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Alicia Angel

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1000 E Victoria Street, Carson CA 90747

Phone 310.243.3514

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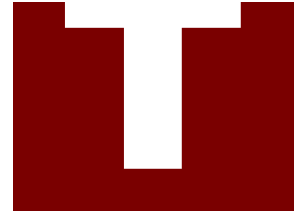
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Social Anthropology: Past and Present

Abstract by Julie Wennstrom

In *Social Anthropology: Past and Present*, Edward Evans-Pritchard argues for Anthropology to be modeled as a form of social history, not a natural science. The early approaches to studying society from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries are discussed and then dismissed. The most recent theory, functionalism, is critiqued thoroughly. Functionalists believe societies are like organisms, which have separate interdependent parts which are already in place and help hold it together. Evans-Pritchard disputes this theory by explaining that a society could not be understood by just looking at what its current structures are.

His argument's main point is that the history of a society needs to be studied to fully understand it. He stresses that collective memory of a culture's past can actually represent a record of their history. Functionalists believe studying the entire history of a culture is unnecessary. Evans-Pritchard claims that having the history of a culture allows for comparative studies of both different and past cultures. He also proposes the question of Anthropology being a historiography in itself. The example he applies is that an Anthropologist writes ethnographies and essentially "translates from one culture into another." The work of social anthropologists and historians are essentially the same: 1) translating overt features of other cultures into his/her own culture's terms; 2) analyzing the latent form of a culture; 3) comparing his/her analysis of different social structures.

Evans-Pritchard's argument entails social anthropology interpreting patterns and designs, studying the moral systems of societies, and explaining their practices by way of history. In the future social anthropology should be studied as a form of social history in the Humanities.

Anthropology and the Theoretical and Paradigmatic Significance of the Collapse of Soviet and East European Communism

Abstract by Richard Quiloon

In *Anthropology and the Theoretical and Paradigmatic Significance of the Collapse of Soviet and East European Communism*, Marvin Harris utilizes the theory of *cultural materialism* to investigate the fall of the Soviet Union. Harris does not attribute the collapse of the Soviet Union to outside forces or a weak Soviet leadership, but rather to an inadequate *infrastructure*. Harris's model of cultural materialism (based heavily on Karl Marx's theory that the production of materials determines the "general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life") is based on a three-part model, wherein *infrastructure* involves the realm of culture that represents modes of *production* (human labor, technology, subsistence patterns) and *reproduction* (birth mortality, fertility, longevity), *structure* encompasses the *domestic economy* (the organization of resources *within* a group of consumers) and *political economy* (the organization of the flow of goods and services *between* different units), and *superstructure* consists of art, religion, worldview, cosmology, etc.

The structural incompatibilities in the Soviet Union's centrally structured command economy hindered technological innovation and innovative behavior within the system,

degrading the mode of production. Additionally, a combination of unemployment, environmental damage, and lower living standards led to an increase in infant mortality (up to 48 percent in Uzbekistan!) and productivity rates. Deteriorations in production and reproduction amounted to an incompetent infrastructure. Infrastructure is the fundamental realm because it “is the essential way humans solve the essential problems.” Through his cultural materialistic viewpoint, Harris maintains that it is this incapable infrastructure that led to the Soviet Union’s demise

Women’s Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Evolution

Abstract by Augustine Tijerina

In *Women’s Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Revolution*, Eleanor Leacock analyzes the status of women in egalitarian society. She argues that the inferior status of women in non-egalitarian society is the result of capitalism and influences of politics and economics, not incipient social roles of women brought to the forefront of society during cultural evolution from the simple to the complex.

Leacock states that gender bias is not limited to male ethnographers, but is endemic to the entire field of ethnography as even women ethnographers —undermine the understanding of [gender] roles...through the downgrading of women that is built into...ethnocentric phraseology. In this sense, the subservient role of women in capitalist societies from which ethnographers come from is transposed onto the non-capitalist societies being studied.

Leacock provides insight into the theoretical problems of ethnography by analyzing the Montagnais-Naskapi people of Labrador. In her analysis, Leacock shows that contrary to the beliefs of Frank Speck who previously studied the people of Labrador, the subservient role of

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women was not a natural occurrence. Instead women's role had been altered by "missionaries, traders, and government" and the imposition of capitalism where women's work is devalued.

Leacock concludes by stating that the devaluation of women's work was caused by women's loss of control over the modes of production in the capitalist system. Therefore, ethnographers must study the historical processes that led to the subservient role of women within society.

The Devaluation of Women in Society: Universal Ideal or Cultural Construct?

By Samantha Glover

Anthropological theory can be divided into two distinct areas of thought: idealism and materialism. Idealists believe that a set of core values and beliefs define a culture while materialists believe that social life determines the configuration of a culture. Within these two camps reside a group of female anthropologists whose work has centered on the role of women in society. This paper will evaluate the theories of three noted female anthropologists through a review of their written work to determine if they are a materialist or an idealist (or somewhere in between) as well as address each anthropologist's contribution to the field of Feminist Anthropology.

The American anthropologist Margaret Mead was one of the first to delve into the often controversial field of Feminist Anthropology. Her book "Sex and Temperament in Three Different Societies" which was published in 1939 focuses on gender roles within three cultures located in the Sepik region of Papua New Guinea. Her ethnographies on the Arapesh,

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Mundugamor and Tchambuli describes females as having roles that are atypical in western society, and that women were more likely to be dominant, aggressive and less emotional. Mead's ethnographies contrast drastically with the commonly androcentric ethnographies that have historically permeated the field of anthropology.

Mead continues her work in the area of Feminist Anthropology with the article "More Comprehensive Field Methods." Mead discusses the need for anthropologists to be more thorough in the documentation of ethnographic data, especially in the area of women's roles, in order to completely understand a culture. She criticizes anthropologists who ignore certain aspects or behaviors within a culture when there are no obvious signs or rituals associated with those behaviors. She uses her own ethnographic field work with the people of Samoa as an example of the need to more accurately document child rearing and puberty while also stressing the importance of adolescent relationships and how they manifest based on the ideals and examples of adults within the group. Mead's views on culture, based on the article mentioned above, are clearly idealist in nature. She argues that in order to understand adult relationships we must first understand the way in which children form relationships. She argues that children's relationships with their siblings as well as other juveniles are a direct reflection of the ideals and values of the culture in which they live.

American cultural anthropologist Eleanor Burke Leacock is mainly recognized for her ethnographies of the indigenous peoples of eastern Quebec and Labrador as well as for her activism in fighting gender, race and class inequalities. She continues this line of inquiry with her article "Women's Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Evolution." Leacock argues that women's roles in hunter-gatherer societies were historically equal to that of men and that the infiltration of capitalism and the advent of trade fundamentally transformed women's

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roles. Leacock admits that the word “equal” can be deceiving when speaking of men and women, since it is obvious biologically that we are not the same. However, Leacock argues that men and women were autonomous with their own responsibilities and roles that were complementary to the society in which they lived.

In the above mentioned article Leacock illustrates the lives of the Montagnais-Naskapi people of Labrador. The Montagnais-Naskapi were a collection of families that lived and hunted together and separated when necessary to access food and resources more wide spread. These multiple families composed small social and economic units that shared resources and provided opportunity for exogamous marriage. Agreement over group needs and disputes was reached collectively and individual value was gained through daily contribution toward the benefit of the group. Leacock argues that once men transitioned to hunting in order to process furs and sell them outside the group, they were elevated in status and women were regarded as subordinate. Leacock’s view of women in modern society can clearly be classified as materialist in that she believes the structure of society has undermined the value of women not through a society’s ideals or values but through the way in which society and its imposed economic framework (capitalism) molds a cultures’ identity.

Another noted American anthropologist and leading feminist theorist is Sherry Ortner. In her second published piece “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?,” Ortner argues that women’s secondary status in society is perpetuated by the view that women are closer to nature. She states that as human beings we are constantly at odds with nature, using culture to elevate ourselves to a higher state of consciousness by manipulating the world around us.

Ortner gives three distinct reasons why women are interpreted as closer to nature than men. First, women are physiologically connected to nature through the process of menstruation,

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child birth and child rearing. Second, nursing and childcare require confinement to the home and limit the social role of women in society. And third, Ortner argues that the feminine personality is concerned with feelings, emotions and personal interactions with others. Men, on the other hand, feel the need to express their creativity through the development of technology and higher expressions of thought since they are unable to create human life. It is Ortner's opinion that the need for men to elevate themselves above the natural world in turn promotes an inferior viewpoint towards women.

Ortner's ideas about women and gender put her in the middle when it comes to classifying her as an idealist or materialist. It is clear that her views regarding society and its determined transcendence of the natural world should be classified as materialist in nature. At the same time, she argues that women are not any more aligned with nature than men are, and that this erroneous viewpoint can be changed by changing our own values and belief system.

Each of these anthropologists' work has illuminated women's roles in society and the need to accurately document women's contributions to culture. Opening a window into the lives of women all over the world has not only increased our knowledge of historical gender roles but has punctuated the present day need for equality for women in all societies. Of the three anthropologists that I have discussed in this paper, Eleanor Burke Leacock's ideas about capitalism and the disruption of a materialist environment as being the catalyst in the devaluation of women is the most convincing. It is easy to see how cultural imperialism transformed "the hunter" into "the trader," elevating men to a higher status as money became the driving factor in subsistence and family support. While women's contributions to the family did not change and were still vitally important to society, the mere fact that these activities did not bring in money forever changed how women are viewed.

Language as a Universal Practice

By Elsie Heredia

Anthropology has gone through various methodological and theoretical phases from which two approaches were established: the materialist and the idealist approaches. The materialist approach consists on the belief that social structures are determined by material constructs, such as instincts, food, shelter, environmental surroundings, and technology. On the other hand, an idealist approach pertains to the belief that cultural views or ideals are what determine social structures. Anthropologists use a materialist approach to understand how universal laws derive from the material world and are applicable to culture. With an idealist theoretical approach, anthropologists attempt to understand how physical experiences in association with cultural perspectives, are interpreted by humans. Therefore, an idealist, a materialist, and a combined interpretation should be employed to broaden the acknowledgement of the role of language in socio-cultural compositions. With this in mind, I will critically analyze Edward Sapir's idealist postulations on language, Claude Lévi-Strauss' materialist conceptions of language, and Alfred Radcliffe-Brown's comparative methodology of language.

In *An Introduction to the Study of Speech*, Sapir stated that although speech may seem as natural as walking or breathing, the conception of naturalness is illusionary (Sapir 90). Sapir described that language is not a biological function but rather a “non-instinctive, acquired, cultural function” (Sapir, 91.) Sapir rules out the idea that language is a system of instinctual sound symbols. Instinctual sound symbols are short utterances used to express a feeling. Similarly, he disregards involuntary expressions of feelings as they mismatch the idea of language as a cultural function. Sapir argues that although the natural environment may stimulate the development of speech elements, the concept of language refers to a “non-instinctive method

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of communicating ideas and emotions by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbol”
(Sapir, 93.)

Furthermore, Sapir states that the object of language is communication, which includes the perception of a sound receiver when receiving a code of sounds sent by another person. Sapir describes language as a collection of sounds in accordance with relations and experiences within a group, in a sense a heritage of human race. According to Sapir, each language moves parallel to history as vocabulary includes experiences of people in a specific culture. Sapir explains that people from different cultures make up words and symbols to label unknown objects and experiences they encounter. Sapir concludes his text presenting language as a universal human quality necessary for the development of technological advances, constantly changing, all inclusive, and the collection of historical experiences.

Sapir is known for the *Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis* which sought to better understand the relationship between language, culture, and perception. In other words, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is a useful tool to help explain the unknown relationships between the interpretation of physical experiences and cultural worldviews in the idealist theory. The *Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis* is based on the idea that humans perceive the world by applying cultural classifications through language.

Claude Lévi-Strauss is known for his creation of the structural approach in anthropology. Structural anthropology is based on the belief that, there are structures of the unconscious that shape culture (Moore, 236.) Lévi-Strauss believed that cultural structures were reflections of the way in which the brain orders and interprets stimuli coming from the external realm (Lévi-Strauss, 236.) In *The Structural Study of Myth*, Levi Strauss attempts to find a structure that can be applied to all myths. Lévi-Strauss explains that fundamental universal human feelings are

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expressed through mythology. In addition, Lévi-Strauss believed that myth is language Lévi-Strauss because a myth is shared through speech.

Like Sapir, Lévi-Strauss separates speech and language into two categories. Lévi-Strauss borrows Ferdinand de Saussure's *langue and parole* terminology. *Langue* refers to the phonemes, the grammatical categories, and the lexicon, which are biologically predetermined and therefore unaffected by the individual. *Parole* refers to words and other forms of language that are used in specific moments of time to communicate feelings, ideas, or experiences (Levin 86.) Lévi-Strauss constructs his framework of analysis, for myth structure, using and modifying the ideas of *langue* and *parole* to explain the "time" in which myths take effect. Lévi-Strauss associates the notion of *langue* to the revertible/diachronic applications of myths, and *parole* to the non-revertible/synchronic time in which a myth takes place. He states that every myth is said to have happened a long time ago during the first stages of the world in a non-revertible time, while having an operative diachronic value that can explain events that happen in the past, present, and future.

Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss believed that time was not the only reoccurring element in myths. He believed that myths were a result of a linguistic formula that could defy the Italian concept *traduttore, traditore*. *Traduttore, traditore* is an expression that translates to the words "translator is a traitor" referring to the idea that an insider translating an expression betrays his cultural group and the cultural meaning is lost (Moore 281.) Lévi-Strauss asserts that myths do not lose their mythical value through translation because of their universal structure. Similar to other materialists Lévi-Strauss tried to find a universal law derived from the material world that could be applied to culture. He formulated the analytical method, "structural law of myth," which could be used to prove his structural theory in relationship to myth and language. Through

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his method, myths would be broken down into units that would neatly fit into categories placed on rows and columns used for analysis. Lévi-Strauss exemplifies the effectiveness of his theory by using it to analyze myths' origins. He provides the following column headings/categories to organize a myth: subsistence, establishment, failure to follow norms, and mythical transformations. Lévi-Strauss argues that the order in which origin myths are arranged reflects human's concern for subsistence, a battle between life and death, and permanency (Lévi-Strauss, 289.) First, humans express their concern for food production through a symbol representing agriculture, or hunting and gathering. Second concern is the establishment of society involving death through war or sacrifice. Third concern is social norms which imply the emergence of culture that can only be possible after subsistence. Finally, a mythical transformation such as victory in battle or contest that requires food production which allows permanency of the group on earth.

Lévi-Strauss concludes that the universality of structure in myth and language “corresponds to a universal way of organizing daily experiences” which comes from human's biological capacities for intellectual thought (Lévi-Strauss 294.) Lévi-Strauss believed that change in a language occurs when new things are discovered and applied through human's “unchangeable” abilities.

Radcliffe-Brown focused on the way language and other aspects of culture should be studied. Radcliffe-Brown is known for the *Comparative Method in Social Anthropology*. He believed that the study of human societies should have two aims and methods: the first method, ethnology, is focused on the history of a specific group; the second, social anthropology, is a comparative method focused on the —study of discoverable regularities in the development of human society [and] illustrated by the study of primitive cultures (Radcliffe-Brown 155.)

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Therefore, Radcliffe-Brown could be said to have used both, materialist and idealist, approaches. Radcliffe-Brown believed that anthropologists should consider social features within their cultural context and at the same time look for “law-like” generalizations.

Radcliffe-Brown used the comparative method when studying social organization in groups from America, Australia, and Asia. He found that the groups studied are organized based on moiety and exogamy. Moiety refers to a division of a society into two groups. Exogamy pertains to marriage contracted by members in —opposing moieties. Radcliffe-Brown recognized that relationships in the societies studied are represented through totemism, the association of a group with a natural feature (Moore 154.) Like Lévi-Strauss and other materialists, Radcliffe-Brown tried to prove that there are law-like regularities in social practices. In addition Radcliffe-Brown also tried to attribute social regularities to material attributes such as subsistence. He illustrates this belief when noting that Australian Aborigines have adopted meat-eating birds as their totem because they are hunters (meat-eaters.)

On the other hand, Radcliffe-Brown can be considered an idealist because he believes that the general theme seen in tales across cultures is the resemblances and differences of totems or animal species. Like Sapir, Radcliffe-Brown considers symbols/language, in the form of totems, a human collection of symbols that express the cultural interpretation of a group’s common experiences. He argues this theme translates into “friendship and conflict” or “solidarity and opposition.” Radcliffe-Brown’s studies can also be interpreted through Sapir’s theory which explains vocabulary in each language includes experiences of people in a specific culture at a specific time since Radcliffe-Brown explains that totems (symbols) represent the identity of the group’s he studied.

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Comparing Radcliffe-Brown's study of human society and human practices with those of Sapir and Lévi-Strauss has made me realize that when studying human societies it is highly beneficial to consider both idealist and materialist perspectives. I believe it is important that anthropologists take into account the existence of unchangeable structures of human nature, such as *langue*. Similarly, I think it is important that anthropologists recognize that there are social aspects, such as linguistic *parole*, that are unique to each culture and individual because they are direct interpretations of their experiences. On the other hand, I am convinced that for the study of language an idealist approach must be adopted. We are aware that there are aspects of language that have physical restrictions, which can be deciphered by scientists, however there are many more socio-cultural realms affected by language that remain unstudied. Linguistic anthropologists should focus on deciphering the meanings and relationships in those realms in order to better understand human cultures.

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Olmec Shamanism: Transformation and the Legitimized Right to Rule

By Celso D. Jaquez

Abstract

Among the most enigmatic objects of ancient Mesoamerican cultures are the Olmec transformation figures of the Middle to Late Formative era. Carved from serpentine and green jadeite, as well as depicted in sculpted stone, these examples of Olmec material culture have been studied for the past six decades, and diverse interpretations have been proposed regarding their meaning and purpose. Most frequently, they are associated with human to jaguar transformation, with shamans connecting to the animal's spirit or *nagual*. This project suggests that the phenomenon of shamanic transformation and its associated depictions extend much more deeply than previously believed, with evidence found throughout the corpus of Olmec artistic and religious expression. While not seeking to dispel existing interpretations, the research undertaken will explore whether examples of shamanic transformation are in fact more prevalent than previously considered. Of particular interest to this project is the most clearly identified iconic figure of Olmec art: the maize god. Considered to be the progenitor of the most revered of all Mesoamerican deities, the Olmec Maize God's association with shamanic transformation has not been thoroughly examined. The relationship between shamanic jaguar transformation and the care of infant/adolescent maize gods will be of great importance in this investigation. By

synthesizing existing analyses and re-examining the archaeological record I will attempt to shed additional light upon the extent to which transformation and communion was negotiated between shaman chiefs and the spirit world. With new understanding, the purpose for the practice of nagual transformation becomes clearer. This project further suggests that shamanic jaguar transformation served as a means of connecting both physically and spiritually with Olmec deities and in doing so, held the key to legitimizing shaman chiefs rule over the vast Olmec sociopolitical landscape.

Introduction

For the Olmec of the Formative Era (1400BC – 100AD) the practice of shamanism was not restricted to the realm of religious ritual and healing. It served as the pathway by which powerful shaman chiefs legitimized their right to rule. Chiefs utilized Olmec artistry to reinforce this right while carving grand monuments and commissioning works of fine art, all of which illustrated and glorified the risk and sacrifice shaman chiefs undertook to insure the bounty of the harvest and the protection of the people. Shamanism was in fact synonymous with politics for much of Olmec history. Iconography and symbolism were among the tools effectively used to reinforce this right of rule (Reilly 1995).

One image most often stands out as almost synonymous with the term Olmec. The giant “colossal heads” carved from basalt have come to be the most recognizable element of Olmec material culture (**fig 1**). Ten of these date from the earliest phase of Olmec culture at San Lorenzo (~1200bc – 900bc) with the last of these monuments to Olmec rulers being carved about in the late Formative (~400bc). These portraits of ruling chiefs served to honor their temporal beings, their flesh and blood side, so to speak. The basalt had been quarried from sites including the Tuxtla Mountains, about 80 kilometers from San Lorenzo. The labor and logistics required

to quarry, carve, transport and erect these monumental pieces of art attest to the degree of authority possessed by early Formative chiefs (Pool 2007). But what were the mechanisms by which these chiefs affirmed and maintained their legitimized status as rulers of a rapidly growing population (Bernal 1969). Clues as to the answer to this question can be found by thoroughly examining the growing corpus of known Olmec art, along with a review of current and past research into the interpretation of early and middle Formative Olmec iconography and artistic symbolism. Iconography and symbolism are the focus of this research.

Though the Colossal Heads of San Lorenzo, La Venta, Tres Zapotes and La Cobata are among the best examples illustrating political authority in the form of commissioned artistic expression, these were by no means the most meaningful or important examples of Olmec art. The artifacts I refer to did not simply celebrate the power and grandeur of the chief; they also served to provide visual testimony as to the chief's very right to rule. With the exception of the monumental carved stone thrones (altars), the vast majority of these carved figurines, relief, murals, and sculptures are much smaller than the colossal stone busts, but they are highly charged with the sacred (Reilly 1996). Works of art served to illustrate the magical and sacred power bestowed upon shaman chiefs who utilized these gifts to insure the success of the harvest, divine the secrets of the supernatural world, and serve as healers and curers. But the most spectacular and dangerous act, and therefore the one most likely to affirm shaman continued favor with the supernatural, was his (her) willingness to undergo spiritual transformation to his (her) *nagual*, their powerful animal spirit essence. Transformation and the associated symbolism are foundational concepts for rulership in the Olmec heartland.

Statement of the Problem

Renewed investigation is warranted in the study of the nature and relationship between

shaman chiefs and the supernatural world. Special attention is needed with respect to understanding the mechanisms by which the connecting of shamanic spirit transformation and the chief's association with the Maize God came to be among the important factors in their legitimized right to rule. Political restructuring within Olmec culture in the Formative era played a large role in the explosion of new artistic expression (Coe and Diehl 1980). A substantial portion of time, resources and labor invested in art served to glorify and reinforce the right of rulership for Olmec chiefs. Understanding the mechanisms by which this occurred will greatly add to the understanding of Formative Era political and religious systems.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify to what degree political authority among the Formative Era Olmec was legitimized on the basis of shamanic efficacy, including, but not limited to the practice of nagual spirit transformation. Other characteristics no doubt played extremely important parts in a shaman chief's repertoire of skills, which also reinforced his right to rule, such as the ability to heal, but the extremely intimate and mystical act of transformation would have been the most important feature of the chief's skill set. In other words, the goal of this research is to determine whether the archaeological record alone, without the support of written and deciphered textual evidence, suggests that success as practitioners in realm of the supernatural alone was sufficient to legitimize a chief's right to rule, as appears to be celebrated in the art, symbols, and iconography of the Olmec Formative.

Secondly, the reexamination of two key Olmec gods, classified under the Joralemon classification of Olmec deities, God II and God IV, is warranted given the context in which they are being interpreted (Joralemon 1971). This re-interpretation emphasizes the extreme importance of the relationship between chief's of the Formative and the Olmec maize deity. A chief somehow able to develop the means by which he could be seen as being allied with, by

way of direct interaction, the Maize God would have achieved a politically masterful stroke.

Hypothesis and Research Questions

Shaman chiefs, using powerful religious supernatural ritual and symbolism, supported by magnificently executed pieces of art, which illustrated their mystical powers and abilities, achieved legitimized authority to rule over the Olmec of the Formative era.

Does the evidence for this legitimized rule exist in the vast corpus of Olmec art presently known in the archaeological record? Is a reinterpretation of key figures among the pantheon of Olmec deities necessary in order to fully appreciate and understand the role of shamanism in this legitimization?

Methodology

I will be undertaking two types of research analysis for this project, primary and secondary source examination. Much of the material culture of the Olmec is available for analysis in the form of either museum collections reviewed by Mesoamerican Scholars (Taube 1996, Coe et al 1995, Benson et al 1996). At this stage of my education and training, I am unable to physically examine the pieces of art relevant to my research, so the scholarly reviews of sources such as the Dumbarton Oaks and Princeton collections are invaluable to this research investigation.

Secondary sources make up the balance of the resource materials used in conducting this research. Books and peer reviewed journal articles detailing the research of Mesoamerican scholars provide expert analysis of the corpus of Olmec art (Furst 1996, Reilly 1989, Joralemon 1971, Taube 1996, Pool 2007). In addition, these analyses provide a broad range of interpretations allowing for a well-developed synthesis of the meaning and purpose for this art's production and use in the context of Olmec religious and sociopolitical frameworks.

Timeline

The collection of resource material for this project began in April of 2010, although it was completed in July of 2010. I anticipate my research, including the addition of new resource materials along with the associated review and analysis, will continue through the course of my graduate studies. Analysis of the data collected thus far began in July and was completed in September of 2010. A full and complete write up of research findings to date began in September and was completed in late October 2010. Presentation of research findings will take place in February of 2011.

Literature Review

Three themes will be discussed in this research: 1) the Olmec Maize God; identification of the Maize God in the archaeological record, and a reinterpretation identifying him in a broader context of that record, 2) Jaguar symbolism reinterpreted; significance and connection to the Maize God, and 3) shamanic transformation as the bond that ties themes 1 and 2 together, and how they then serve to legitimize the right to rule among Olmec shaman chiefs.

Identification of the Olmec Maize God, God II in the Joralemon (1971) classification, has been the subject of much discussion from the very early days of Olmec scholarly inquiry (Covarrubias 1957, Soustelle 1962, Coe 1968, Bernal 1969). There has been a generally accepted agreement over how he has been characterized in Olmec art for nearly the past fifty years. He is most often depicted with a downward turned, toothless mouth (very reminiscent of the “were-jaguar” figure associated with God IV. Additional discussion on this to follow), a “V” shaped cleft in the center of his head, and either corn tassels, leaves or cob sprouting from the cleft (Miller and Taube 2007, Griffin 1981, Taube 1996). This image can be found incised on jade and serpentine celts, pectorals and masks, carved in base relief, and sculpted out of stone

(figs 2-6). Examples such as some of the **Rio Pescaro celts**, though incised in profile, are classic renderings of this deity. Another piece from the middle Formative in Maize God motif is a scepter found in Cárdenas, Tabasco, Mexico which is topped with Maize God complete with a fully grown maize cob protruding from the center cleft of his head (Coe et al 1996). This association to this particular deity to an instrument of rulership is a strong example of the early connection made by chiefs to this deity, and their understanding of the political implications that came with a perceived favorable relationship between chiefs and one so vital to the Olmec's existence as the Maize God (Deihl 2004).

It was during my examination of the many hundreds of art pieces, most dating from the Early and Middle Formative that I began to reconsider the identity of another Olmec deity classified as God IV, the Rain God. There are more examples of this deity sculpted in this period than any other. The question was whether this very familiar looking subject might simply be nothing more than a slightly varied manifestation of the Maize deity, God II. Mesoamerican scholars have been raising this issue to one degree or another a few years now, though I am unaware of true consensus on the subject (Taube 1996, Pool 2007). Aside from the absence of maize leaves or cobs emerging from the cleft, pieces such as **San Lorenzo Monument 52** appear in every way to be "related" to the figure already acknowledged to be God II, the Maize God (figs7-8). **San Lorenzo Monument 10** is sculpted seated figure, identical to that portrayed in Monument 52 with the exception that he has grasped in his hands a pair of as yet undefined "knuckle dusters" (Benson 1996)(fig 9). Dr. Taube has speculated that what we have in the case of not only God IV, but also God VI and X as well, is in fact "aspects of the Olmec Maize God as phases in the growth cycle of corn (1996)."

This new interpretation adds significant emphasis to the role already played by the Maize God in Olmec cosmology. The role of the Maize God in the Olmec universe is illustrated clearly on another of the **Rio Pescaro celts**, which shows the God II in profile in the center of the work, maize cob sprouting from the cleft in his head, and flanked by four maize effigies occupying the positions of the four cardinal directions (**fig 10**). This image has been interpreted as the Maize God serving as the axis mundi, the center of the Olmec universe (Coe 1996, Taube 1996, Pool 2007). There is, however, another extremely important element contained in this piece. The Maize God is shown grasping with both hands a serpent bar against his chest. While the significance of the serpent in this context is unclear to me, I am aware of Mesoamerican folklore that includes the belief that jaguars and serpents represent the struggle for balance of opposing cosmic forces, which are in constant battle for equilibrium (Joralemon 1996). The symbolic meaning of the bar or staff, on the other hand, is very much understood. Among several Mesoamerican cultures such depictions are thought to represent a ceremonial staff of office (Deihl 2004, Reilly 2005/1996) (**figs 11-12**). Cosmological belief and political authority are one both in this way effectively and graphically rendered as art.

Looking next at jaguar symbolism, particularly as it relates to Maize God imagery, we have the elevation of Middle America's top predator to the status of a god by the Olmec, as well as all Mesoamerican and South American indigenous cultures. It is not surprising that the Olmec, along with many other Central and South American indigenous cultures held this creature in such esteem. The jaguar is the master of all three realms of humankind's world, hunting with equally deadly effectiveness in arboreal, terrestrial, and aquatic environments. The jaguar came to symbolize the very essence of power for Mesoamerican rulers (Miller and Taube 1993, Saunders 1994). The great cat is found represented in Olmec artistic tradition in both naturalistic art and in

a highly stylized adaptation that for two generations was referred to as the *were-jaguar*, a supernatural being bearing human and jaguar features. I will not be examining the examples of naturalistic renderings of jaguars also found in Olmec at this time. That will be incorporated into a larger project to be undertaken in the future. This project is interested first in a reinterpretation of the were-jaguar figure and jaguar transformation figures.

Possessing a snarling mouth, sometimes complete with exaggerated fangs, feline eyes, the most fascinating feature of the iconic figure once commonly referred to as the Olmec were-jaguar, is that it is always rendered as an infant or very young child (**fig 13**). More important is the fact that this figure is consistently depicted either cradled in the arms of a human caretaker, or being presented as in the act of some unknown ritual by Olmec chiefs. In the case of the **Altar 5** from La Venta (**fig 14**), the chief appears emerging from a cave or perhaps the underworld with an infant held in extended arms (Furst 1996, Deihl 2004, Benson 1996). The reinterpretation of this infant figure, complete with the unmistakable cleft in the center of his head, may in fact be an infant manifestation of God II, the Maize God (Taube 1996, Reilly 1996). The juxtaposition of this all-important deity, in his most vulnerable state, in the caring arms of the chief, depicted wearing a Maize God headdress, would have sent a powerful message to anyone assembled before the throne that he, by way of honor and duty in the caring for the god responsible for that all important food source, was truly entitled to rule. One so honored would have also enjoyed great power, as well. Reinforcing this relationship between chief and god, on the sides of Altar 5, carved in relief are the images of humans (shaman/chiefs/twins?) cradling visibly active infant maize babies)(**figs 15-16**). The imagery does not at all end with Altar 5.

Perhaps the most dramatic expression of the concept of human care taking of the infant Maize God is that of the **Las Limas Monument 1** sculpture found in Veracruz in 1965 by two

children (Coe 1996). A cross-legged figure sits with a Maize God infant cradled in his lap. The figure appears to be in a state of ecstatic trance leading me to think this could possibly be a representation of a shaman chief (**figs 17-18**). Incised on the shoulders and knees of the sitting figure are the faces of four supernaturals: the Banded-Eye God, the Shark Monster, the Olmec Dragon, and the Bird Monster (Joralemon 1971, Taube 1996). The cosmological significance of this piece becomes clear when viewed standing directly in front of the figure. The four supernatural beings can be seen as occupying the positions of the four cardinal directions, with the infant Maize God this time occupying the position as the axis mundi (Deihl 2004, Joralemon 1996). The political significance of the piece is focused on the trance-induced individual who sits with the incisions on his body, and the maize deity in his arms. If a shaman chief, holding the Infant Maize God in the act of presentation, the art becomes political *and* religious propaganda.

A strikingly similar piece dating from the Middle Formative was uncovered in Tabasco, Mexico. It is referred to as **Figure Seated on a Throne with Infant on Lap (fig 19)**. Absent from the seated figure is the incising found on Las Limas Monument 1. However, we do again have an “entranced ruler of undetermined rank” holding what I am now referring to as Infant Maize God, and does so while sitting on a throne. Although I made what I thought was the obvious Maize God connection after examining the figure, Peter David Joralemon added an all-important description. “The remarkable rigidity of this baby is reminiscent of the **ceremonial bar** held in the lap of the elaborately costumed figure in Chalcatzingo Relief 1” [emphasis added] (Joralemon 1996). In Las Limas we had the Infant Maize God imagined as the axis mundi. With the figure Seated on Throne the Infant Maize God may be interpreted as representing a ceremonial staff of office held in the arms of an enthroned ruler. If these are, as I suspect, shaman chiefs then what we have in these pieces are incredibly powerful examples of art

that would have served as great visual tools of affirmation of the chief's right to rule (Reilly 1996). These chiefs may have managed to establish themselves visually as a type of stepfather, a paternal presence as well as intermediary between humankind and the maize deity.

The third theme has to do with the practice of shamanic transformation, and links the together the previous two. The role of shamans among the Olmec, along with that of healers, was that of intermediary between human kind and the supernatural world. They sought guidance from ancestral beings, performed acts of divination, and interacted directly with deities as well as ancestral spirits. I will only address two examples of Olmec shamans demonstrating their abilities to effectively interact with the realm of the supernatural as found in the archaeological record. The first is that of shamanic flight. Shamans would travel to the spirit world by means of ecstatic trance possibly brought on by any number of methods; including bloodletting, fasting, sensory deprivation, or through the ingesting of hallucinatory substances (though the source and substance continues to be a debated topic) (1996). An important task performed by shamans having achieved flight to the supernatural world was to do battle with evil forces (possibly other shamans) seeking to do harm to those under their charge.

There are several excellent pieces of Olmec art, which show shamans in the midst of spiritual flight. One is **Chalcatzingo Monument 12**, Morelos, Mexico, (**fig 20**). Another is found incised on a jadeite spoon, from Veracruz, Mexico (**fig 21**). The latter clearly showing a shaman "flying," his right arm extended holding what could be interpreted as a torch to light his way as he traverses the world of the supernatural. While the accepted identification of the object in both examples has been that of a vegetation bundle (type unknown), the metaphorical purpose whether torch or sacred bundle; its presence held before a trance induced "flyer" implies power and ability possessed only by the shaman, of, "flying between planes of reality" (Coe 1996;

Reilly 1996). The most dramatic visual example of shamanic flight is that of the **Oxtotitlan Mural 1**, located in a hillside cave near Chilapa, Guerrero, Mexico. It depicts a ruler, adorned in ornate avian regalia seated on a throne in the throes of ecstatic trance (**fig 22**). Again, the ritual/ceremonial purpose of this action can only be speculated on, the fact that is being performed while seated on a throne represents another example of supernatural ability directly tied artistically to rulership. This action has also been thought to possibly ritually link to rainfall and fertility of the land (Grove 1970). I believe that these monuments and art pieces were meant to convey not only the supernatural abilities of shaman chiefs, but also to provide visual evidence of the chief's willingness to undertake dangerous ritual action on behalf of his subjects. This concept plays out in its most visually dynamic form in the case of art depicting shamans in the act of jaguar spirit transformation.

Peter Furst first identified the figures commonly referred to as transformation figures, as being representations of shamans in varying stages of trance induced spiritual transformation from their human form to animal essence (Furst 1968). These figures range in size from very small portable pieces of less than twenty centimeters, to works of over a meter in size and weighing hundreds of pounds. A feature common to them all is that they appear to represent an individual (shaman) in the midst of undergoing an extremely trying ordeal involving the transformation from human to jaguar *nagual*, or spirit being (Coe 1966; Taube 2004, Reilly 1989). (Again, one must consider this choice of animal spirit as we examine this last thematic element.) As stated earlier, jaguars are the alpha mammals of the Mesoamerican animal hierarchy. As symbols of power, virility, and bravery, they were the natural, if not logical, choice of animal to commune with in transformation.

Several of the most beautifully rendered examples of jaguar shamanic transformation can be found in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection. **Kneeling Transformation Figure (fig 23)** is thought to have originated in Puebla, Mexico, and dates from the Middle Formative. The figure sits with its hands on its knees and leans slightly forward. This may indicate the individual is in the act of rising from this seated position. The body is powerfully built with the arms appearing decidedly more like that of a large predatory feline, and the torso and legs slightly more human. The head is a blend of human and feline characteristics. The ears, snout, and snarling mouth (down turned and reminiscent of the “were-jaguar” motif) are feline, with round deeply orbited eyes and short goatee retaining the figure’s human quality. It is at the shoulders that Furst made the observation that at both clavicle regions, there appeared to be a V-shaped split in the skin. These tears are symmetrical and traverse the neckline, joining in the middle of the throat. The analysis of piece and others similar, is that this “tearing” represents the separation of flesh of the shaman chief to reveal the jaguar essence beneath (Furst 1967). Put simply, these pieces, and others like it, were meant to visually illustrate one of their most important supernatural abilities. Carved mostly of jadeite, and serpentine, these portable pieces of art depict the act of transformation at various stages, and include extremely important elements; anguish and pain (**figs 24-26**). This characteristic can also be found on larger jaguar transformation pieces such as La Venta, **Monument 11 (fig 27)**. Peter Furst speculates that what is being expressed in clear and dramatic fashion is the rigorous sacrifice these shamans willingly put themselves through in order to demonstrate the degree they would be willing to sacrifice for the benefit of the people. They represented a demonstration of power and sacrifice essential to legitimize their right to rule. Furst states that this is “precisely the sort of physical and mentally exhausting crisis – the

crossing of the threshold between two worlds, two kinds of reality, ...that is integral to the practice of ecstatic shamanism everywhere..."(Furst 1996).

But these are, to my untrained eye, far from being the only pieces of monumental art found with ties to the concept of transformation and communion between shaman chiefs and sacred jaguar being. One found on a hillside near Veracruz, Mexico. **El Azuzul Monuments 7, 8, and 9** bring together several vital religious and political artistic motifs, along with being a magnificent example of political propaganda. Monument 7 is a feline figure carved from sandstone, and stands about 110cm (**fig 28**). It sits crouched in a sitting position, facing two human figures. Monuments 8 and 9 appear to be male twins. They are quite elegantly attired with elaborate headdresses. They kneel before the jaguar figure, leaning slightly forward, clutching a bar in their hands (**figs 29-30**). The symbolic power of this tableau on top that hill runs deep. First, in looking at the feline figure it was determined upon closer examination that this monument was re-carved from another large one (Pool 2004). Could this have been re-carved from a colossal head or alter/throne stone? What would be the reason for such a supposition? My theory as to the meaning and purpose of the El Azuzul tableau centers on the identity of the feline figure, one which is clearly feline, and most probably jaguar. What is interesting to me is that I have not read of anyone noting the recessed area around the mouth and eyes of the creature. Could this be another example of flesh separation revealing an alter persona? If so, this might be the reverse of what we saw with the earlier discussed figures. Here we may have a sacred jaguar personage, a fully transformed shaman ancestor, whose separating flesh reveals the *human chief* beneath. This individual sits slightly elevated in the tableau, bearing his teeth in a powerful growl. The two "princes" sit below the jaguar figure, grasping that which we have come to recognize as a ceremonial staff of authority (2004). Combined in

one artistic display we have together examples of jaguar transformation and ritually sanctioned and legitimized authority. This tableau setting was a brilliant example of the political savvy of Olmec chiefs. It memorialized the passing of sacred supernatural and temporal authority from a powerful shaman chief to twin princes, most likely of his lineage. It would have sent an unmistakable message to all entering the region by what right rule had been obtained. Given the widespread understanding of Olmec motifs, this would have been political advertising, BC 900 style.

We can now attempt to begin to connect the dots between Maize god, jaguars, and shamans as found in the archaeological record. I will address a few additional examples illustrating my point. A finely made jadeite sculpture found in the Veracruz region depicts the Maize God, complete with fully grown maize cob sprouting from the cleft in his head, wearing the perforated paper ear tassels found on rulers headdresses (**fig 31**). What is so compelling about this piece is the snarling fanged jaguar face he also possesses, and the classic early stage transformation pose he is in. The kneeling pose with the appearance of rising, or having just arisen, is common throughout all the transformation figurines. This is a prime example of the conscious association made by artisans connecting the Maize God and sacred jaguar symbolism.

Another interesting piece of monumental sculpture is the **San Martín Pajapan Monument 1 (fig 32)**. Found in the Tuxtla Mountain region of Veracruz, Mexico, this figure bears a striking resemblance to the twins of the El Azuzul tableau. The one obvious difference is that this figure is crowned with a magnificent Maize God headdress. As in the case of the Azuzul twins, the body is positioned slightly forward, arms fully extended and grasping a ceremonial staff of office.

Lastly, a piece from the Rio Pesquero region of Mexico may serve as one of the best illustrations of the intimate connection between the Maize God, shamanic jaguar transformation and rulership. It is a small piece, only about 9cm x 3cm x 5cm in size, and yet it conveys powerful and important religious and political conventions. Carved from jadeite, it has been cataloged as **Supernatural Riding a Jaguar (fig 33)**. It depicts an infant Maize God wearing a tasseled head cover tightly grasping a staff of office. He rests reclined, as if in the midst of travel, on the back of a supernatural jaguar. My interpretation of the jaguar figure is that of a fully transformed shaman chief. In other words, we have a transformed shaman serving as guardian and attendant of the infant Maize God as he is transported to and from the supernatural world. This is the same expression of responsibility we saw carved on the altar thrones at La Venta (see figs 15-17). Rulers were shown providing care for infant maize deities, while here we have the idea of guardian and attendant carried to its most elaborate supernatural ending. The figurine illustrates the power relationship between shamanic supernatural ability, the right to rule as a result of that ability, and the role of the chief as guardian and caretaker of the Maize God. Religion and politics were made one in a system of ideology, fertility, and legitimized rule.

Conclusion

A definitive conclusion drawn from my research to date is impossible, as additional research is needed. This research shall be ongoing under the tutelage of a graduate level mentor. I have attempted to synthesize as much of the available literature, and have studied the artifactual evidence, as could be done within the time constraints of this project. Based on what I have learned thus far, religious practitioners among the Olmec of the Middle Formative appear to have been masterfully skilled at manipulating material culture of all types, sizes and medium in their quest for consolidating authority over the growing populations in and around their

heartland region. Through all areas of religious, social, and political culture, however, maize fertility and production were the keys to authority and power. Maize was the most important feature of Mesoamerican Formative cultural development. Without the intensive cultivation of maize, there is no population growth. Without population growth, there isn't the surplus labor needed to construct monumental art and ceremonial architecture (Coe 2005). Power associated with growth results in access and even control of desired trade goods. Shaman chiefs developed a formula, which placed themselves as not only intermediaries with ancestral spirits, but as caretaker of the life assuring Maize God in his most vulnerable stage. This role tied his effectiveness as supernatural liaison to the fertility and productivity of the land. There would have certainly been the risk of a bad harvest resulting in a loss of faith, the results of which most likely would have meant sacrificing your office, if one was lucky. Otherwise, a bountiful harvest, assured by the effective intercession between chief and deity, would have been a powerful motivator for the recognition of the shaman practitioner as legitimate ruler.

Perhaps the best evidence that shaman chiefs recognized the manipulation of iconographic art as a legitimizing force is the fact that it is found far outside the acknowledged Olmec heartland. At Chalcatzingo, in the state of Morelos, the heartland motifs of jaguars, shamanism, and rulership are found in multiple artistic settings. At Takalik Abaj, Guatemala, the badly eroded remains of a still clearly recognizable La Venta style throne complete with a figure emerging from a niche holding what appears to be what I have identified as the Infant Maize God (Graham 1989) (**fig 34**). Further investigation will provide more detailed insights.

I only detailed a small fraction of the pieces examined while initiating this project. Additional research will be needed to better understand how these fit into the model of shamanic rulership I am investigating. There is a great deal of direction needed in all areas of iconographic

identification. The interpretations outlined in this paper will evolve as I make my way through my graduate studies. They will either prove to merit additional investigation, or will require re-working according to training and new developments in archaeological investigation.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Our understanding of Olmec religious practice has gone through many revisions over the past sixty years. Each new discovery adds another piece to a puzzle still left far from complete. Unfortunately, absent from these discoveries have been examples of decipherable Olmec text. Aside from the as yet to be deciphered Cascajal Block found in Veracruz gravel quarry in 1999, no written record of Olmec culture has been found. Regarded as the earliest example of writing in the Americas, Cascajal has not yet provided new insights as to Formative Olmec culture (Houston 2007, Mora-Morín 2009). Study of this artifact is ongoing.

Along with the challenges of decipherment of three thousand year old iconography and symbols there also exists an ongoing battle over the very term shamanism as applied to artistic interpretation of ancient art in general, and Mesoamerican art in particular. In a 2002 journal article on the subject the point is made that too often art is assigned to the realm of a vague and misidentified category of shamanism (Klein, et al, 2002). The question is raised over why these artifacts have not been afforded a secular interpretation in the first place.

Perhaps the biggest impediment to truly and completely understanding the meaning and purpose for many of these objects is their lack of archaeological provenience. Many of the most exquisitely and masterfully crafted pieces were purchased by collectors from dealers of antiquities whose method of extraction in no way followed archaeological protocols. Positioning relative to their location at the site they were found has made accurate interpretation of some

pieces extremely difficult, if not impossible. This lack of provenience has also opened the door to the oft-heard claim of fake and forgery.

Perhaps the most obvious limitation to this research project is my limited training in the study of Olmec religious practice, symbolism and iconographic decipherment. These are skills which will be honed and developed while conducting my graduate studies.

Among the strengths supporting my research is the amount of recent discoveries made in recent years. Much of these most important recent discoveries have in fact not been within the acknowledged heartland of Olmec culture. Most notable would be the discovery of the San Bartolo Murals in 2001 by William Sarturno. Dating to the late pre-Classic, it details among other things, a clearly Olmec looking maize god shown in the act of receiving offerings. Found in the lowlands of Guatemala, this remarkable find is solid evidence of extensive Formative era Olmec religious influence well beyond the borders of the heartland (Pool 2007, Coe 2005). As I worked to complete this paper I happened to be taking a closer look at the murals as part of assigned class work. On one of the walls is painted what appears to be a turtle shell within which reside the Maize God, flanked by the Rain God and another water deity (**fig 35**). As I studied the image, the thought occurred to me that this could be an early conceptualization of the multiple manifestations model I have imagined. Was this what had been found in ancient San Bartolo? Further investigation will follow.

The other strengths as relates to my research are my passion for the subject matter, and the tools available to researchers that were not around less than a generation ago. I am driven to continue my research and to one day inspire the next generation of Mesoamerican archaeologists. With respect to tools, there has never been a more exciting time to be a Mesoamerican archaeologist. New and innovative technologies such as satellite imagery and ground penetrating

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radar, as well as the wealth of foundational scholarship available with the click of a mouse count significantly among my research strengths.

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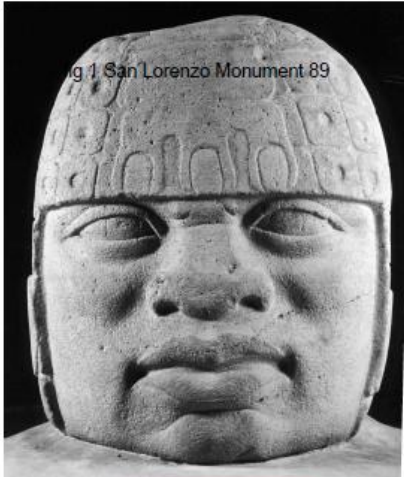


Fig 1 San Lorenzo Monument 89



Fig 2 Winged Plaque - Merida

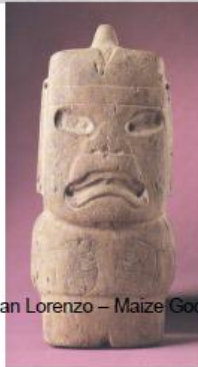


Fig 3 San Lorenzo - Maize God

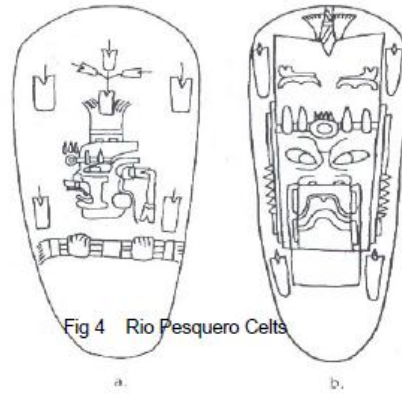


Fig 4 Rio Pesquero Celts



← Fig 5 La Venta Maize God Scepter



Fig 6 La Merced Maize God →



← Figs 7-8 San Lorenzo Monument 52 →



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Fig 9 San Lorenzo Monument 10
Seated Figure With Knuckledusters

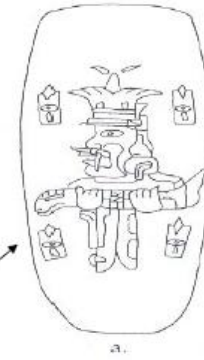


Fig 10 Rio Pesquero Celt
showing Maize God as Axis
Mundi



Fig 11 Veracruz –
Standing Figure Holding
Ceremonial Staff



Fig 12 La Venta Stela 2 Olmec
Ruler Surrounded By
Supernatural Beings (hold
ceremonial staff of authority)



Fig 13 Kunz Axe



Fig 14 La Venta Altar 5



Fig 15 La Venta Altar
5 left side



Fig 16 La
Venta Altar 5
right side

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← Fig 17-18 La Limas Figure



Fig 19 Seated Figure on a Throne with Infant on Lap - Tabasco



Fig 20 Chalcatzingo Monument 12



Fig 21 Oblong Spoon with Incisions - Veracruz

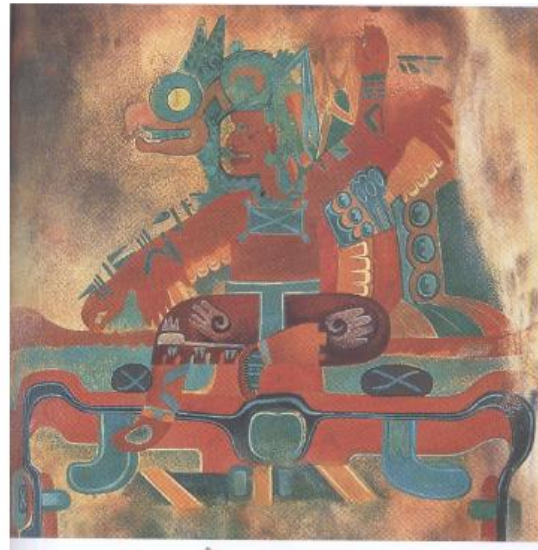


Fig 22 Oxtotitlan Mural 1 Ruler Seated on Throne in Shamanic Flight

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Fig 23 Kneeling Transformation Figure



Fig 24 Crouching Figure of Man-Jaguar



Fig 25 Jaguar Transformation Figure in Combat Pose



Fig 26 Standing Transformation Figure



Fig 27 La Venta Monument 11



Fig 28 El Azul Monument 7



Fig 29 El Azul Monument 8



Fig 30 El Azul Monument 9

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Fig 31 Olmec Maize God - Veracruz



Fig 32 San Martin Pajapan Monument 1 Crouching Figure with Headdress and Ceremonial Staff



Fig 33 Supernatural Riding a Jaguar



Fig 34 Takalik Abaj – La Venta style altar throne??



Fig 35 San Bartolo Mural

The Archaeology of Architecture

By Scott Bigney

Architecture and associated symbology have been purposefully developed to reflect social hierarchal variations in a society and subconsciously prompt culturally defined behaviors (Rapoport, 1982:13). These socially constructed boundaries can take many forms architecturally, manipulating culturally defined behaviors through accessibility, displays on the façade, capacity, visual dominance, and the consequent communicative capabilities. Plazas and associated religious symbols are but one way in which the built environment manipulates these cultural behaviors and ideology (Moore, 1996a: 2; Moore, 1996b: 789). In this paper I focus on the architectural form of Plazas and how they express religious and socially designated boundaries (Moore, 1996b: 789). Thomas Pozorski excavated at Huaca de los Reyes in '73 and '74, stating that this site displays progressively restrictive access from east to west signifying social stratification (T. Pozorzki, 1980: 100-109). I have focused on the three plazas and the west mound in order to answer the following: first, how does the architecture express monumentality; second, what are some of the restrictive qualities for participants; third, what is the resulting interpersonal communication between participant and practitioner; and fourth how do these factors reflect physical social boundaries.

Huaca de Los Reyes is the best preserved site in the larger complex of Caballo Muerto (Dead Horse) located in the Moche Valley. It was a "U" shaped ceremonial site occupied for nine centuries during the Initial period with an estimated population of 1200 people (Pozorski, 1980: 109; 1982: 230). There are many features that are displayed at this site that are common to other U-shaped sites such as an east to west axial symmetry and sunken plazas with feline motifs. A unique aspect of this site is what Thomas Pozorski called a "fractional relationship"

between colonnades mound face width, and plazas. Plazas, the main focus of this paper, especially show a calculated constructive space, in that plaza III is 1/6 the size of plaza II, while Plaza II is 1/3 the size of plaza I (1980:101; Moore 2005: 103).

The Methods used in this analysis are visual monumentality and proxemics. Analysis of visual monumentality will be determined by using the angle of incidence, angle of depression, and isolating isovistas. Using the visual attributes of the site the intended monumentality should be revealed, displaying cues “in which learned experience allows for interpretation”, a type of metacommunication (Moore, 1996a: 111). In order to use the visual monumentality methods, I first need to produce a cross section of the site (Figure 2), which will then serve as a map for analyzing the fields of vision across the site.

The Angle of Incidence is used to determine the initial monumentality of the site measuring 0-90 degrees from the eye of the viewer. Defining it as a gentle slope <15 degrees, frontal surface 15-30 degrees, or a vertical face >30 degrees (Moore 1996a: 105). This will assist in determining the initial qualities of the site such as: does the site suggest an emphasis on depth or is it purposefully overwhelming to the viewer. Using this method will assist in determining the point at which the monument is obstructive in ones field of vision, either from within or from outside the built environment, where depth would encourage movement and use of the site inward. All Initial visual effects of the built environment evoke unequal wonder to the viewer, such as a plain or a sheer mountain, where one evokes a sense of endless expanse of the scenery the other can cause “visual tension”, lacking in depth (Higuchi, 1983: 66-70).

There are other means to enhance a structure’s majestic quality, such as concavities. Creating artificial concavities in front of structures can increase the majesty of the structure,

though the majestic result might not be indented (Higuchi, 1983: 72; Moore, 1996a:111). Due to the fact that sunken plazas are present at this site, the angle of depression will be utilized. However in this case it is employed as a nominal variable relegated to present or absent (1996a: 106).

The last of the visual methods is “Isolating the Isovistas”. This method attempts to recreate the perceptions of the visual impact along transects intersecting mound-tops and staircases (Moore, 1996a: 106-107). As one moves through a structure certain thresholds are not only embarked upon but purposefully developed, possibly in order to reflect social or religious differentiation. This analysis defines different portions of the monument as the viewer moves across the site embarking on thresholds that vary in occupation of one’s field of vision. Certain angles have been defined to be representative of unique characteristics prompting tacit responses, 18, 27, and 45 degrees (Higuchi, 1983: 32-35; Moore, 1996a: 93-116). At 18 degrees our perception of the construction begins to reflect monumental status, at 27 degrees we begin to see the larger details of the construction, and at 45 degrees the construction is seen in greater detail being able to see small details (Higuchi, 1983: 47-48).

The proxemic analysis employs the relative scale, visual, and oral/aural data to evaluate the inter-personal communicative properties of the built environments (Hall, 1968: 92; Moore 1996b: 791). Changes in size of structures reflect different functions of communicative properties for the sites participants by defining visual and verbal limits from participant to practitioner due to distance (Moore, 1996a: 139; Moore, 1996b: 792). I attempted to employ the relative scale and visual aspects of the proxemic analysis in order to evaluate the private and public attributes of the monumental architecture. The relative scale is the size of a structure relative to surrounding structures, including humans. This will allow us to see what spatial

parameters were allowed per individual in this society. Due to the lack of residential architecture, the “human scale” will be primarily employed. The most reasonable measurement used for "human scale" is one person per 3.6m² (Moore, 1996a:149-151). Table 1 is a simplified chart modeled after Moore and Hall’s proxemic chart (Hall, 1968: 92; Moore, 1996a: 154). This chart will allow for the elucidation of the possible communicative properties imposed on participants of the religious ceremonies occurring at this site (1968: 92; 1996b:791).

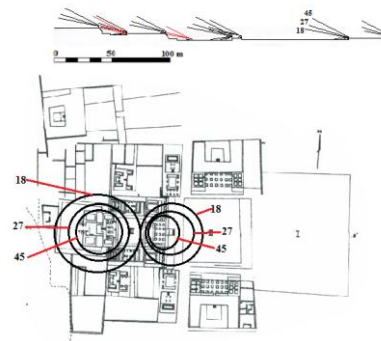
Table 1: Distance and perception Based on Hall 1968 and Moore's 1996a data												
Distance in Meters												
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	>10
Informal Distance Classes	Intimate/ Personal	Social			Public							X-Public
Oral/ Aural	Soft voice/ whisper	Conventional voice			loud voice when speaking to crowd			full public speaking voice			Voices in audible, reliance on music	
Visual perceptions	face and bust details	less face detail, whole body gestures			upper body and gestures/ whole body visible			increase importance of people, visual space around individuals			Body signs are barely visual perceived,	

Huaca de los Reyes symmetrical axial form suggests east to west processional movement across the site (Moore, 2005: 104). The processional movement across the constructed space, in and out vertically as well as horizontally, shifts visual perspectives of mound E assisted by the parallel arms. The results of the visual analysis suggest that this site is meant to draw attention into Mound E, punctuating the viewers field of vision led by the parallel arms and the face of the

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mounds. This is an intentional feature of many U shaped sites that was constructed drawing the focal point inward (Moore, 1996a: 111). Concavities are a repetitive theme across the site. They are centrally placed and directionally sized, consequently enhancing the structure. Though purposefully done, they are in all probability intended for ritual action and movement.

Monumentality of the east mound is not reached until nearing the mound itself, about 2/3 away the way into plaza II, approximately 22.5 meters from mound E. Once about 10.25 meters away from Mound E details are finally discernable which is just at the edge of plaza II and therefore represent brief interaction with religious knowledge displayed on the mounds. However, neither mound F nor the activities in plaza III are seen from the second plazas, suggesting a separation of social status.



Map 1: Cross-section of Huaca de Los Reyes using measurements from Pozorski description of the site, (1982: 233), along with existing maps. Isovistas are circled, which are the cultural focal points for this society.

Mound E is approximately 5.5 meters tall (Figure: 2) and actually contains more volume than mound F, which is 6 meters tall (Figure 1) and is built upon higher elevation than mound E (Pozorski, 1980: 101; 1982: 233). These mounds are purposefully constructed to separate secluded planes from the first two and one would have to publicly separate and ascend past the masses occupying that area. Once leaving plaza II, mound E is seen in greater detail and two narrow staircases lead up to the 3rd plaza. At this point the participant or practitioner is surrounded by colonnades displaying religious knowledge. These are in the form of Bipedal figures, unseen by the masses due to the fact that the colonnades are behind the walls of Mound E. Only when exiting these stairs and past the portico of colonnades does mound F become visible and almost immediately it becomes the dominant constructed space. Mound F becomes

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monumental within 29 meters from its base. People allowed to enter the 3rd plaza would be visually oppressed due to this towering structure overseeing their activities. Not only are the activities in mound F still unseen, the access through a single portal suggests its space is of higher exclusivity than Mound E.

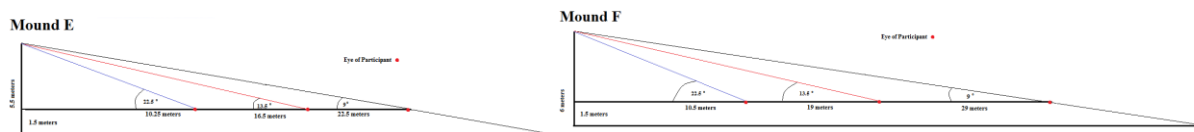
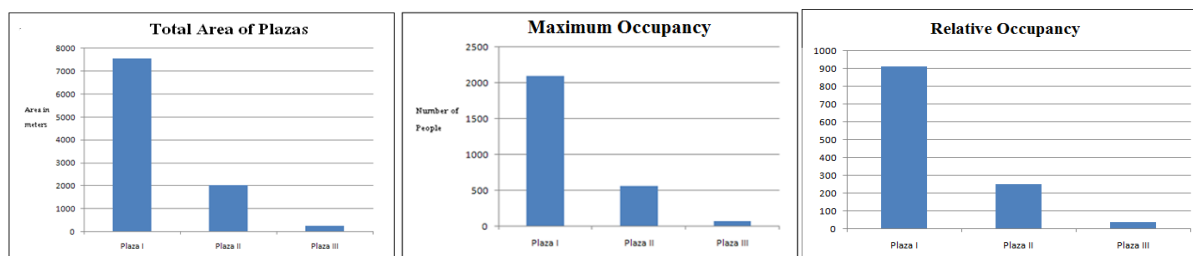


Figure 1: Cross-sections of isovistas approaching Mounds E Figure 2: Cross-sections of isovistas approaching Mounds F

Huaca de los Reyes’s plazas seem to display a pattern, of progressively intimate communication from east to west, roughly correlating to Pozorski’s fractional relationship (Graphs, 1-3). The results of the proxemic analysis are based off estimated measurements of scaled maps (Moore, 2005: 102; Pozorski, 1980: 102). The Relative Occupancy is based off of total estimated area of plazas and estimated population, and under the assumption that everyone attended events at this site.



Graphs 1-3: Area (Graph 1), Maximum occupancy (Graph 2) (3.6sq.m.), and Relative occupancy (Graph 3) (7.8sq.m.)

The first plaza measures approximately 82 m X 92 m giving it a total area of 7544 sqm. This large plaza could hold 2096 people in it comfortably with a relative occupancy of 912 people. Plaza II is another rather large plaza in that it measures 44 m X 46m, giving it a total area of 2024 sqm (Moore, 2005: 101). This plaza could hold up to 562 people with a relative

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occupancy of 252 people. If the population that was in attendance was 1200 people, these two plazas could have accommodated 97% of the population with generous room to spare, allowing approximately 7.8sq.m. per person. Both of these plazas are in the X-public realm of communicative attributes, enabling only communicative cues in the form of fire signals or music, and exist on the initial elevation plane (Map 2). These two plazas are just too large to hold private interactions between participants and practitioner. However, there are distinct qualities of plaza II that distinguishes itself from plaza I. Friezes bombard plaza II from all three sides in the form of 2 meter high anthropomorphic heads and bipedal figures, which represent deities and a cultural hero respectively, as well as within plaza II the central focus of the site becomes monumental (Moore, 2005:103-104; Pozorski, 1980:104-108).

Plaza III, the second elevation plane, is 16 m X 16 m giving it a total area of 256sqm. This plaza could hold up to 71 people, although the relative occupancy is 36 people. Here we see a marked increase in private communication when comparing it to the previous plazas. However, it is still in the public realm of communicative capabilities. Communication can now be verbally conveyed in the form of a full public voice along with basic visual recognition of people (Map 2). Here we see greater variation in friezes not of type, but in style, suggesting craft specialization and further reasons for status differentiation from east to west (Moore, 2005: 103-104; Pozorski, 1980: 107-108). With acquired visual monumentality and greater variation in friezes, it also decreases in occupancy and public media, marking an ideological separation within this society on the thresholds of Mound E.

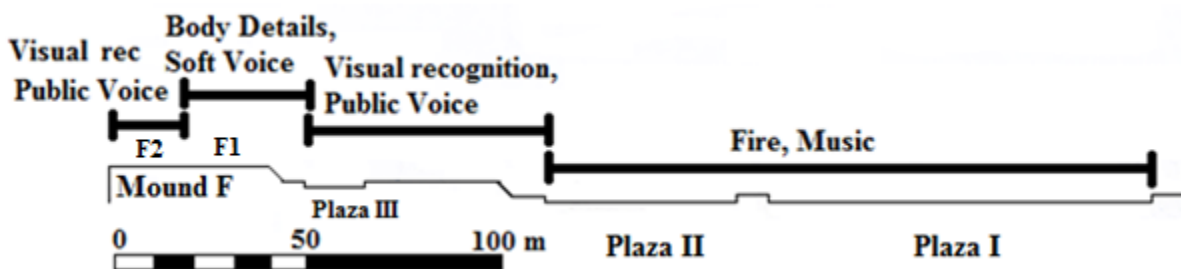
Mound F, the third elevated plane, has unique communicative attributes as a result of its internal shape, which appears to be two separate sections with a sunken court. The initial section (F1, Map 2) of the mound top continues to show a progressive reduction of size, occupancy, and

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public communication. It measures 8 m. X 8 m. giving it a total area of 64 sqm, accommodating 17 people with a relative occupancy of 8 individuals (7.8m.sq. / Person). It is within the social realm of communication where body details are discernable and one could talk softly or in a conventional tone to convey messages (Map 2).

F1 leads to the larger section (F2, Map 2) where the communication is difficult to surmise due to the internal shape. It measures 20m X 32m and has a total area of 640sqm, accommodating 177 people with a relative occupancy of 82 people. It appears it is in a public realm, with people potentially using their full public speaking voice and visually giving recognition to one another (Map 2). Despite the larger size, I do not believe 82-177 people used this space; rather it is in my opinion a physical representation of a separation of experience not status.

This communicative attribute, the shift from social to public, is somewhat confusing, in that it represents of a physical separation of religious experience rather than social status, though overall it does display exclusivity of space. These two sections are on the same elevated plane, with heightened restrictive access. Both sections are unseen, and possess increased religious knowledge. The increased religious knowledge is due to the anthropomorphic head carved in the round, hidden from view, and facing north, where all other friezes are viewable by most and



Map 2: Cross-section of Huaca de los Reyes displaying the communicative attributes along the length of the east-to-west transect.

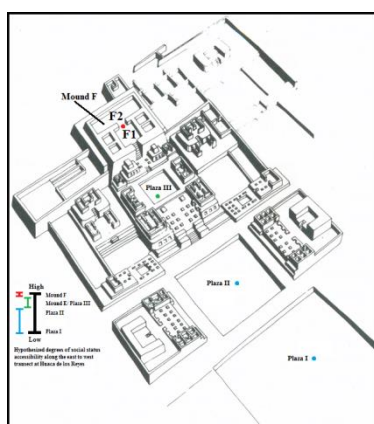
oriented to face the plazas or the axial line from east to west.

It appears that there are at least three divisions within the architecture separated by the elevated planes creating unique visual qualities, display of varying imagery, and communicative capabilities. These divisions might be due to ideological divisions of social status within this society evidenced by the architecture (Map 3). The visual monumentality and proxemic analyses have coincided with each other, in that the mounds and plazas culturally construct boundaries conforming to, or forming cultural behaviors. The following is a hypothesized social tripartite based on the results of the above methods on Huaca de los Reyes.

First, there are the commoners, allowed in the first elevated plane where X-public communication could occur occupying both the 1st and 2nd plazas, moving in and out of the cultural landscape and exposed to the religious knowledge and monumentality of the site for a brief moment.

Mound E is the initial cultural focal point and the first social dividing line allowing only 3% of the population to enter as suggested by the size of plaza III when compared to the first two plazas. It exists in a public communicative realm, where the first recognition between practitioner and participant could have occurred and where one must ascend from the first elevated plane (Plaza I and II) to the second elevated plane. We also see an increase in frieze variation with two narrow staircases to unseen events. It seems plausible that this constructed space was produced to publicly display exclusivity, in that only those with a high degree of religious knowledge and social status are able to access and ascend past the masses. This would be seen as a public demonstration of legitimization of their status and religious authority.

In the 3rd plaza, mound F becomes oppressive and suggests that the initial differentiation in status produced by Mound E might be for display purposes, which in turn suggests an even more exclusive group having access to ascend into Mound F, the third elevated plane. Mound F seems to represent the second social division and focal point for participants allowed access to Mound E. It is a continuation of legitimization of status and religious authority represented through ascension and exclusivity (Pozorski, 1982: 251). One observation of the architectural



Map 3: 3-D reconstruction of Huaca de los Reyes (Mosley, 2001:139). This map is displaying the hypothesized social demarcations along the east to west transect of the site.

traits bolstering the exclusivity of the second dividing line is that activities in Mound F are unseen by all, and in fact the mound itself is unseen by participants in plaza II. However, it is seen before and within most of plaza I, although Mound E and Mound F would probably be indiscernible at such a distance. Its dynamic communicative qualities, seen in F1 and F2, could be a separation of experience sharing many other qualities despite the size difference. Overall, the fact that mound F's appearance is larger than mound E, the reduction in access, initial reduction of public communication, along with unique friezes, suggests this is the

second dividing line in the society, again displayed through exclusivity, legitimizing religious authority.

By suggesting a tripartite within this society, I am not suggesting a middle class, common to our own society. I am merely interpreting the evidence and suggesting that within the initial high status tier (Mound E) a second division is made. This division is evidenced by the architecture, separating a portion of the participants (approximately 20% of the 3%) allowed access to Mound E and able to access the even more exclusive space of Mound F. All physical

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separations that are created by the architecture are due to analogous ideologies, differentiating higher status and religious knowledge through the parallel increased exclusivity of the site. It could be that those allowed in Mound F allow for the access of the occupants of Mound E legitimizing their power, where in turn these people, Mound E participants, use this legitimization to control or influence the general public.

I believe these analyses have shown Huaca de los Reyes' to be progressively restrictive overall and the architecture is constructed to emphasize social and religious boundaries. This is but one U shaped ceremonial center, there are analogous contemporaries located throughout the Andes, and I believe using these methods in future research on other initial period sites will elucidate how representative Huaca de los Reyes is to its contemporaries.

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Preliminary Study on the Reproduction of Cambodian Court Dance in Long Beach, California

By Katie Nicole Stahl

In four months of dancing with Khmer Arts in Long Beach, I was taught the basic movements of Cambodian court dance, *kbach batt*, and learned rudimentary knowledge of the meaning and symbolism transforming through the hand gestures and body movements of court dancers. With the addition of research from critical dance theorists and Cambodian court dance ethnographers, coupled with my own personal fieldwork with Khmer Arts, I have drawn comparisons between the “real” and the “ideal” of Cambodian court dance and its manifestation in Long Beach. There is a great divide between the ideal image of Cambodian court dance and the actual representation of its modern form in Long Beach.

Cambodian court dance in Long Beach is currently going through an interesting transition, as discussed by my cultural contact at Khmer Arts, Keomony Chan. Keomony, court dancer since she was fifteen, has recently been honored with the position as manager of Khmer Arts in Long Beach. We met in August of 2010 and throughout our discussions she has continually proved to be a descriptive, patient, and encouraging teacher of Cambodian court dance. Keomony’s and my conversations about Khmer dance fueled the essence of this paper and I am very grateful for her support of this research and her continual activism for Khmer arts and culture in Long Beach.

This study will deliver a general background on the modern and ancient history of Cambodian court dance, a detailed biography on Keomony coming to dance at Khmer Arts, an explanation of the aesthetics of Cambodian court dance, and a closing analysis on the “real” and the “ideal” of Cambodian court dance in Long Beach.

Court Dance under Communist Kampuchea

The main dilemma in studying Cambodian court dance is its physical transmission through passage from teachers to students. Shapiro extrapolates, writing that the “knowledge of Khmer dance, its technique, mythology, rituals and history, resides within the dancers themselves” (1993:42). This proposes a problem for studying court dance during the past century, for the Khmer Rouge, also known as Pol Pot’s reign, murdered “close to ninety percent of Cambodia’s professional artists” including almost all of the Cambodian court dancers and teachers (Shapiro 1993:43).

Previous to the reign of the Khmer Rouge, “a single troupe resident in the royal palace” performed and was “revered as a living symbol of the kingdom” (Cravath 1986:179). When Pol Pot came to reign, dancers were thus targeted for their ties to the royal court, which the new rulers of Communist Kampuchea wished to obliterate from history. Pol Pot called for a return to an agrarian state, where Cambodians were forced to relocate and work the rice fields for long, grueling days with only one meal to sustain upon. The dancers that survived found themselves in a precarious position in the work camps, where revealing one’s training in dance may be asking for a death sentence.

The reign of the Khmer Rouge had “virtually all ritual and formal performance... come to a standstill...when close to 2 million people perished from starvation, disease, forced labor, torture, and execution” (Phim & Thompson 1991:11). Toni Shapiro worked in the refugee camps in Thailand, talking with dancers who were recovering from the traumas of the war. Dancers felt the need to keep dancing, to teach dancing, even if under threat. The dance metamorphosed into a symbol of Cambodia’s strength and resilience. For those that survived, it was “the *dancing* and the *dancers* which constituted the archive assuring the perpetuation of tradition” (Phim & Thompson 1991:9).

Ancient History of Court Dance

In traditional stories, it is said that court dance was sent from the heavens as a gift to the people. In actuality, it was constructed from the common people of Cambodia and in later centuries nurtured through the royal kingdom. The earliest evidence of Cambodian court dance is found through written documents from the sixth and seventh centuries about dancers serving in temples, performing dances of blessing and “to assist the deceased in gaining rebirth in the spirit world” (Cravath 1986:181). Cravath extrapolates, claiming that it seems likely that “ritual dance has been intimately connected with ancestor communion and fertility rites in the area of Cambodia from the most ancient times” (1986:182).

Angkor Wat, the ninth to fourteenth century architectural splendor, archaic political center of Cambodia, and the largest religious site in the world, is where we see the growing importance of Cambodian court dance in the kingdom. “The function of dance in traditional Khmer culture...(and) the number of dancers in the state and temples increased tremendously during” the Angkorean kingdom (Cravath 1986:185). The beautiful bas reliefs, etched so delicately in the walls of Angkor Wat, detail the *Apsara*, the celestial dancer who embodies “purity of spirit and eternal beauty” (Shapiro 1993:77). The dancer in the bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat is clothed in delicate fabrics, gold chains clipped snug around her waist; her fingers are bent back in a graceful arch, with her hand bent perpendicular to her wrist.

The creation of the dancer as a celestial form is procured in the “Churning of the Sea” myth:

At the bottom of the sea a great naga serpent stretches the entire forty-nine yards of this mythical ocean... Above this, the naga appears a second time supported by two groups of figures. On the left are ninety-two yakkha, ogres, pulling on the head; on the right are eighty-eight deva, gods, pulling on the tail. The naga is

wound around the stone...and the resultant churning (procures) thousands of flying dancers who emerge from the ocean's foam (Cravath 1986:185).

The dancers served important roles throughout Angkor Wat's rule, performing dances of blessing to the health and prosperity of the kingdom with their symbolic hand gestures. Cravath argues that the court dancers were vitally important to the state because they were the "embodiment of the life-creating energy resulting from a process for which Angkorean temples and entire cities were architectural metaphors" to the celestial heavens (1986:185). The king would then surround himself with court dancers, for they represented the continuity of prosperity within the kingdom.

Though the Siamese invaded and defeated the kingdom of Angkor in the early fifteenth century, Cambodian court dance persevered through the passing of knowledge from teacher to student, insuring that the dance would survive, though not unchanged.

Transition to the Modern Era

The dance though lived to see the modern era, when the French colonial presence would dictate court dance aesthetics. King Ang Duong, the restorer of national unity to Cambodia whose reign spanned from 1841 to 1860, is credited with initiating unifying transformations to Cambodian court dance. Ang Duong saw the bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat as a model for how his court dancers should dress, dance, and be represented. Though "the *Apsaras* figured prominently among the rich figurative art on Angkor's bas-reliefs, this reenactment of Angkorean bas-reliefs as a dance was clearly new" (Phim & Thompson 1991:39). It was, as Penny Edwards describes, "a curious process of copying and replication, of imitation, and ultimately, of anticipation, the credentials of the 'Original Khmer' were simultaneously invented and validated in textual, material, and visual fields" (2007:163).

Under the French protectorate in 1863, the French opinion of Khmer affected Khmer social and structural beliefs, for the French perceived the Khmer as mere tattered remains of their glorious Angkorean past. Cambodian court dance then transformed under the French colonial presence into a dance of remembrance of the glorious royal ancestry that the Khmer had once been, and had subsequently “lost.”

How Keomony Chan Came to Dance

Keomony’s father, Bora, and her mother, Piseth, were forced into a marriage during their stay in a work camp underneath the Communist Khmer Rouge regime.¹ They are both originally from Battambang. Her mother, Piseth, became pregnant while in the camp, and received special treatment from the Communist officers during the course her pregnancy and for the rest of her stay in camp. The special treatment from the officers spurred on jealousy from her cousin, Sambath, who was also living in the camp. This jealousy festered within Sambath, even after she was safely relocated from the refugee camp to Utah. Sambath attempted to convince the sponsor that had relocated her to not relocate Keomony’s parents, Bora and Piseth. Sambath claimed that they were Communists. The sponsor, however, decided against Sambath, and sent for Bora and Piseth to come to the U.S from Thailand in 1984.² Keomony’s parents are still together to this day.

Keomony was born in Salt Lake City, Utah on November 23, 1985. After her first birthday, she moved with her family from Salt Lake City, Utah to Gardena, California. After three or four years, her family relocated to Long Beach, where they still live today. Her family life at home was rather strict and according to her (interview with author, October 15, 2010), her father is the “traditional Cambodian guy” and had difficulty opening up to his children, especially with the girls.

Keomony fell for Cambodian court dance when she first saw it on television as a curious five year old. However, she was unable to start dancing in classes at Khmer Arts because the classes were located far away from her home. Her family relocated closer to the studio when she was fifteen, and she immediately began training. Starting at fifteen creates difficulties for a court dancer, for the body has not had sufficient time to develop proper flexibility in the fingers, toes, and back. Keomony overcame this obstacle and became Sophiline Cheam Shapiro's honored student. She became a strong and graceful court dancer who emotes grace, strength, and the quality of endurance to the audience (See Figure 1 in Appendix). Keomony still dances to this day to insure the continuity of Cambodian court dance and to honor the dancers that died underneath the Khmer Rouge regime. For the "Khmer Rouge failed to break the spirit, or the spirits, of the dance" and Keomony wishes to teach this moral to her students (Phim & Thompson 1991:42).

Sophiline, the creator of Khmer Arts, desired to move back to Cambodia and asked Keomony to take over as the acting manager of Khmer Arts. Unfortunately, this was not Keomony's dream. Keomony has said (interview with author, October 15, 2010) "if I didn't, really, have anything going on in my life right now... I would probably be over there joining the troop" in Cambodia. Keomony took the job as the manager for she felt an obligation to impart her knowledge to the students at the academy and a kinship duty to her mentor, Sophiline. Keomony's reasons for staying are best described by Chea Samy, a court dancer Toni Shapiro worked with in refugee camps: "I am like a gardener who has planted some seeds. I need to nourish and protect them until they blossom, until they can safely bend their own way in the wind. But they must never forget their roots" (1994:439).

Aesthetics of Court Dance as Seen at Khmer Arts

Cambodian court dance, as seen at Khmer Arts in Long Beach, is a dance with a repertoire of ancient myths and modern tales of Cambodian life. The dancers use their hands and fingers to transmit symbols of meaning while alternating slow and quick rotations of their bodies, with their legs alternately bent in a deep “V” or locked into a standing position. “They are strong,” Shapiro writes, “on the inside and soft and supple on the outside” (1994:80).

Before dancers are ready to perform, they must spend almost six years prepping their bodies and spirits to identify with the character they are meaning to portray. Shapiro witnessed novice dancers in the first throes of training at a refugee camp in Thailand, working with “specific (sometimes excruciating) exercises that are designed to encourage the hyperextension of the elbow, the deep arch in the spine, and the extreme flexibility of the fingers, all of which are essential to the execution of Khmer classical dance,” also known as Cambodian court dance (1994:81). This process is enacted with an hour of basic movements, *kbach batt*, at the beginning of every class session. Dancers are aided in learning *kbach batt* (basic movement) by learning this song as told by Keomony (letter to author, November 25, 2010), which helps teach the rhythm of court dance: “Jak jong (joe-n) jak ting ting jong ting.”

Kbach batt (basic movement) begins with sitting side-saddle, your knees pointed forward and bent at a sixty degree angle, with your left foot tucked underneath your right leg. Your right foot, the exposed foot, has its toes completely flexed towards the top of one’s foot. The torso is positioned within the center of your body, with your back bowed into a gentle curve. Your shoulders are back and your posture is upright. Your right hand is flexed inversely with the palm resting on your right knee, the fingers pointed towards the sky. The left hand is grasping the fingers of the right, pulling and stretching the digits to create a deeper curve of the fingers. After sitting for a few minutes, with your master teacher adjusting your posture and holding you firmly

into the perfect position, you then switch to the opposite side and repeat (See Figure IV in Appendix). The subsequent movements or stretches are used to stretch the back, the fingers, and work on the perfection of posture. Each movement is held with the idea of perfection in the dancer's mind, and thus the stretches can be extremely painful and physically taxing.

In Shapiro's dissertation, *Dance and the Spirit of Cambodia*, she translates the core group of symbolic hand gestures court dancers utilize.

Kbach changol (forefinger pointing, all others curled under together) can symbolize a budding vine. *Kbach cheep* (thumb and forefinger held straight, pressed together, other fingers separated and arched backward) and *kbach phka* (palm turned up and inward toward body, fingers reaching to the skin in a cup-like formation) indicate a flower. *Kbach Khuong* (thumb and middle finger touching to form a circle while other fingers are outstretched) represents a fruit. *Kbach lea* can symbolize a leaf. When *kbach khuong* leads into *kbach lea*, this represents the falling of the ripened fruit. The cycle is ready to commence anew" (1993:85).

These movements represent a story that Keomony and other teachers use to help students memorize the hand movements (interview with author, September 23, 2010). At Khmer Arts, the story goes: "In nature, a seed grow into a tree. The tree has leaves and fruit. When the fruit gets ripe, they fall off the tree and the new seed grows into another tree." The hand movements detailed by Shapiro accompany this rhyme.

There are four main characters in Cambodian court dance: the male, female, giant, and monkey. For the male character (see Figure VI in Appendix), his legs are always open to the audience and many movements have him close to the ground with bent knees. The female character traditionally represents Mera, the mother of Cambodia, who spiritually portrays the ideal Cambodian woman: strong, intelligent, gentle, and sweet. This character's legs are always closed and bent slightly at the knee, with delicate hand movements and small, controlled

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swaying. The giant represents the evil character. The movements are grand, broad sweeping gestures with strength behind every movement of the character's gestures. The monkey is the playful character who stirs up trouble with tumbling acrobatic movements and playful scratching of the ears and genitals.

The Khmer Arts Salon Series of Long Beach featured, in October 2010, Sophiline Cheam Shapiro, Keomony's first Neak-kru, who brought three dancers from her troupe in Cambodia known as the Khmer Arts Ensemble to perform a piece from her new dance, *In the Lives of Giants* (See Figure V in Appendix). After the beautiful performance, Sophiline and the dancers were asked questions from the audience members. One of the questions directed towards Sophiline questioned how one chooses a dancer to enact a character for one of her dances. Sophiline responded saying that each of the dancers had part of the character within themselves, (Khmer Arts Salon Series, October 9, 2010) "though the dancer I chose to portray the giant is not big and tall, she is strong and confident, thus she is the perfect dancer for this part."

After warm-up, dancers then perform what the master teacher would like to see and work on. In the case of Khmer Arts, Keomony hooks her Mac laptop to the stereo system and will play Pin-Peat music from her personal music files or utilize the music from videos of court dance performances from the internet. The girls will dance the fan dance, the sword dance (*robam dao*), and many other dances they are working on for upcoming shows (See Figures II and III in Appendix). The artist in residence, Sophanmay Nong, and Keomony will sometimes please the girls with a performance of their own choreography. They are currently working in a collaborative effort, attempting to re-choreograph the ending to the Sentimental Dance, the dance of young lovers. The traditional version has the lovers forced apart and forever doomed to

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sadness; Sophanmay and Keomony are changing the ending of the dance, so that the lovers do not part and live the American classic, “Happily Ever After.”

When Khmer Arts performs Cambodian Court Dance, family members and Sophanmay are put to work in preparation of hair, make-up, and dress for the dancers. The hair is kept back, with a flower placed on the side of the head which dictates the gender of the character. The face is covered in dramatic make-up, emphasizing the eyes. The fabric is made of Cambodian silk, and is sewed onto the dancer, which is a specialized art within itself. The jewelry is gold covered brass and is all handmade from Cambodia.

Performances have the dancers looking out at the audience with serene smiles upon their faces. Their movements are strong, steady, and the epitome of grace. Their heads tilt slightly from side to side, and their bodies sway with the gentle stringing of instruments. Their feet lightly touch the ground to the beat of the drum, and their hands tell the story of the dance.

At the Cambodian Arts and Culture Exhibition of Long Beach, two students from Khmer Arts performed the Sword Dance, *Robam Dao*. The performance took place on a wooden stage on the grass of MacArthur Park during a very rainy afternoon. I talked with a few audience members afterwards about the performance. One viewer remarked that the girls looked so serious, so intense, that they appeared to be much older than they were. Another audience member remarked that the evidence of practice and training in the girls was astounding. The dancers’ obvious respect for the art form made a serious impression on the audience members who were there visiting the exhibition; the viewers were privileged to see how Cambodian court dance represents the strength of Khmer women and the grace of their people, who have kept this dance alive throughout the constraints of time.

The Real and the Ideal Represented at Khmer Arts

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Khmer Arts is located off of the rundown street of Obispo, next to sewing factories, a pet kennel, and a Mexican restaurant. The gate into the studio is barred, and the studio itself is a large open warehouse with grey carpet, white walls, and long wall of mirrors. The walls are filled with pictures of dancers from Khmer Arts and Khmer Arts Ensemble, the sister school in Cambodia. There is a fridge and storage for food, for Saturdays families come in with their children and share in an hour long lunch break. The stereo is perched on a table underneath a wipe-off board with markings on which parent has donated how much to support the running of Khmer Arts. The studio is a space that is created for the community in a location that is accessible to many Cambodian-Americans.

From the description presented, it is obvious that this may not be a dance space akin to one you would find in Cambodia presently or historically. In Cambodian court dance there are a varied amount of values and ethics taught as ideal ways of how dancers should: learn, teach, spiritually connect, and portray Cambodian court dance. Please note, that though court dance represented at Khmer Arts in Long Beach may not be at the “ideal” level, it is a professional school for many members of the Cambodian-American community who would not be able to access this art form in the competitive nature of court dance in Cambodia at the Royal Art Academy.

The way in which one should learn court dance is portrayed quite differently among the literature on Cambodian court dance and the way in which it is enacted at Khmer Arts. Ideally, a dancer “embarks at the age of eight or nine on the long road to becoming a professional classical dancer” (Phim & Thompson 1999:44). At Khmer Arts, some students do start at that age, and earlier at times. However, many of the dancers begin their training at a later stage in life. Keomony, for example, began her training at 15 and has been featured in many professional

dances across the United States. Phim and Thompson also go on to say that “it takes at least twelve years to be an accomplished dancer—six to master the steps, and another six to understand the spiritual and emotional aspects of the dance, as well as to perfect the art of performance, the art of communicating atmosphere and story-line” (1999:44-45).

At Khmer Arts, Keomony has said that many of the dancers, if they are serious and focused, can begin performing after three to six months of training. Keep in mind that the dance practices at Khmer Arts are three days a week, two hours on Thursdays and Fridays and four hours on Saturdays, in comparison with Khmer Arts Ensemble’s daily training in Cambodia. Also, there is a great misconception on the ideal of how much a dancer knows about the hand symbolism, or *kbach*. Keomony informs me that dancers in Cambodia and at Khmer Arts do not have a deep understanding of the symbolism behind the hand gestures. To many it may just be choreography. “As for learning,” Keomony says (interview with author, October 15, 2010), “I’d like to learn more and learn what I already don’t know. Because over here, it’s like we’re going to learn this dance, so just follow it.” In a recent e-mail, Keomony and I discussed spiritually connecting with the dance:

Katie Nicole Stahl: How do you teach the dancers to spiritually connect with court dance at Khmer Arts?

Keomony Chan: I don't really teach the dancers to spiritually connect because it's something that can't really be taught, but only felt. Khmer Arts doesn't really teach it because it goes deeper down and most of our students are either Christian or are too young to understand the deeper meanings of each dance. There are many older dances that do honor our ancestors but is usually only performed during special occasions or ceremonies.

The way in which Cambodian court dance is taught, and the teachers chosen to instruct the dancers, also differs greatly from the idea presented in court dance literature. The literature describes the teacher as a stern symbol of authority, where it is not uncommon “to slap or pinch a

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dancer” (Shapiro 1993:83). At Khmer Arts, Sophanmay and Keomony may be stern with the students, but do not physically harm any of them in any way. Sophanmay and Keomony may hold a dancer tightly, to help the student into the perfect position, but their intention is never to cause harm to the student. Secondly, most teachers and trainers have had intensive training from the royal academy in Cambodia. Keomony, though, has been trained by a Cambodian dancer, but has received her training in the United States. She addresses the holes within her court dance education by saying that “it’s hard for me, teaching and choreographing, because I really don’t know much about it. I know the basics, but what do certain movements mean? For me, I’m still learning.” The literature also reveals that “dance teachers are known to be exceptionally discriminating” about choosing their students (Shapiro 1993:84). At Khmer arts, the reality is that anyone who would like to learn the dance and has strong self-discipline may join. Keomony advertises Khmer Arts at public exhibitions and performances, and insures that anyone interested in learning is most welcome.

There is much discussion of the spiritual connection dancers feel when training and performing Cambodian court dance. Phim and Thompson claim that the dancers take “six years to understand the spiritual and emotional aspects of the dance” in addition to six years of training (1991:44). Keomony shares a different aspect on training in Cambodia and in Long Beach at Khmer Arts.

Keomony Chan: The dancers over there (Khmer Arts Ensemble in Cambodia) aren’t training to be historians. They are just there to know the separate things about dance, just to learn movements... they’re just dancing.

Katie Nicole Stahl: But, from what I’ve read you’re supposed to learn to spiritually connect with the dance.

KC: Connect, but as far as learning and knowing the deeper meaning...

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The reality of learning the choreography is that most are not given the full six years that scholarly texts claim is necessary to spiritually connect with court dance. At Khmer Arts, it is embedded within the training that this is a “spiritual” dance, but there is no formal training on spiritually concerning connecting with the dance itself.

This paper is not suggesting that Khmer Arts, nor the dancers and the teachers at Khmer Arts, attempt to reach this “ideal” platform. Rather, the research points out the discrepancies in scholarly material regarding the dance, on whether or not it is a ritual dance and the ways in which dance is taught, represented, and perceived contemporarily. This dance is traditional in that it has held an iconic importance to the people of Cambodia since the ninth century, and arguably the sixth or seventh century. This dance is modern in that new choreographers create new hand movements, or *kbach*, but all with a respect to the traditional form of dance, whether or not that “traditional form” was created long ago or in the past two centuries. This dance, at Khmer Arts, is a representation of the continuity of a people whose lives have been ravaged by war, geographic relocation to a western nation, and the creation an authentic cultural terrain, Cambodia Town, where they may practice, speak, and live culturally Khmer lives as well as integrate into American culture. This dance, this artform, is not a mere representation of a glorious past, but the essence of a community’s grace and strength under enormous social and political pressure. Cambodian court dance is the dance of its people and is aiding second and third generation Cambodian-Americans in developing pride in their ancestry and identifying with their cultural roots. This dance is a wonder and will continue to teach the world about what it means to be Cambodian: strength, resilience, and grace.

¹ The names given for Keomony Chan and her relatives are pseudonyms to protect their privacy.

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² When Keomony's mother went to file to be relocated from the refugee camp in Thailand to the U.S, the officials wrote her name down incorrectly. She did not correct the officials, for fear that if she remarked about anything, it would stop the relocation process to the U.S. She still goes by the name given to her in Thailand.

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*Figure I.
Keomony, performing Robam (dance) of
the fans at the Aquarium of the Pacific in
Long Beach on October 9, 2010.
Image photographed by Katie Nicole
Stahl.*

*Figure II.
Practice on September 17, 2010 at Khmer
Arts studio off of Obispo and Anaheim
Street in Long Beach. (Keomony pictured
Right Front).
Image photographed by Katie Nicole
Stahl.*





*Figure III.
Image captured September 17, 2010
during choreography practice at Khmer
Arts in Long Beach.
Photographed by Katie Nicole Stahl*



*Figure IV.
Neak-kru Sophanmay, the Artist in
Residence, pictured in green and brown,
adjusting the posture of Nita by applying
pressure to the shoulder blades.
Photographed by Katie Nicole Stahl*



*Figure V.
Three dancers from Khmer Arts Ensemble
in Cambodia (the sister school to Khmer
Arts of Long Beach) performing a piece
from In the Lives of Giants,
choreographed by Sophiline Cheam-
Shapiro at the Salon Series of Long
Beach, October 9, 2010.*



*Figure VI.
Author learning the male character on
September 23, 2010.
Photograph captured by Keomony Chan.*

More than Art: Moche Ceramic Iconography and Their Architectural Representations

By Alicia Angel

Comprehensive research on the Moche culture has been steady since the first discoveries in the beginning of the 20th century. Many of the contributions to these studies have concentrated on the interpretative analysis of rich Moche iconography. Despite the Moche having had no writing system, researchers have been able to make intuitive interpretations from the vivid artistic record left behind in their art. Illustrations of beliefs and ritual activities along with architecture painted on their skillfully sculpted ceramics have been the key element to this long line of research. For many years attempts to understand the culture and interpret the Moche sites were largely dependent on these studies. Now at the height of sixteen years of recent archaeological excavations, new evidences are being unearthed that may draw a parallel between Moche iconography and actual Moche sites.

Problem

In this paper, I will provide an interpretation of recently excavated Moche architecture as it relates to documented ceramic iconography. The basis of my interpretation is drawn from the cumulative artistic research accomplished by renowned scholars such as Christopher B. Donnan and Donna McClelland, and the recently obtained data from archaeologists Jaime Luis Castillo Butters and Santiago Castillo Uceda. I want to note that I refer to my analysis as an interpretation because there is little concrete evidence to link specific vessels with specific sites. Unfortunately, more than 95 percent of Moche ceramics in museums and private collections today were looted by grave robbers, and their provenience is unknown (Donnan and McClelland 1999). Though it is confidently suggested that nearly all of the recovered ceramic came from graves, use wear suggests they were not made for funerary purposes. Signs of wear like abrasion, chipping, or

mended breaks suggest prior use to their placements in graves (Donnan 1999). Thus, where conclusive linkages between vessels and specific graves are not possible, especially due to their portability and likely exchange, strong inferences can be made regarding their ritual practice and the possible architectural settings in which they took place.

As illustrated in Figure 1, I categorized my interpretations by 1) Structures or ceremonial precincts represented, 2) Characters within the narrations, 3) Symbolic indicators of ritual activity, and lastly 4) The archaeological evidence supporting the existence of such ritual and architectural settings in actual Moche sites like San Jose de Moro and Huaca de la Luna.

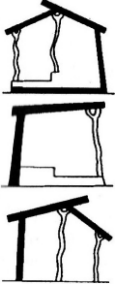







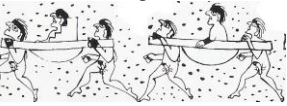
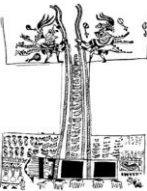
Moche Iconography and Architectural Settings				
Structures	Characters	Symbolic Indicators of Ritual	Archaeological Contexts at Huaca de la Luna	Archaeological Contexts at San Jose de Moro
<p>Enclosures with & without thrones</p>  <p>Platforms/ Ramps</p>  <p>Open air areas "Plazas"</p>	<p>Priests</p>  <p>Priestesses</p>  <p>"Vultures"- Torture</p>  <p>Nude Captives for sacrifice</p> 	<p>Presentation of offerings in enclosures</p>  <p>Human Sacrifice and /or Torture</p>  <p>Procession of Captives</p>  <p>Burials</p> 	<p>Permanent enclosures possibly the scene of such presentation of offerings</p> <p>Imaged of tools used in sacrifice found in Plaza 1</p> <p>Skeletal remains in Plaza 3 provide evidence for sacrificial killings</p> <p>Few elaborate tomb of priests in Plaza 1</p>	<p>Evidence of temporary enclosures.</p> <p>Several effigy artifacts and utilitarian ceramics found indicate ceremonial celebrations.</p> <p>Intact Skeletons demonstrative of non sacrificial death</p> <p>Evidence of tombs of high ranking Priestesses</p>

Figure 1. Correlations between artistic representations and physical evidence.

The initial questions I set out to answer: 1) were whether architectural functions at each site were similar or different, and if so why? 2) Would the ceramic iconography match any

differences in architectural settings? And lastly 3) could I find any evidence that would support correlations between the images and the sites.

Background

I want to begin by providing a brief background of the two recent archaeological projects chosen to make my comparisons. Both sites are located within the Moche territory on the northern coast of Peru (Figure 2). The distinct projects included in this paper were chosen due to



their recent establishment, both having begun in 1991. The first project is that of the southern site of Huaca de la Luna established by the Universidad Nacional de Trujillo lead by archaeologist Santiago Castillo Uceda, the second project that will be used as a contrast comparison is the northern site of San Jose de Moro established by the Pontifica Universidad Católica Del Peru lead by archaeologist Jaime Luis Castillo Butters.

Figure 2 Map of Moche Territory

Distinctions between northern and southern regions are defined, in part, by major differences in art (Benson 2008). Thus one can begin to speculate whether there will be differences in architecture as well.

Analysis of Huaca de La Luna

My first attempt to correlate iconography to architecture will be with the site of Huaca de la Luna (Figure 3). This site consists of a complex structure comprised of three large platforms

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on different levels, linked by adjacent plazas of varying size (Figure 4). The Huaca de la Luna complex extends 290 meters from north to south and 210 meters from east to west (Uceda 2003).

Prior to present investigations any work at this site was relatively small in scale. The monumental architecture visible today was uncovered by recent excavations. Huaca de la

Luna consists of the following three architectural

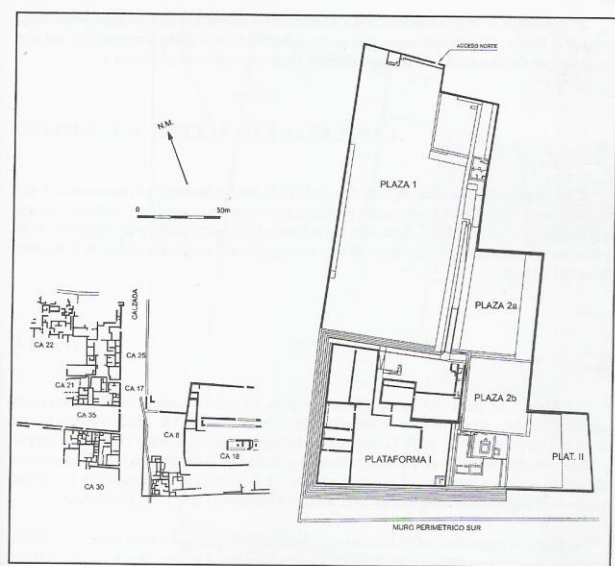


Figure 4. Architectural Layout of Huaca de la Luna (Uceda 2003)

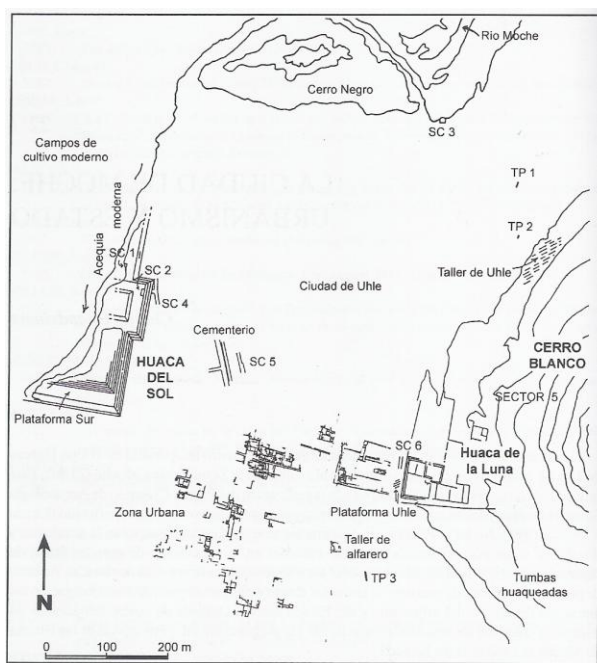


Figure 3. Map of Huaca de la Luna (Uceda 2003)

components: a large, elevated platform located in the southwest corner of the complex (Platform I), a smaller platform in the southeastern corner (Platform II), and the third in the northeastern corner (Platform III). The last platform is detached from the main architectural compound and is located on higher ground (Uceda 2003). Four plazas, at varying levels are adjacent to the platforms.

These are arranged as follows: Plaza 1, also known as the Great Plaza, is located immediately to the north of Platform I. Following along the wall of this large open space is a long ramp that would have provided access to Platform I from the Great Plaza. Located to the east of Plaza 1 is Plaza 2. This plaza is smaller in size and is located at a higher level. Plaza 3 is located in the southern part of the complex, between Platform I and

II. It is divided into three sectors (3A, 3B, and 3C) and is characterized by the presence of a rocky outcrop that was incorporated into Platform II and Plaza 3A (Uceda 2003). Lastly, Plaza 4 is located to the west of Platform III. Most of the correlation that can be made between the huaca's architecture and documented iconography are found within Platform I and III, and generally are restricted to the plazas within the platforms.

Huaca de la Luna has been deemed an ideal space for the performance of ritual, preceding the sacrifice of prisoners (Uceda 2003). Not surprisingly, the exact types of ritual activity appear to be illustrated in iconic fine line Moche motifs often referred to as the "Sacrifice Theme" (Donnan and McClelland 1979). The sacrifice theme (Figure 5 and 6) consists of different levels of activity in a processional order, much like the architectural layout of the Huaca de la Luna. These correlations can be best explained by first dissecting the complex artistic analysis accomplished by Edward K. de Bock on these popular motifs. Though his analyses were not specifically linked to particular sites as I will attempt to do, they are noteworthy and provide a perfect foundation to my suggested correlations between iconography, ritual and actual architectural settings. For the sake of keeping the explanation concise, I will only make correlations with the narration in Figure 5, though it should be clarified that much can be additionally said about Figure 6, especially in regards to the illustration of natural landscapes used in ritual.



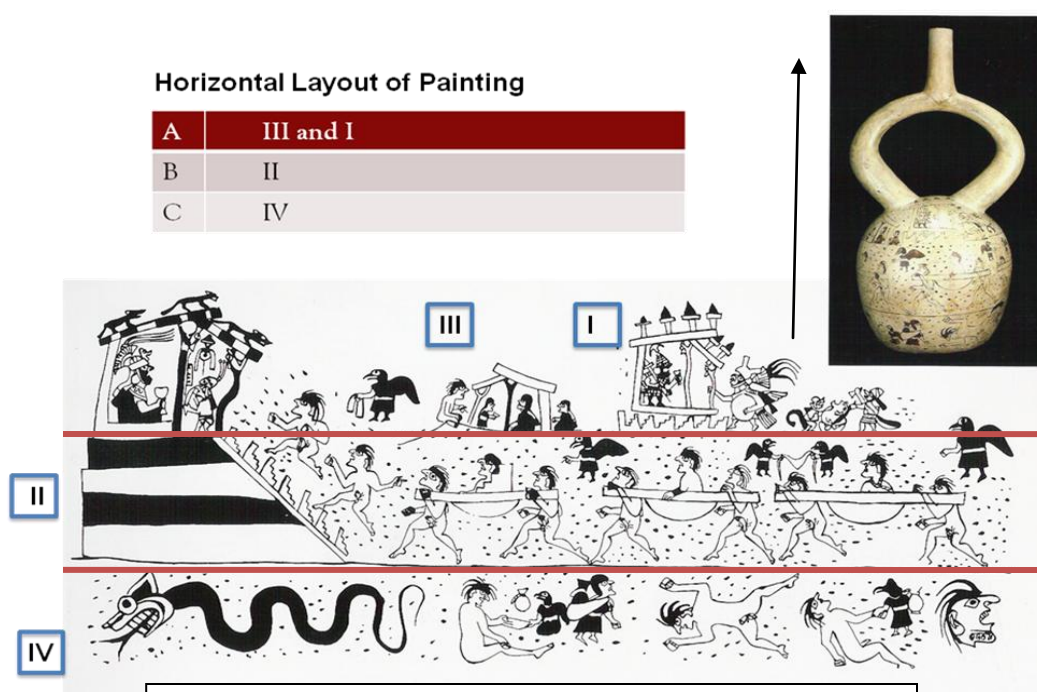
Figure 5. Rollout drawing of the Sacrifice Theme (Donnan 1999)



Figure 6. Separate example of the Sacrifice Theme (Donnan 1999)

Structure and Action

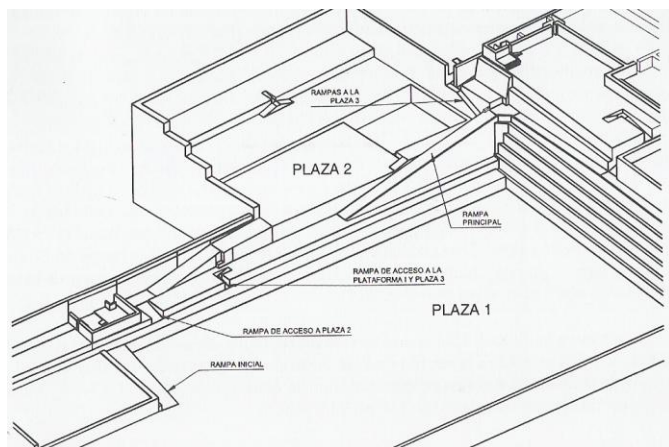
The complex structure, suggested by De Bock, can be summed up by the dissection of narration into layers or sections by which they are placed on the vessel. Each section is divided and numbered by order of succession. Scenes depicted within narrations possess a complex structure and a sequence because of their hierarchy of different parts. The separation of narration into different examples not only produces organization in space but also an organization of time (De Bock 2005). As can be seen in Figure 7, De Bock separates the narrated scenes into three separate examples of activity which are categorized by significance and are painted in a sequence running from the base of the vessel to its stirrup spout.



The main level of activity painted on the mid section of the vessel (Section B Scene II of Figure 5) depicts a procession of prisoners leading up to a small enclosed altar. This activity most likely would have culminated in a large area where several prisoners could have been kept. I believe this illustration can be strongly correlated with the architectural layout of Platform I and

Plaza 1 of Huaca de la Luna. The Great Plaza would have necessitated the housing of several prisoners before they ascended to the higher levels where other activities would have been preformed (Figure 8). Further, the correlation between Plaza 1 and Figure 5 can be made by the use of symbolic iconography. Several sculpted reliefs have been found in recent excavations that bear a striking resemblance to iconography painted on this vessel (Figure 5). Low relief murals were found to have been sculpted on the northern façade facing the Great Plaza. As the tiers of these reliefs narrow, to accommodate for the inclination of a ramp, warriors are replaced by a image of a serpent (Uceda and Trufino 2003), similar to that depicted in the narration. Earlier remains of mural paintings from an earlier north façade have also been found depicting anthropomorphic figures holding a *tumi* or crescent shaped knife, that terminate in profile bird heads (Uceda and Trufino 2003). These symbols have been suggested by De Bock to be indicators of brutal sacrificial killing, as is illustrated in this example of the Sacrifice Theme.

This actively played out ceremonial procession ends with an offering of sacrificial blood to the gods. These depictions are often referred to as location indicators or ceremonial precincts, which are categorized by a represented ritual act taking place. These scenes are usually conducted in an enclosure or ‘alter’ with an added throne where a priest sits (Bourget 2001).



Similar types of enclosures where these offerings could have taken place are found on several levels of the Huaca de la Luna, including Plaza 1. Excavations on Platform I, where Plaza 1 is located, have shown that the construction process was

Figure 8. Layout of Plaza 1 and 2 (Uceda 2003)

closely linked to the renovation of power through the burials of priests in tombs found within this level. It is important to emphasize that the priest's graves were not found in a distant cemetery, but underneath the floor of the Great Patio (Uceda 2003). This large open court was undoubtedly used for the performance of sacred rituals that are depicted in Moche fine line paintings.

Lastly, several correlations can be made between the Sacrifice Theme and the architectural settings of Plaza 3. As illustrated in the upper level of the ceramic narration (Section A Scenes III and I), activity would have been played out farther in distance from the main plaza, those activities would be in close proximity, possibly in enclosures. Scene I illustrates a character being sacrificially killed by way of slicing of the throat.

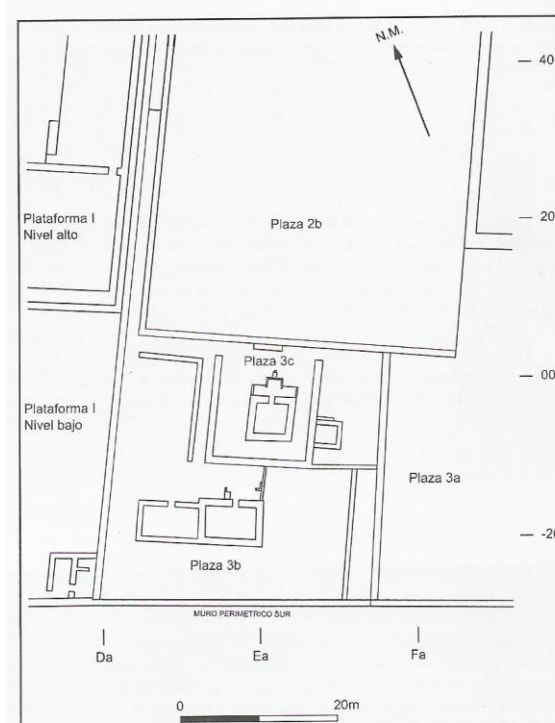


Figure 9. Layout of Plaza 3 (Uceda 1996)

Bones recovered from different areas of Plazas 3

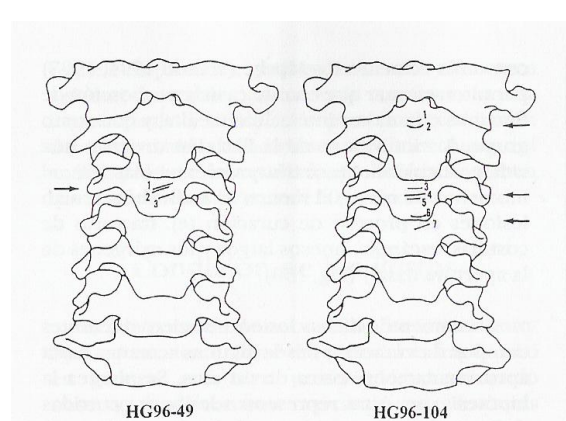


Figure 10. Illustration of Vertebrae Cuts (Verano 1996)

indicate that this very well could have been the place where prisoners were brutally sacrificed. (Verano 1998, 2008) Skeletal evidence from Plaza 3a and 3c are consistent with that represented in Moche art. The most common injury seen in the skeletons found in Plaza 1, are cut marks across the bodies and anterior surface cutting of the cervical

vertebrae (Figure 10). The locations of the cut marks indicate that the object used was intended

to slit the throat, not decapitate the victim (Verano 2008). It is not surprising to find this exact activity played out throughout several narrations of sacrifice.

Given the evidence found in Plaza 1, it can be argued that the sacrifice of captives was clearly a long-standing cultural tradition that played an important role in ritual activities at Huaca de la Luna. The sacrifice of captives likely functioned to affirm the religious and political power of major centers like that of the Pyramids at Moche (Verano 2008). These obvious correlations strengthen the argument that painted ceremonial activity in ceramic iconography can be linked to actual architecture, such as that of the major complex Huaca de la Luna. If ceremonial function is to provide the link between iconography and architecture, then the ceremonial settings provided by independent sites should reflect that.

Analysis of San Jose de Moro

Contrast to the site of Huaca de la Luna, San Jose de Moro lacks permanent structures, and, to date, does not appear to have monumental architecture. This differentiated pattern of architecture can be linked back to the function of the site. Unlike Huaca de la Luna, San Jose de Moro was not used as a site for ritual sacrifice but rather as a ceremonial center where elaborate elite burials were conducted (Castillo B. 1999). This unique site has brought forth new evidence that previous excavations were not so lucky to have acquired. Unlike many excavated Moche sites, San Jose de Moro is one of the few sites that has not been completely looted by grave robbers. In fact, they have a relatively large collection of beautiful intricate fine line painted ceramics that they can claim as their own. In such an inconclusive field, like that of Moche ceramic studies, these directly linked vessels have provided a new line of conclusive interpretation that may be vital in proving interpretations of other vessels with no provenience.

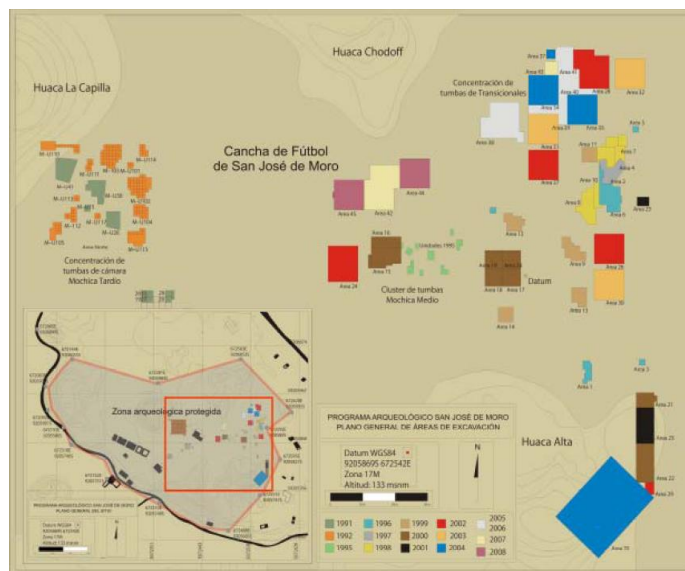


Figure 11. Map of San Jose de Moro (Archaeology Project Website 2010)

From the beginning, this archaeological project was conducted in order to determine the relationship between the towns and villages where people lived and the ceremonial centers where they went to conduct their most important rituals (Castillo B. 2003b). Unfortunately, most tombs do little to provide information about the participants and all the social connotations associated with the event. However, these elaborate elite tombs have made available not only abundant artifacts that assist in deciphering the activities, but also rich iconography illustrating the events as they occurred.

Though San Jose de Moro has several different types of ceramic examples that may be linked to the architecture at the site, I will provide my analysis of the fine line motifs, as was done with the site of Huaca de la Luna. The function and architecture of the site can be correlated I believe with that of the appropriately named Moro Style Burial Theme motif (Donnan 1979). The motifs are similar in style and relatively near in date to those of Huaca de la Luna, yet they exhibit a completely different ceremonial ritual. Motifs found at this site illustrate

the ceremonial burial of high-ranking priestesses. As can be seen in Figure 12, these were no ordinary burials; in fact they were complex ceremonies that required several stages to complete.



Figure 12. Rollout illustration of the “Burial Theme” (Donnan 1999)

The “Burial Theme” motif has been subdivided, similar to that of the “Sacrifice Theme” at Huaca de la Luna into different scenes or events (Donnan 1979). The different sections of the motif have been categorized into four separate events: the burial, the assembly, the conch transfer, and lastly the sacrifice. First to be conducted is the burial. As can be seen in the illustrations (Figure 13 and 14), the iconography is not solely symbolic but in fact accurately depicts the process of the burial. The human remains of the first Moro Priestess (Castillo 2006)

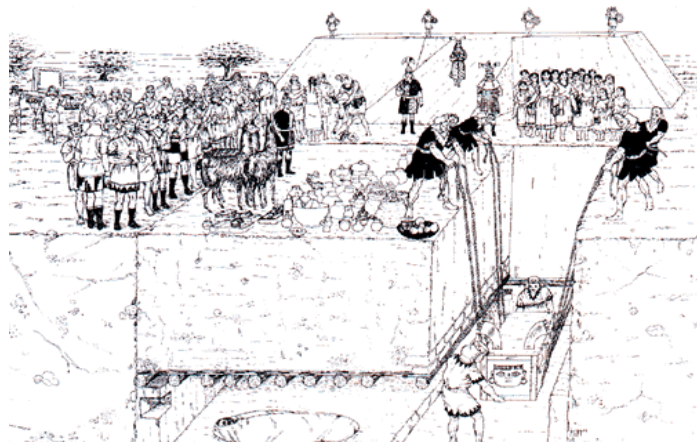
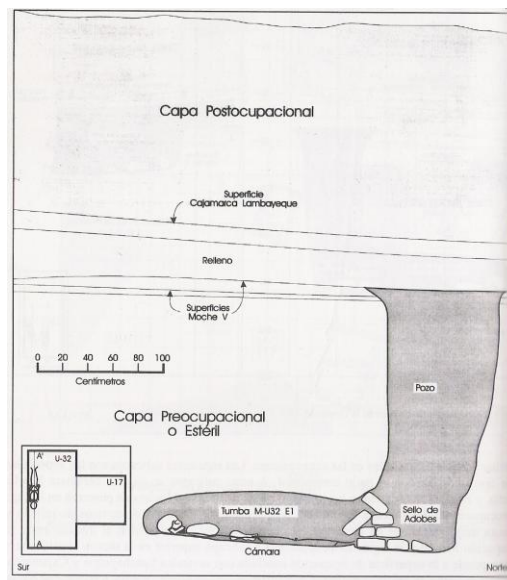


Figure 13. Illustration of Burial (1979)

Figure 14. Illustration of actual priestess burial (Castillo B. 1999)



and the remains within the funerary chamber were found at a profound depth of more than 7 meters below ground. This is a recurring observation that only begins to link the iconography to the site.

Being that the provenience of the vessels and motifs are known, I will make no further correlations between site and iconography, but rather draw attention to the ritual in the illustrations I will explain what correlations can be made between ritual and architecture. I argue that obvious predictions can be made regarding architectural settings once the ritual is known. For the Moche at San Jose de Moro, a location for large ceremonial celebrations would have been the highest priority, and not monumental structures of politico-religious statement (though it must be noted that burials of elite women in and of itself, is a monumental statement of the times and the women who ruled during them) thus making monumental architecture unnecessary. It is uncontested that San Jose de Moro was functionally used to host parties and ceremonies, activities that have been linked to having taken place within a central area. No evidence has been found for permanent structures, yet there have been findings of temporary enclosures, mostly roughly constructed of clay and cane. Would this have sufficed for a community whose sole purpose was to host parties and provide food and entertainment? Yes. There is, at least in this site, no evidence of a substantial residential population, yet there still exists large amount of deposited organic material, such as that may be created through these celebratory activities (Castillo B. 2005).

Conclusion

I anticipated two general outcomes. First the ceramic motifs, though unable to be directly linked to specific sites could still be grouped into generalized patterns of ritual or domestic function. And second, was that these functions would remain symbolically exclusive to specific

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motifs and can be associated with architecture that matched its function. Though my research concluded that these motifs did in fact stay exclusive to specific functions and thus matched in their architectural settings, they did not match my hypothesis of generalized pattern of ritual or demonstrate any domestic purpose. What I originally concluded would be “domestic attributes” that would reflect different architecture turned out to be diversity within the rituals the Moche practiced and the functionality of the architecture as was needed to conduct the rituals.

Moche architecture, murals, and fine crafts mirror developments in Moche political history, for they embody the will and the administration and cosmological needs of rulers, for whom the arts were an important part of their politico-religious power structure. The subject matter of the ceramics sometimes seemingly naturalistic—a portrait, a llama, maize, or potatoes—but it probably always has symbolic, ritual, and/or mythic significance (2008 Benson: 2).

Without a doubt, it can be concluded that ceramic iconography has a clear correlation to architecture. The type of architecture can likely be predicted by the motifs reflected on the ceramics and in cases where lack of architecture exists, an explanation can be drawn. I confidently believe that new uncovered ceramic evidence provided by sites such as San Jose de Moro, can aid not only in interpretation of iconography, but also provide a method to roughly link vessels with no prior provenience to actual sites.

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Wat Willow Pchum Ben Ceremony

By Audrey Dollar

On Saturday, October 9, 2010, I attended the Pchum Ben Ceremony at Wat Willow in Long Beach, CA. It is a religious ceremony performed in honor of the people's past ancestors and friends, known to anthropologists as a rite of social intensification. The Theravada Buddhists believe that, on this day, the spirits of their ancestors return to the temple in search of food. The people bring offerings of food to the temple to satisfy the hunger of their ancestors.

Traditionally, the ceremony goes on for 1 week. However, in the United States the ceremony goes on for a full month to accommodate the schedules of participants.

The monks at the temple recite the teachings of Buddha on this day and chant in Pali. Pali is the divine language of the Theravada Buddhist, and is used in all of the Buddhist practices that require blessings.

During the ceremony of Pchum Ben, as the monks are chanting, the participants write the names of their deceased friends and relatives on pieces of paper. They take these pieces of paper to the monks, where they are burned. The smoke from the burning paper brings blessings to the friends and ancestors, as well as to Buddha. This is a very important ritual for the Theravada Buddhists because they believe that if they do not bring food and blessings to their ancestors, the spirits will become angry and will curse the living members of their family.

For the ceremony, participants bring traditional Khmer food, place it in small Styrofoam

bowls, and leave them on a table at the entrance to the temple. There is so much food that the bowls are stacked on top of one another to accommodate all of the offerings.

Once the participants have contributed their edible offerings, they enter the temple with papers on which the names of their ancestors are written, and bring them to the stage where the monks are sitting in a row. At this temple, there was a stage placed at the far end of the room for this purpose.

There were 6 monks that are involved in this ritual, all of whom had shaved heads, and wore the traditional orange robes. They sit cross-legged on the stage as they chant and recite the teachings. Some of them seemed very happy to be participating, and others seemed as if they were entranced, showing no emotion and not displaying any facial expressions. The monks on the stage recite the teachings of Buddha and use a bundle of sticks dipped in water to sprinkle the participants with blessings. They also burn incense as blessings to the people and their ancestors.

Once the participants have had the blessings sent to their ancestors, they move to an outside area where more offerings are made to the spirits in the form of food. There is a long table set up outside with 7 bowls set in a row, and a large plate at the end of this row. Each person gets a Styrofoam bowl of rice that they take to the table. They put a spoonful of the rice in each one of the bowls, for the ancestors, and place the remaining rice onto the plate to satisfy bad spirits.

After these offerings are made, the monks recite the teachings of Buddha as the participants face the alter with their hands clasped together in prayer form. As this is taking place, two monks walk around the perimeter of the room, one with a bundle of sticks, and one

carrying a bowl of water. As they walk around the room, the sticks are dipped in the water and shaken over the people as a blessing.

Once the ceremony comes to an end, the monks are the first to leave the room. They sit at the table at the entrance to the temple, where all of the food offerings are. The monks eat until they are satisfied. After the monks are finished eating, everyone else is able to approach the table and take the remainder of the food to feed themselves.

This ritual is an important event in the Khmer Theravada Buddhist community living in Long Beach. It is not only a way to honor their ancestors, but it is a way for them to teach their children about their religion and culture. It is also a way of teaching their children about their family history. This is of great importance to this community because their children are growing up in a society that knows very little of the traditions and culture of their ancestors.

A participant that I spoke to during this ceremony emphasized the importance to himself, his family, and his community of passing on their cultural practices to their children. He told me that he comes to these ceremonies not only to practice his religion, but to ensure that the cultural practices do not get lost. He said that it is difficult to teach his children of the ways of their ancestors, and bringing them to these ceremonies helps to integrate their cultural traditions into their American lives. The ceremony is extremely important to the Theravada Buddhists, and for those who live in America, it also functions as a tool for learning and cultural preservation.

Mesoamerican Ethnoecology

By Julie Wennstrom

The Mesoamerican Ethnoecology course offered at CSUDH gives students the opportunity to travel to Chiapas, Mexico, where they learn local agricultural practices and culture. Taught by Dr. Jan Gasco, the students this year learned about basic cacao cultivation and conducted field research with indigenous farmers in the Chiapas lowlands. The students' focus was to gain an understanding about Sweden agricultural practices and how the local people connected with/viewed their environment.

The farmers we worked with were partnered with a non-profit organization called CASFA (Red Maya de Organizaciones Organicas) and cultivated organic cacao. While interviewing and working with the local farmers, we were able to see a combination of "local knowledge" and "scientific knowledge" utilized. We gained an understanding of traditional cacao agriculture and indigenous farming practices in the lowland Chiapas environment. Before leaving the lowlands we made a visit to a local factory to view the chocolate making process.

At the end of our course we traveled to San Cristobal de las Casas to learn about the local Mayan culture. We visited traditional Mayan churches, museums, and markets. We ended the trip with a visit to the ruins site of Tonina.



