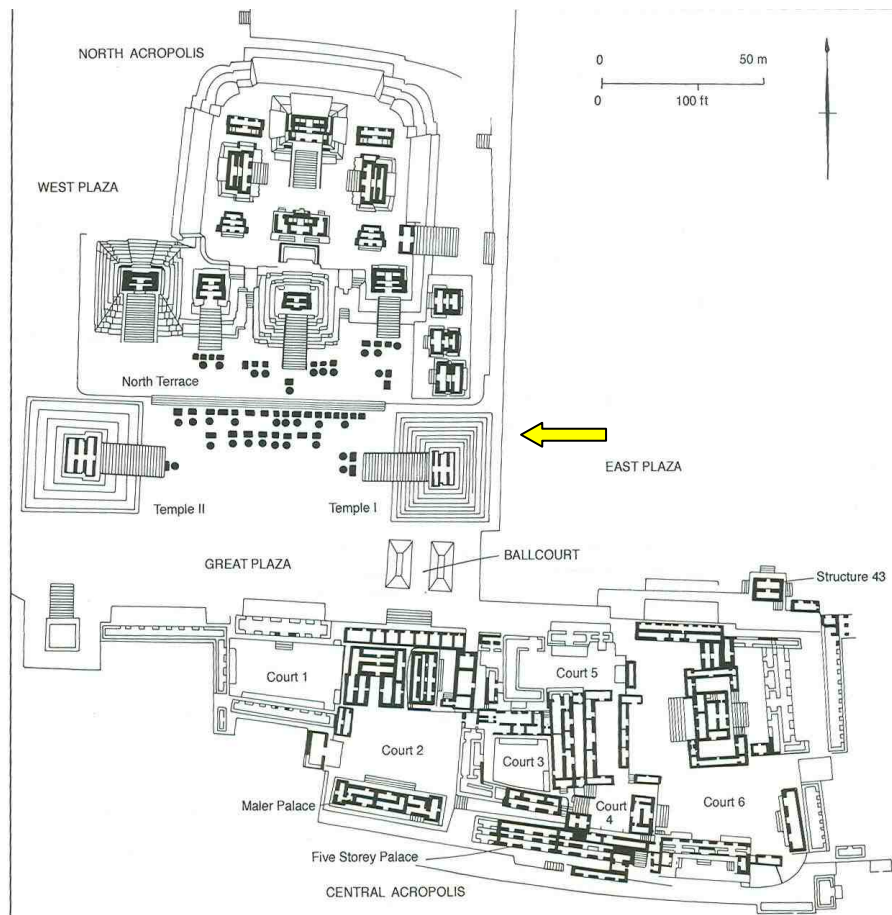


Figure 5. Plan of the Great Plaza, Central Acropolis, and North Acropolis, Tikal, Guatemala, Temple I is denoted by the yellow arrow (Harrison, *The Lords*, 17, fig. 6)



Figure 6. Temple 26, Copan, Honduras, July 2006, view of temple beneath protective canopy, from the ballcourt

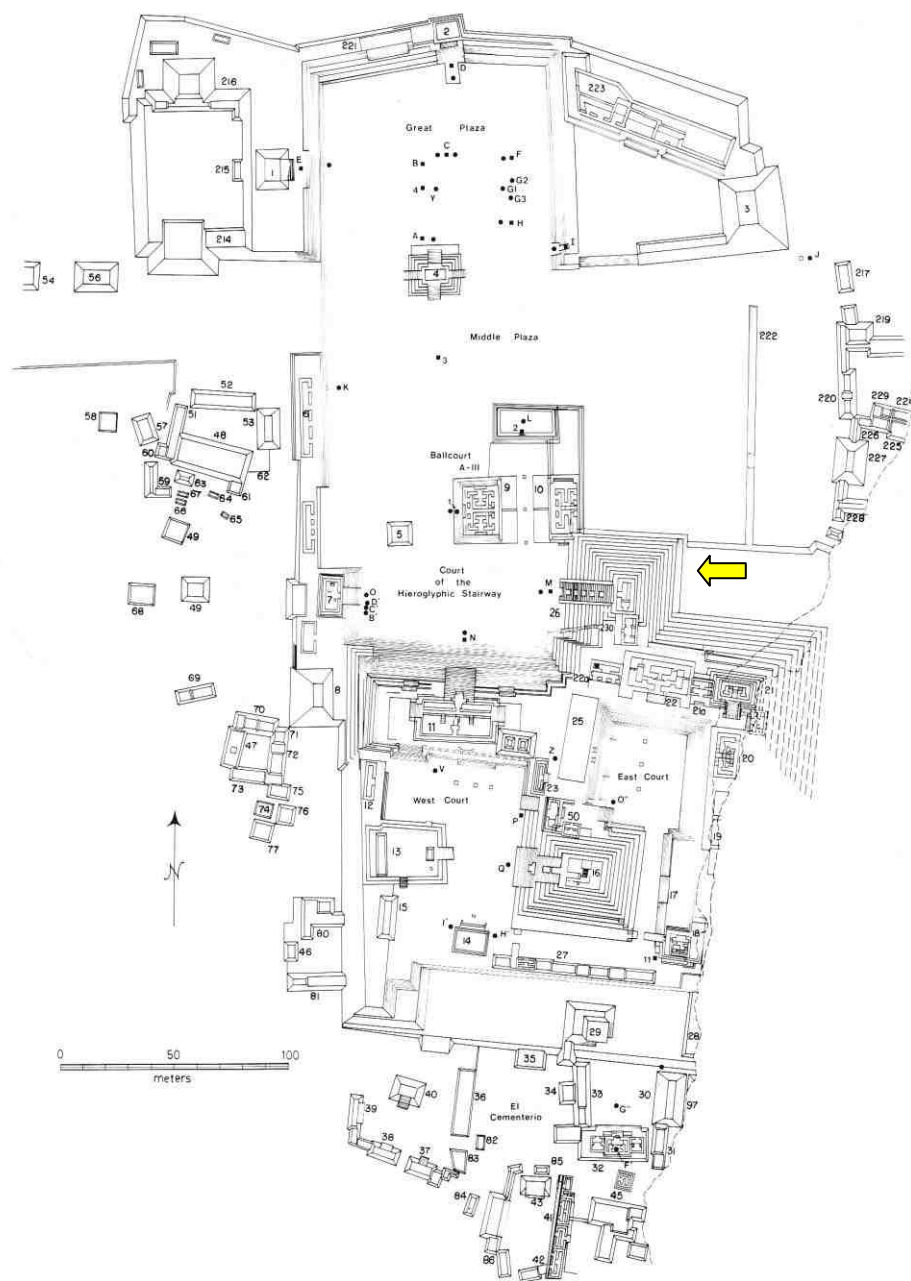


Figure 7. Plan of the Principal Group, Copan, Honduras and Temple 26 is denoted by the yellow arrow (Barbara Fash and Refugio Murcia in Fash, *Scribes*, 20, fig. 8)

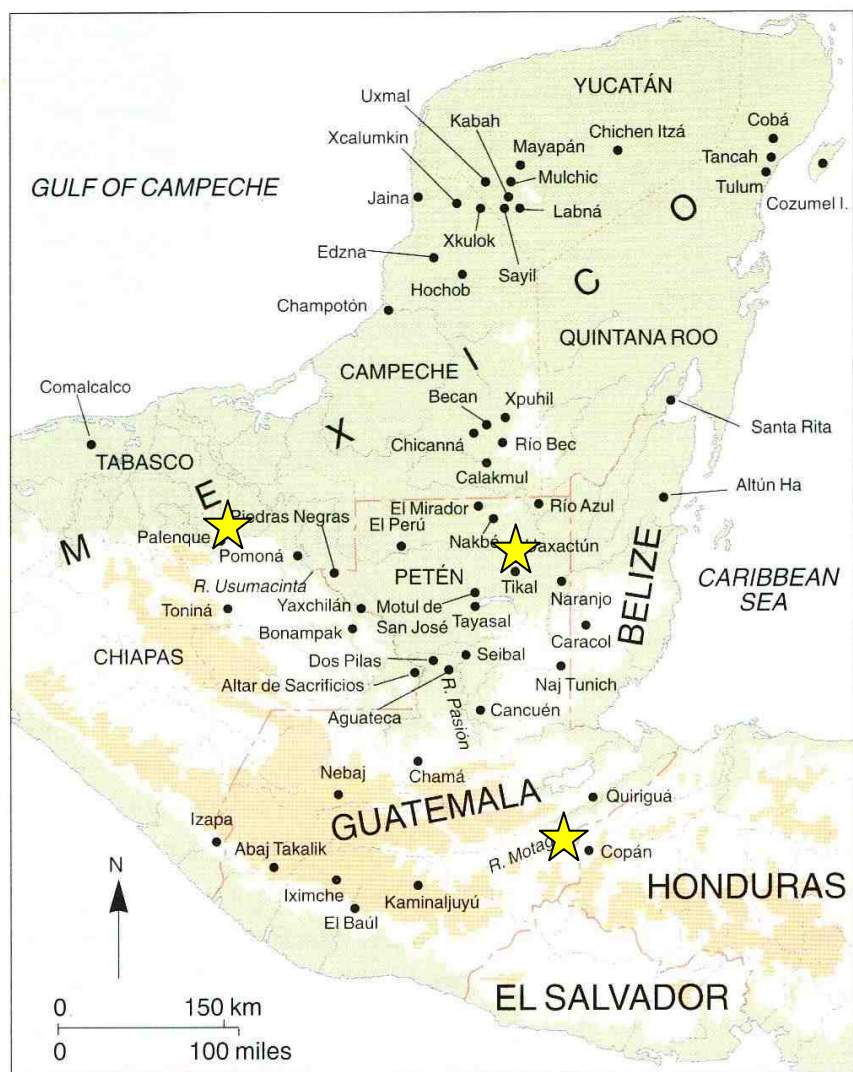


Figure 8. Map of the region, the yellow stars indicate the locations of Palenque, Mexico, Tikal, Guatemala, and Copan, Honduras (Miller, *Maya Art*, 23)

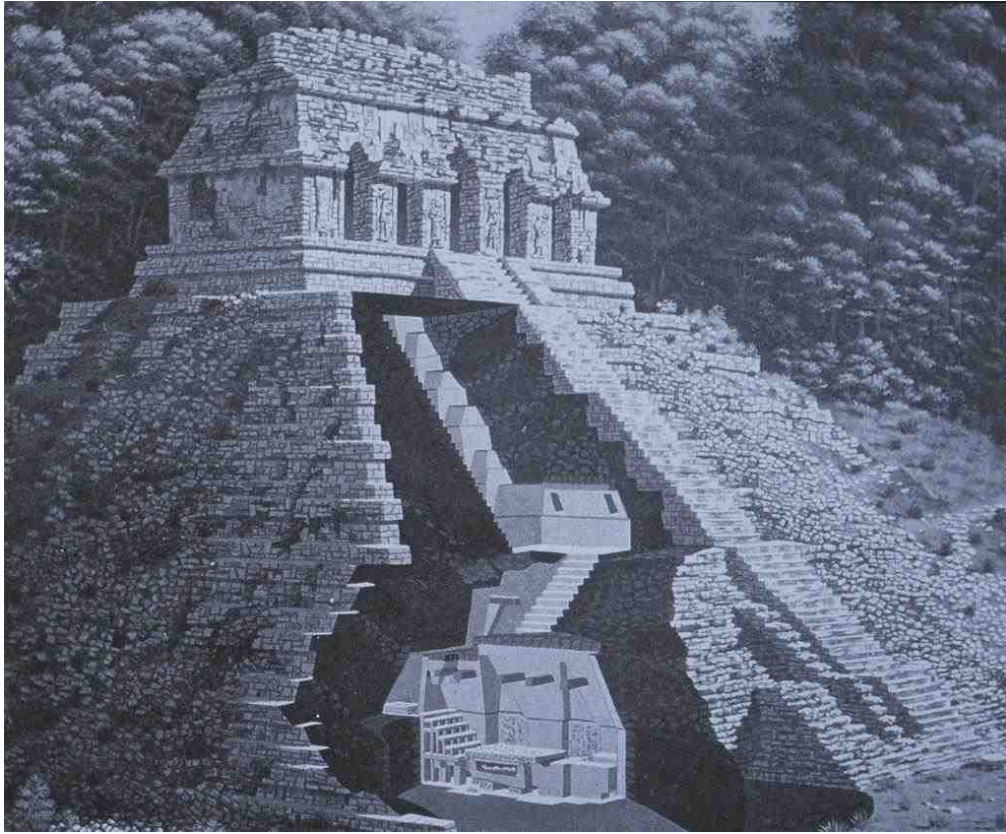


Figure 9. Cross-section view of internal architecture, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Kubler, *The Art and Architecture*, 222, fig. 175)



Figure 10. Photo taken from the south entrance of the tomb chamber of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico, photo of the tomb chamber from the south entrance looking north (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 153)



Figure 11. Internal staircase with psychoduct (photo by author)

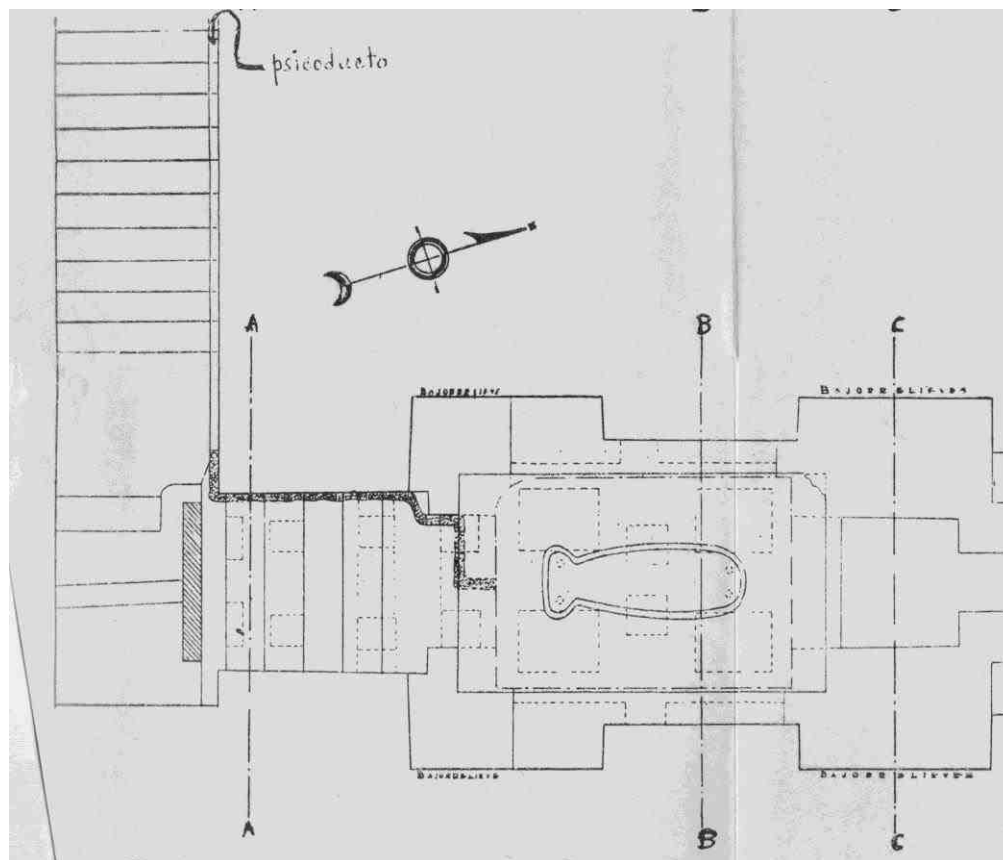


Figure 12. Plan view of the tomb chamber, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *Costumbres*, fig. 31)

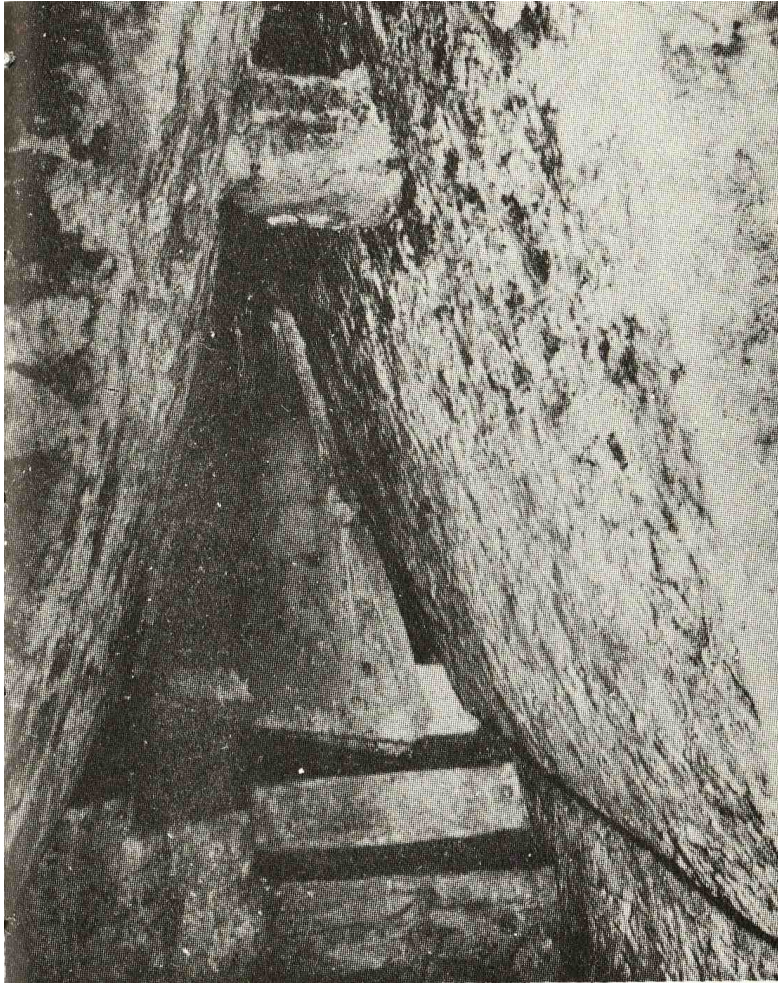


Figure 13. Photo of threshold leading to the tomb chamber of Pakal, includes the triangular door and stairs from the east west corridor, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 151)

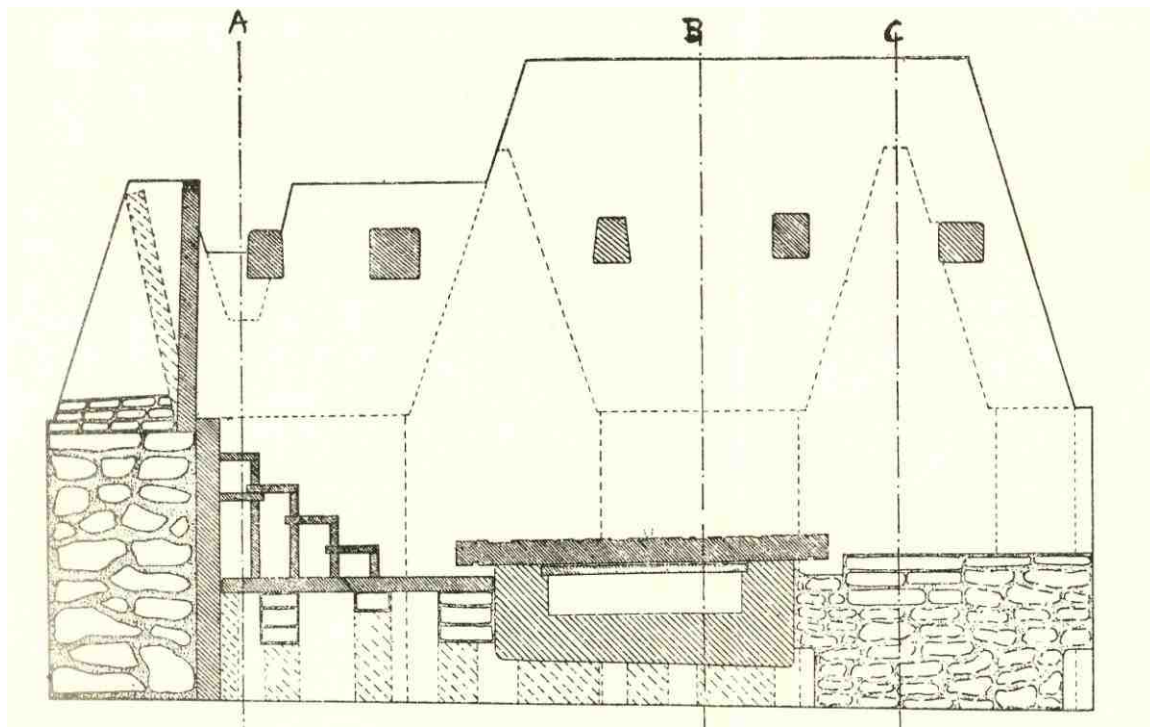


Figure 14. East elevation view of the tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *Costumbres*, fig. 31)

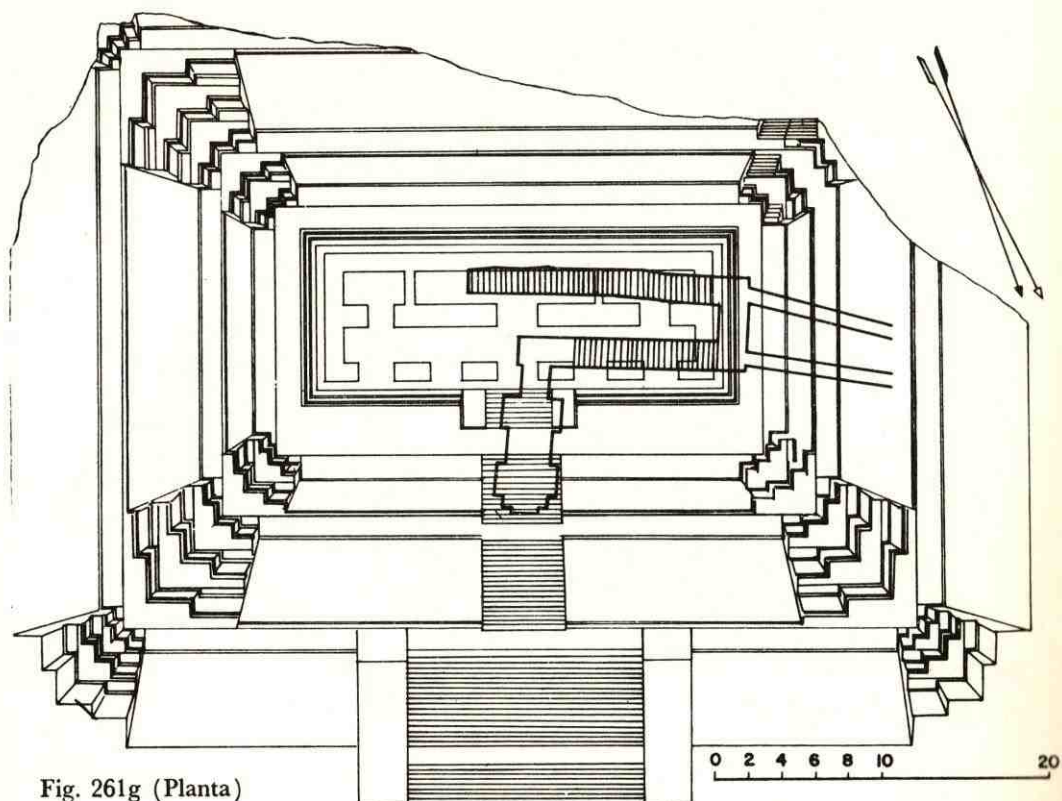


Figure 15. Overhead plan view of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico, includes subterranean staircase and tomb chamber (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 261g)

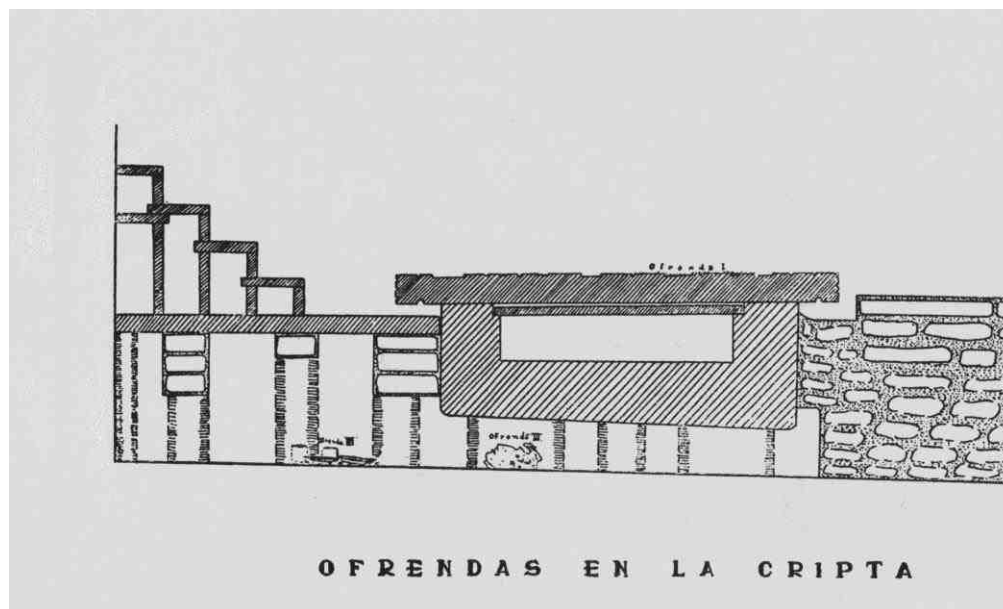


Figure 16. Elevation of the floor and sarcophagus, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico, tomb chamber and the offerings beneath (Ruz Lhuillier, *Costumbres*, 337)

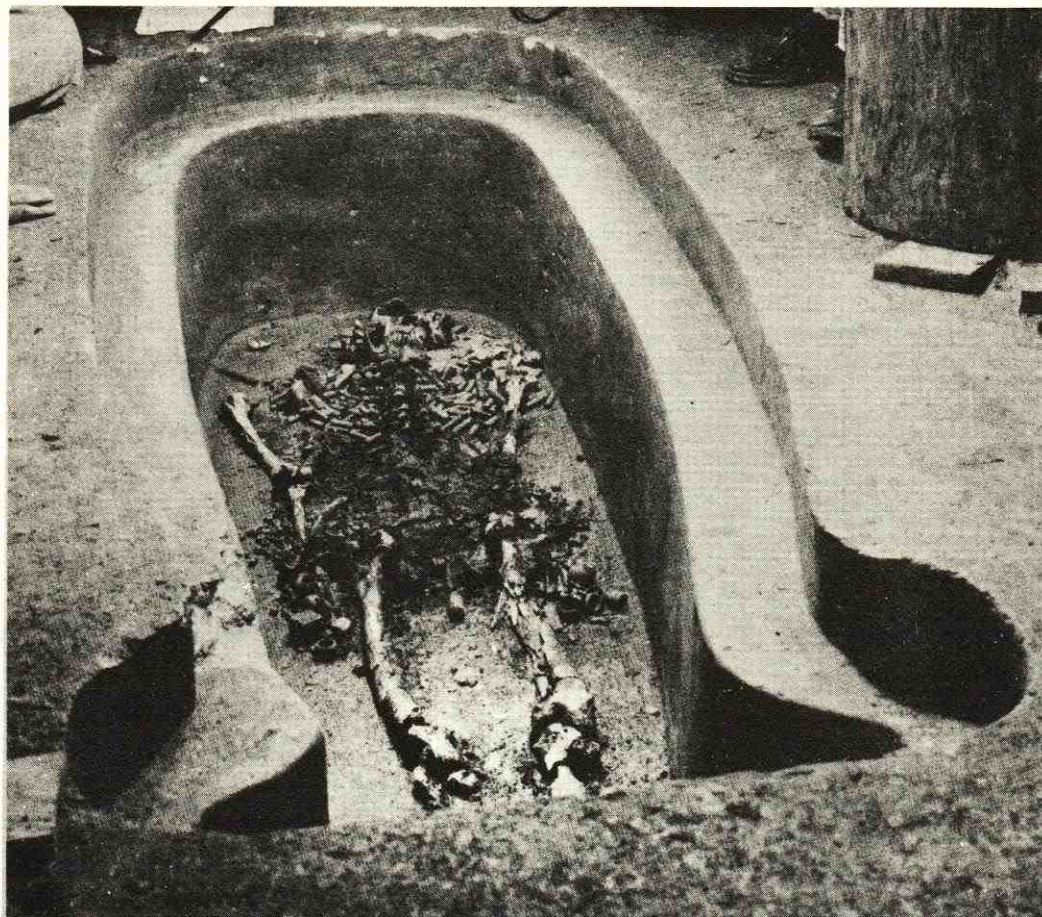


Figure 17. The opened interment from the tomb chamber of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 204)



Figure 18. Reconstruction of Pakal with his funerary effects, Pakal's interment, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (photo by Jorge Pérez de Lara in *Arqueología Mexicana*, Special Edition, Maya Room, 17)



Fig. 220

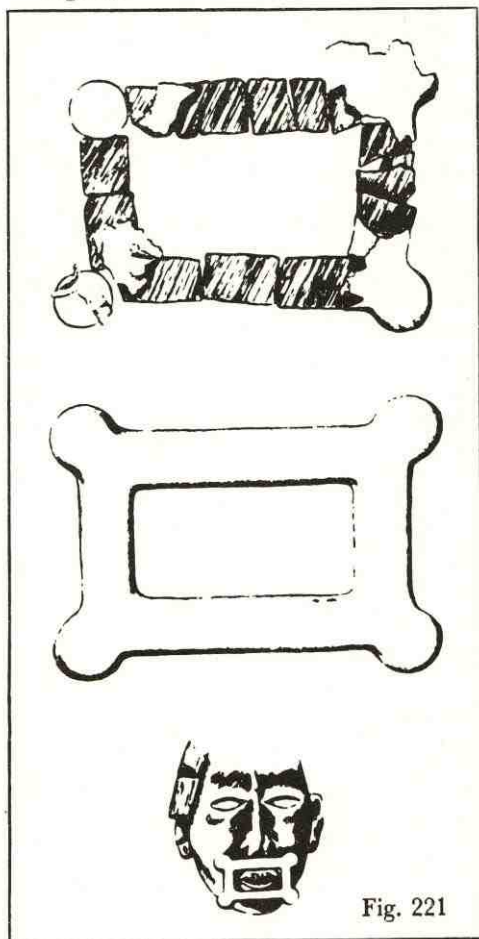


Fig. 221

Figure 19. Drawing and photo of buccal mask covering Pakal's mouth, Pakal's interment, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 221)

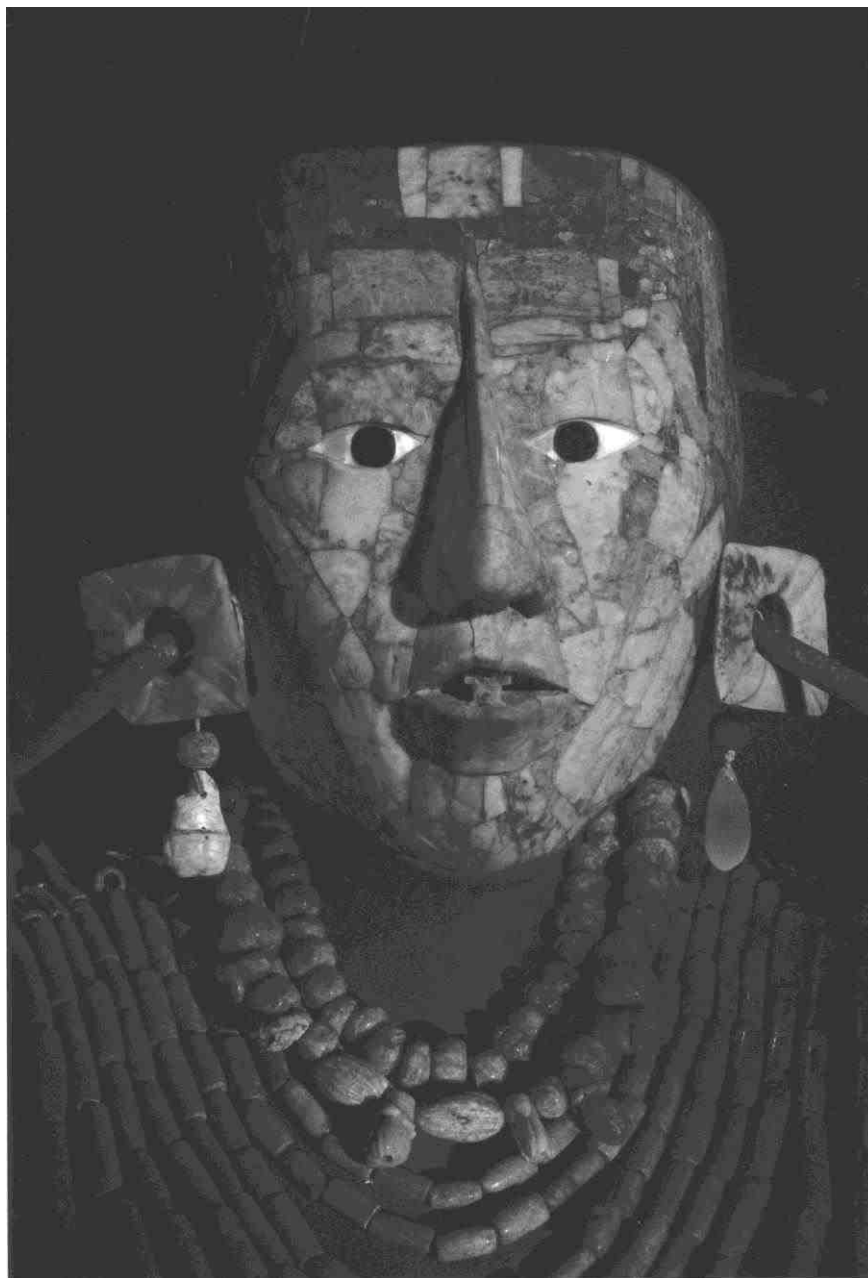


Figure 20. New reconstruction of the jade burial mask of Pakal with accompanying earflares and necklaces, Pakal's interment, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Stuart and Stuart, *Palenque*, fig. 25)

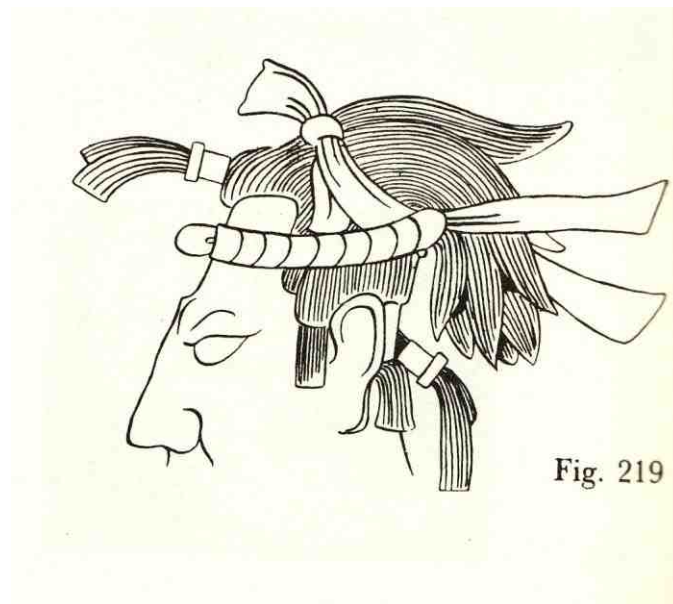


Fig. 219

Figure 21. Drawing of the diadem, funeral effects of Pakal, Pakal's interment, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 219)



Figure 22. Funeral effects of Pakal: four pointed star denotes jade figurine associated with the decedent's loincloth, five pointed star is a jade figurine found at the decedent's left foot, and the quad arrow denotes the jewelry (celts and effigy mask for belt) found on the sarcophagus lid, Pakal's interment, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (photo by Jorge Pérez de Lara in *Arqueología Mexicana*, Special Edition, Maya Room, 17)

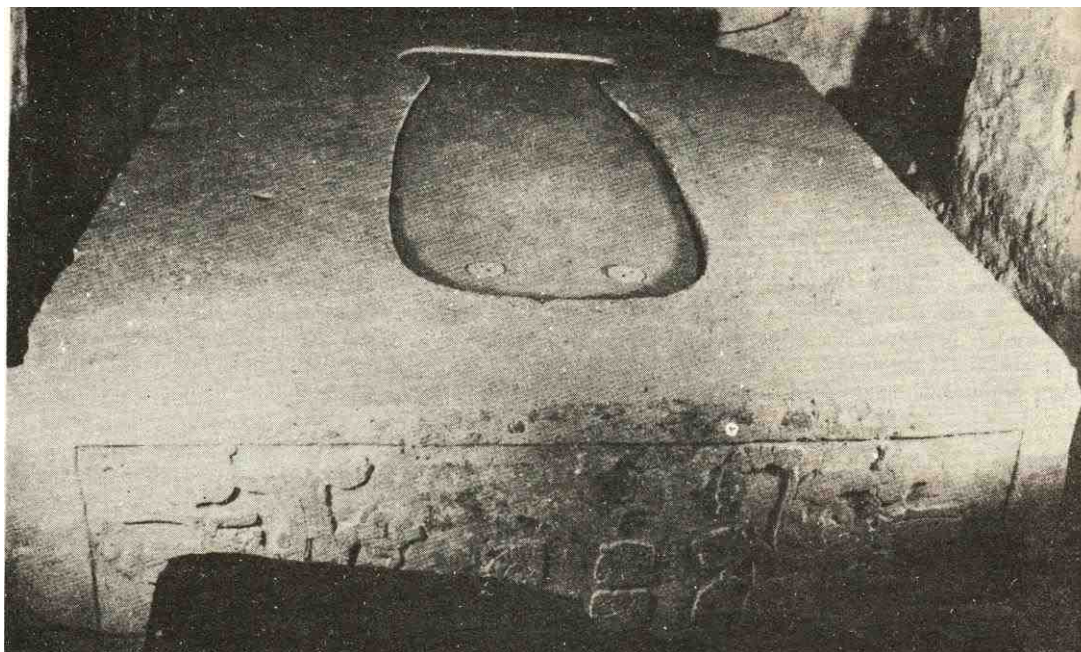


Figure 23. Photo of the sarcophagus of Pakal with human-shaped seal; the view is from the north, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 202)

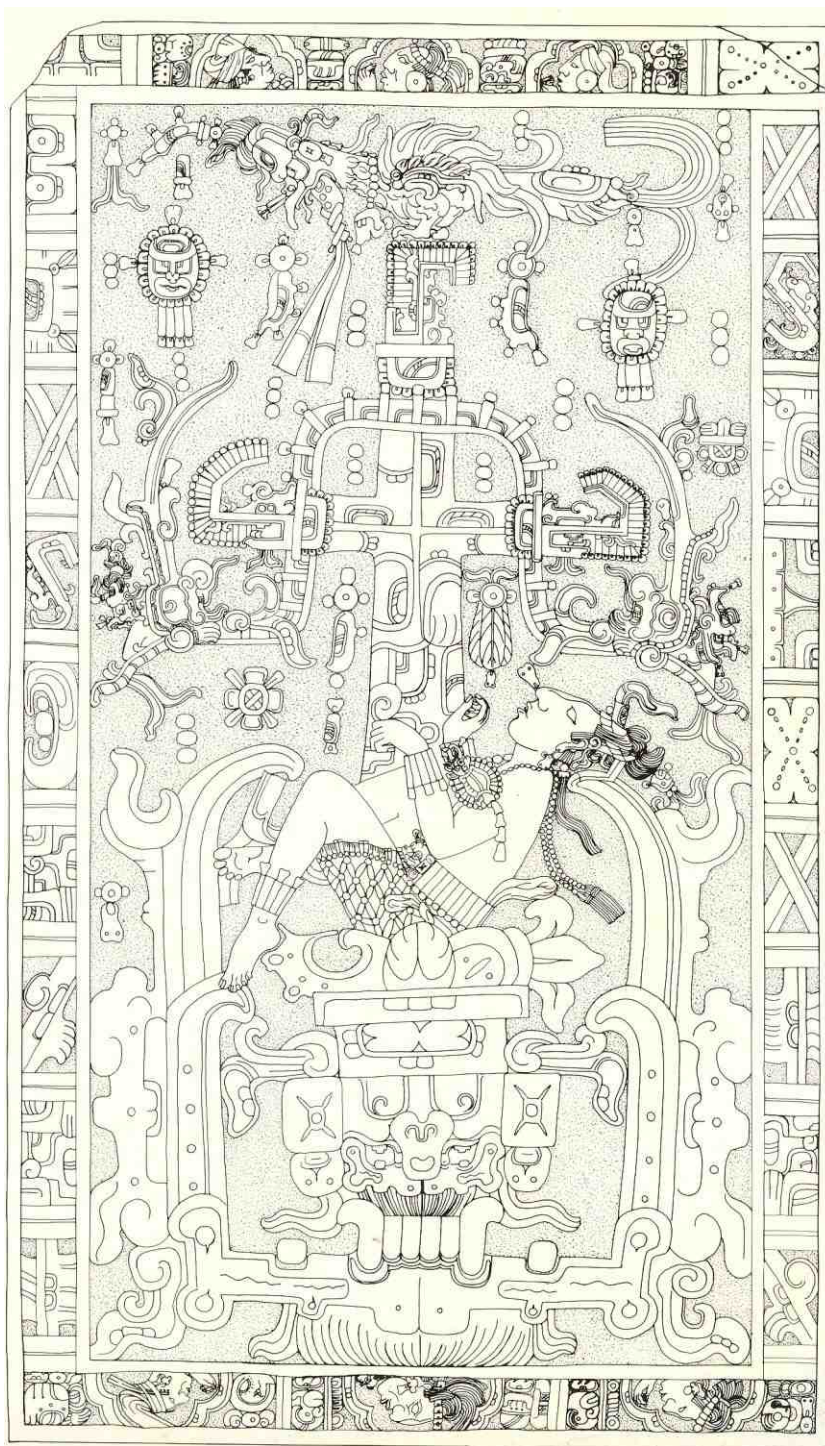


Figure 24. Drawing of the sarcophagus cover imagery, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico ([Drawing by Robertson] Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)

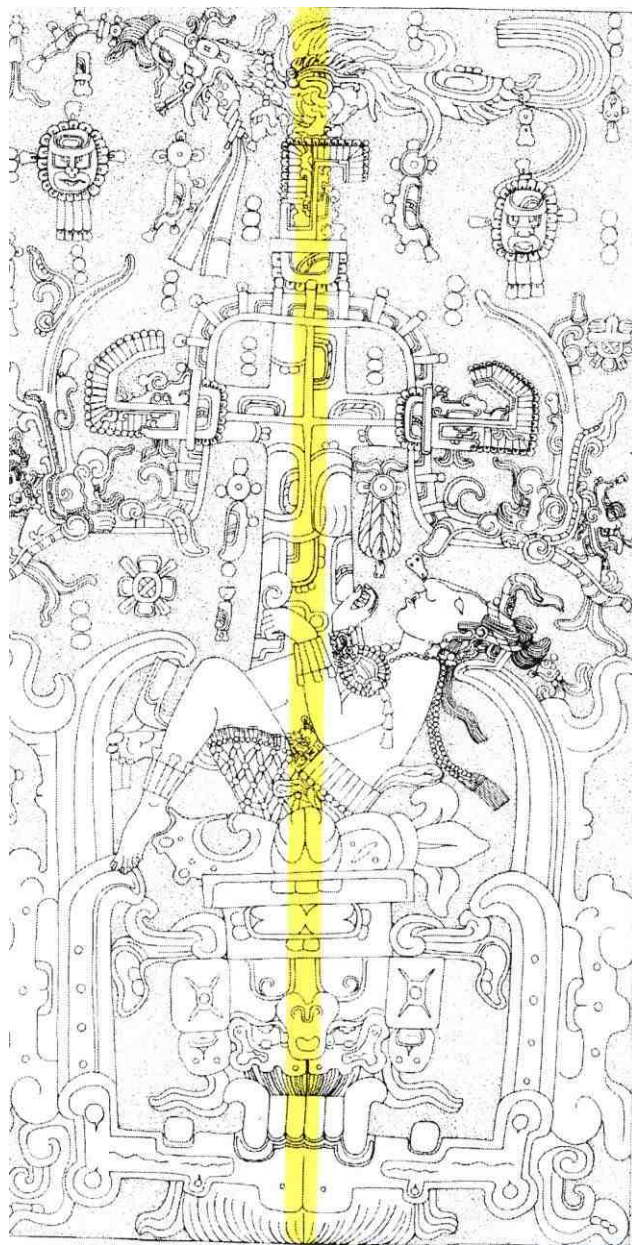


Figure 25. Detail of the vertical line from the carved sarcophagus cover imagery, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)

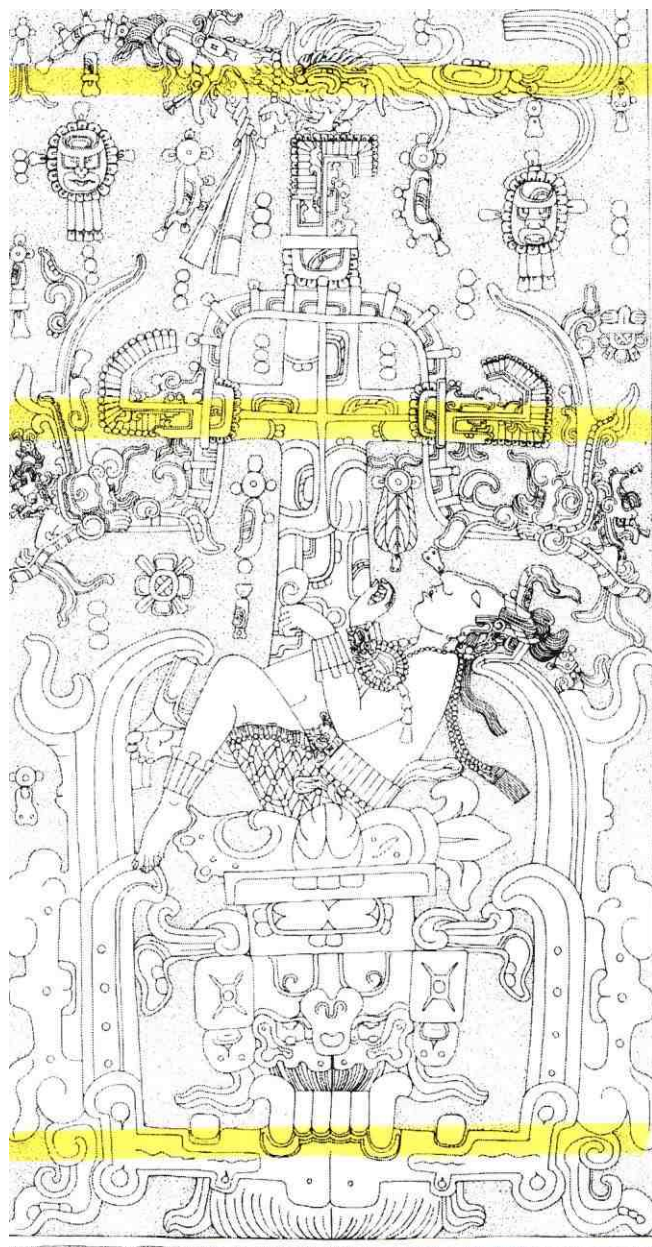


Figure 26. Detail of the horizontal lines from the carved sarcophagus cover imagery, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)

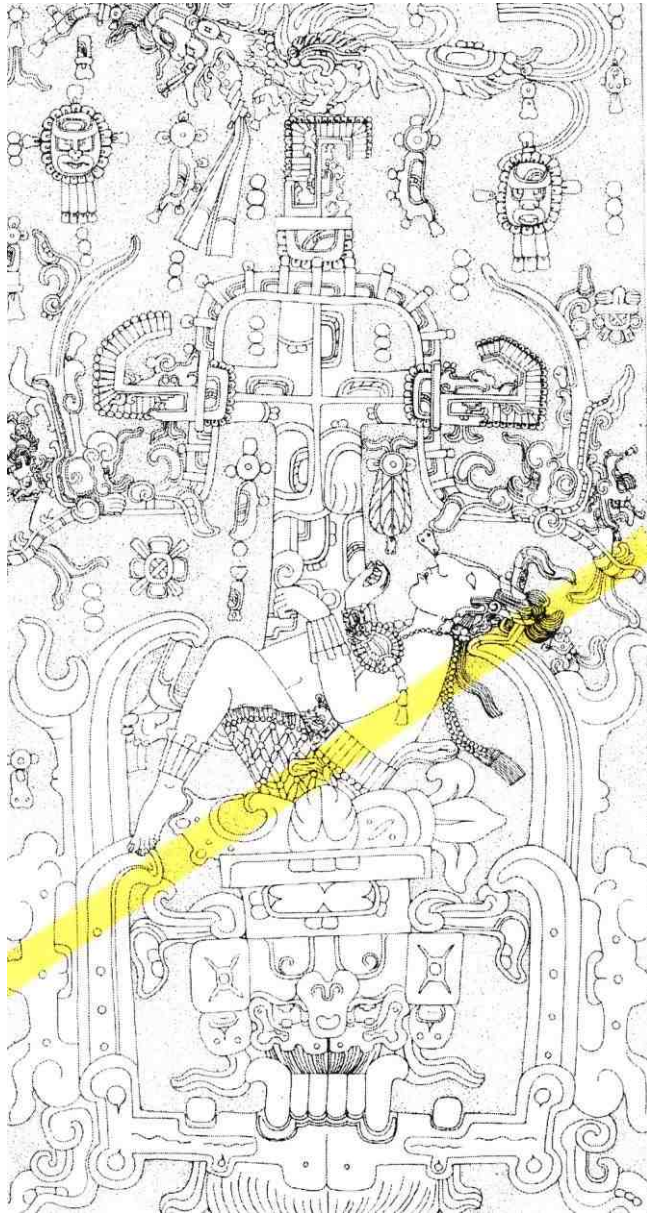


Figure 27. Detail of the diagonal line from the from the carved sarcophagus cover imagery, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)

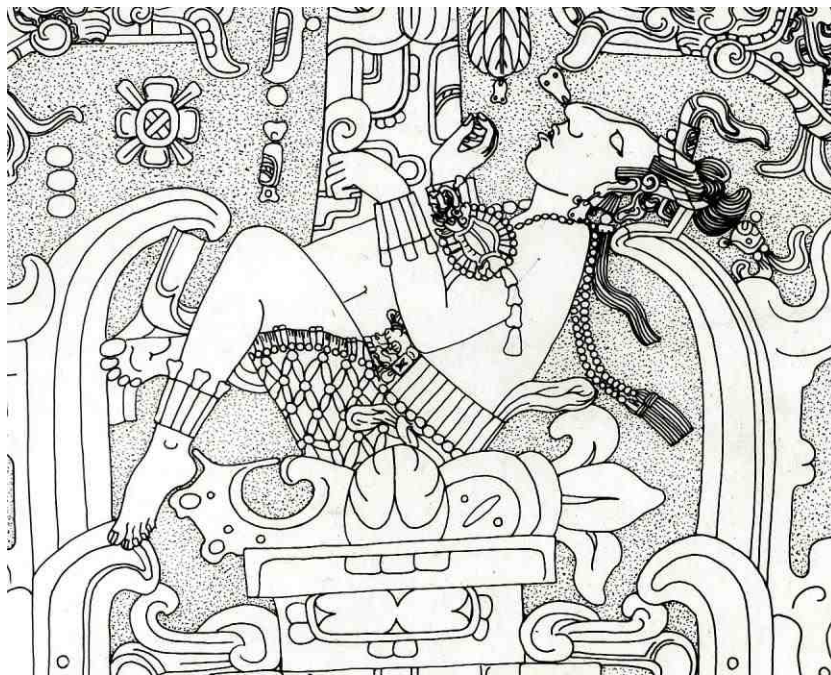


Figure 28. Close-up of Pakal, from the carved sarcophagus cover, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)



Figure 29. Detail of the skeletal cauac image from the south end of the carved sarcophagus cover, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 98)



Figure 30. Detail of the open maw at the south end of the carved sarcophagus cover, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 98).

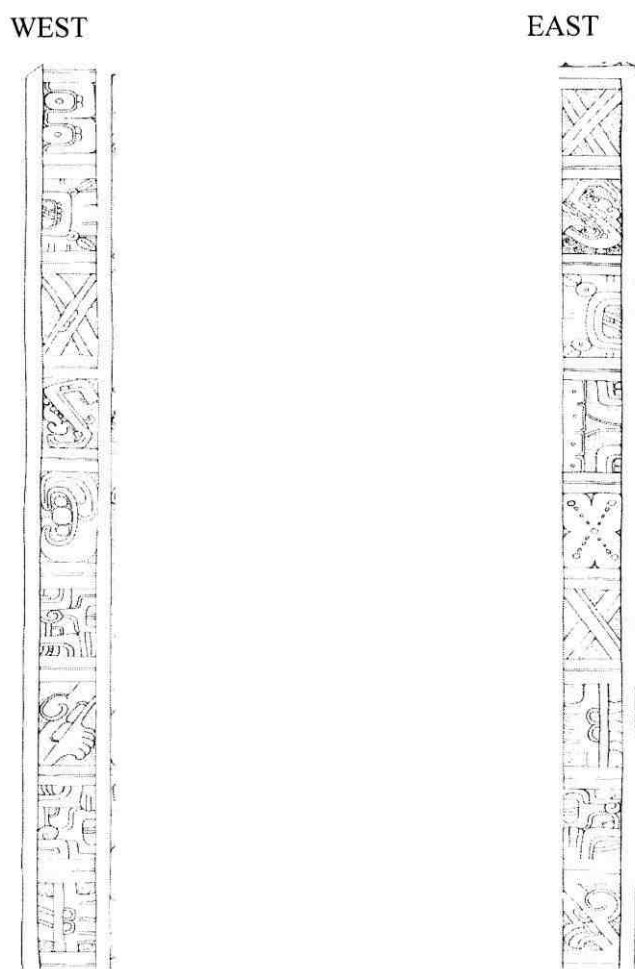
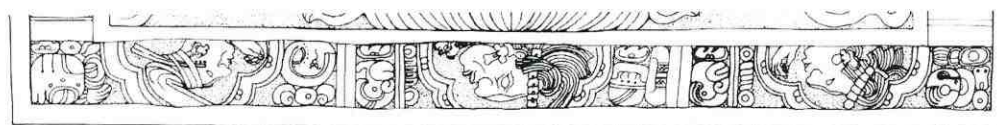


Figure 31. Detail of the “cells” that comprise the skyband frame, border of the carved sarcophagus cover, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)



NORTH



MERLE GREENE '75

SOUTH

Figure 32. Portraits from the north and south ends of the carved sarcophagus border, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 99)

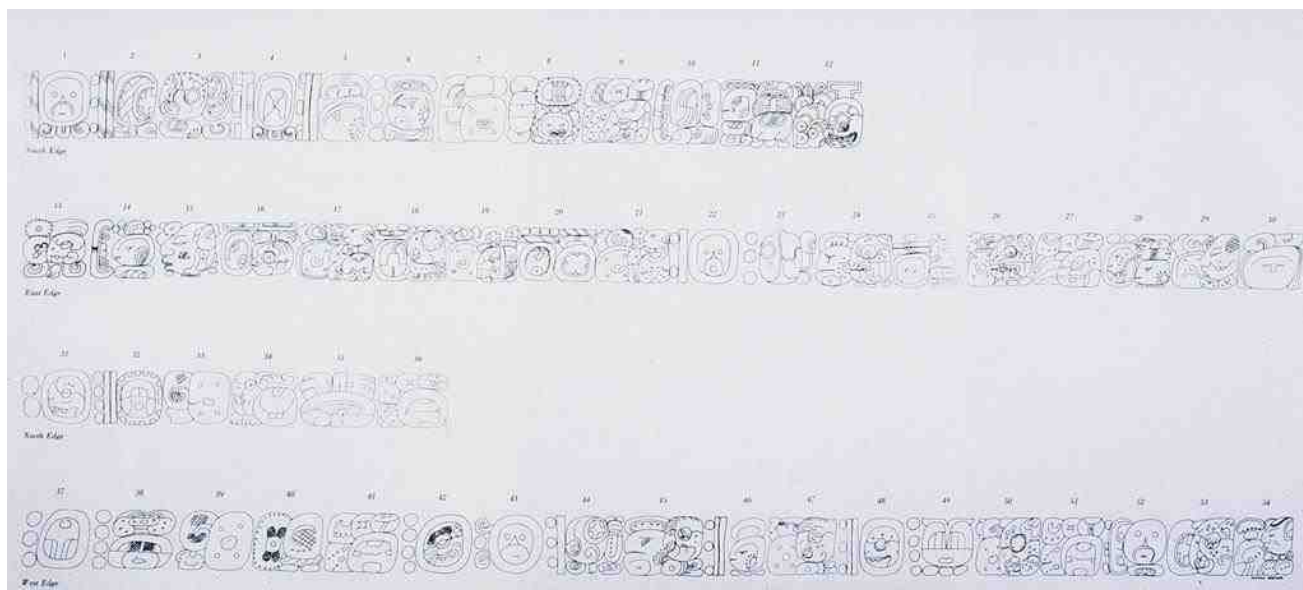


Figure 33. The inscription from the sides of the sarcophagus cover, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 170)

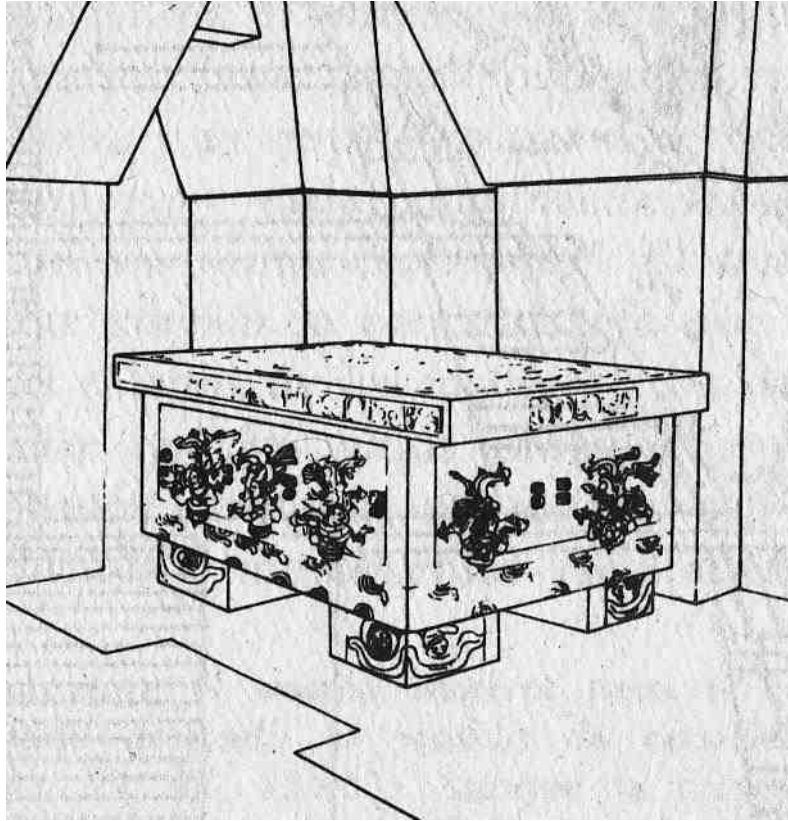


Figure 34. Reconstruction drawing, isometric and unobstructed view of the bas-reliefs from the sarcophagus sides and support legs, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 222, fig. 253)

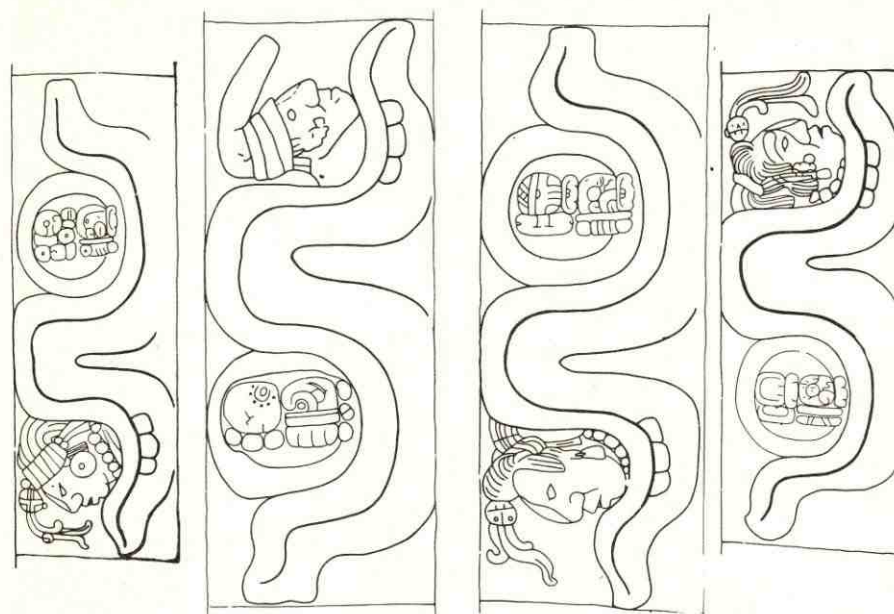


Figure 35. Drawing of the carved figures from the four support legs of the sarcophagus, from left to right: southwest, northwest, northeast, southeast, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 199 a-d)



Figure 36. Drawing of the bas relief imagery from the outer walls of the sarcophagus, tomb chamber, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico ([drawing by Robertson] in Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 177)



Figure 37. The two stucco portrait heads, an offering found beneath the sarcophagus, tomb chamber, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Stuart and Stuart, *Palenque*, fig. 27).



Figure 38. Drawing of Stucco Figure #9, southeast wall of the tomb chamber, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 245)

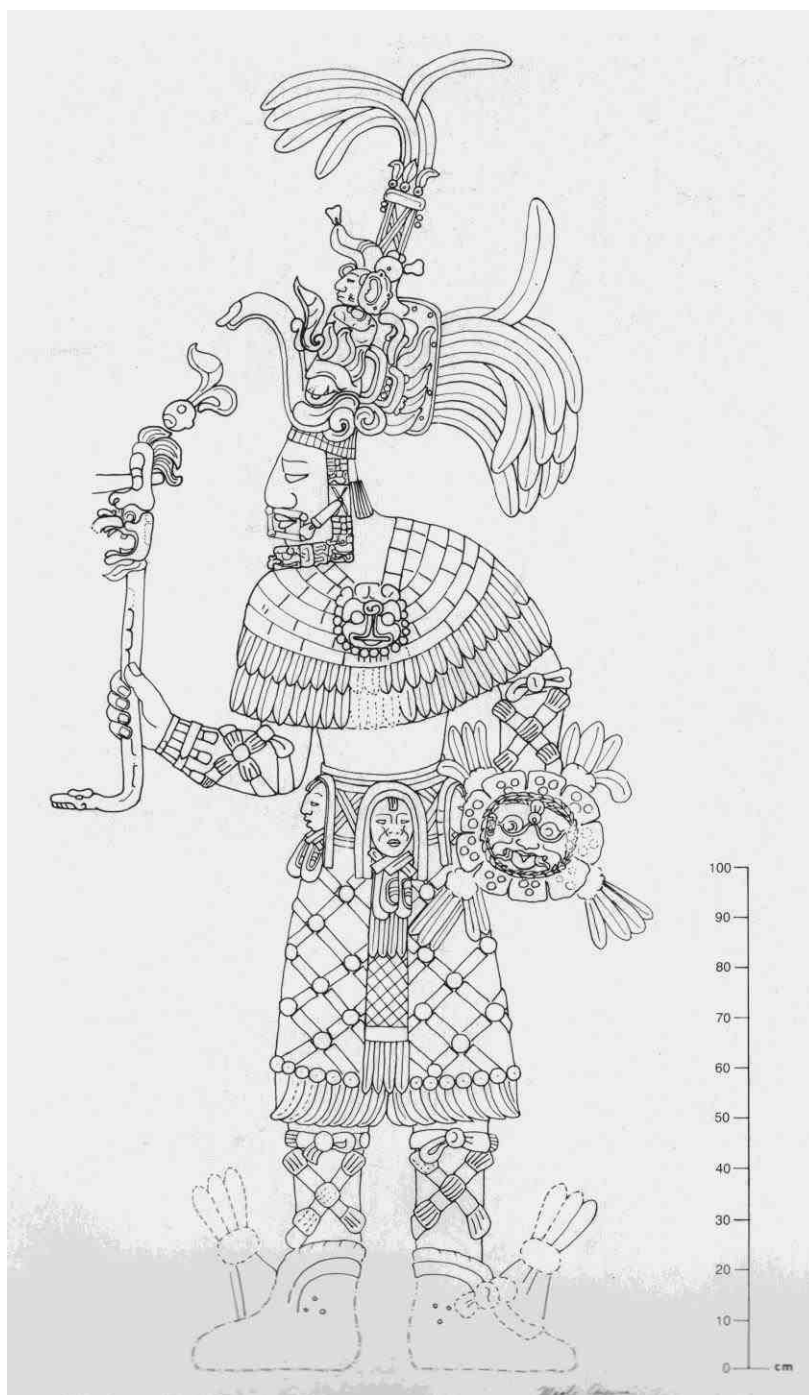


Figure 39. Drawing of Stucco Figure #7, on the northeast wall of the tomb chamber, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 298)

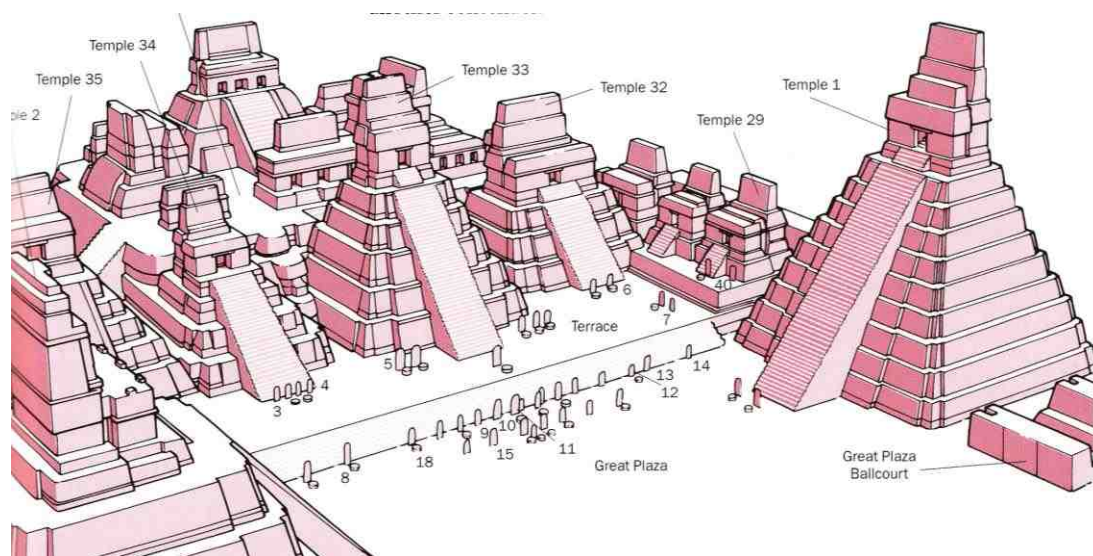


Figure 40. The North acropolis, Great Plaza, and Temples I (right) and II (extreme left) Tikal, Guatemala, (Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 43)

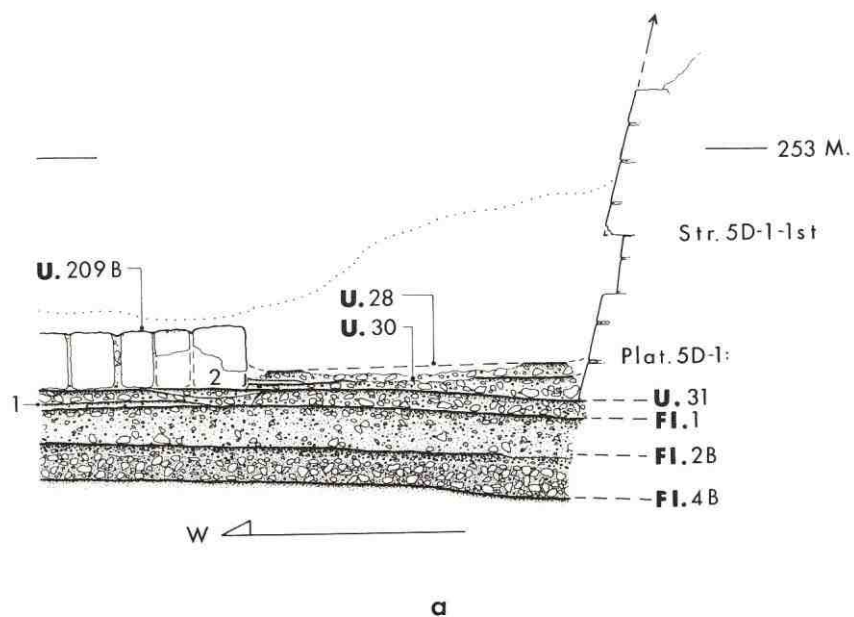


Figure 41. Drawing of plaza stratigraphy in relation to end of the base of Temple I Tikal, Guatemala. West stair base and the northwest corner of the structure. Image shows layers of thin grading on the plaza floor (Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 5: fig. 233)

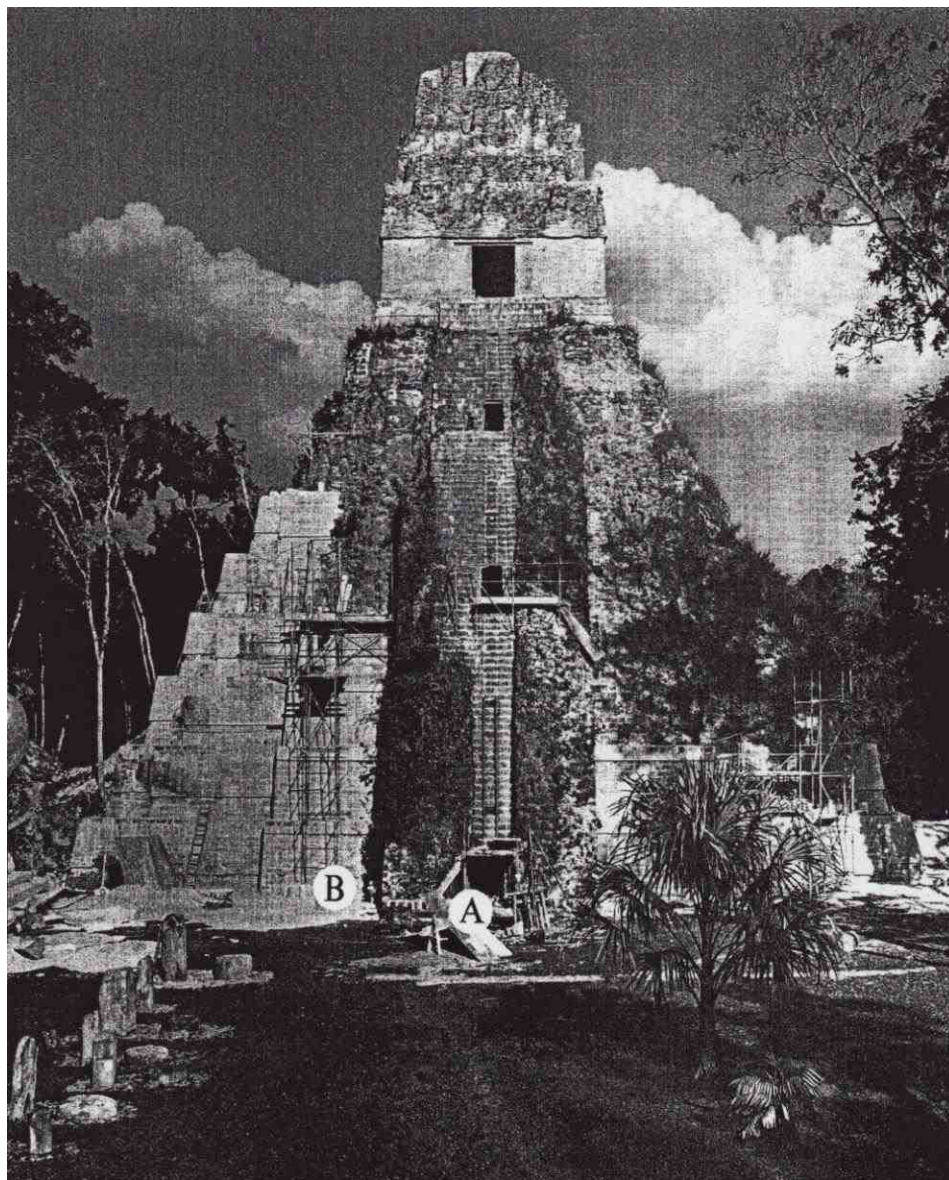


Figure 42. Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, “A” and “B” denote the locations where Trik and his team excavated looking for a royal burial (Trik, “The Splendid Tomb,” 4)

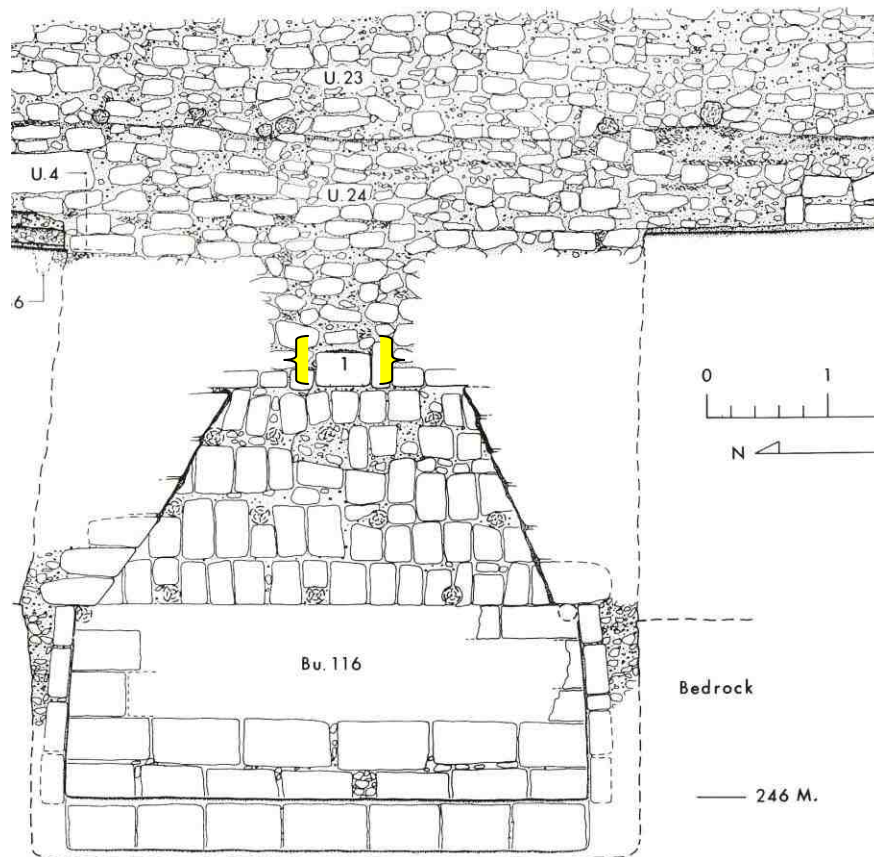


Figure 43. North south Section of Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, #1 denotes painted capstone. Lithic horizon deposit in Units 23, 24 (Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 5: fig. 258)

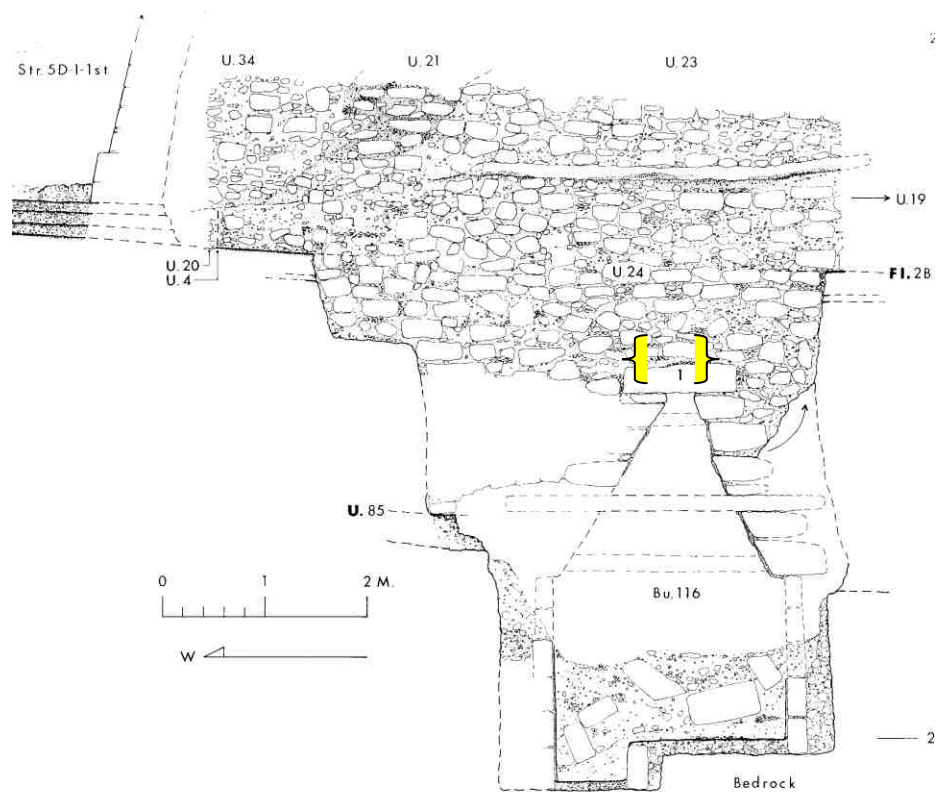


Figure 44. EW Section of Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, #1 denotes the painted capstone and above is a layer of flint chips and charcoal. Lithic horizon deposit is in Units 23, 24 (Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 5: fig. 259)

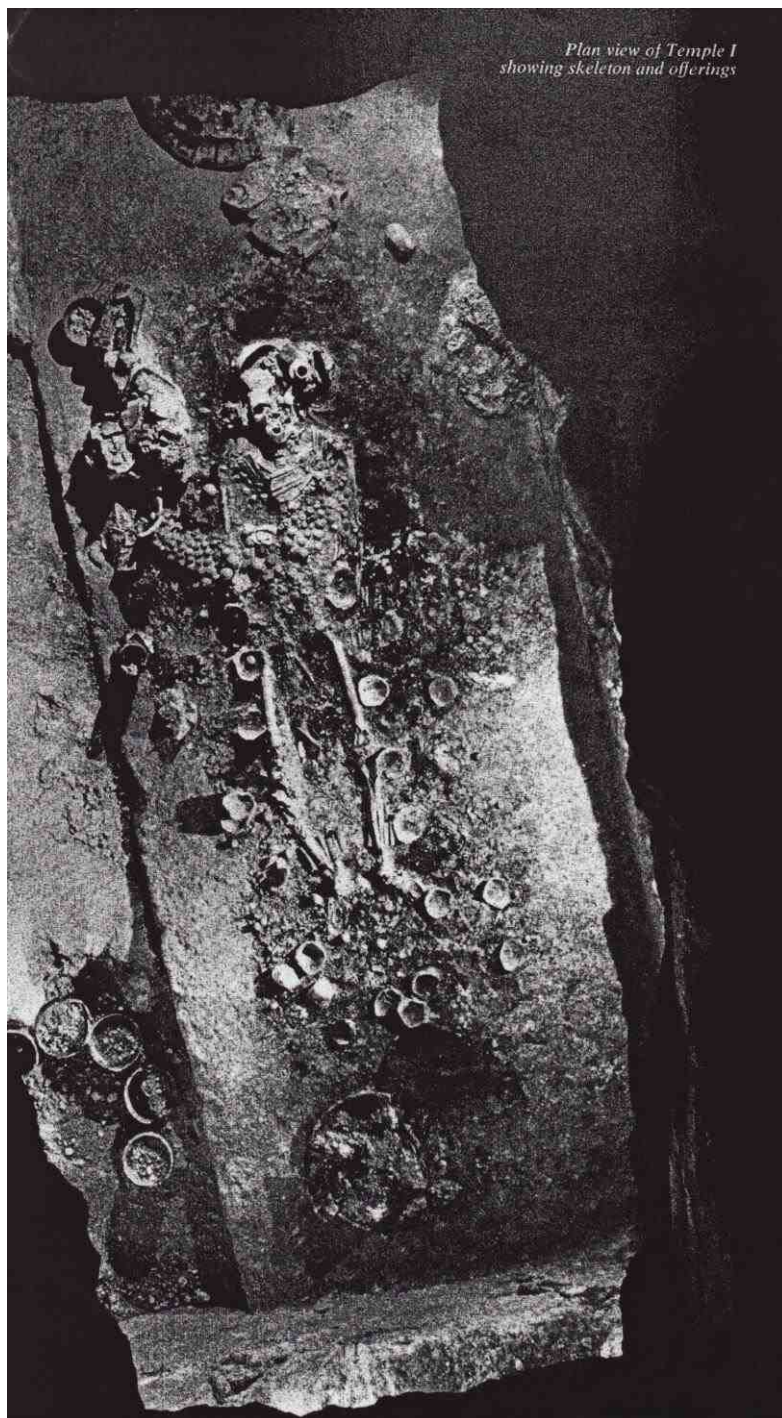


Figure 45. View Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, Jasaw and aisle to the west (Trik, "The Splendid Tomb," 2)

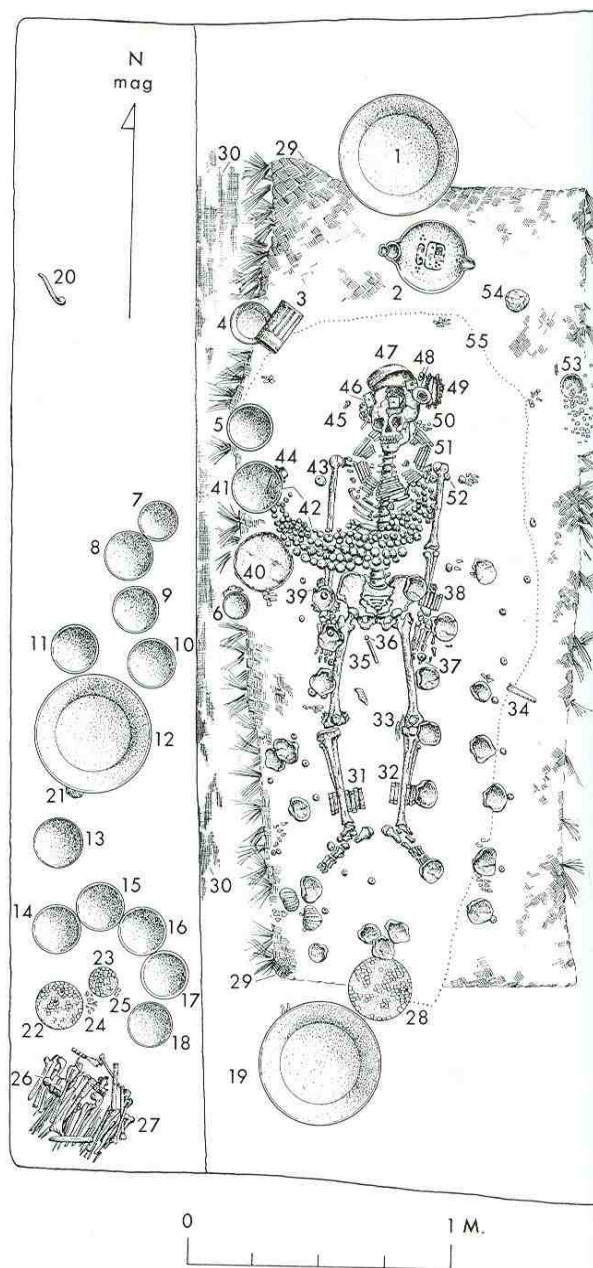


Figure 46. Plan of Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, Jasaw's interment (Harrison, *The Lords*, 144, fig. 85)

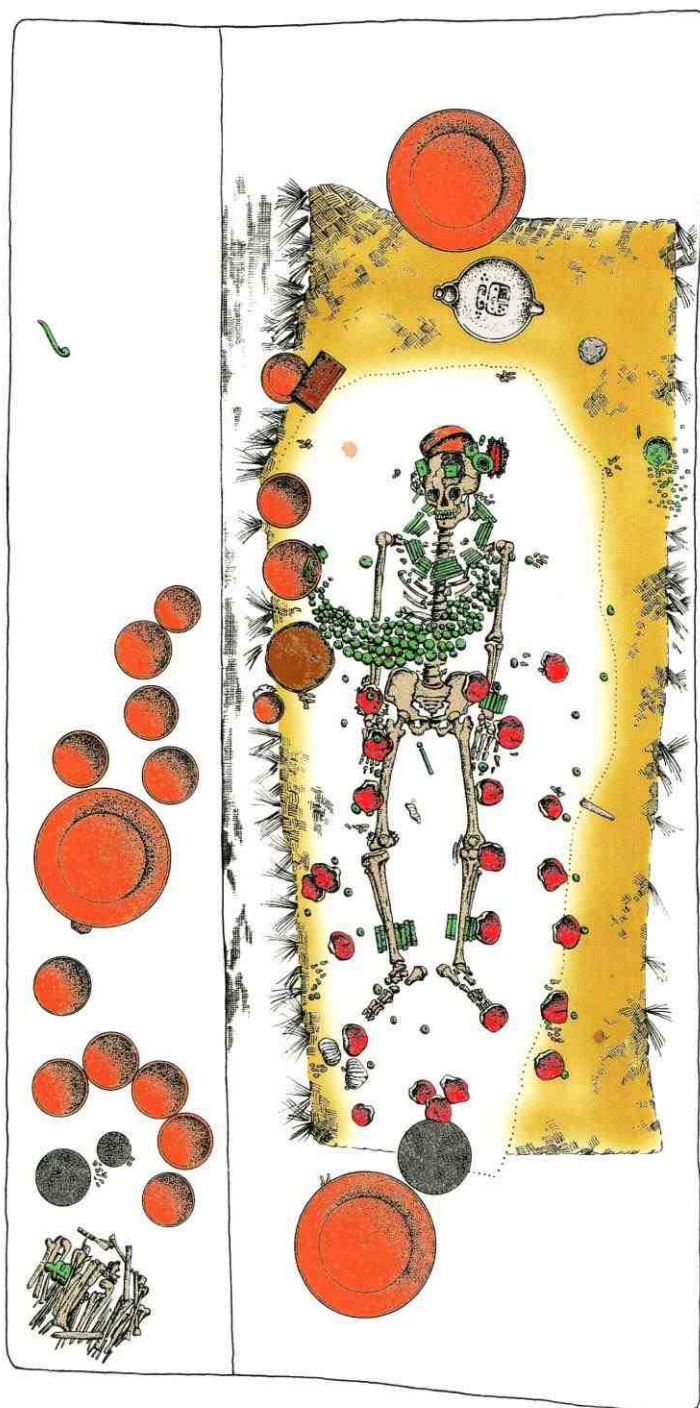


Figure 47. Color illustration of Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala. This image depicts the varied colors of the burial (copyright Peter D. Harrison)



Figure 48. Reconstruction of Jasaw's interment rituals, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (drawing by Terry Rutledge)

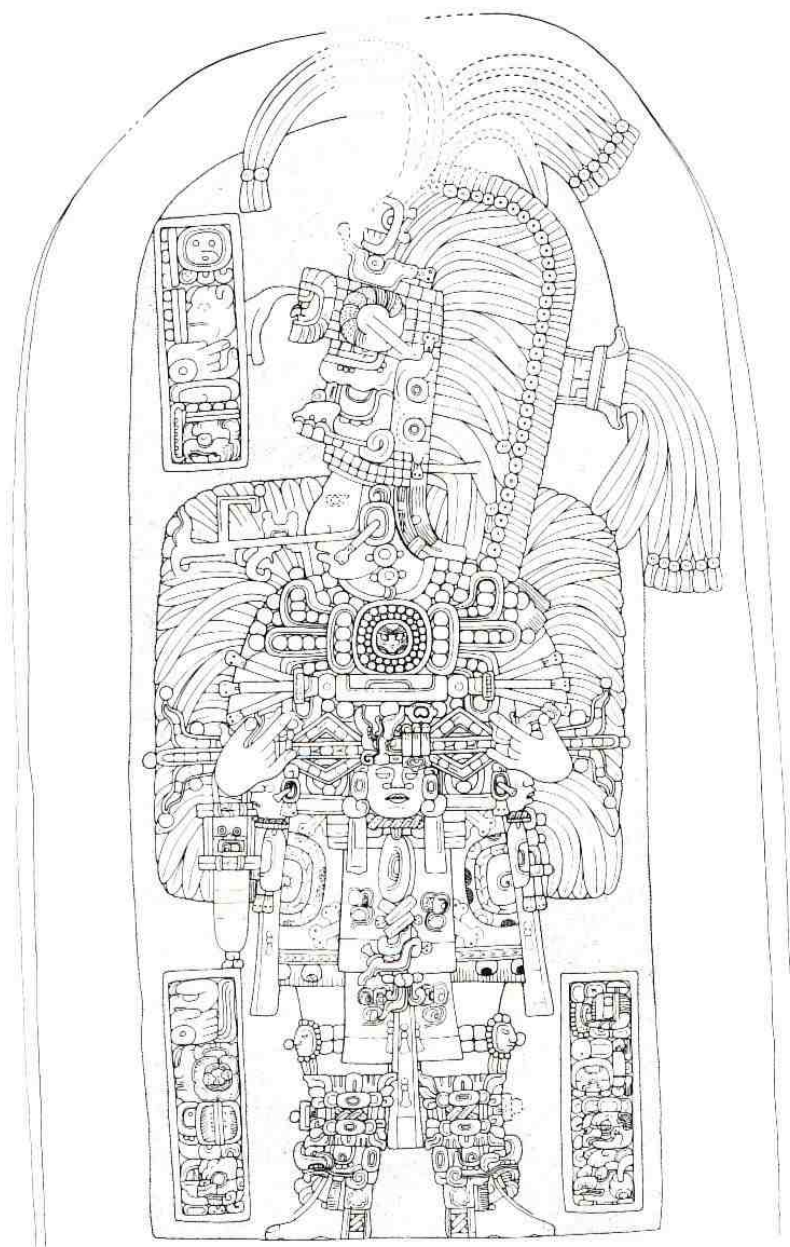


Figure 49. Drawing of Stela 16 located in N Group or Group 5C-I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Harrison, *The Lords*, 138, fig. 79)



Figure 50. Mosaic jade lidded portrait vessel, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Harrison, *The Lords*, 145, fig. 87)



Figure 51. Jade Figurine and cache of bones from the west aisle Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Triak, "The Splendid Tomb," 10)

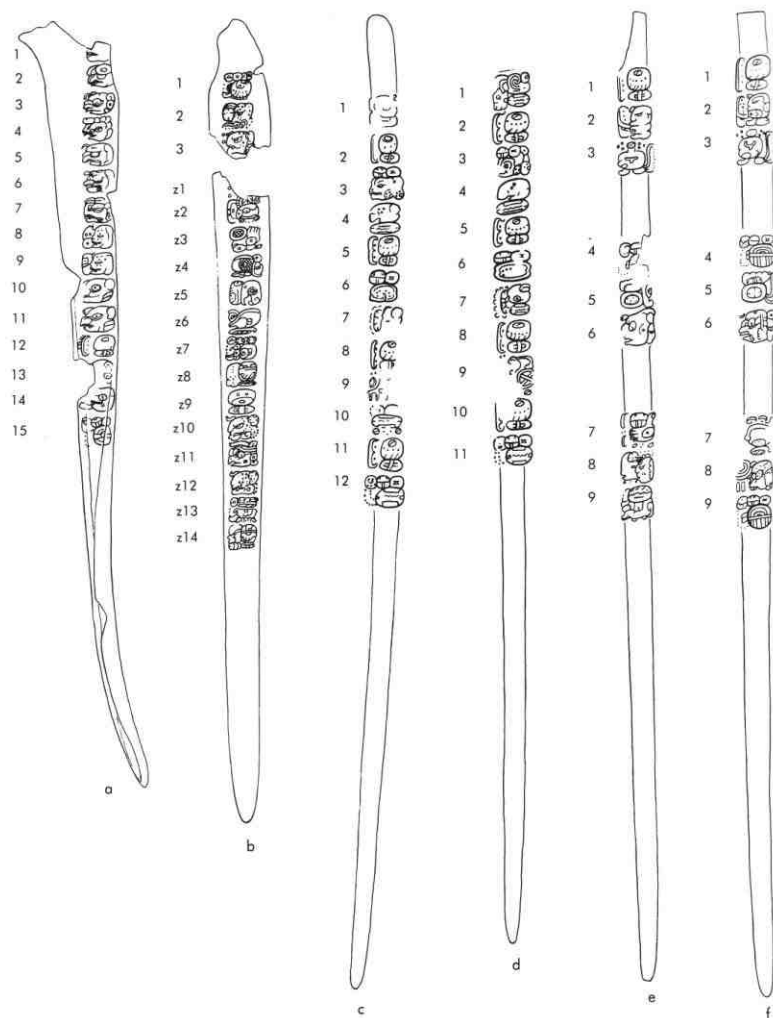


Figure 194. Inscribed Bone Set (1:1 scale). Inscribed bones from early Late Late Classic chamber burial, Bu. 116. a. 4P-113(53)/2, MT. 40, also Fig. A: 203e. b. 4P-113(49)/2, MT. 41, also Fig. A: 203d. c. 4P-113(61i)/2, MT. 42A, also Fig. A: 204d. d. 4P-113(61d)/2, MT. 42B, also Fig. A: 205g. e. 4P-113(46b)/2, MT. 43, also Fig. A: 204h. f. 4P-113(61a)/2, MT. 44, also Fig. A: 204g.

Figure 52. Incised bones with hieroglyphic inscriptions, cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27b*, fig. 194)

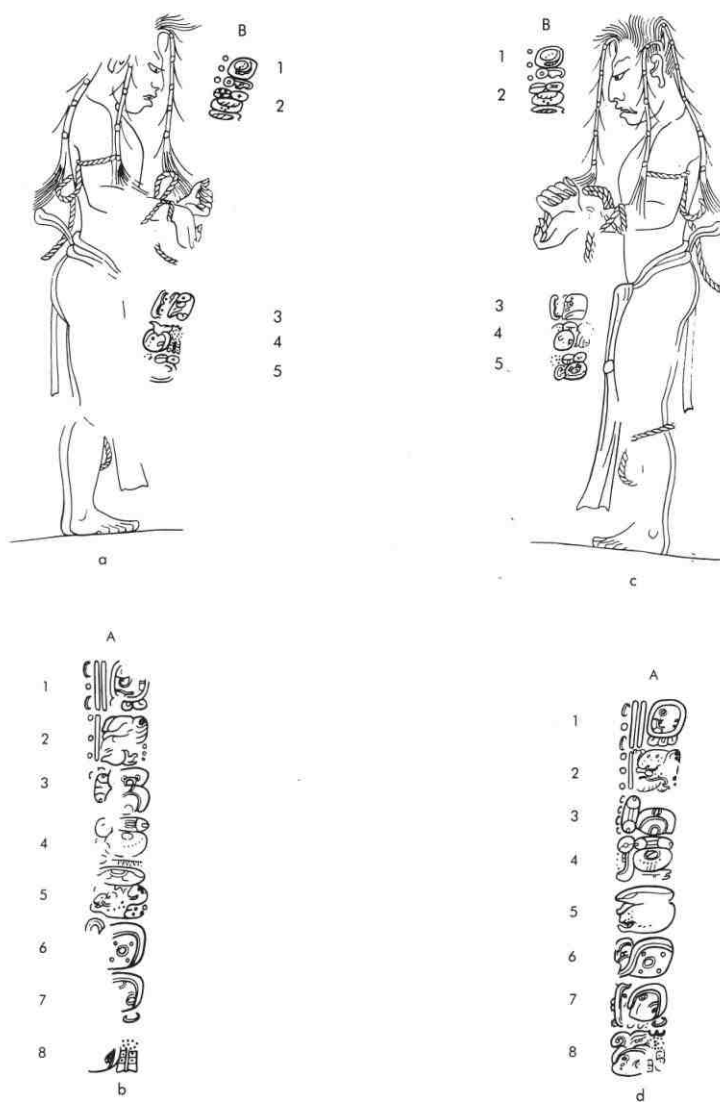


Figure 53. Drawing of the captive figure paired set of bones, cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27b*, fig. 200).

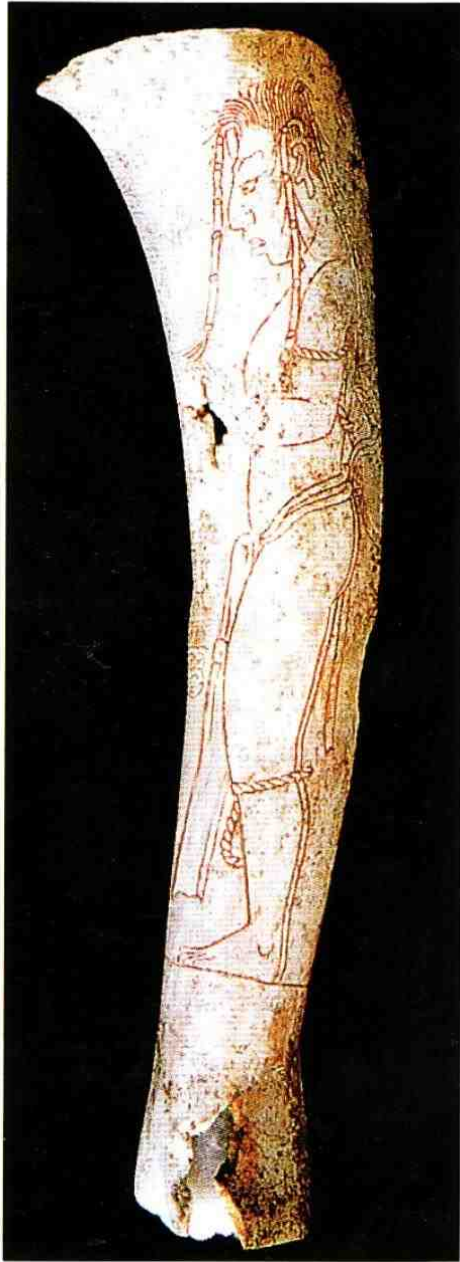


Figure 54. Carved bone, one of a pair of captive figures, cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Miller, *Maya Art and Architecture*, 219)

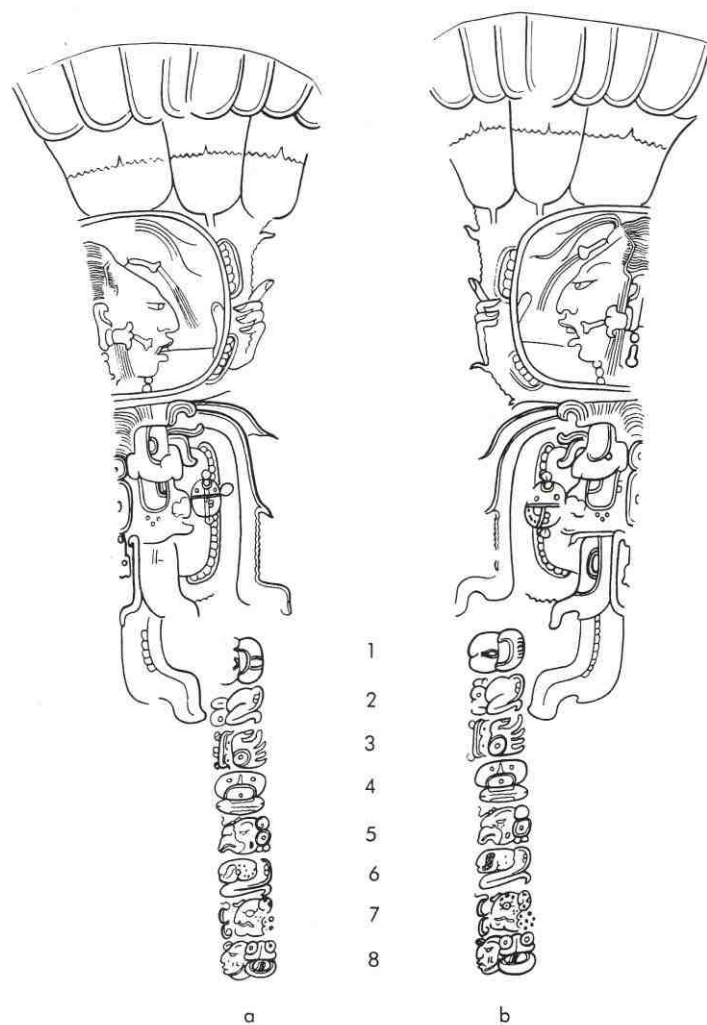


Figure 55. Drawing of the imagery from a paired set of “cartouche deity” carved bones, cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27b*, fig. 199 a, b)

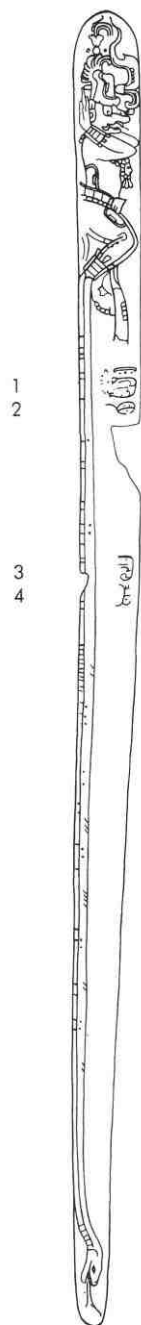


Figure 56. Drawing of sceptor-style carved bone with K'awiil figure, cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, Tikal Report 27b, fig. 197 c)

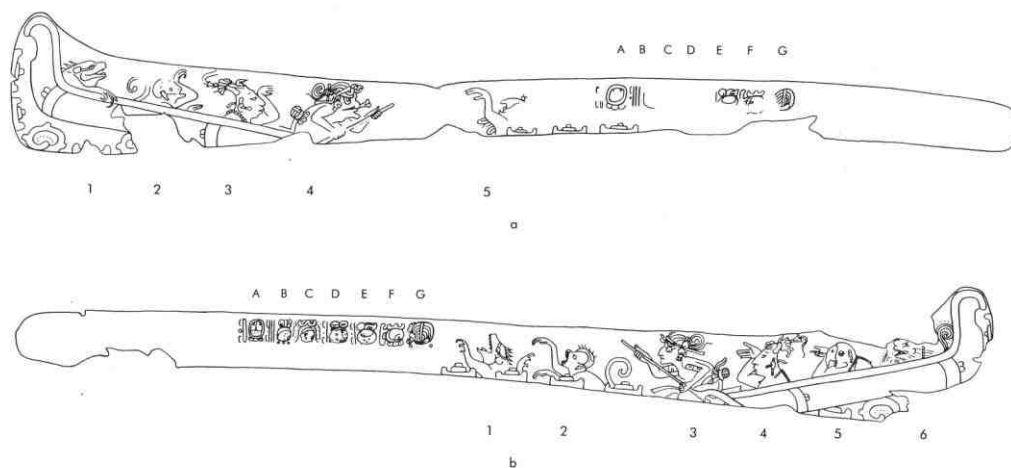


Figure 57-a. Carved Bones, Paddler Scenes, “sub-marine,” cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27b*, fig. 192)

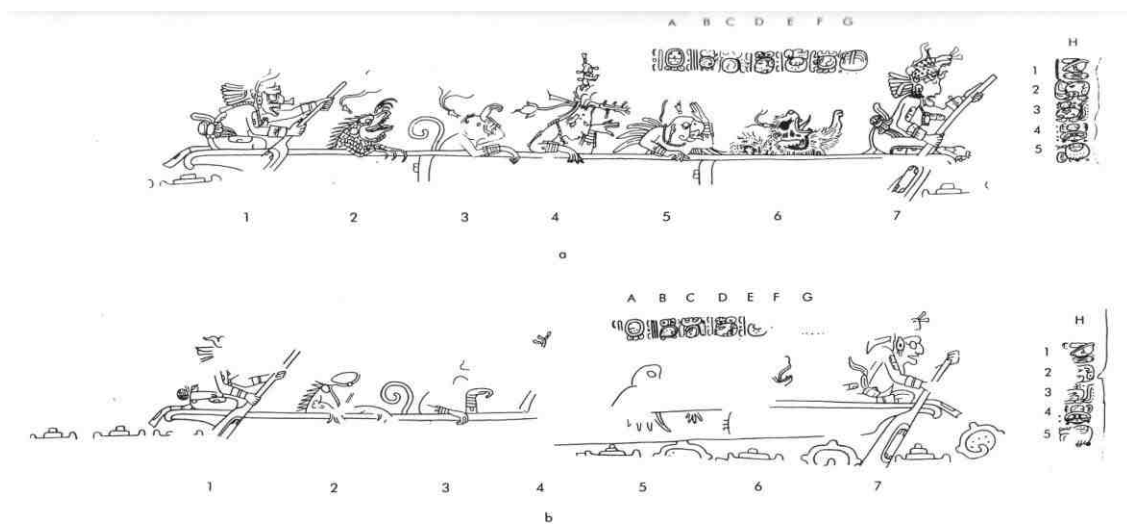


Figure 57-b. Carved Bones, Paddler Scenes, “terrestrial,” cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27b*. figs., 189)



Figure 57-c. Carved bone Paddler Scene “celestial,” cache from the west aisle, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Moholy-Nagy, *Tikal Report 27b*. fig. 190)

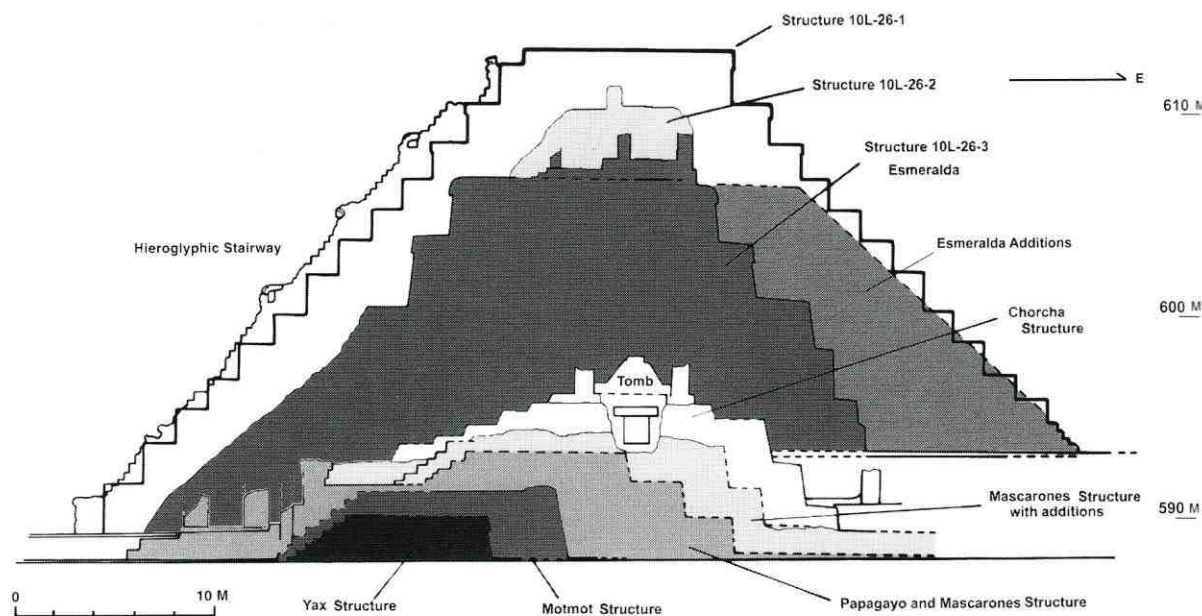


Figure 58. Cross Section of the architectural development of Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Rudy Larios, assisted by Jorge Ramos, Barbara Fash, and José Humberto Espinoza, in Fash, *Scribes*, 96, fig. 48)

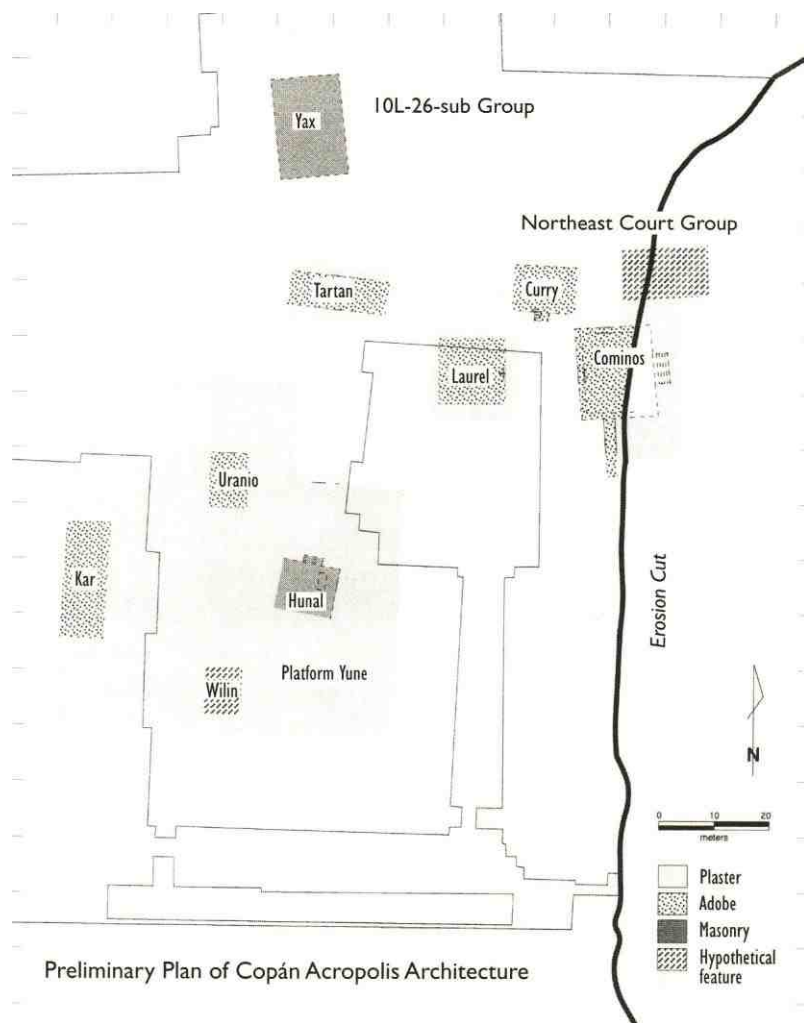


Figure 59. The early platform of the ceremonial precinct, Copan, Honduras with the the Yax structure at the north and nascent Structure 16 at the south, (Sharer, Sedat, Traxler, et al, “Early Classic Royal Power,” 154, fig. 5.2)

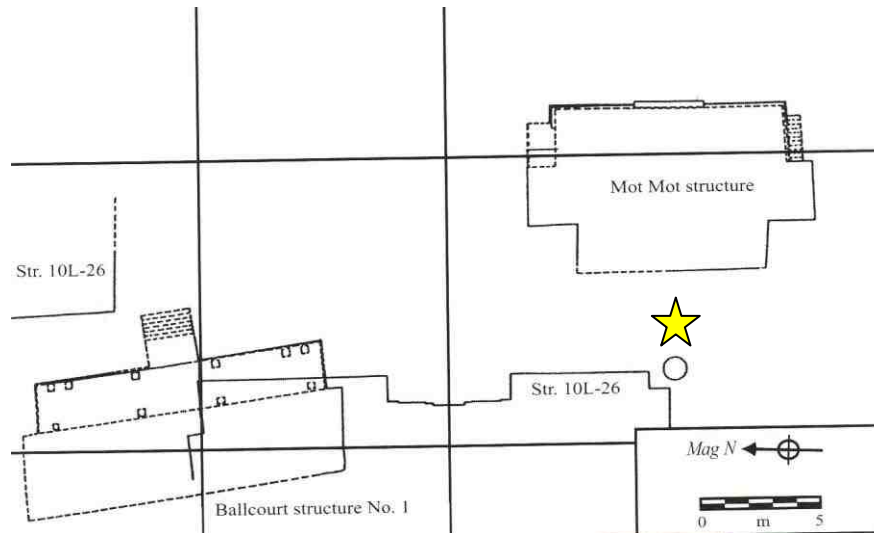


Figure 60. Early Motmot structure with outline of Temple 26 and location of the Motmot floormarker (marked with yellow star) boundaries of early Temple 26 are denoted center bottom and left side of the figure, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 66, fig. 4.1)

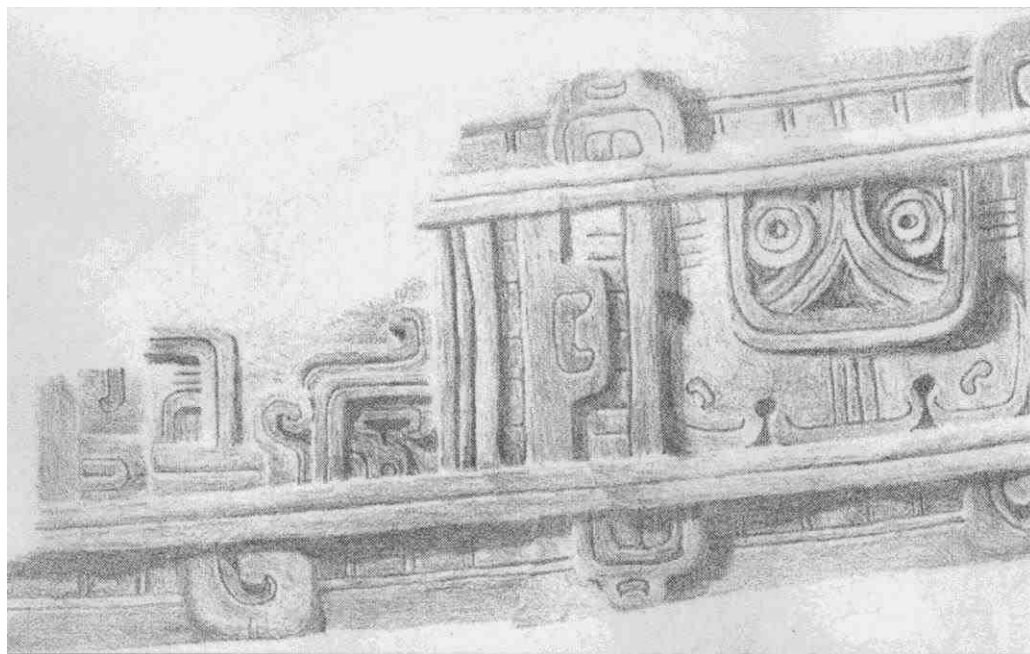


Figure 61. Drawing of the modeled stucco skyband southwest corner of the Motmot structure, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Nathan Fash, in Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 72, fig. 4.6)



Figure 62. Circular cist burial beneath the Motmot floor marker, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Fernando López, in Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 77, fig. 4.9)

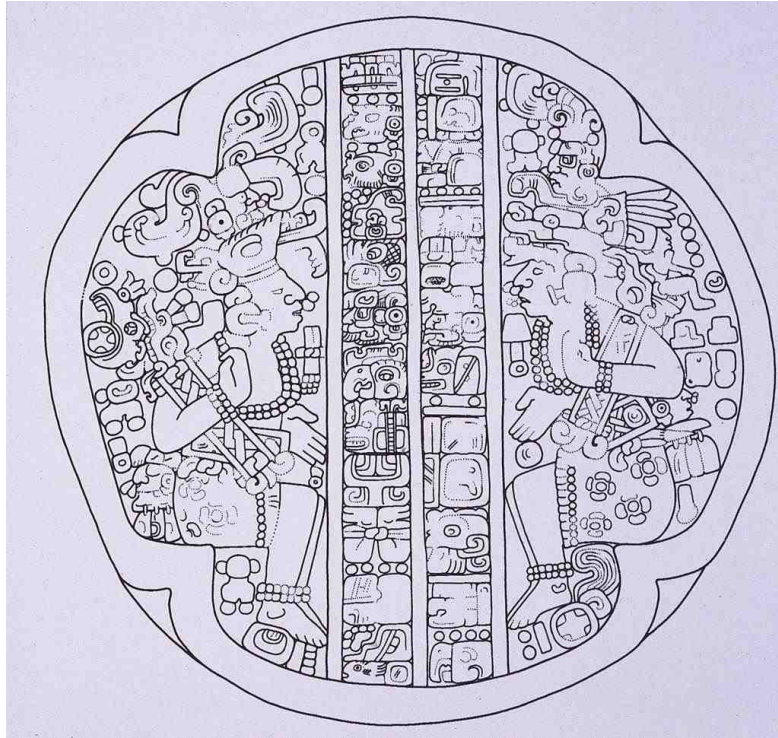


Figure 63. *Motmot* floor marker Kinich Yax K'uk' Mo' is depicted on the left and Ruler 2 is on the right, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Barbara Fash, incorporating suggestions made by David Stuart and James Fitzsimmons, in Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 70, fig. 4.4)

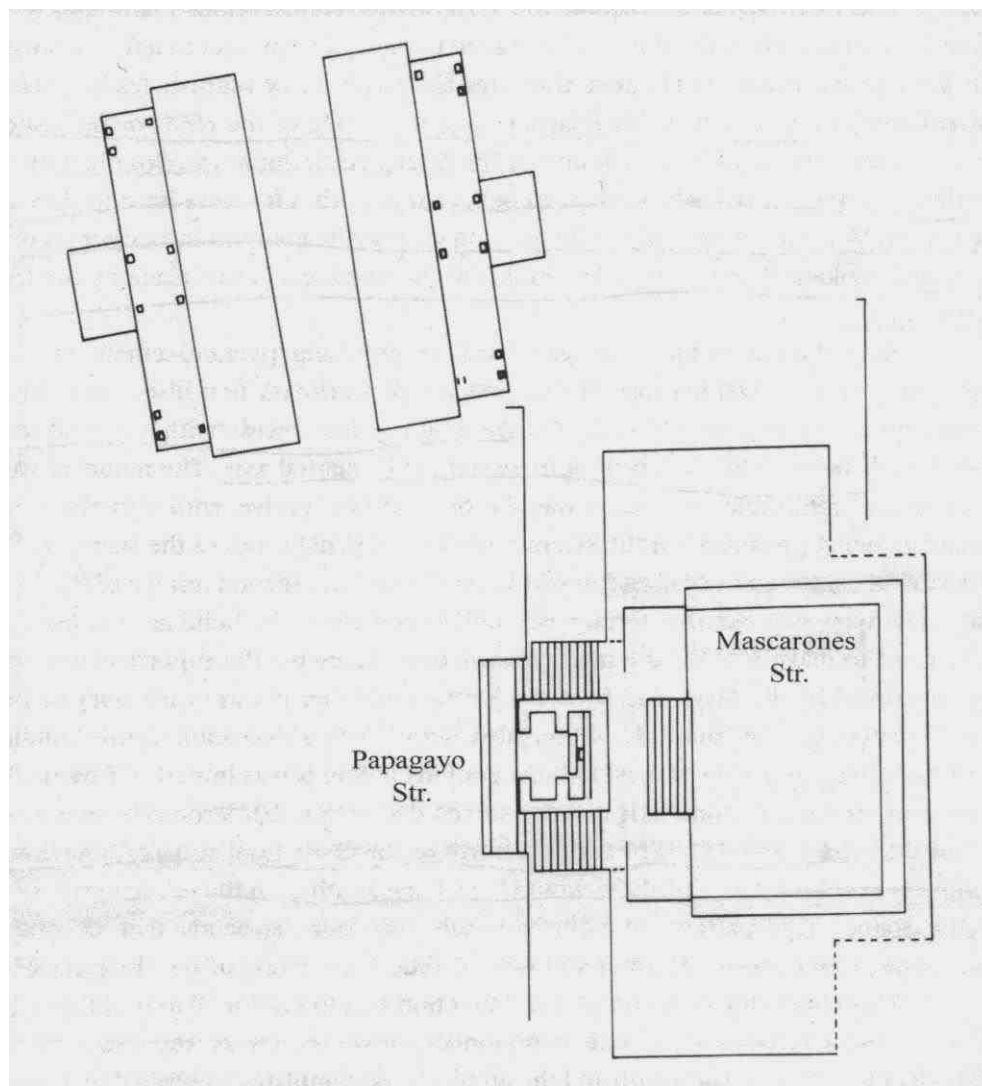


Figure 64. Plan of the Papagayo and Mascarones Structures, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Fernando López, in Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 77, fig. 4.9)

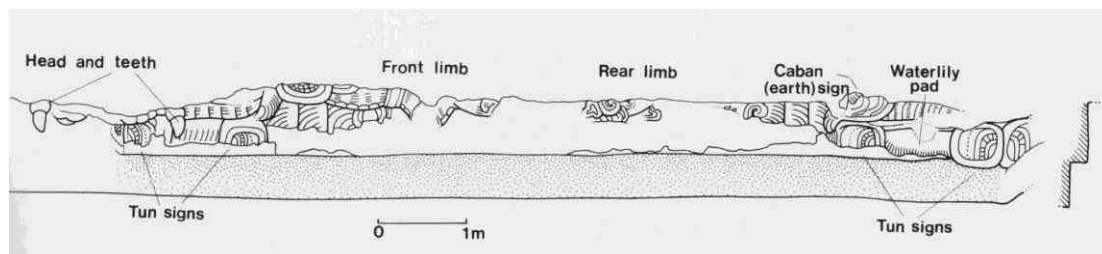


Figure 65. Drawing of the crocodile modeled stucco fragment from the back or east side of the Papagayo structure, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Barbara Fash in Fash, *Scribes*, 85, fig. 40).

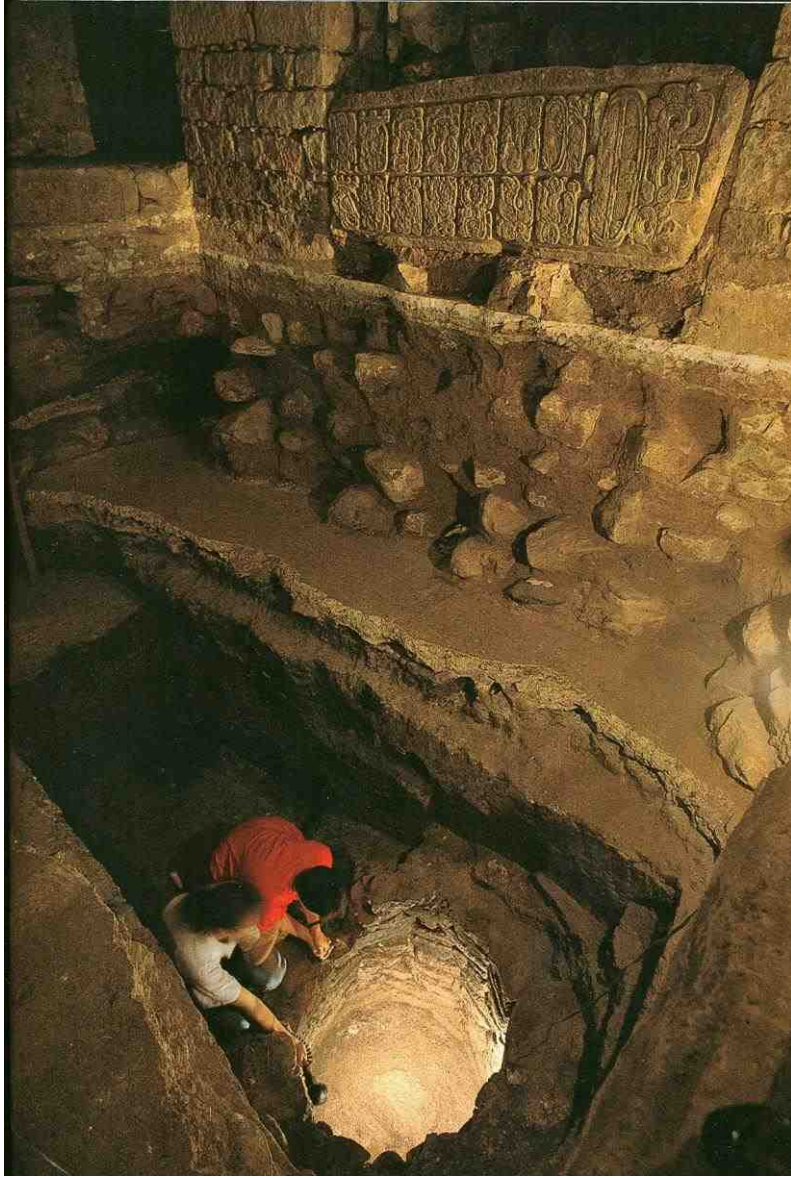


Figure 66. Stratigraphic depth of the Papgayo structure and shrine, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (photo by Kenneth Garrett, in Fash "Copan," 484)

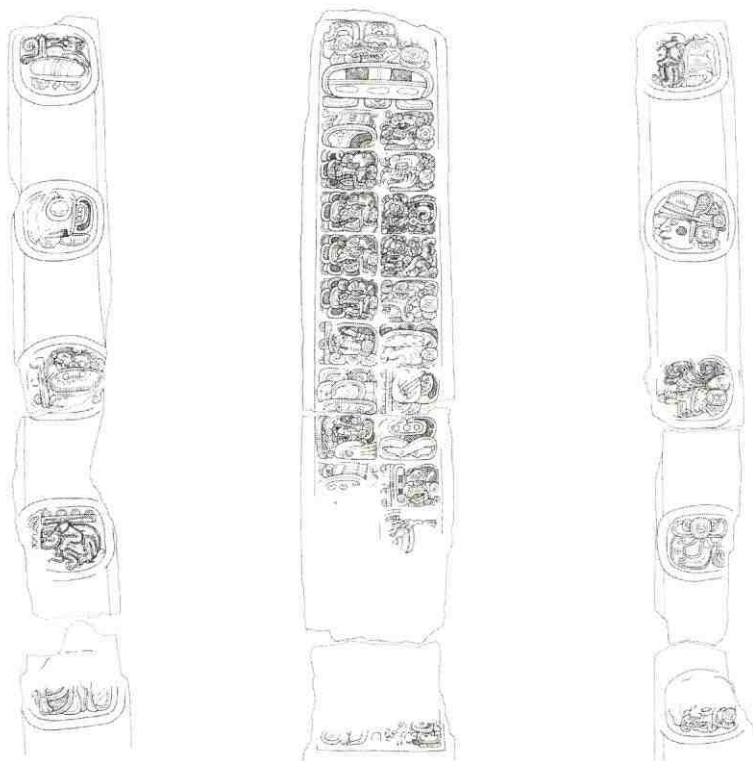


Figure 67. Drawing of Stela 63, Papagayo shrine, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Barbara Fash, in Fash, First Edition, *Scribes*, 82, fig. 37)

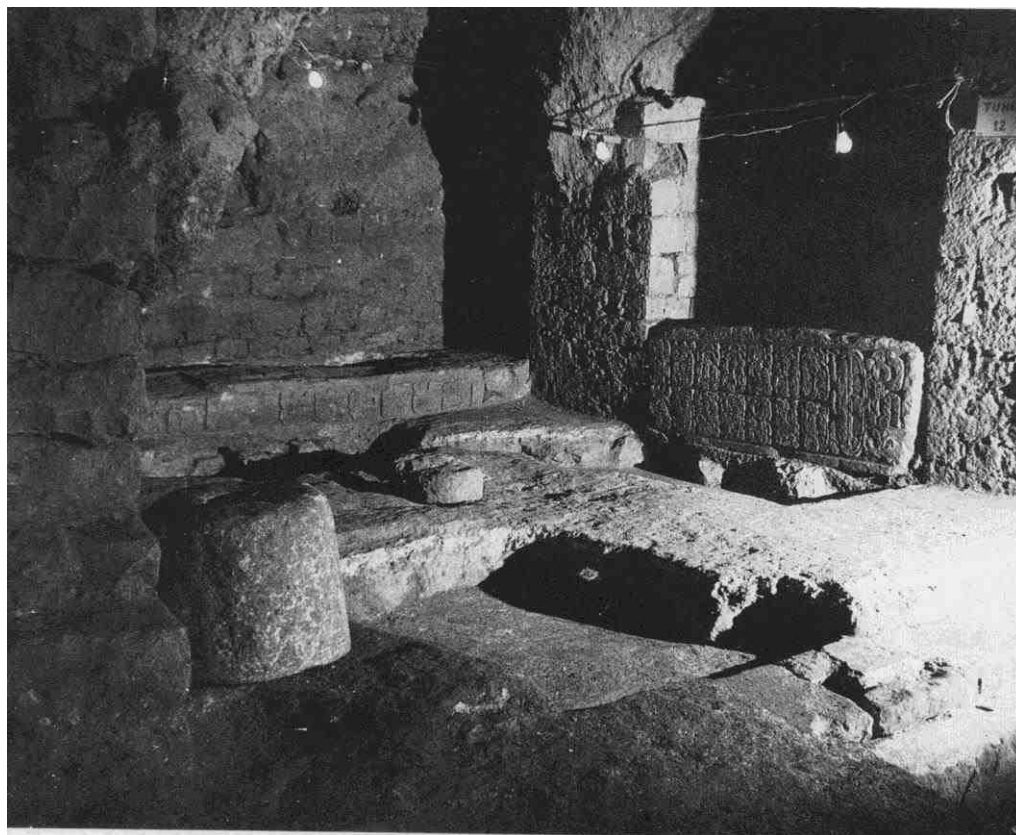


Figure 68. Interior view of the Papagayo shrine with the hieroglyphic step, Stela 63, and the covered square area (center) where the Motmot burial and marker were found, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (Fash, *Scribes*, First Edition, 83, fig.38)



Figure 69. Photo of the deposition of Stela 63 and cached macaw heads formerly adorning the ballcourt, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (Fash, *Scribes*, 63)

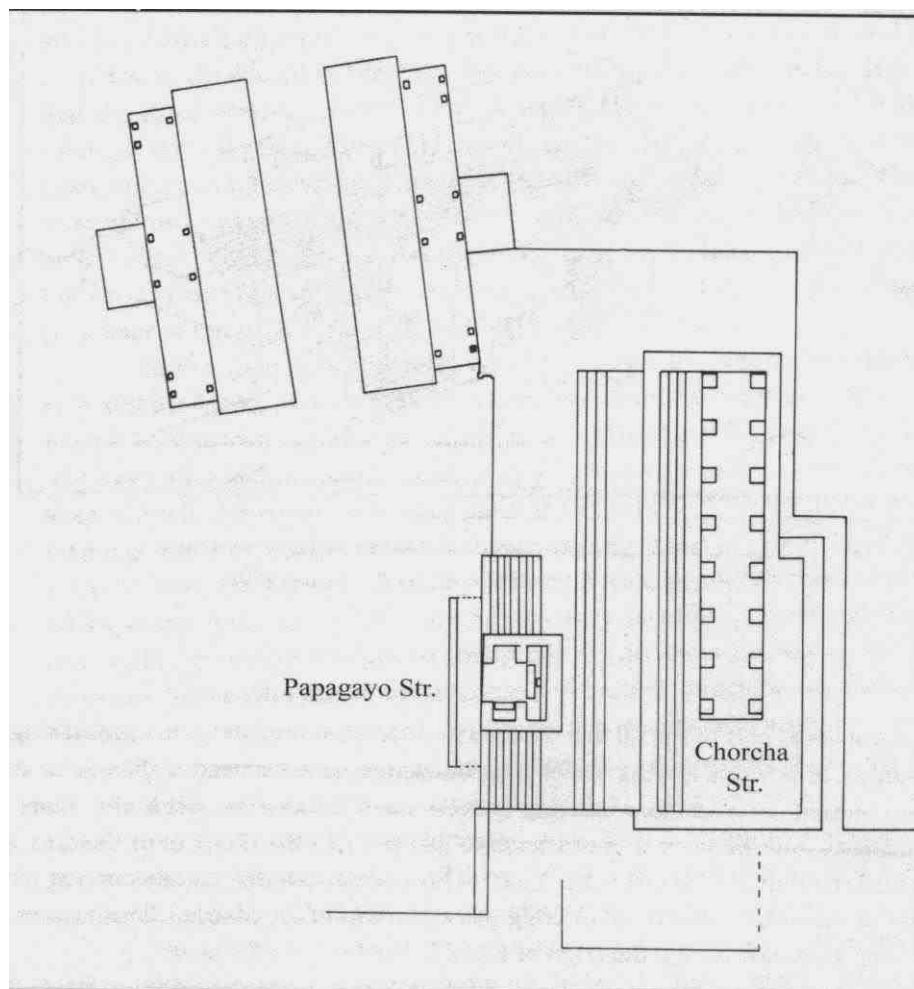


Figure 70. Plan of Papagayo and Chorchá Structures, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Fernando López, in Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 79, fig. 4.10)

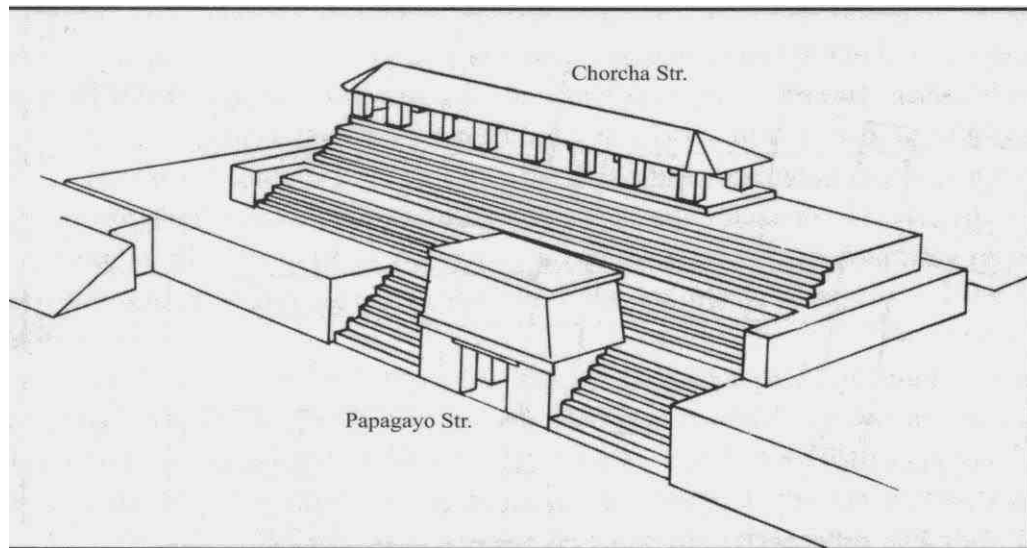


Figure 71. Isometric View of the Chorchá Structure with the Papagayo shrine, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Fernando López, in Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar, "Setting the Stage," 80, fig. 4.11)

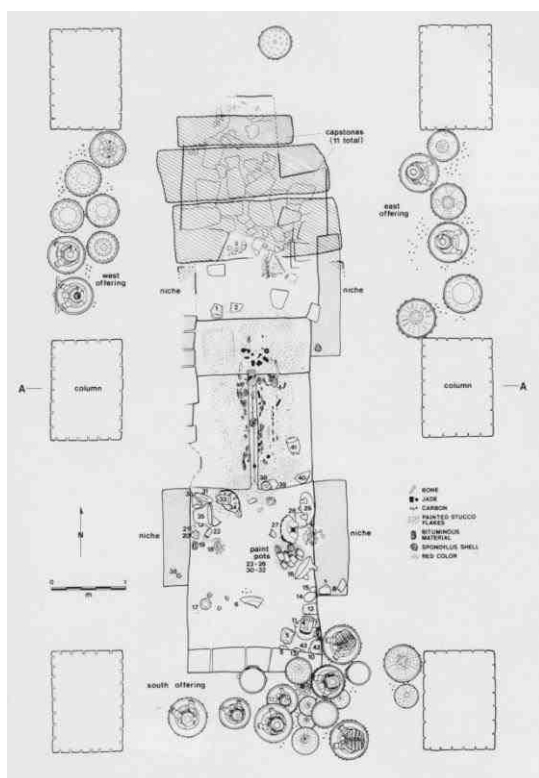
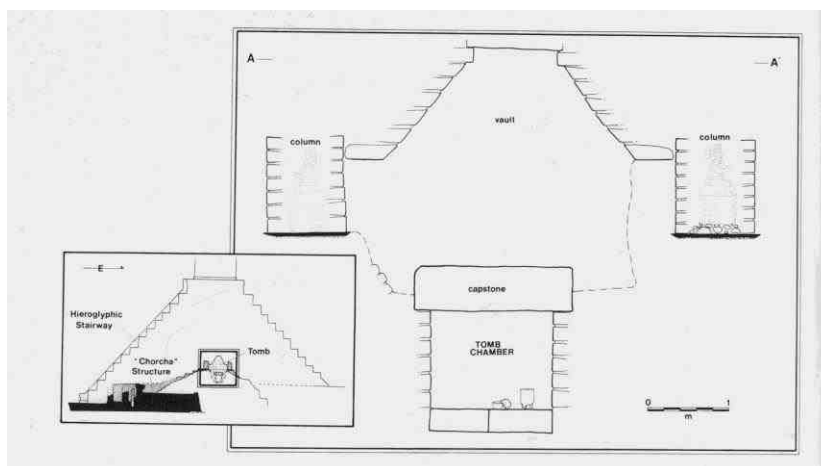


Figure 72. Burial XXXVII-4 Ruler 12 and the Chrocha chamber vault, Copan, Honduras (drawing by Barbara Fash [image modified by the author], in Fash, *Scribes*, First Edition 108, figs.65, 66)



Figure 73. Interior view of Burial of Ruler 12-Smoke Imix, Burial XXXVII-4, Chorchá Structure, Temple 26-sub, Copán, Honduras (Fash, Scribes, First Edition 106, fig. 61)

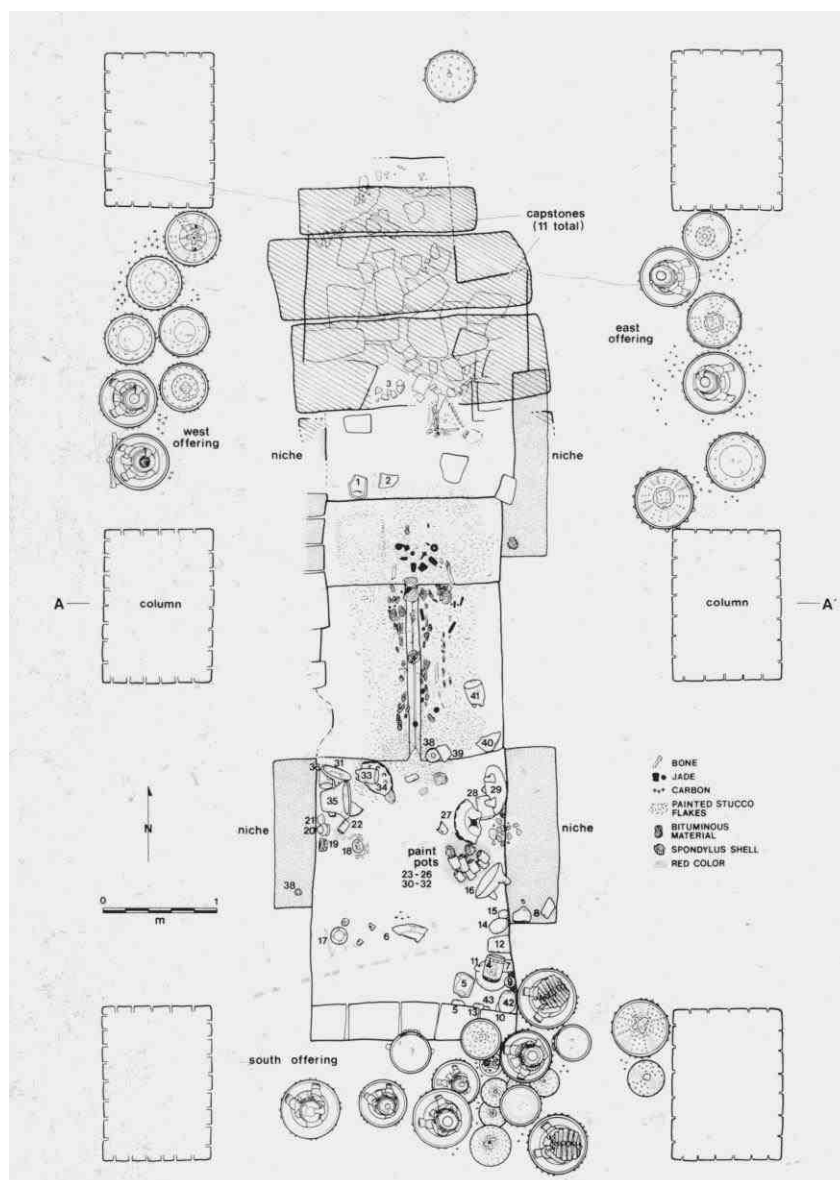


Figure 74. Plan View of Burial XXXVII-4, Ruler 12-Smoke Imix, Chorcha Structure, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (Fash, Scribes, 108, fig. 66)

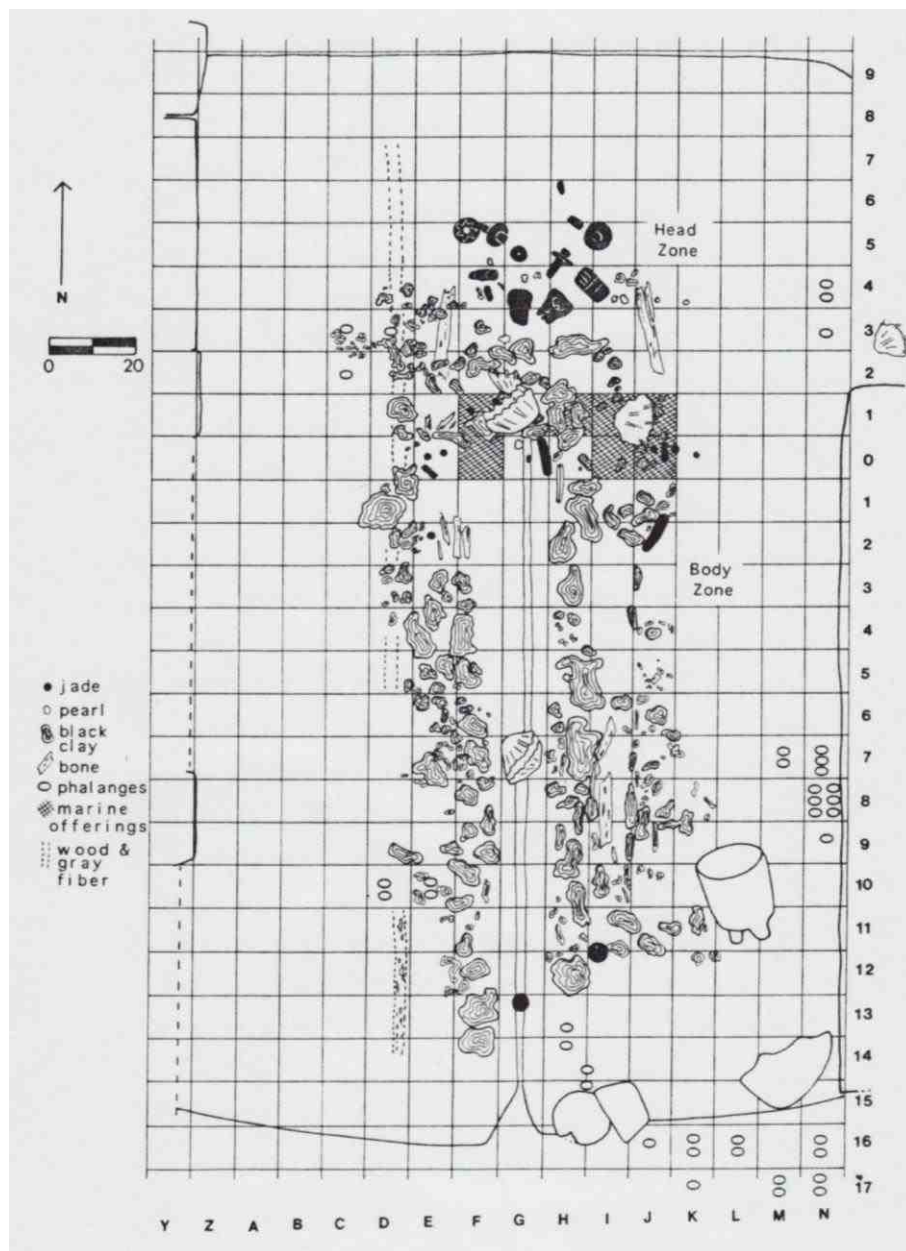


Figure 75. Plan of dais offerings, Burial XXXVII-4, Ruler 12, Chorcha structure, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (Fash et al., "The Trappings of Kingship," 163, fig. 10.6)

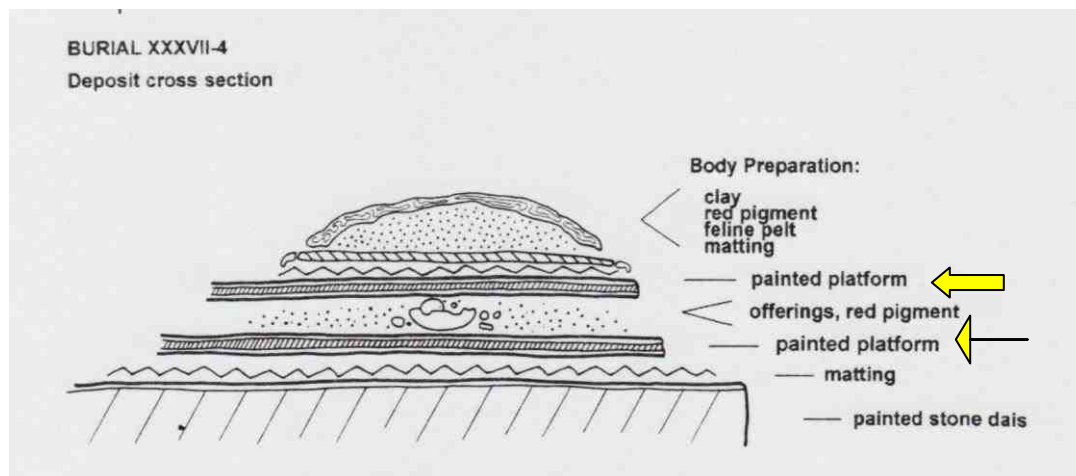


Figure 76. Schematic cross section of the dais stratigraphy, Burial XXXVII-4, Chorcha Structure, Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras, large yellow arrow denotes the upper platform and the thin yellow arrow marks the lower platform (Ruler 12–Smok Imix burial) (Fash et al., “The Trappings of Kingship,” 162, fig. 10.5)

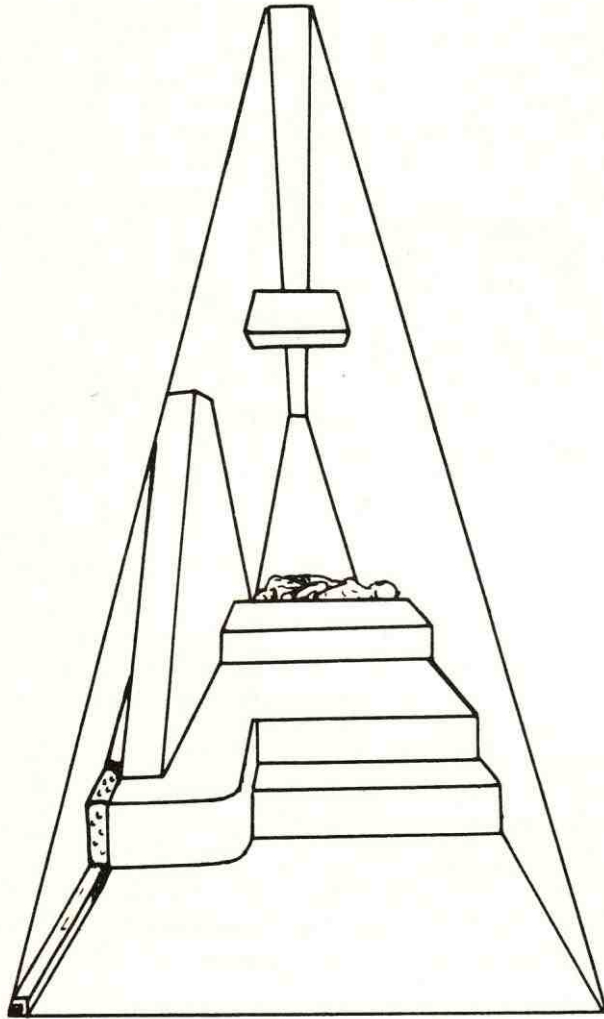


Figure 77. Drawing of the entrance to Pakal's burial chamber and the exequial sacrifice, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico. At the lower left is the psychoduct, found in the internal architecture. (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 227, fig. 258)

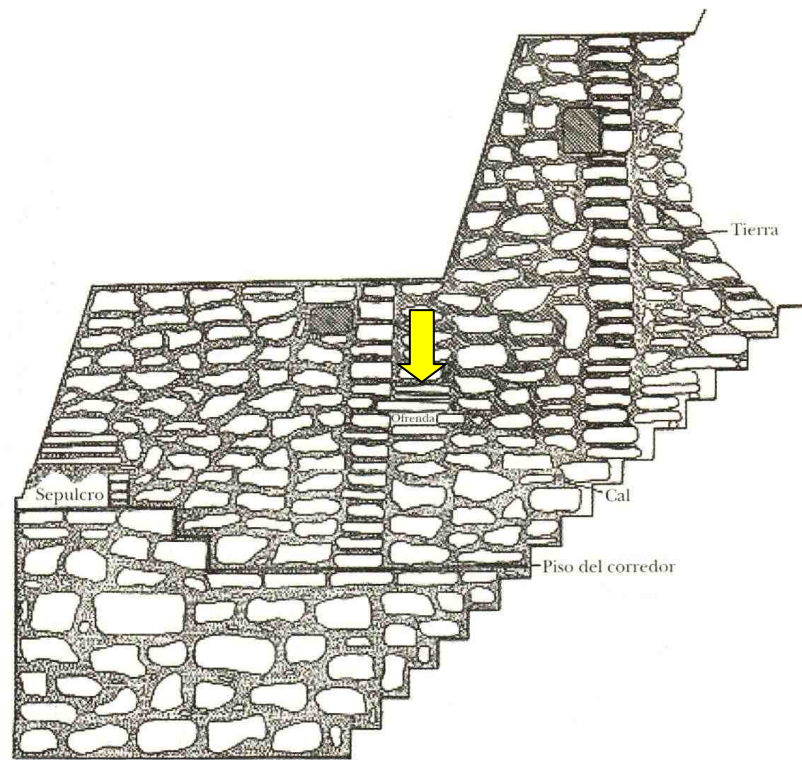


Figure 78. Elevation cross section of the east west corridor and the inter-wall offering, internal architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico, view is from the north looking toward the south (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 227, fig. 258)

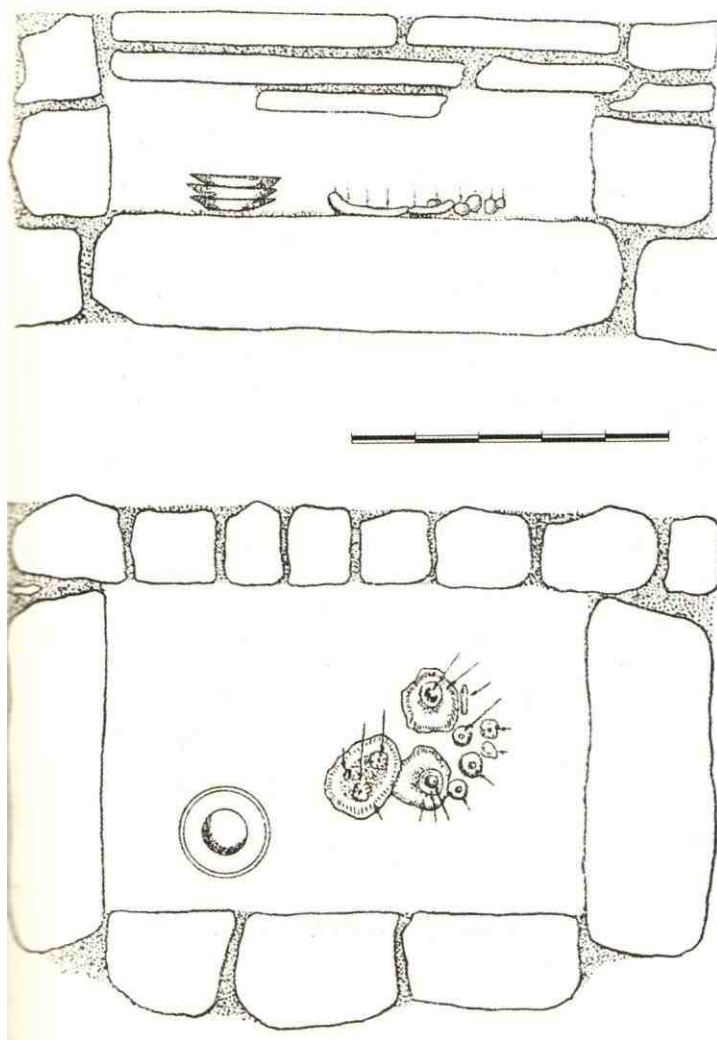


Figure 79. Drawing of section and plan of the inter-wall offering from the east west corridor, internal architecture of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig. 162, fig.179)

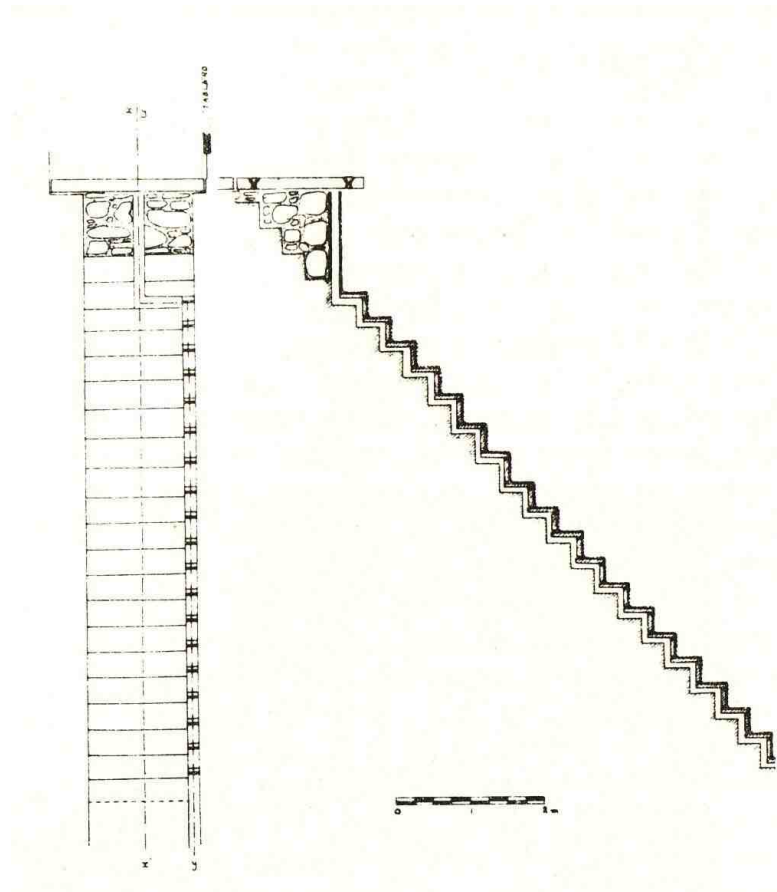


Figure 80. Cross section and plan view of the interior stairs of the Temple of the Inscriptions, profiled is the psychoduct that follows each riser, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 122, fig. 126).

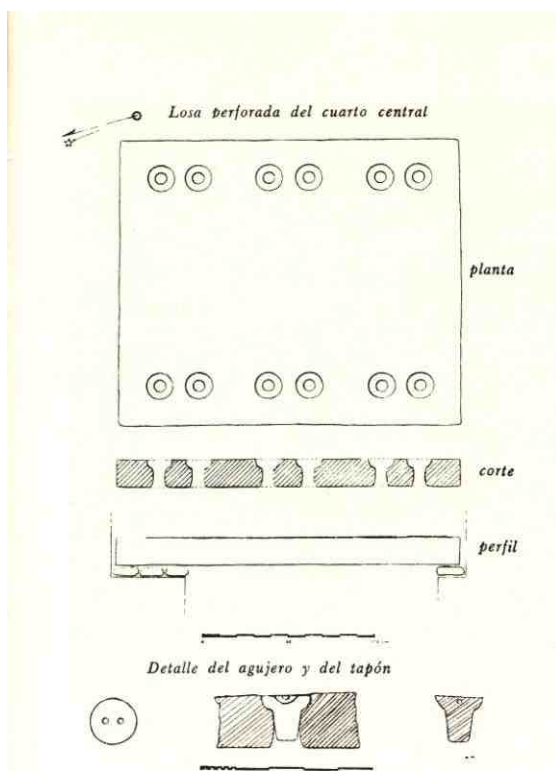


Fig. 127



Fig. 128

Figure 81. Photo of hidden floor entrance to the internal staircase and drawing of the flagstone seal from the central chamber in the superstructure, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 123, fig. 128)

Fig. 130

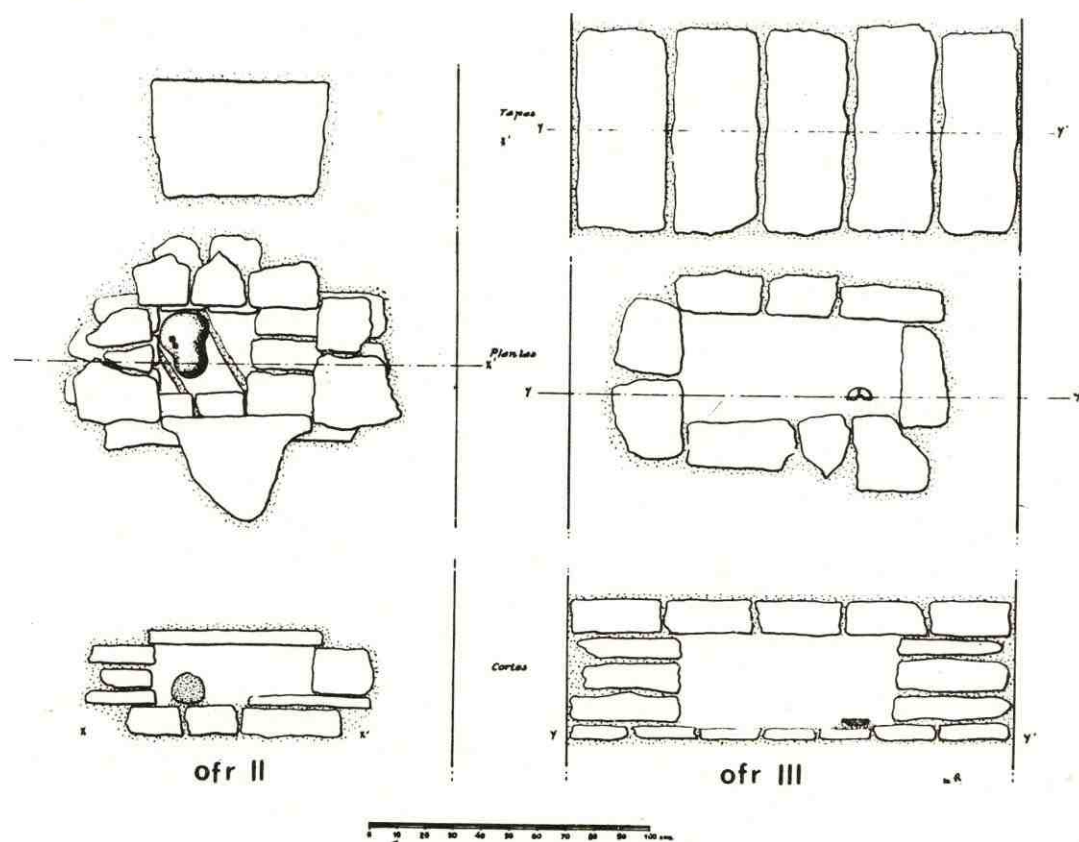


Figure 82. Section and plan drawing of offerings from the top of the internal stairs, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 125, fig. 130)

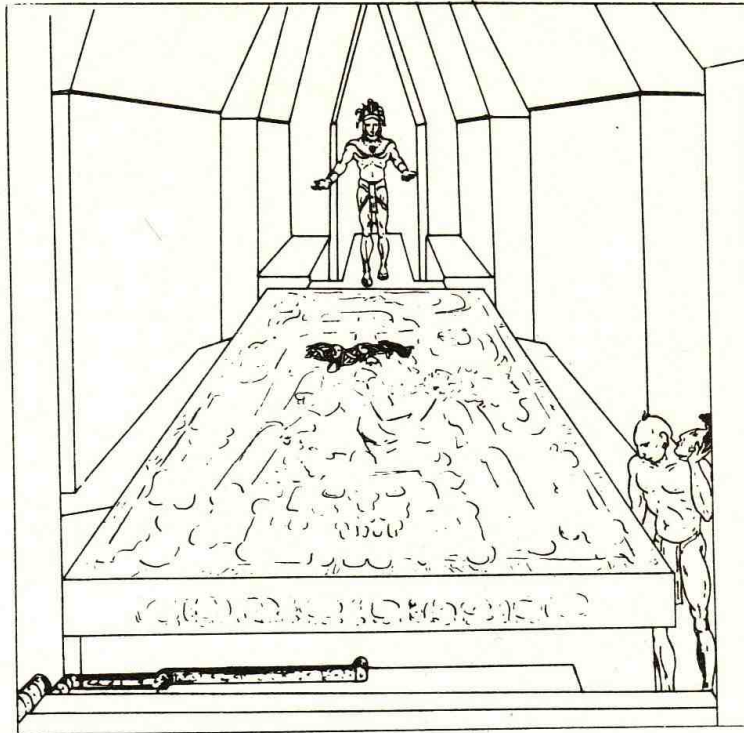


Figure 83. Reconstruction drawing of the interment of offerings in the tomb chamber, *descansillo*, and psychoduct, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 226, fig. 257, fig. 124)

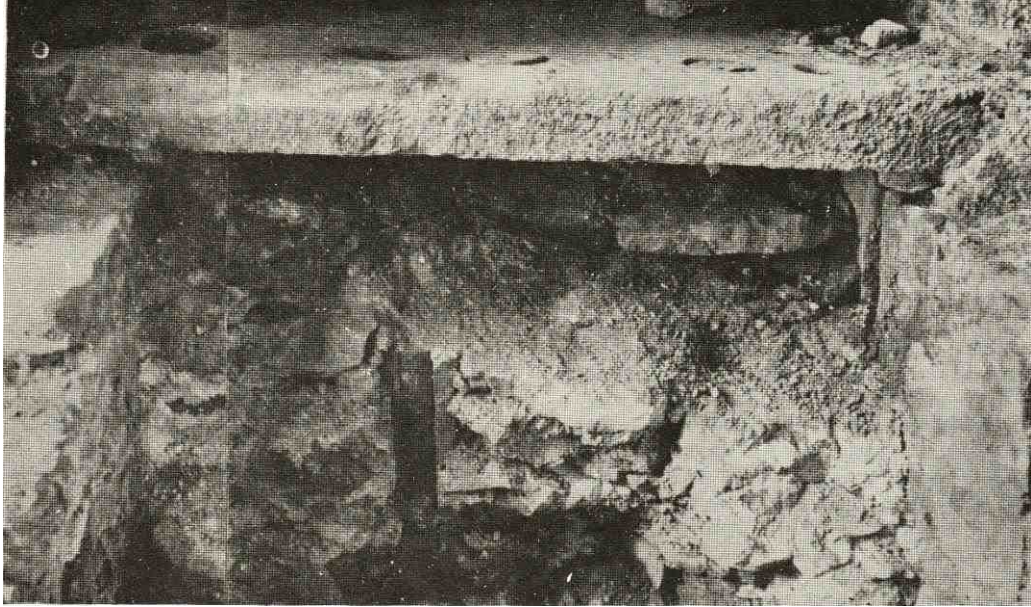


Figure 84. Threshold to the internal staircase with detail of void where the psychoduct was located, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 121)



Figure 85. Chorchá Structure incensarios in situ, Burial XXXVII-4, Ruler 12-Smoke Imix, Temple 26-sub, Copán, Honduras (Fash, *Scribes*, 107, fig. 62)



Figure 86. Portrait incense burner interpreted as founder, K'inich Yax K'uk' Mo,'
Chorcha Structure incensarios in situ, Burial XXXVII-4, Ruler 12-Smoke Imix,
Temple 26-sub, Copan, Honduras (Fash, *Scribes*, Revised Edition, cover image)

Fig. 259 (PRIMERA FASE DE LA CONSTRUCCION)

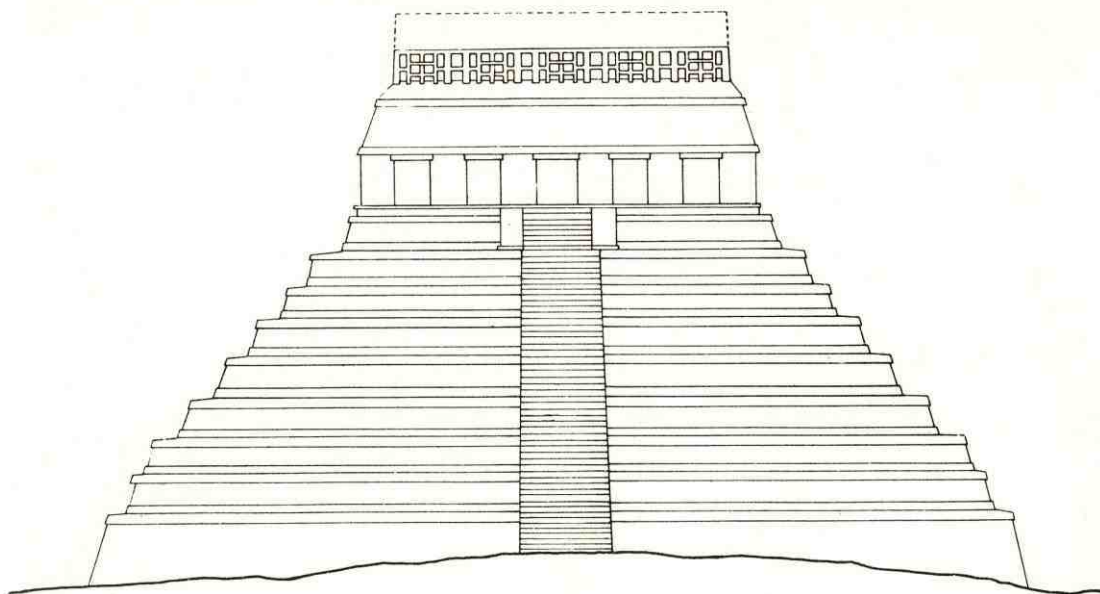


Fig. 259a (Norte)

Figure 87-a. First phase of construction, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 232, fig. 259a)

Fig. 260 (SEGUNDA FASE DE LA CONSTRUCCION)

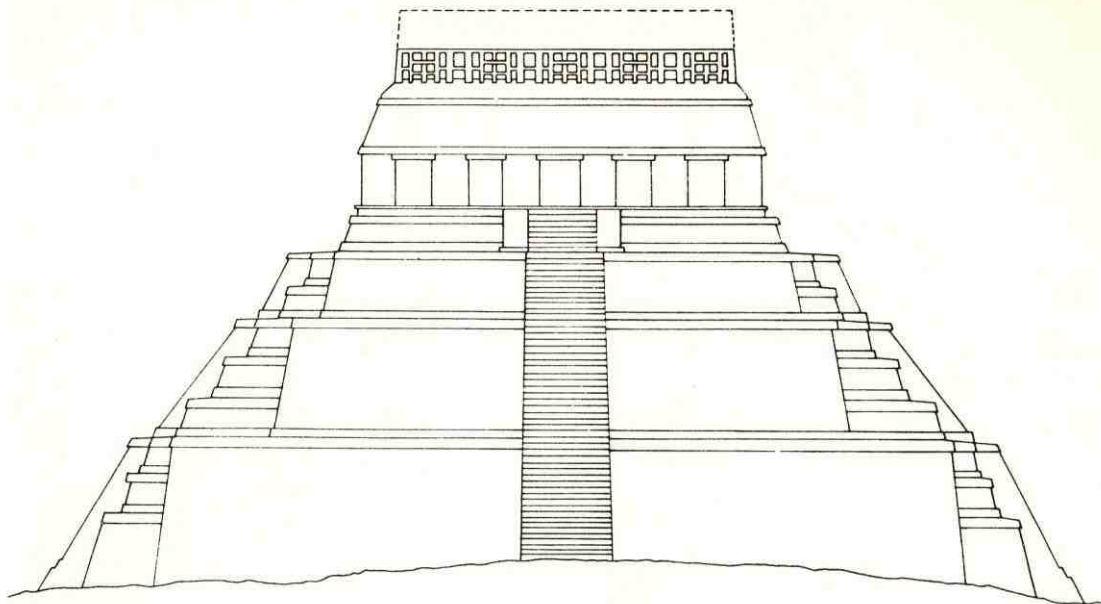


Fig. 260a (Norte)

Figure 87-b. Second phase of construction, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 233, fig. 260a)

Fig. 261. (TERCERA FASE DE LA CONSTRUCCION)

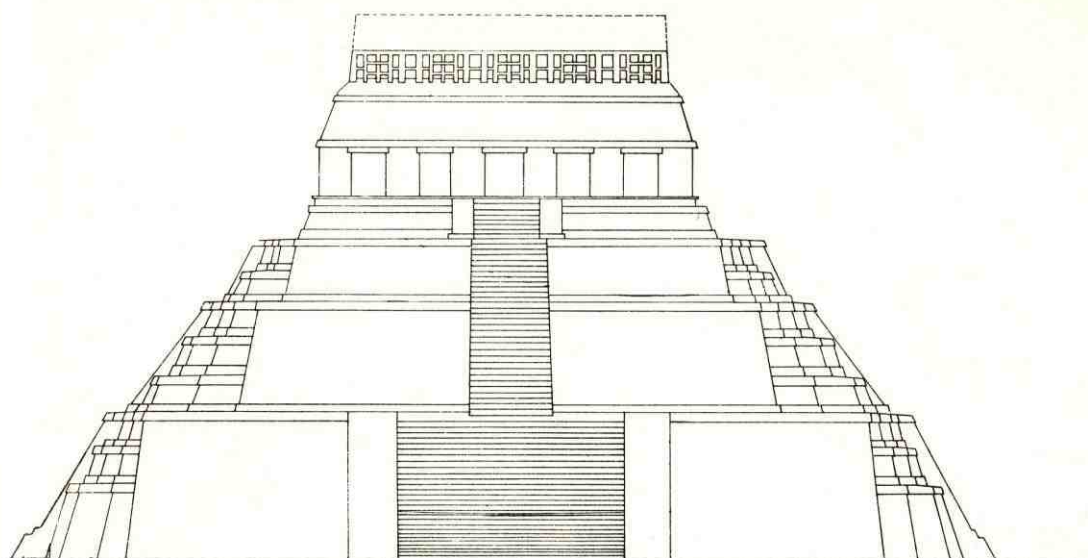


Fig. 261a (Norte)

Figure 87-c. Third phase of construction, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 240, fig. 261a)

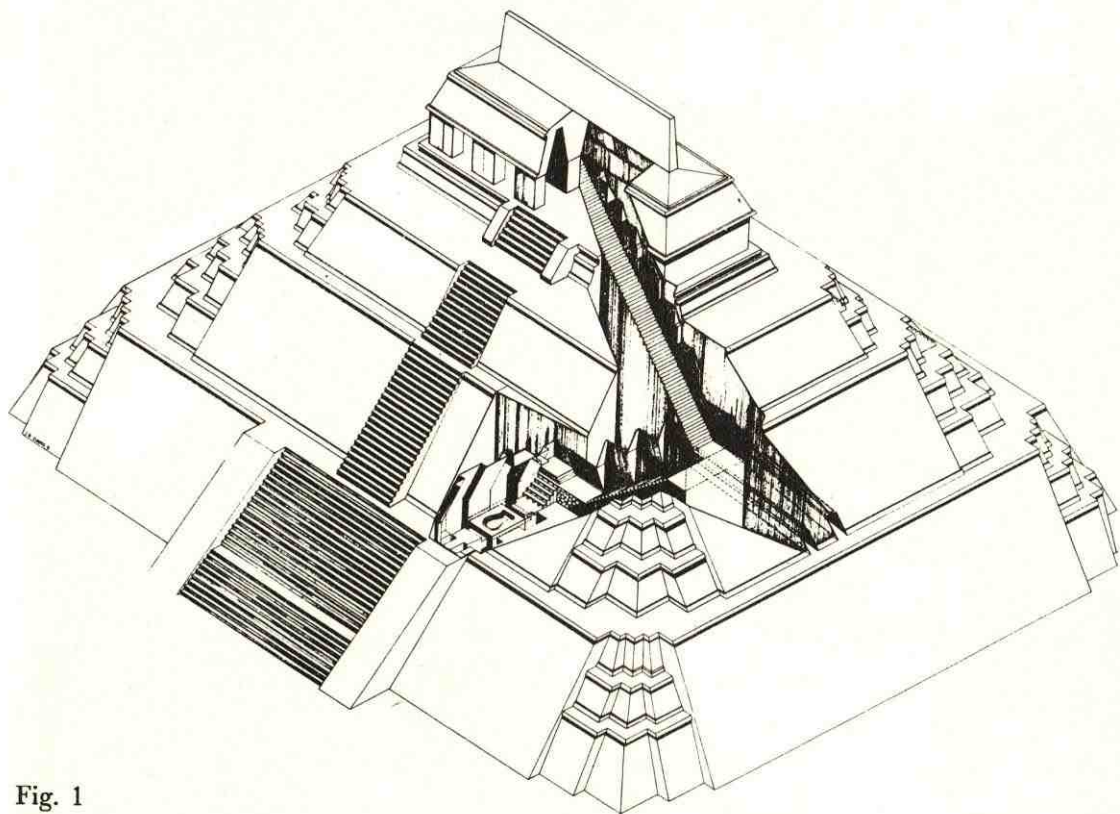


Fig. 1

Figure 88. Isometric view of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico final phase of construction, Palenque, Mexico (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, 13, fig. 1)

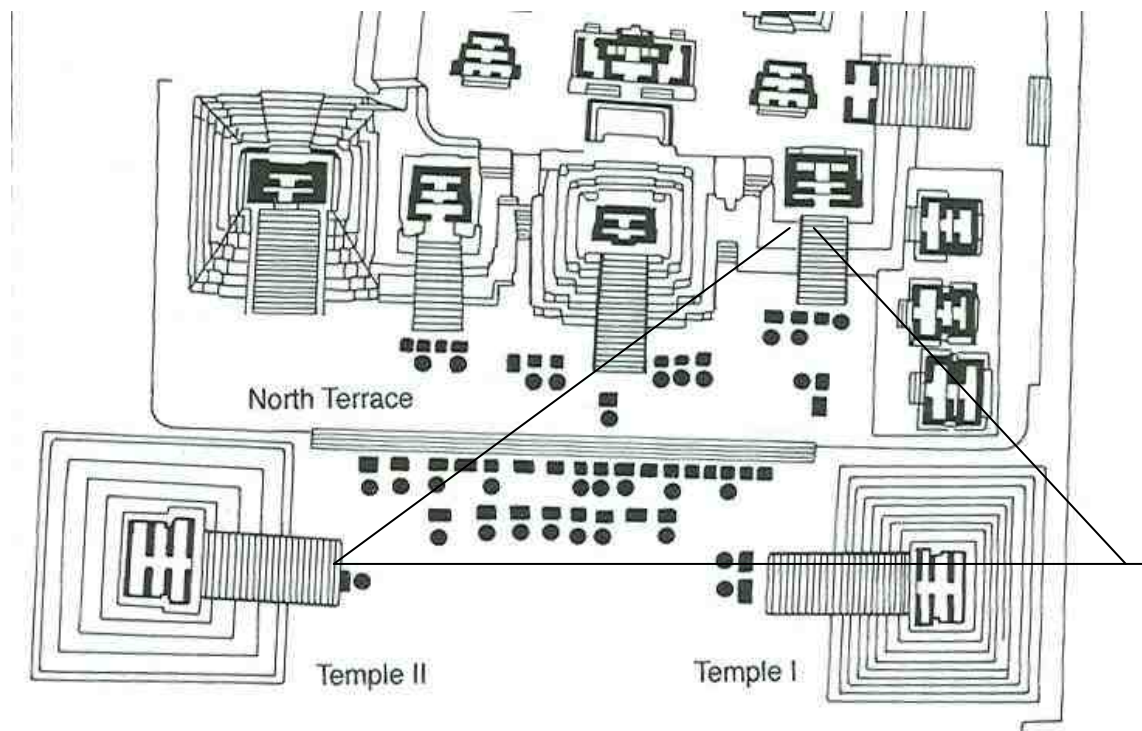


Figure 89. Detail of plan depicting the Triadic relationship between Temples I, II, and 33, Great Plaza, Tikal, Guatemala (Harrison, *The Lords*, 17, fig. 6)

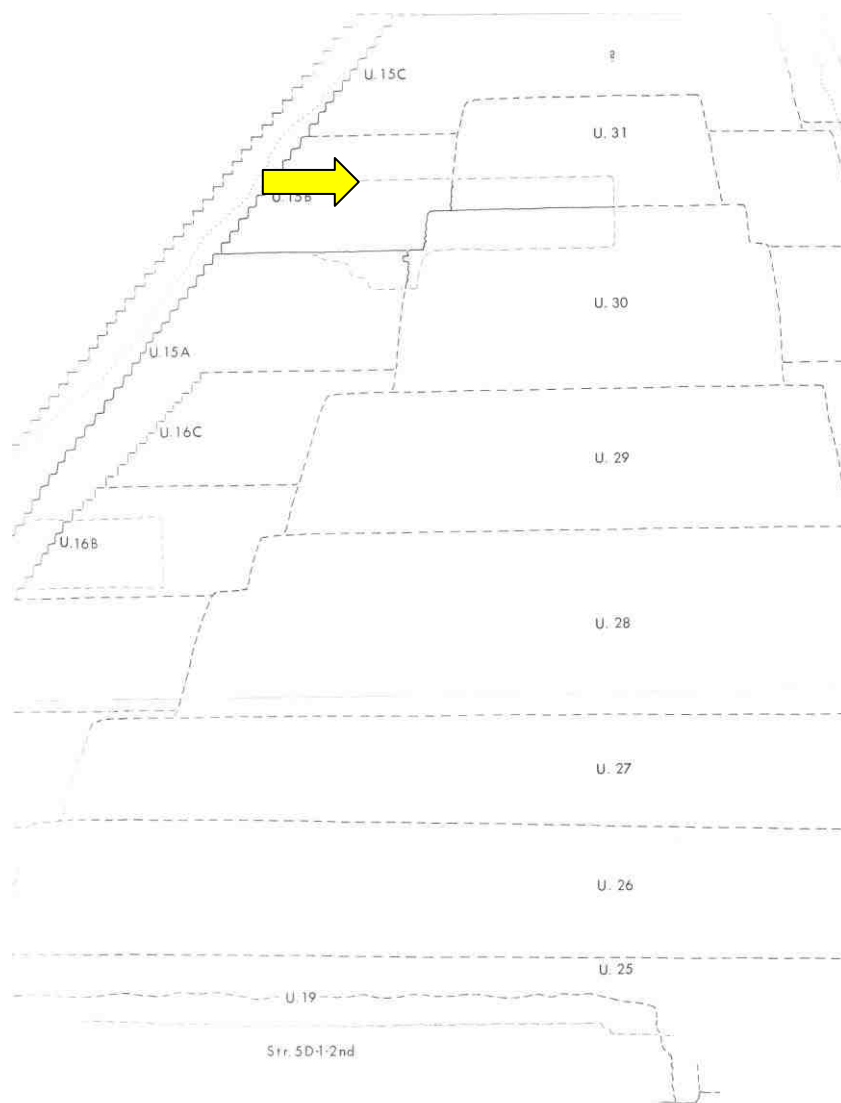


Figure 90. Yellow arrow points to the interior core construction, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 5: fig. 253e)

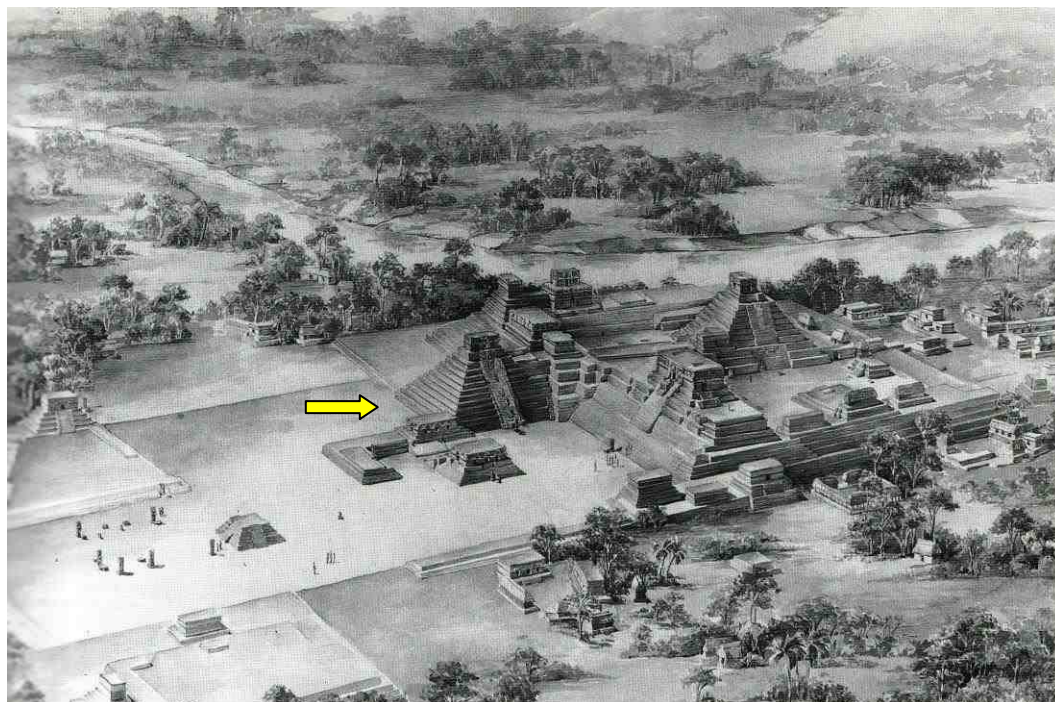


Figure 91. Reconstruction painting of the ceremonial precinct, yellow arrow points to Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (painting by Tatiana Proskouriakoff in Fash, *Scribes*, 29, fig. 16)



Figure 92. Reconstruction of Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (painting by Tatiana Proskouriakoff in Fash, *Scribes*, plate 7)

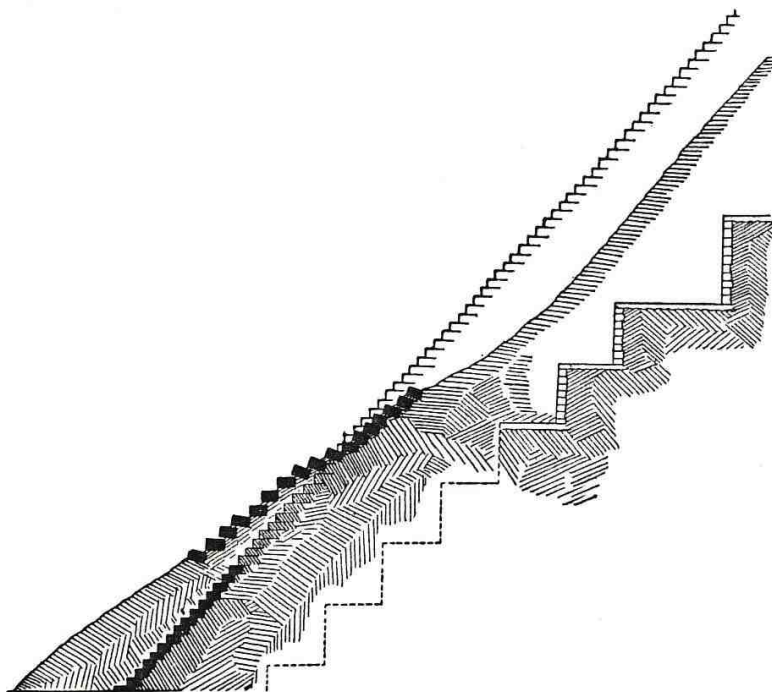
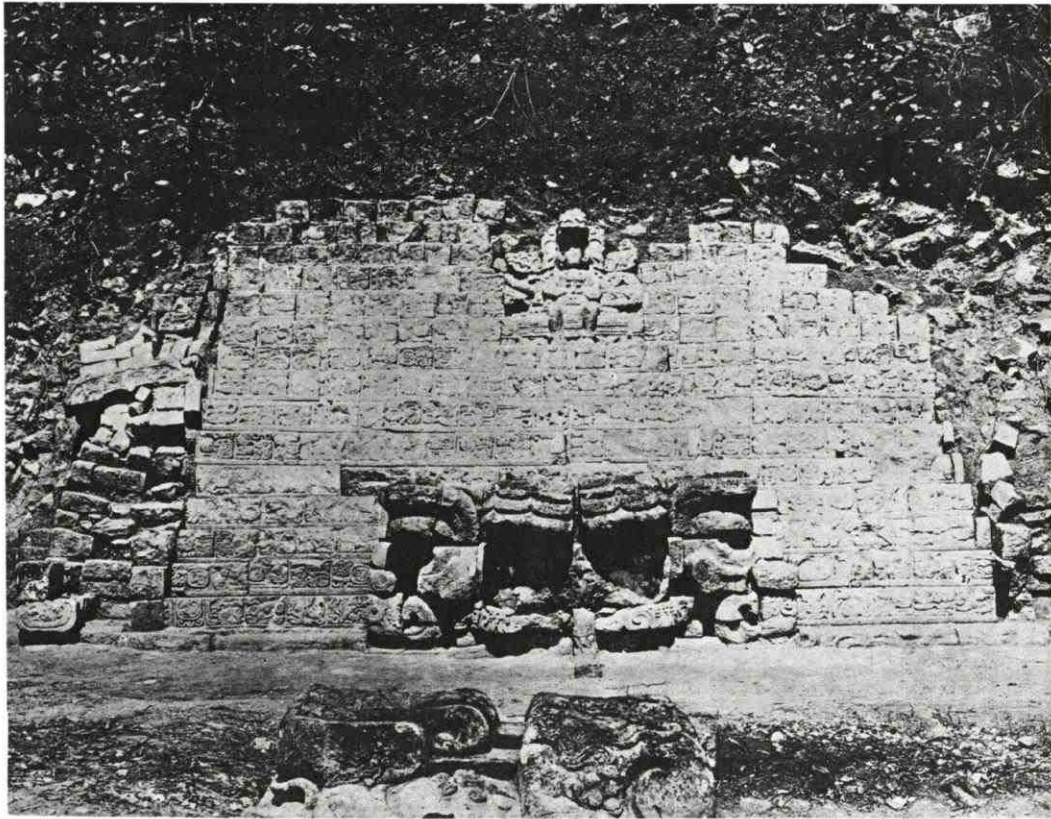


FIG. 2.—CROSS SECTION THROUGH WESTERN SIDE OF MOUND 26, SHOWING LANDSLIDE, STEPS IN POSITION, AND TERRACES IN THE INTERIOR OF THE MOUND.

Figure 93. Drawing of the slide, west façade of Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, 9, fig. 2)



HIEROGLYPHIC STAIRWAY AFTER EXCAVATION.

Figure 94. Photo of the original bottom steps in situ after initial excavation of the hieroglyphic stairway, Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, plate 3)



Figure 95. West façade of Temple 26, Copan, Honduras view from beneath its protective canopy (copyright Mayaruins)

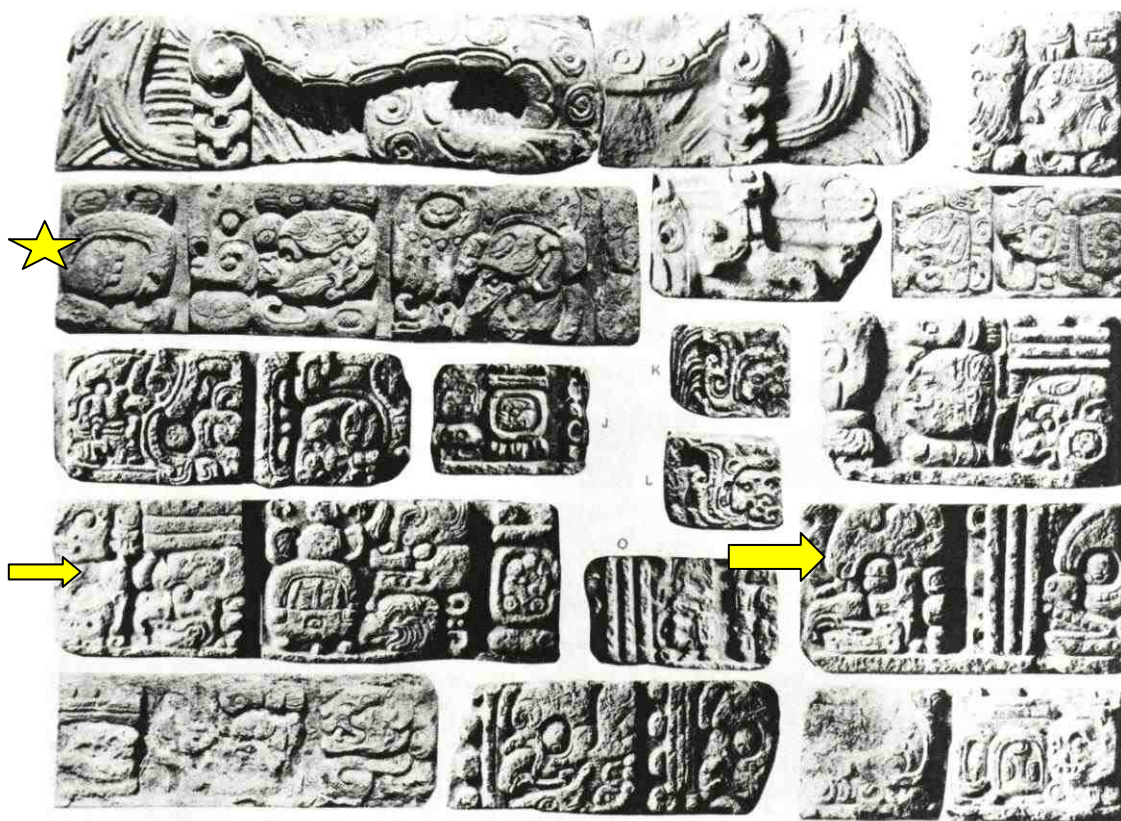


Figure 96. Fragments of the carved risers, star denotes the rounded style of carvings (lack ground-line) and the arrow marks the calligraphic style, Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (Gordon *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, plate 12)



Figure 97-a. Seated figure #1, Temple 26, Hieroglyphic stairway, Copan, Honduras
(photo by author)



Figure 97-b. Embedded seated Figure #2, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Temple 26, Copan, Honduras, currently reconstructed and housed at the Peabody Museum, Harvard University (photo by author)



Figure 97-c. Seated Figure #3, Temple 26, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan, Honduras
(photo by author)

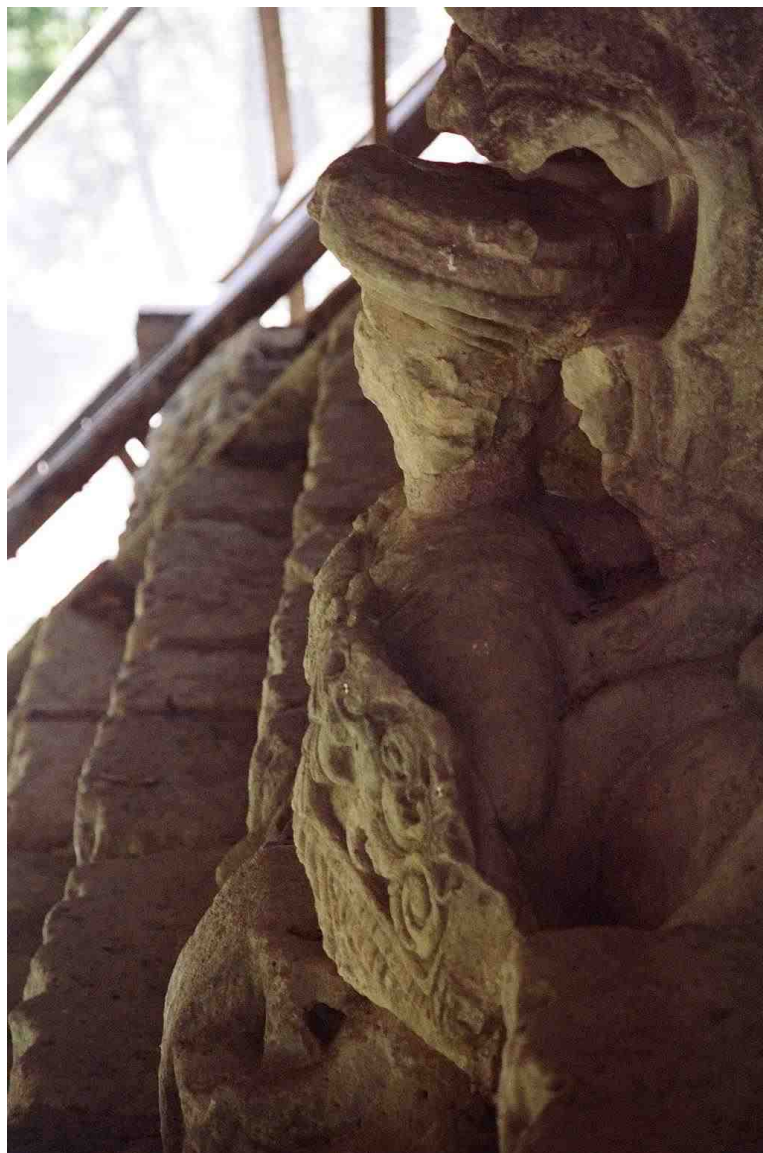


Figure 97-d. Seated Figure 4, Temple 26, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan, Honduras
(photo by author)

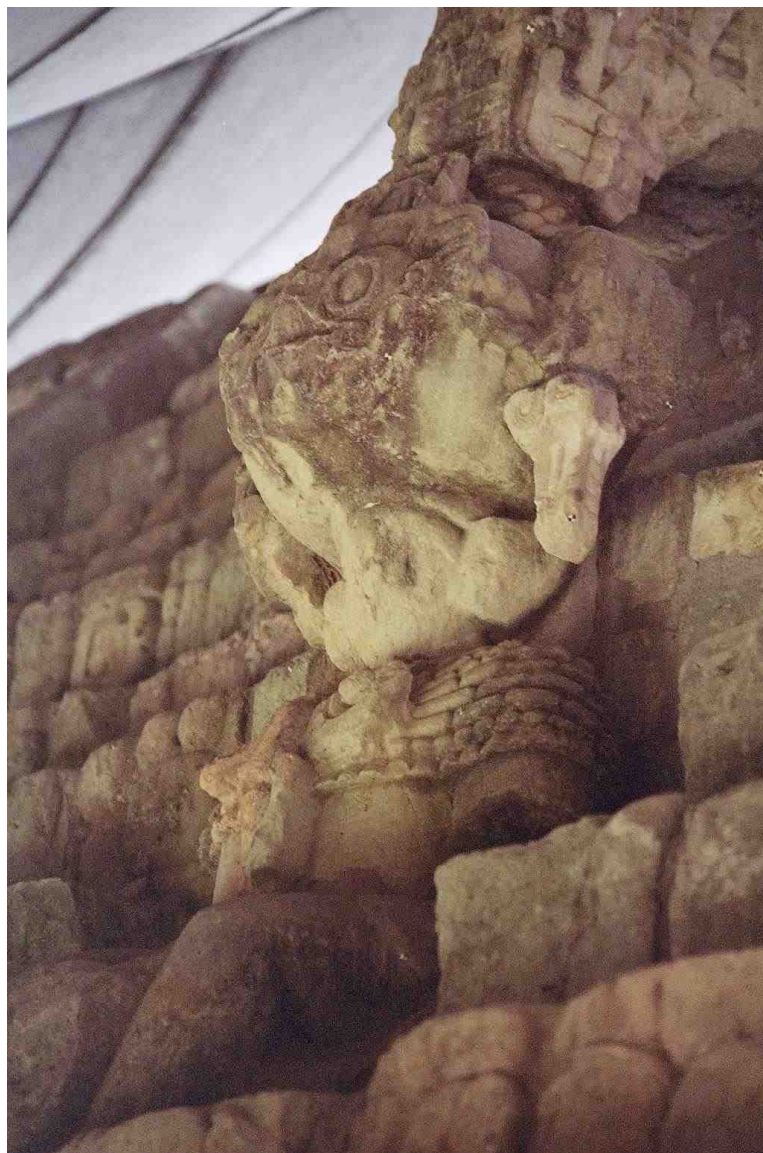


Figure 97-e. Seated figure #5, Temple 26, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan, Honduras
(photo by author)

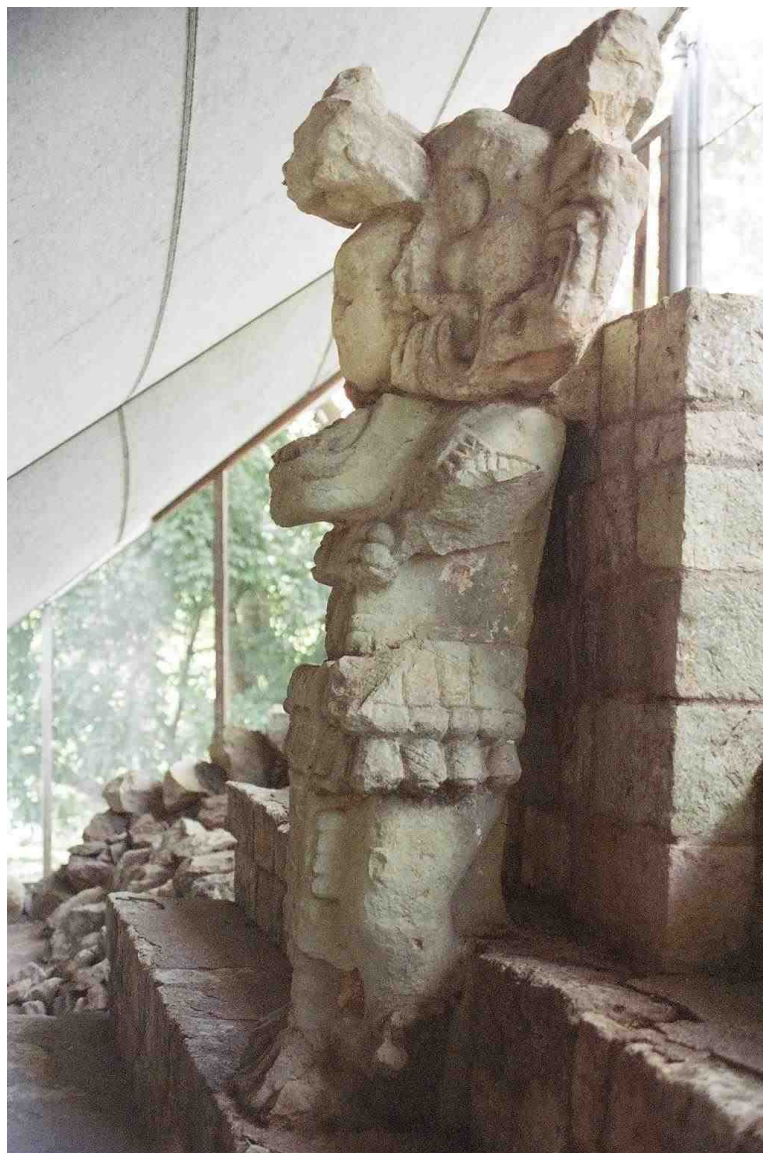


Figure 98. Statue #6, Temple 26, Hieroglyphic stairway, Copan, Honduras (photo by author)

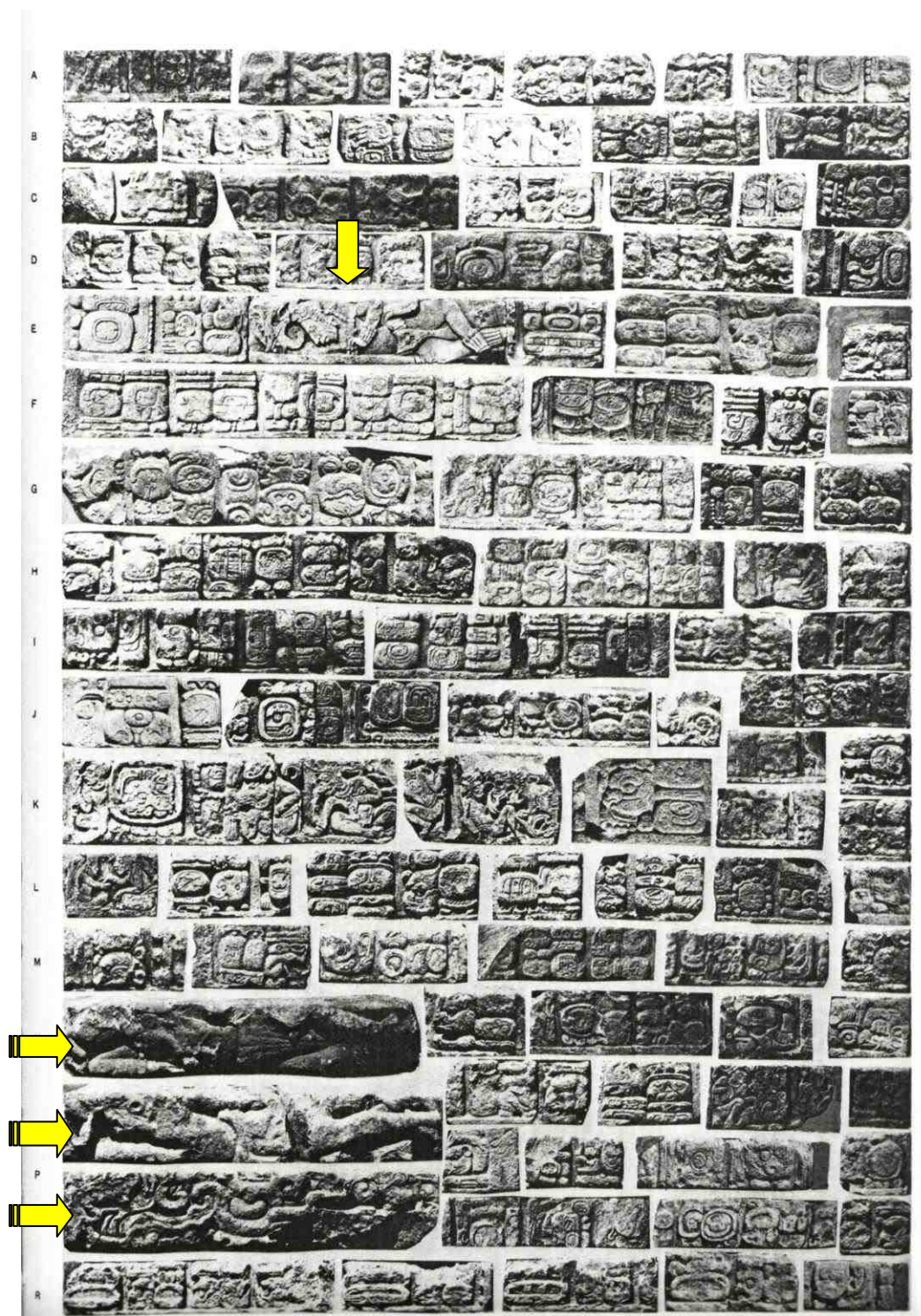


Figure 99. Photo of fragments of the Hieroglyphic Stairway, Temple 26, Copan, Honduras and other sculptures. Yellow arrows denote the three prone figures and one horizontal form (Gordon, *The Hieroglyphic Stairway*, plate 13)



Figure 100. Detail of the alfarda sculpture, west façade Temple 26, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan, Honduras (photo by author)



Figure 101. West front view of the altar, Temple 26, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan, Honduras (photo by author)



Figure 102. Top view of the bas-relief carving of the altar,
Temple 26, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan, Honduras (photo by author)

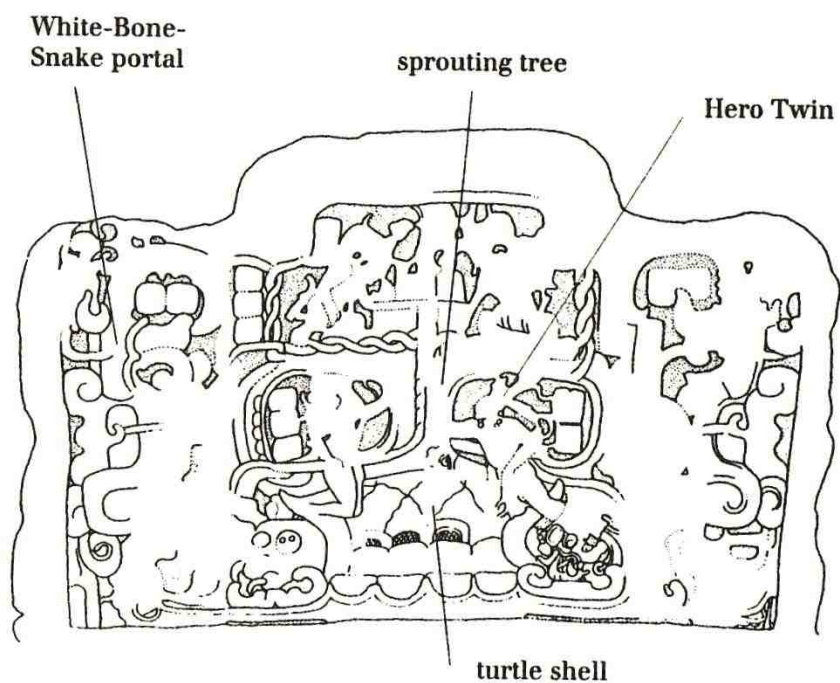


Figure 103. Drawing of the imagery from the top of the altar at the base of the Hieroglyphic Stairway, Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (drawing and iconography, Linda Schele in Freidel, Schele, and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*, 371, fig. 8.25c)



Figure 104. Eccentric flints from the cache beneath the altar at the base of the Hieroglyphic Stairway, Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (Fash, *Scribes*, 147, fig. 92)



Figure 105. The portico gallery with the west inscribed panel to the right and view out to the North Plaza, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 101, fig. 3.8)

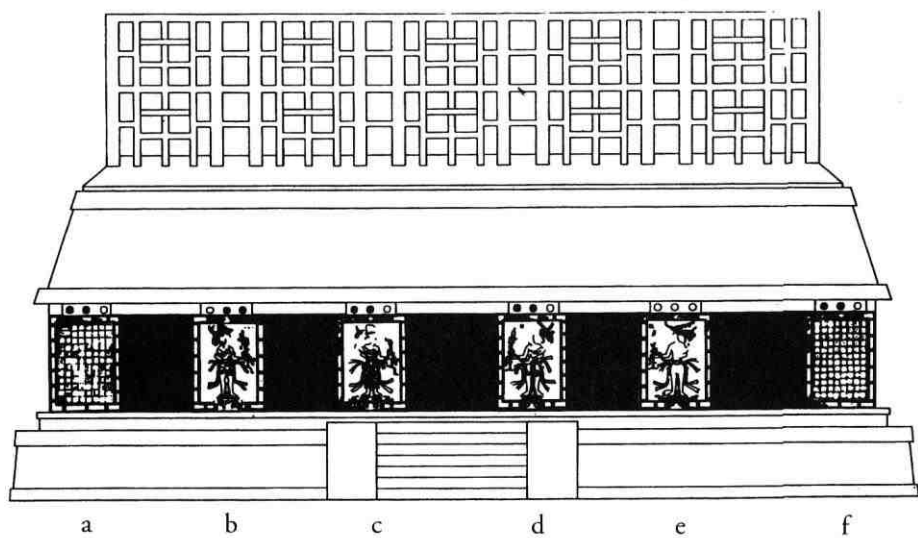


Figure 106. Drawing of the superstructure, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 100, fig. 3.6)

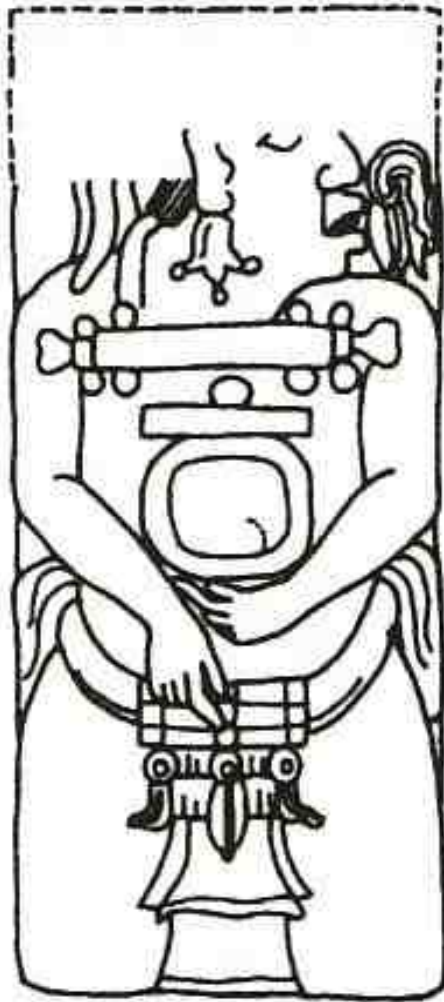


Figure 107. Drawing of left alfarda Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico base of superstructure (Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 101, fig. 3.7)

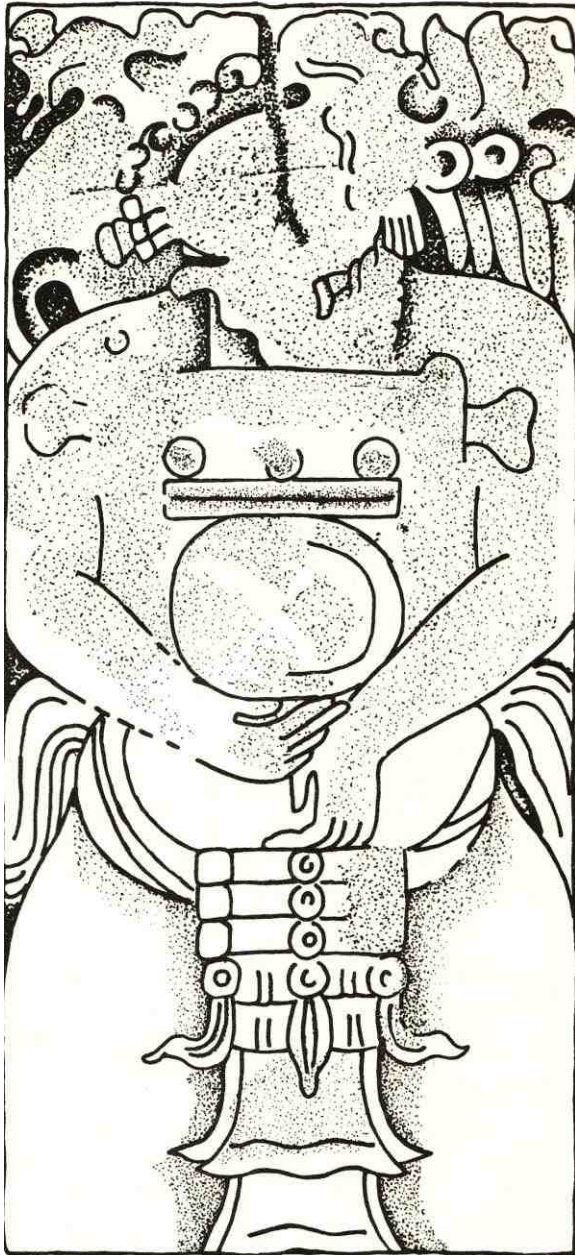


Figure 108. Drawing of right alfarda, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico
base of superstructure, the Temple of the Inscriptions (Ruz Lhuillier, *El Templo*, fig.
43b)



Figure 109. Detail of the infant's body from the sculpted pier figures, superstructure, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico. Photo shows the use of color (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 42).



Figure 110. View from the east toward the west, sculptured paired piers B and E are denoted by the yellow arrows, superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 7)



Figure 111. View from west toward east, the paired piers C & D are denoted with yellow arrows, superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 13)

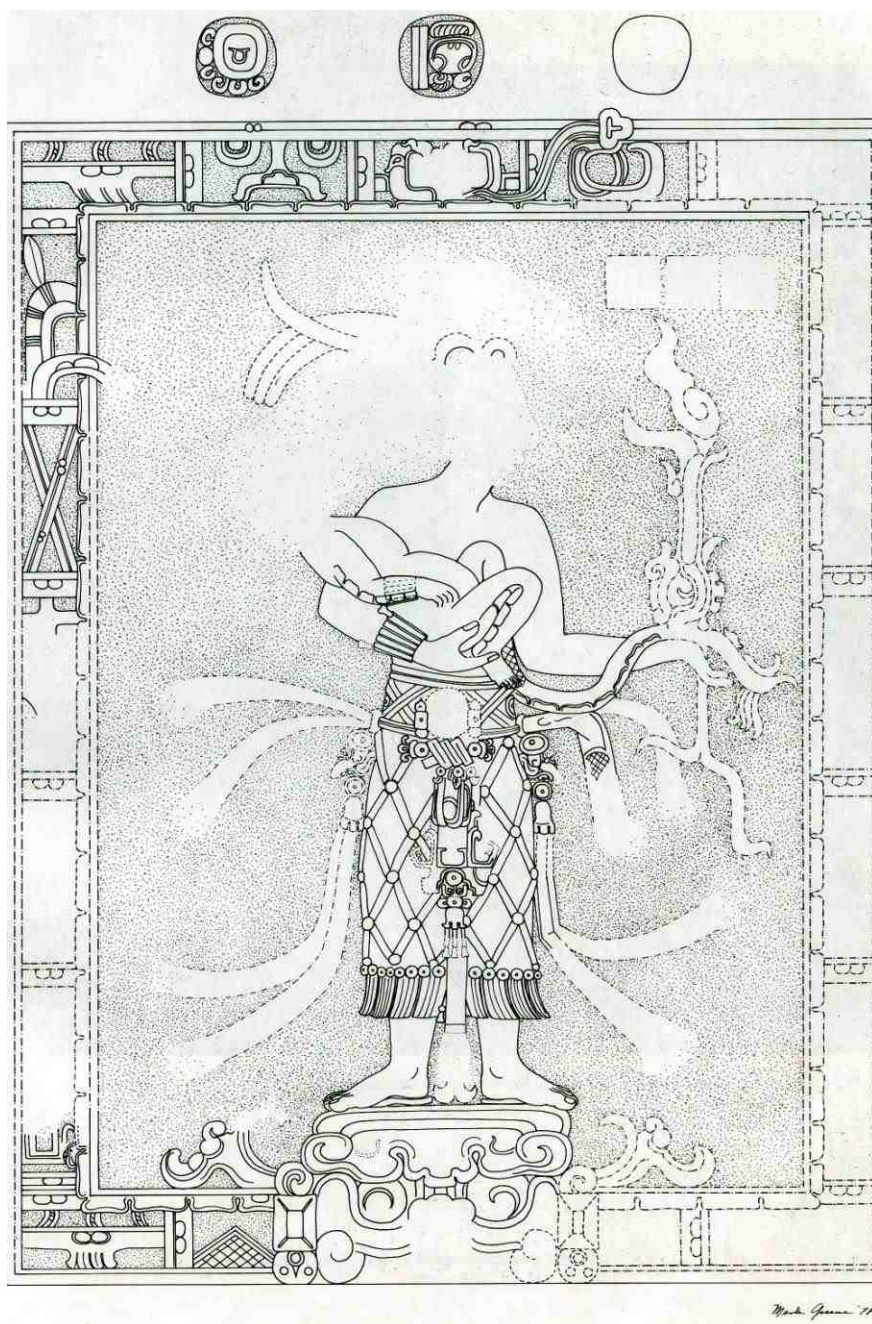


Figure 112. Drawing of Pier C, superstructure, Temple of the Inscription, Palenque, Mexico (drawing by Merle Greene Roberston, in Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 39)

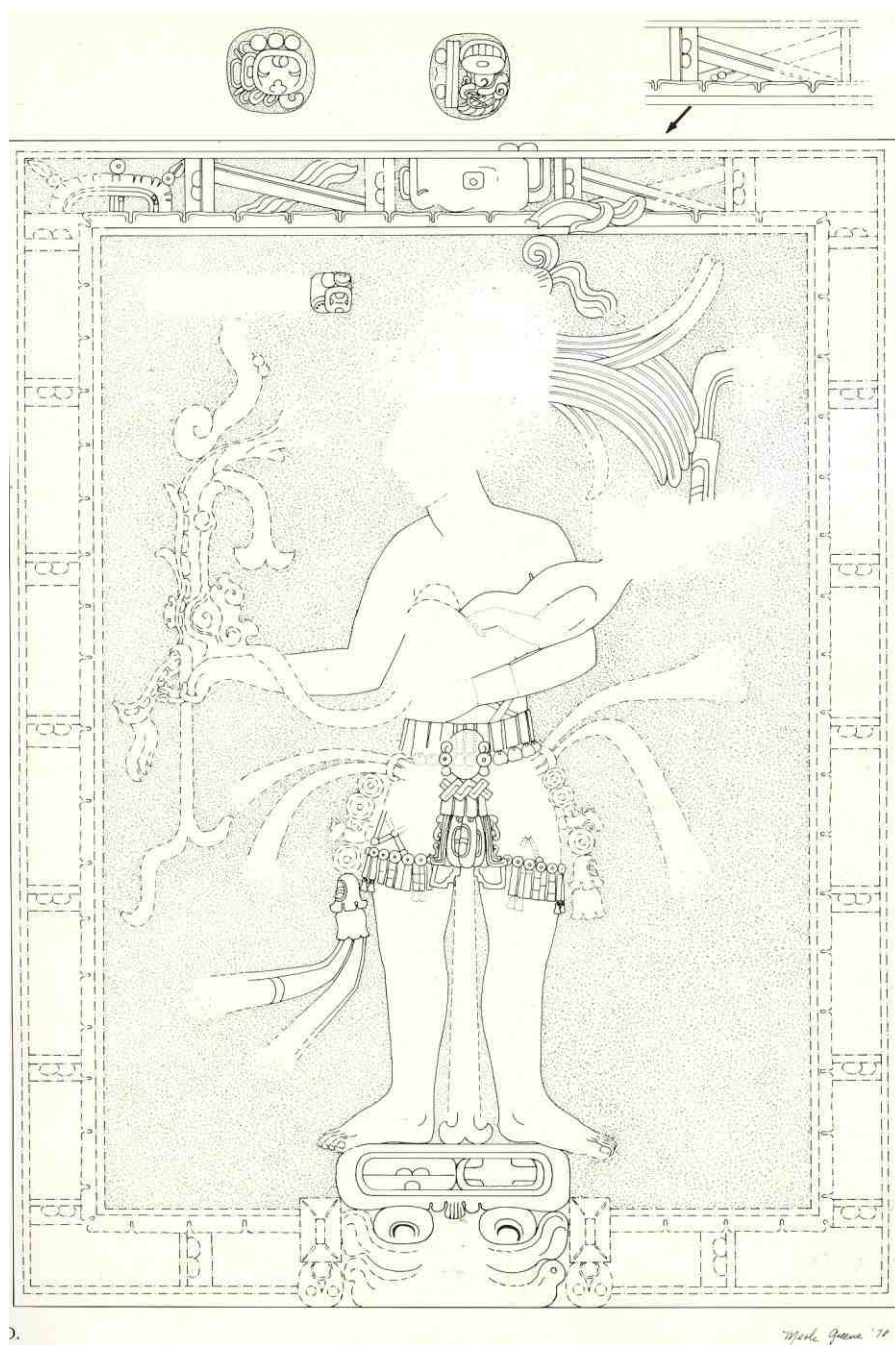


Figure 113. Drawing of Pier D, superstructure, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (drawing by Merle Greene Robertson, in Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 64)

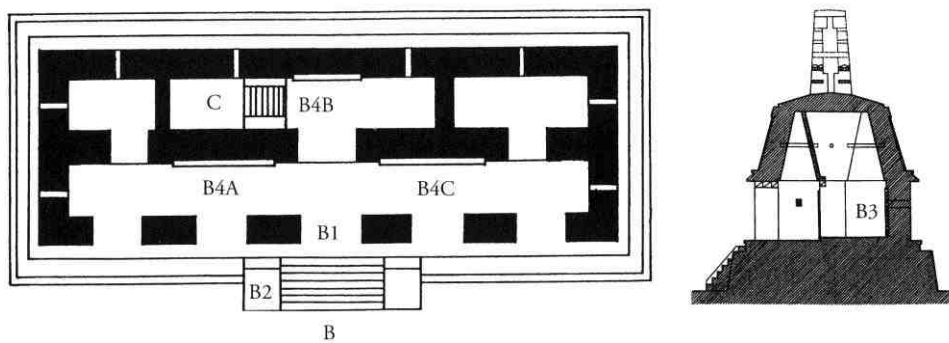


Figure 114. Plan of the superstructure, Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 99, fig. 3.5)

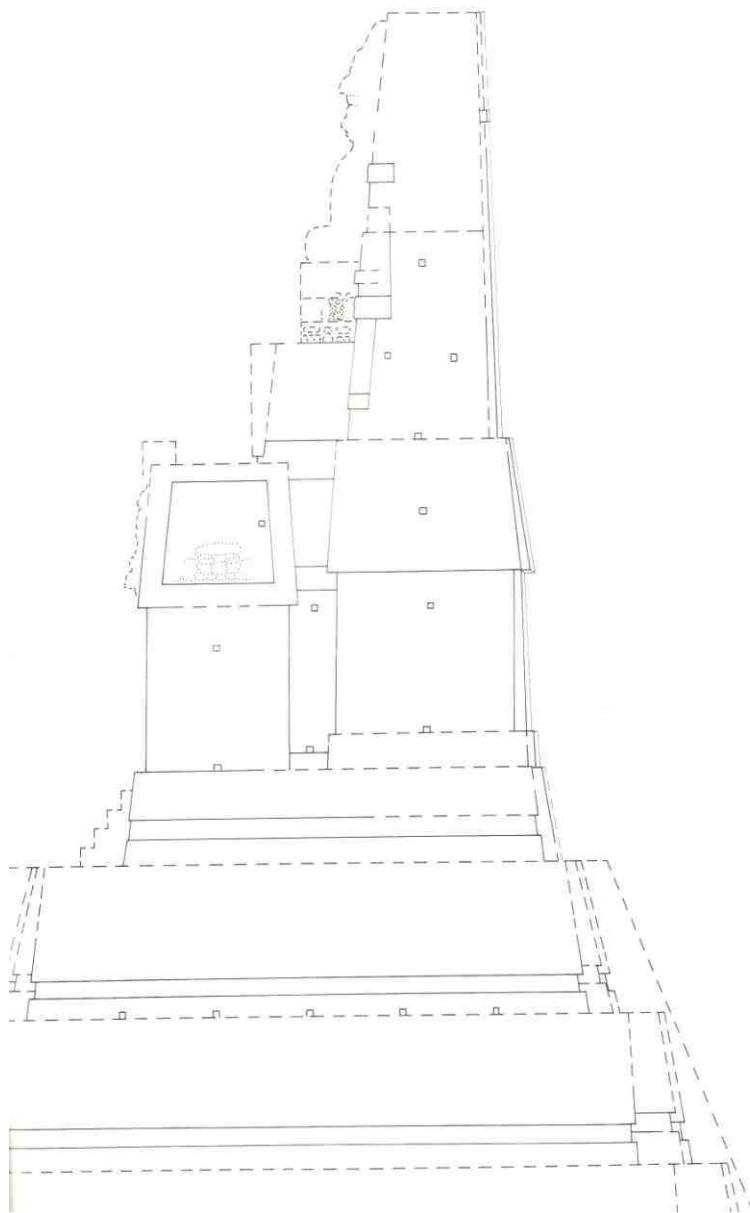


Figure 115. East west elevation of Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala. An outline of a seated figure can be seen in the roofcomb (Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 5: fig. 253-E [detail])

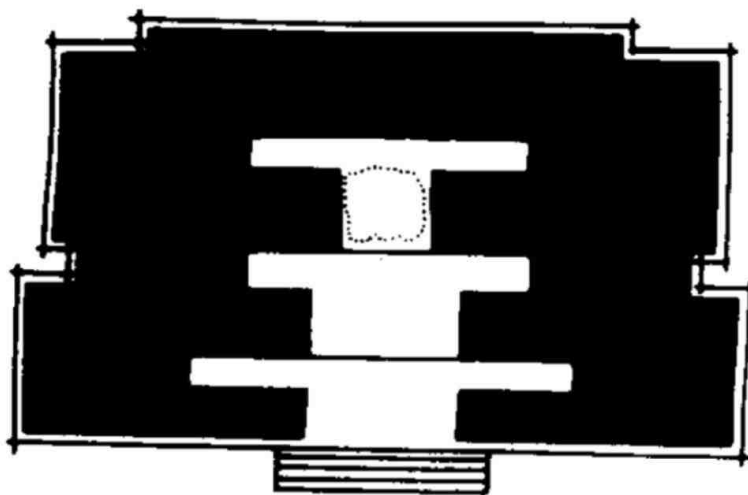


Figure 116. Plan of Temple I, superstructure, Tikal, Guatemala with the location of the disturbed section directly beneath Doorway 3 (Adams and Trik, *Tikal Report 7*, fig. 38)

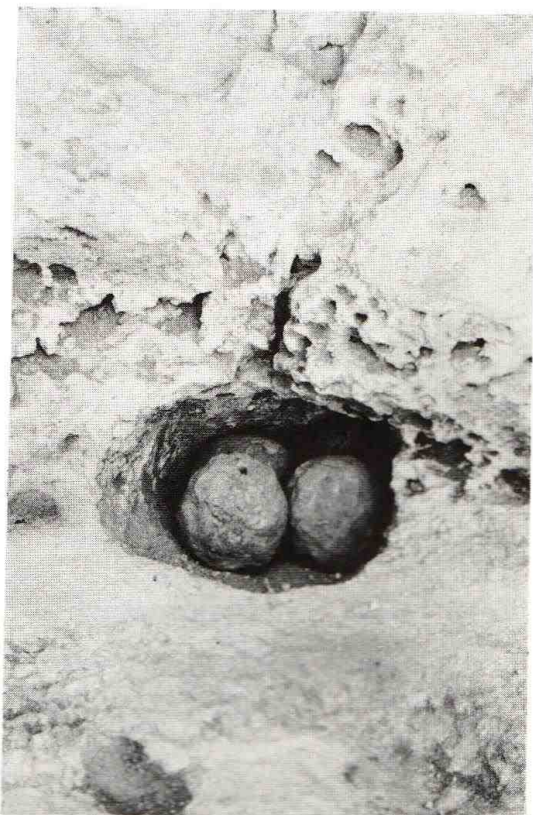


Figure 117. Cache 37, superstructure Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, entranceway to Doorway 2 (Adams and Trik, *Tikal Report 7*, fig. 40-c)

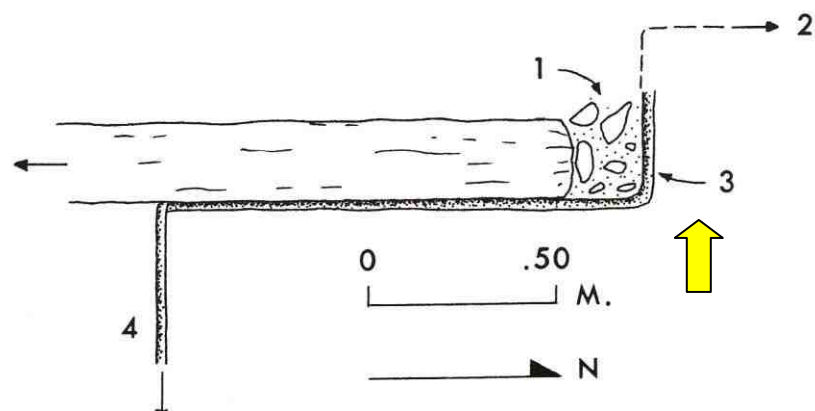


Figure 118. Elevation of a wooden lintel and the wall masonry and inset wall, yellow arrow denotes proposed location of Cache 49-A, 3rd doorway, superstructure, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Adams and Trik, *Tikal Report 7*, fig. 21-C)

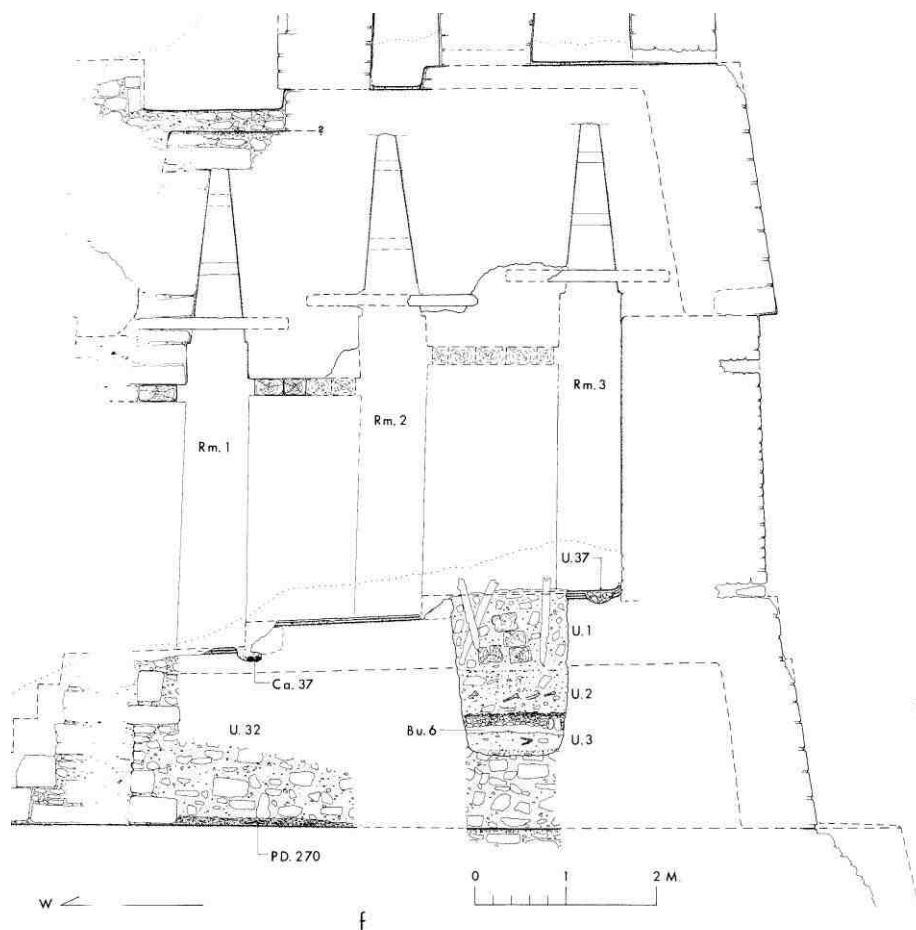


Figure 119. Section view and elevation of superstructure of Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, detailing the floor deposits. Image includes Burial 6 (Coe, *Tikal Report 14*, 5: fig. 253-F)

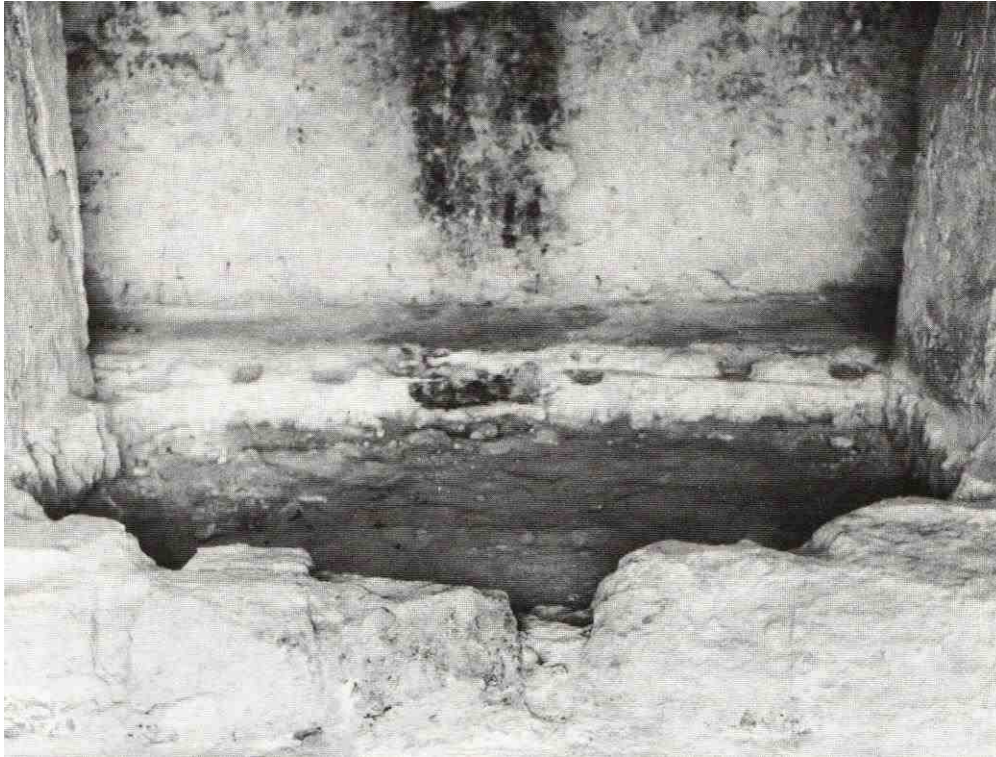


Figure 120. Burial 6, burial pit looking east toward Chamber 3 and its blackened wall, superstructure, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala, (Adams and Trik, *Tikal Report 7*, fig. 40-A)

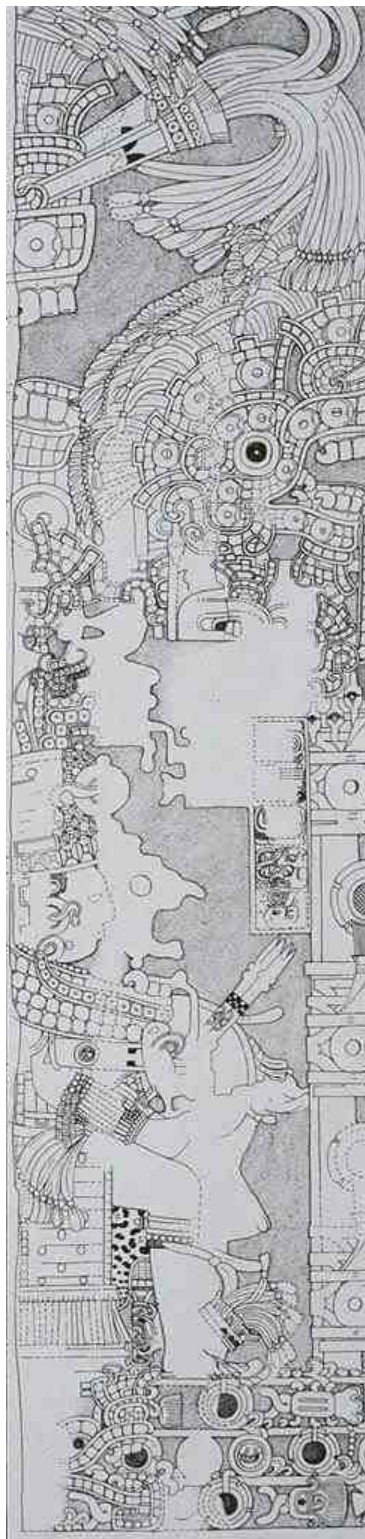


Figure 121. Drawing of Lintel 2, Doorway 2, superstructure Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Coe and Shook, *Tikal Report 6*, fig. 12).

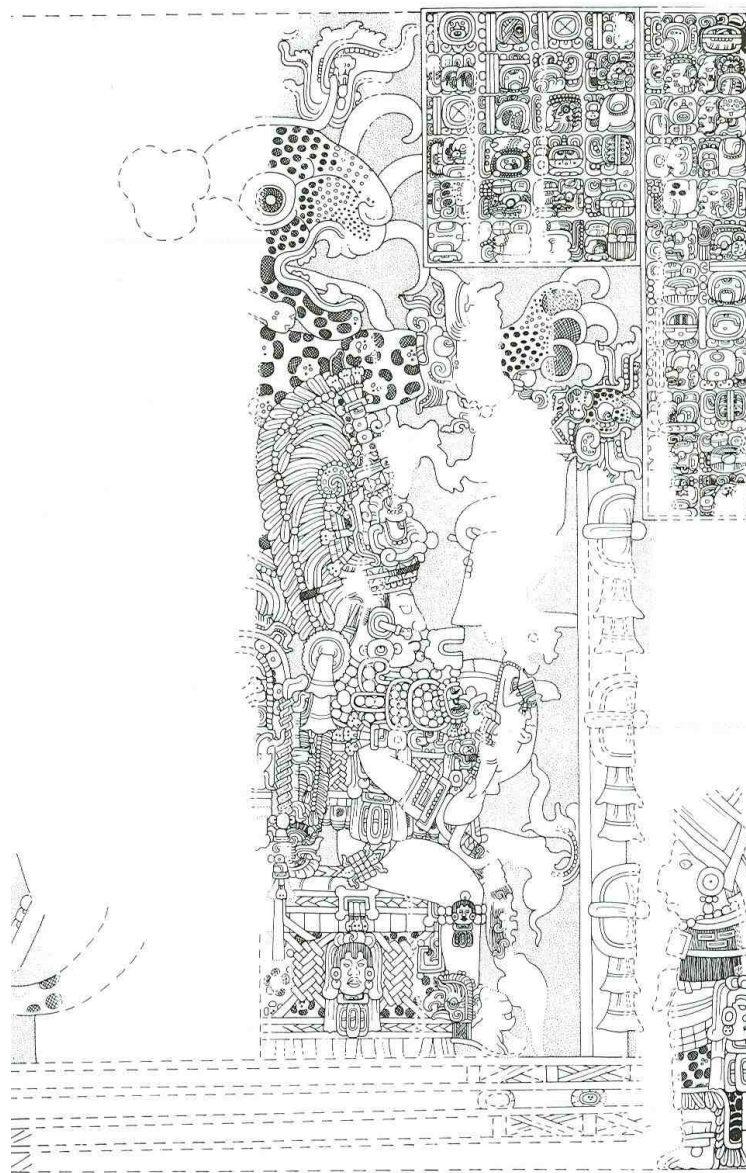


Figure 122. Drawing of Lintel 3, Doorway 3, superstructure, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Harrison, *The Lords*, 132, fig. 77)

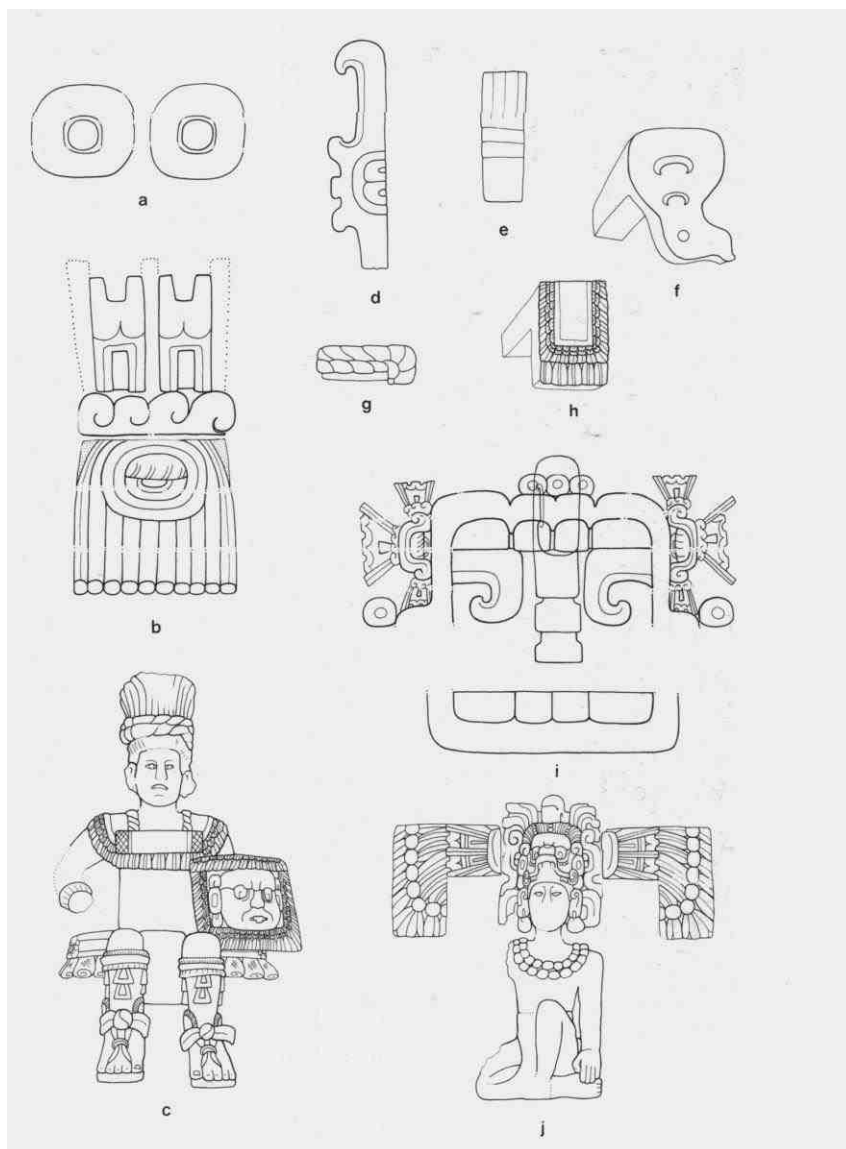


Figure 123. Drawing of superstructure decoration, final phase Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (drawings by Barbara Fash, in Fash, *Scribes*, 145, fig. 91)

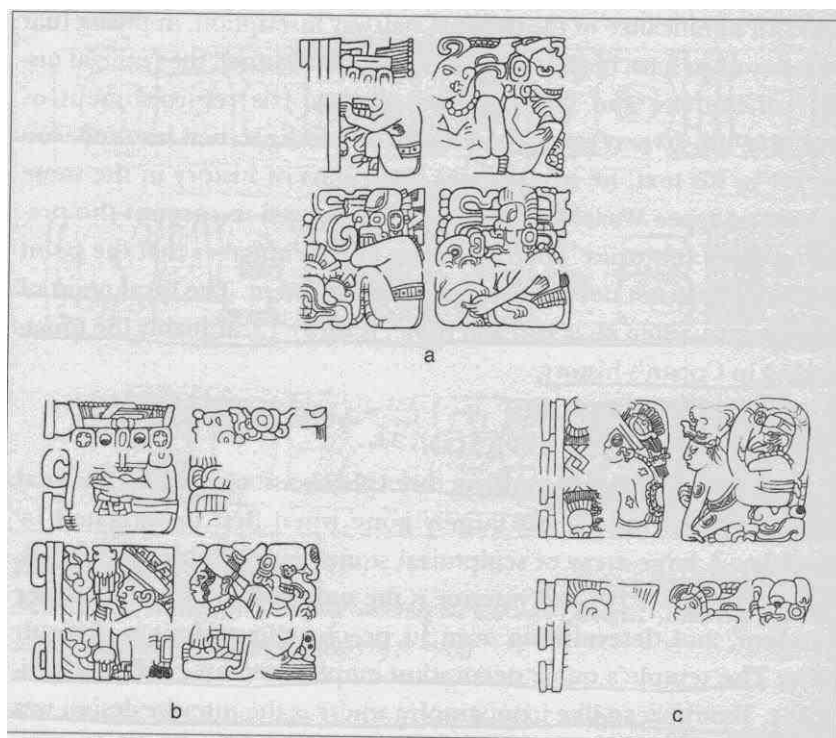


Figure 124. The Parallel Texts from the superstructure, final phase Temple 26, Copan, Honduras (drawings by David S. Stuart, "A Foreign Past," 388, fig. 10.6)

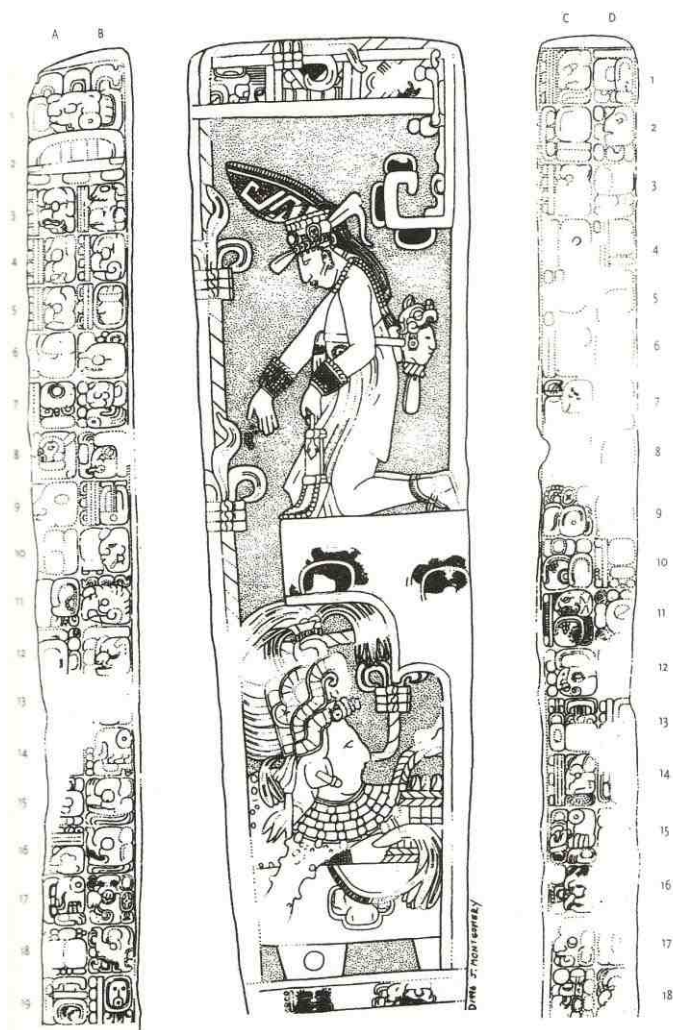


Figure 125. Stela 40, Piedras Negras, drawing by John Montgomery Figure 125. Stela 40, Piedras Negras (drawing by John Montgomery, in Clancy, *The Monuments*, fig. 6.7)



Figure 126. Detail of baby from Pier C, superstructure, the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico (Robertson, *The Temple*, fig. 40)

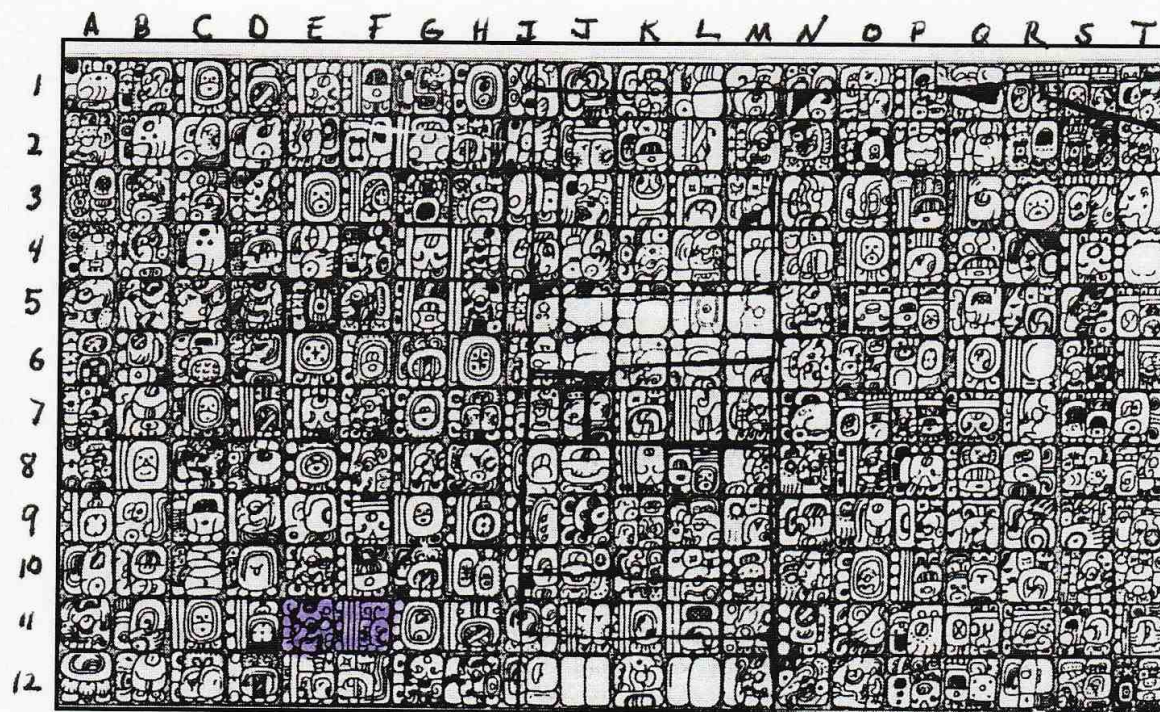


Figure 127. West panel from the superstructure of the Temple of the Inscriptions, Palenque, Mexico, glyphs in lavender denote the Piktun (Schele and Mathews, *The Code*, 103)

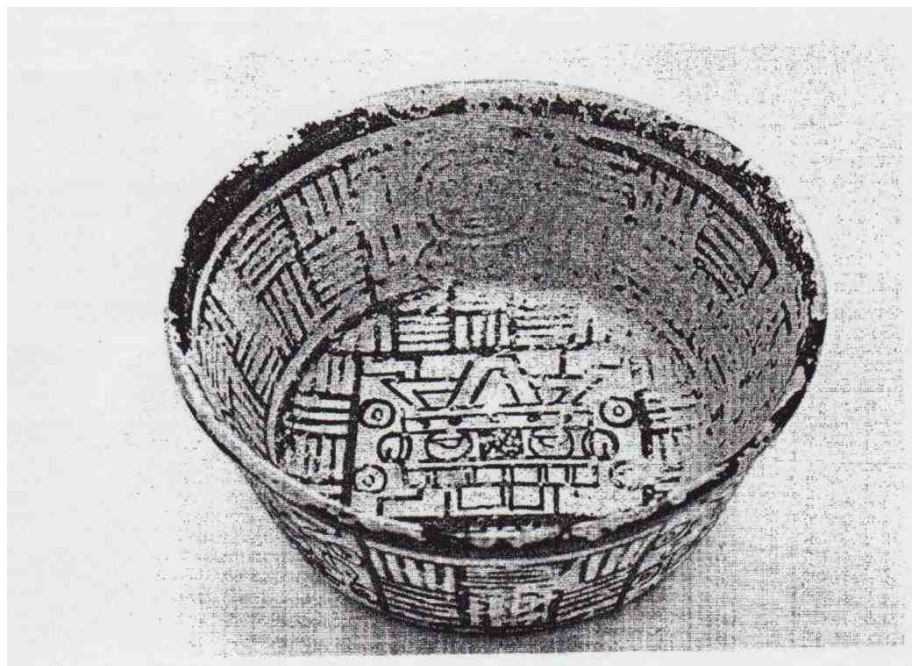


Figure 128. Zacatel Cream Polychrome bowl from Burial 116 in the center is an “anthropomorphized Mexican year sign” and around the walls are Ajaw glyphs, Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Trik, “The Splendid Tomb,” 9)

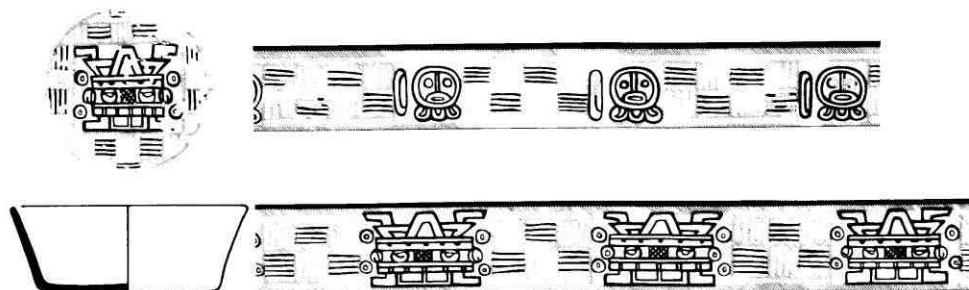


Figure 129. Rollout drawing of Zacatel Cream Polychrome bowl from Burial 116, Temple I, Tikal, Guatemala (Culbert, *Tikal Report 25*, fig. 64b-1)



Figure 130. Drawing of Altar 5, Jasaw's second twin-pyramid complex, Group N (Group 5C-I), Tikal, Guatemala (Harrison, *The Lords*, 139, fig. 80)

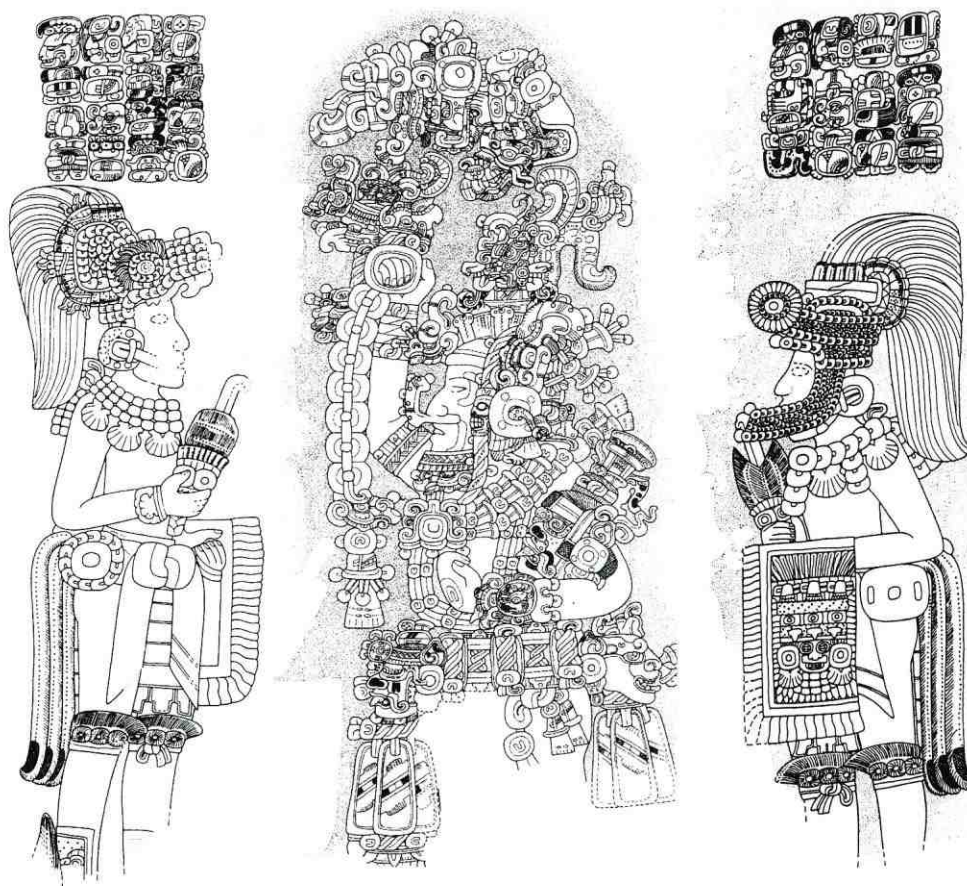


Figure 131. Rollout drawing (front and sides) Stela 31, found cached inside Temple 33 2nd as part of the remodeling effort for the final phase Temple 33 (Martin and Grube, *Chronicle*, 35).

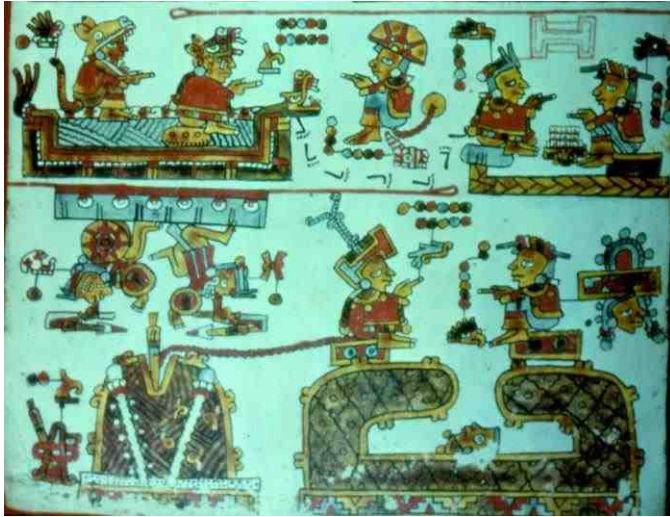


Figure 132. Mixtec Ruler's birth from cleft in the mountain, Selden Codex Figure 132. Selden Codex, showing the birth of a ruler at the Cleft Mountain (Caso, *Codex Selden*, 1)

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