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PACAL

Probably the greatest ruler of Palenque. He ruled from 9.9.2.4.8 (A.D. 615) to 9.12.11.5.18 (A.D. 683). He ascended the throne at age 12 years 125 days, and died at age 80 years 158 days. He is entombed in the sarcophagus of the Temple of the Inscriptions.

Above is one of several forms of the glyphic expression of his name. It is from the west panel of the Temple of the Inscriptions, column A, row 3.

LEFT GLYPH. Superfix: *Mah K'ina*, a title of honor and respect for lineage heads and rulers. Main sign: An iconic sign for Shield, possibly read as *Pacal*, a Mayan word for shield, or as *Chimal*, another widely used word for shield, which was a borrowing from Nahuatl.

RIGHT GLYPH. Top: a phonetic sign for the syllable *pa*. Center: a phonetic sign for the syllable *ca*. Bottom: a phonetic sign for the syllable *la* or for a final *l* following *a*. The three together read *Pa-ca-l*, a spelling of the Maya word for shield.

His name was probably a double name, with a personal name 'Shield' (either *Pacal* or *Chimal*) and a lineage name 'Shield' (certainly pronounced *Pacal*). The name Pacal is well documented as a lineage name among the Quiché, still in use throughout the sixteenth century. It was probably known and so used among other Mayan peoples also.

The title *Mah K'ina* was also known in the highlands still in colonial times and is documented for that period. It too must have had wide currency. It is of two parts, which could be used separately or as a compound. The first part was current in colonial times as a Cakchiquel title for heads of lineages, and it is still in use today among the Chol for the chief mayordomos of their principal saints.

Floyd G. Lounsbury

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Gestures and Offerings

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Since I have not recently been working in the Maya field, rather than making any firm statements, I would like to suggest for development a topic which I believe to be important in Maya art in general, and particularly in Palenque sculpture and certain related groups of objects: this is the study of pose and gesture. I believe that everything that was set down in Pre-Columbian art was important, and that gesture and pose are iconographic. Many Maya figures look as if they were speaking sign language — and I suspect that they were. I would suggest that such a study begin with a corpus of examples from the codices, Jaina figurines, the Bonampak paintings, scenes on pottery, and the monuments of Palenque and the Usumacinta sites. I think that general pose should be considered first, and then the more subtle hand gestures, the *mudras*. Gesture should also be studied in connection with ritual objects, dress, and hieroglyphic texts.

To see how this idea might work, I examined a few basic poses to see what associations they might have. I was led into the consideration of elements other than pose itself, and I have no definite conclusions from this experiment, but I would like to share some of the findings in the hope that they may stimulate further investigation.

One common gesture shows one hand — or both — near the mouth. One explanation of this gesture is the blood-letting ritual. With the kneeling woman on Yaxchilan Lintel 24 (fig. 1), one hand is near the mouth, the other in front of the chest, with the forearm perpendicular to the body, as the hands hold the cord that runs through her tongue. The woman faces a standing Shield-Jaguar in a rather simple tied headdress, with a mask attached. He appears to have a cord loosely tied around his neck. He holds a staff that is possibly flowering or flaming or smoking; I would surmise that this is a ceremonial torch. The way the staff is held places Shield Jaguar's left hand not far from his mouth; this holding provides another object-explanation for the gesture. His other arm goes straight down. Between the two figures

Fig. 1 Lintel 24, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

there is a woven basket from which the cord is drawn, and which also contains rectangular objects with waffled circles on them. Ruppert *et al.* (1955: 55) explain these objects as strips of bark paper, since it was the custom on the Mexican plateau to let blood drawn in self-sacrifice fall on pieces of bark paper, which were then offered to the gods, splashed with melted rubber. "The crosshatched spots on the paper strips on Yaxchilan lintels presumably represent drops of melted rubber, for crosshatching is a symbol for black, but they may indicate dark spots of coagulated blood."

Fig. 2 Lintel 17, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

In a similar scene on Yaxchilan Lintel 17 (fig. 2), Bird-Jaguar, seated, is holding the perforator. I would guess that he may not be about to draw his own blood, as suggested by Rands (Greene *et al.* 1972: 82), but that he has punctured the woman's tongue, or is holding the object ritually or as a token of the offering. In front of the woman and at Bird Jaguar's feet, is a bowl, this time with waffled circles on the side and with the same rectangular objects in it; the cord rests on this, if it does not actually come out of it. In both scenes, the women wear elaborate headdresses.

A similar scene appears on a painted pot at Dumbarton Oaks (fig. 3) where a standing male figure in a bird headdress performs the same ceremony in front of a figure who also holds a perforator. The end of the cord rests in a bowl. The basket-shaped bowl seems to be associated with this rite. The gesture of the first figure is slightly different from that of the Yaxchilan women, in that both hands are in front of the mouth. The facing figure, who may be holding the perforator for the man in bird headdress, may also be performing a penis bloodletting rite (Michael Coe, personal communication; cf. a vase from Huehuetenango, Gordon and Mason 1928: Pl. XXVI). He wears a long curving headdress and a cape that looks as if it were made of cord, perhaps adorned with flowers, and he may be the same personage who is seated crosslegged on a throne on the other side of the pot. Headdress, collar, and loincloth are enough alike on the two major figures to suggest that they might be the same person at two different moments; this is further indicated by the fact that both figures are shown frontally. (The "palace" scenes on pots usually have a major figure shown frontally, whereas subsidiary figures are shown in profile — cf. Coe 1973: 65, 67, 70, 74, 95. This is usually not true in scenes where all the figures are deities or monsters; these are shown in profile — cf. Coe

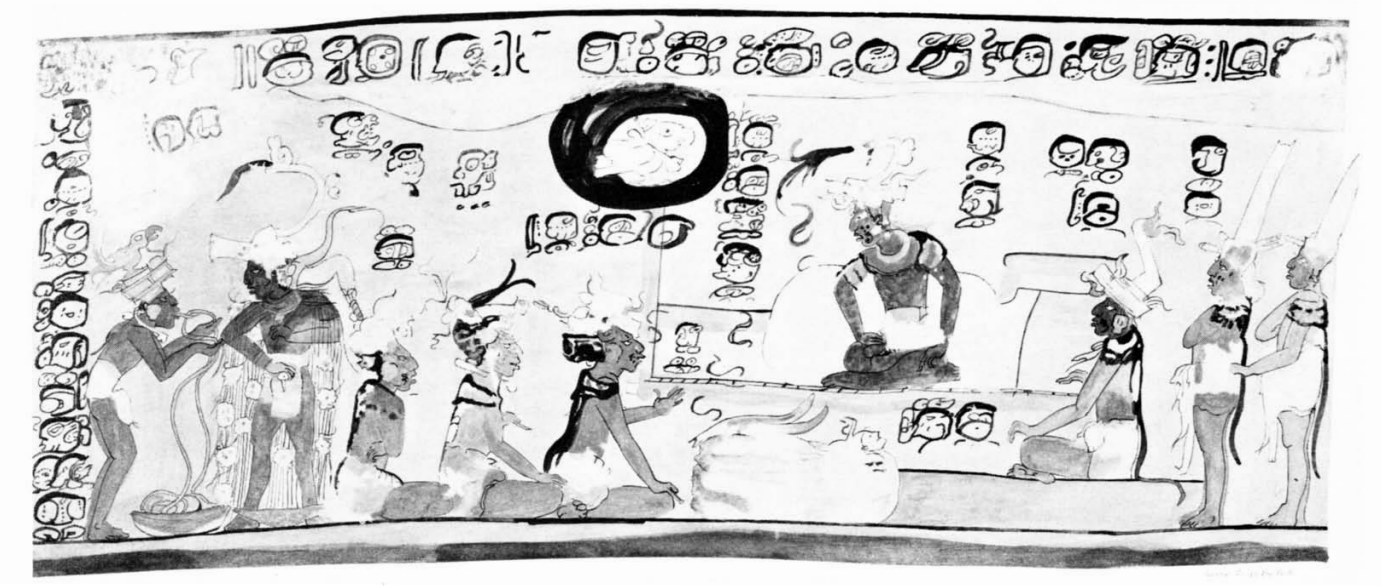

Fig. 3 Polychrome vase. Dumbarton Oaks Collections. Roll-out drawing by Diane Griffiths Peck.

1973: 82, 85, 101, 109. On the monuments, the rules for frontal vs. profile views are more complex.)

A figure seated crosslegged is a fairly common pose in Olmec art, where, I believe, it is a sign of importance — of rank or occasion; it must still have some of this meaning in Maya art. Olmec figures are for the most part throneless, and I think that the fact that they sit on the ground and/or put their hands on, or in the direction of, the ground is symbolic of the importance of the earth. The same gesture exists in Maya art. Four other figures on this pot are seated crosslegged; three of them have one hand on the knee (as do many Olmec figures) and the other hand in front of the chest. There are two standing figures at the right: one touches his soulder in the so-called gesture of submission, the other has arms folded, as does one of the seated figures. These gestures seem to be to some extent interchangeable.

Fig. 4 Lintel 15, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

To return to the baskets or bowls from which the cords emerge on Lintels 17 and 24, we find an identical bowl and contents on Yaxchilan Lintel 15 (fig. 4), where a woman with a simple, tied headdress kneels in front of a serpentine creature. The waffled-circle motif appears on the headdress tie and on the serpent, which seems to rise from the bowl offering and has a hand close to the mouth. The woman holds in both hands a woven basket, like that on Lintel 24, with the same contents and a rope dangling from it. A similar theme appears on Yaxchilan Lintel 25, where the woman holds the bowl with waffled circles in one hand and extends the other hand toward the serpent in a gesture often made toward offerings or sacred objects. Again, she has a fairly simple headdress with the waffled-circle motif. Beneath the serpent, there is another bowl with similar objects and a rope protruding from it.

The serpentine creature appears between Bird-Jaguar and his consort on Yaxchilan Lintel 13, and between the two figures on Yaxchilan Lintel 14. Here there are no bowls or baskets, but I believe that the objects held by the major figures are perforators. On both lintels, the male figure seems almost to hold the serpentine creature in his hand, which again is placed toward the mouth. The other arm goes fairly straight down. The serpentine creature has the hand even nearer the mouth.

On Yaxchilan Lintel 43, the woman is holding with both hands a bowl which undoubtedly has cord in it; otherwise one can see nothing of her. Bird-Jaguar wears particularly rich garments, with the waffled-circle motif on his pectoral, and holds a staff that ends in a woven fanlike shape with something like a manikin scepter on top.

The scene on the lower step of the Northwest Doorway of Yaxchilan Structure 44 may also represent blood-letting. This ceremony usually involves two people; the people here are richly dressed; the left-hand one is making the proper gestures for this rite.

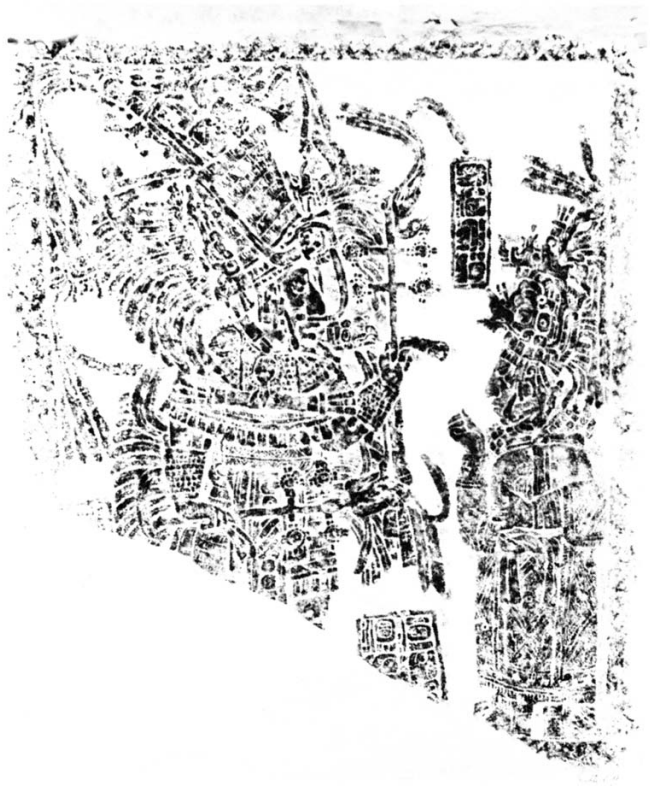

Fig. 5 Lintel 5, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

On Yaxchilan Lintel 5 (fig. 5), Bird-Jaguar holds a staff that is a little like the "torch" held by Shield-Jaguar on Lintel 24. He is facing a woman who this time does not hold the cord but is in the same position, one hand in front of the face, the other in front of the chest, perpen-

dicular to the body. Here we have the gesture without the explaining object.

The secondary figure on Yaxchilan Stela 1 (fig. 6), is in a similar pose, this time closer to the hand gestures of the cord-drawing figure on the painted pot. Between the two figures is what Rands (Greene *et al.* 1972: 106) has described as a "small, mat-covered 'altar' " which appears on a number of Yaxchilan stelae, at least two of which (4 and 7) have subsidiary figures in much the same pose. Rands (*ibid.*) has commented on the beadlike strings that flow from the major figure's hands down over this "altar" — also a common motif at Yaxchilan — noting that they have been variously identified as grains, beads, or water. I would only like to note that they do bear some resemblance to the cord involved in the blood-letting ceremony.

Two Yaxchilan lintels, again one involving Bird-Jaguar and the other Shield-Jaguar, show a related theme. A lance and flexible shield are held by the major figure in each case, and a prisoner kneels to the side. On

Fig. 6 Stela 1, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

Fig. 7 Lintel 45, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

Lintel 45 (fig. 7), Shield-Jaguar's gesture of holding the lance brings his hand before his face, so that, as on Lintel 24, he echoes the gesture of the subsidiary figure as he holds the lance; the other hand seems to go straight out to grasp the victim's hair. The figure on one knee seems to be holding the end of the shield; in any case, his hand is again in front of the face. The other hand is holding either an object or part of Shield-Jaguar's garments. In noting that he is bound with rope, Proskouriakoff (1963: 154) says that such a rope around the neck may indicate sacrifice, but is also often worn by figures performing blood-letting rites. This captive is known as "Ahau" or "Death" (Proskouriakoff 1963), which makes me wonder if this is really a scene showing a military victory or a symbolic picture? Is Shield-Jaguar perhaps shown winning a battle with Death, in that he might at the moment of this struggle have become immortal or a god? According to Proskouriakoff (1963: 150), Bird-Jaguar's captive on Lintel 8 is "Jeweled Skull". All these captives seem to have death-associated designations.

The Lintel 16 (fig. 8) figure of Bird-Jaguar again shows the straight arm and the bent arm holding the

Fig. 8 Lintel 16, Yaxchilan. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

lance, although the hand is much farther away from the face in this instance. Here the subsidiary figure has a hand actually at the mouth, an extreme version of this gesture. His headdress has some elements in common with that of the woman with the serpent on Lintel 15; he seems to have two kinds of rope at his neck — this motif is repeated on the fan he holds. The gesture of one arm raised and one arm perpendicular to the chest suggests again the pose of the woman with the cords. He has a long, flexible ear ornament. Over the raised arm is what seems to be a knotted cloth garment or perhaps offering.

Thus far, at Yaxchilan, the purest versions of the hand-toward-mouth gesture have appeared on subsidiary figures — on women or what appear to be prisoners or conquered figures, where both arms are bent and at least one hand is related to the face. The major figures usually have one arm straight, the other bent so that the hand is in some relation to the face in front of, or holding, ceremonial objects of certain types. On Lintel 26, Shield-Jaguar holds one arm straight (with a knife in his hand) and with the other hand gestures toward the jaguar head held by the woman. On Stela 20, Shield-Jaguar wears the headdress shown on Lintel 26 (different masks are shown on Lintels 17 and 24, the bloodletting scenes), where it has the waffled circles on it, matching those that mark the jaguar skin worn by the subsidiary figure. A seated figure on a wall panel from the Lacanha area (Greene *et al*. 1972: Pl. 77) contemplates a mask or god face held in his raised hand, while the other arm goes down and rests on the knee. On Dos Pilas Stelae 1 and 2, the single male figure holds a manikin scepter so that the holding of the object brings the hand toward the face. On Dos Pilas Stela 16, the major figure holds a ceremonial bar, rather casually in one arm, and makes the same gesture toward the mouth. This figure is apparently a woman.

Bonampak Stela 2 has a central male figure with a woman at either side. The woman on the left holds in her hand a bowl with objects in it like those at Yaxchilan, but less carefully carved and without the waffled circles. The woman at the right makes the gesture toward the mouth with one hand and has the other lower arm perpendicular to the body. In her raised hand she holds a bowl of bark-paper offerings.

In a painting in Room 3 at Bonampak, Ruppert *et al*. (1955: 54-5) have noted that the figures who look like ladies powdering their noses are engaged in the rite of bloodletting. There are the cords, the tied-back hair, the man kneeling at the side with the perforator, and the bowl with circles on it and "wafers" inside. Ruppert *et al*. also bring up the interesting point that the figure on the right on the dais is male and is dressed in woman's garb for the ritual. We have noted that, on the Dumbarton Oaks pot, (fig. 3) the figure involved in this ritual was male, but those associated with the rite on the monuments have all been female; it is certainly an act with strong female associations. (This hand-toward-mouth gesture, incidentally, is made by a number of other figures at Bonampak who are not involved in this rite, some of whom are simply, others elegantly dressed.)

A Chamá vase in the University Museum (Gordon and Mason 1925: Pl. VIII) has a major figure seated crosslegged, one arm straight down to the ground, one hand toward the face, or between the face and a basket of offerings. Although details are different, the general configuration of this offering suggests the baskets or bowls of bark paper. The two crosslegged figures on the other side show two versions of the folded-arms pose, and wear intricately draped loincloths.

The Nebaj vase in the British Museum (Gordon and Mason 1928: Pl. XXX) has a major figure seated crosslegged with the right hand at a distance from the face, but performing much the same gesture as he points to a basket of offerings (these look like dinner rolls) on a kind of altar; his left arm goes straight down to his foot. Behind him another crosslegged figure sits with both hands near the face as he leans over another basket of offerings, and holds in his hand what might be either a roll of cord or a puncturing implement. The standing figure behind him holds one hand in front of the face; the other lower arm is more or less perpendicular to the body. The pose of the seated figure at the left is a little like that of the standing figure holding the perforator on the Dumbarton Oaks vase; behind him the standing figure has crossed arms.

All these poses seem to relate to offerings or to sacred or ceremonial objects rather than to the other characters in the scenes. (This notion is confirmed by a clay object in the New Orleans Museum of Art, an arm, bent at a right angle, and holding a cylindrical pot in its hand. This was not broken off from a larger object; the top of the arm is filled in and has a cord — also of clay — coming from the center.) I also believe that, if these

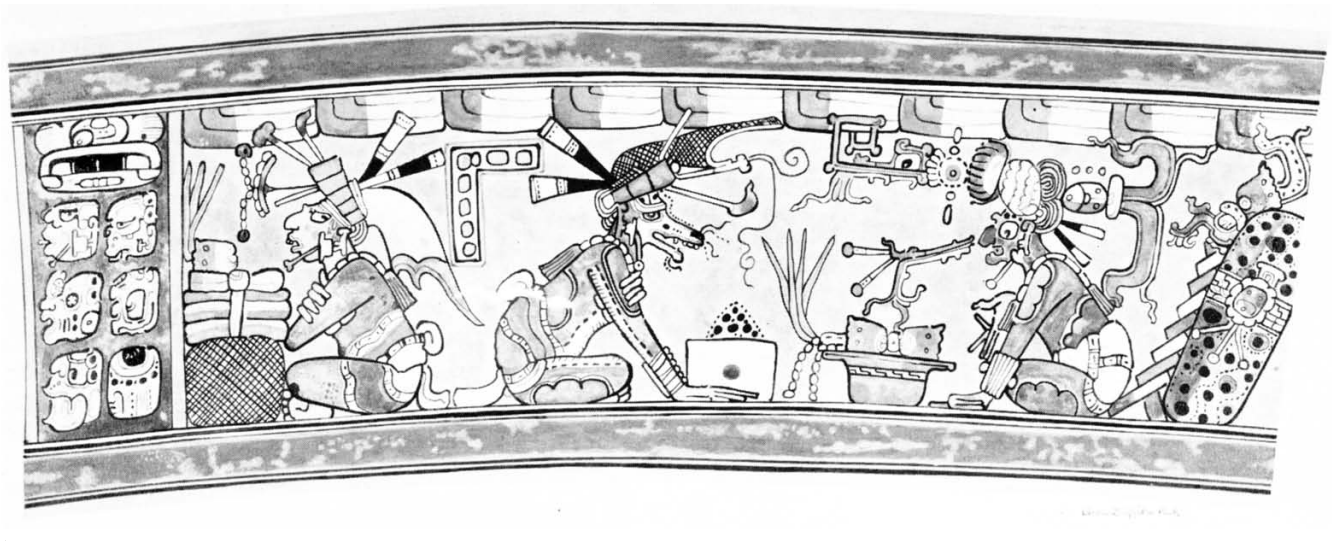

Fig. 9 Polychrome vase. Dumbarton Oaks Collections. Roll-our drawing by Diane Griffiths Peck.

themes were studied thoroughly, a correlation would be found between gesture and kind of object or offering.

This may be indicated on another Dumbarton Oaks pot (fig. 9) where one figure sits with one hand on the ground, the arm straight down, the other hand more or less in front of the face before a bowl of offerings, which include two objects (?) like Ahau glyphs and two strands of beads — or perhaps cord? Across from him is a dog-headed figure with one hand straight down on the ground, the other touching the shoulder in the gesture of surrender or respect. (I do not think that this gesture means anything quite so simple as a prisoner surrendering.) This figure is seated before a different container with different offerings. Although these two figures face each other, they seem not to be relating to each other, but to the offerings in front of each of them. The figure with its back to these two has the folded arms pose and sits in front of what appears to be a woven bundle — or a small altar — a pile of cloth perhaps, topped by a feathered Ahau like those on the other side of the vase.

Another frequent gesture on painted pots is the "hand-raised-in-front-of-chest," in which the other arm may be at various angles, but is always bent. (I have sometimes thought of this as the "pointing-to-a-joint" gesture.) This usually accompanies the crosslegged position, and is most often shown on a major, frontal figure.

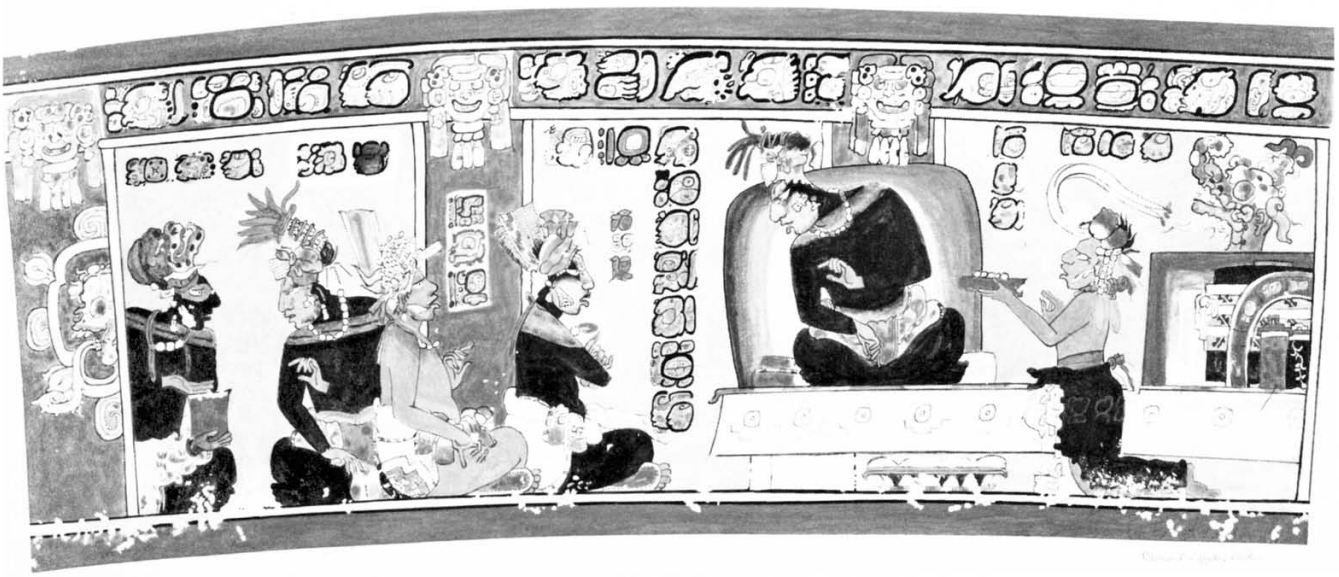

Fig. 10 Polychrome vase. Dumbarton Oaks Collections. Roll-out drawing by Diane Griffiths Peck.

Fig. 11 Polychrome vase. Dumbarton Oaks Collections. Roll-out drawing by Diane Griffiths Peck.

The palm of the hand is usually turned away from the mouth. Shield-Jaguar and his consort sit in this pose on Yaxchilan Stela 11. We see it also in an enthroned figure on Altar 2 at Bonampak, before whom a mask is being held with a cloth flowing from it. The figure seated behind him is in the crossed-arms pose.

On another pot at Dumbarton Oaks (fig. 10), the major figure makes this gesture, as does another figure seated on the ground, almost identically dressed, who is, I suspect, a repeat of the same figure, this time being presented with a tall vase. On both sides of the vase, pottery is being presented to him. If this is the same figure shown twice, it is interesting that gesture is used to identify him even more surely than clothing. The scenes are somewhat different and must represent separate moments or occasions, but the gesture seems to indicate permanent attributes or the theme running through the occasion of both scenes. The pale figure in the scene makes the same gesture, and, if the pot were removed from the hands of the figure at the far left, his gesture would be the same. The figure to the left of the enthroned figure makes the folded-arms gesture, and the kneeling figure to the right, holding the bowl of offerings, is essentially making the hand-toward-mouth gesture, which is most often associated with a kneeling position shown on secondary figures. The arm-in-front-of-chest gesture is frequently associated with cylindrical pots; the hand-to-mouth gesture with a basket or bowl. The latter is found on both monuments and pottery; the former does not seem to be a monumental theme.

Another version of the hand-raised-in-front-of-chest pose is shown on another Dumbarton Oaks pot (fig. 11) where there is again a tall vase beside the principal figure. A crosslegged figure is holding what may be a mirror. Behind him is a particularly interesting figure, seated crosslegged, with both hands to the mouth, a tied headdress reminiscent of those seen at Yaxchilan and Bonampak, and the long flexible ear ornament found on secondary figures at Yaxchilan. Behind him are some folded cloths, and in front of him is what looks like a basket with some sort of tied bundle in it.

Fig. 12 Tablet of the Orator, Palenque. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

At Palenque, the hand-toward-mouth gesture appears, in one instance, on the Tablet of the Orator (fig. 12). The hair on this figure is arranged in the same kind of tied headdress seen on other figures in this pose, and there is a flexible ear ornament. Rands (Greene *et al.* 1972: 80) has observed the similarity of this figure to the minor figure on Yaxchilan Lintel 16, both in gesture and in the fact that there is a soft cloth object draped quite carefully over the left arm, while the right hand holds an object lower down, in this case one of the Holey Banners, which seem to belong exclusively to Palenque. The draped-cloth, observed also at Bonampak, is all over Palenque. The smaller figures on the Cross, Sun, and Foliated Cross (plates 1, 2, and 3) Tablets all have this motif. The manikin scepters on these tablets are held on draped cloth, and the offering proffered by the woman on the Tablet of the Palace has a draped cloth between it and the bowl on which it rests. There are, however, no baskets, bowls, or cords associated with the hand-toward-mouth figures at Palenque. (It was pointed out at the Mesa Redonda by Linda Schele that there is a fine line from the mouth of the Orator figure to an Imix-comb-Imix glyph block in the space above, which might suggest the depiction of speech.)

Fig. 13 Tablet of the Scribe, Palenque. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

Fig. 14 Tablet of Temple XXI. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

The Tablet of the Scribe (fig. 13) has a similar kneeling figure, with the hand a little farther from the face, but otherwise it is like the Orator relief, except that this figure holds something like a pencil in his hand — could this be an implement for blood-letting? (This possibility is perhaps enhanced by David Joralemon's identification, during the Mesa Redonda, of the object held by the minor figure on the Tablet of the Foliated Cross as a penis perforator.)

Another figure in this pose at Palenque is on the Tablet of Temple XXI (fig. 14). Here the figure holds an object, which I have not identified, out a little farther from the face, and wears slightly richer attire, but has the same essential elements as the previous two panel figures. One of the problems, of course, with this kind of study is the significance of the degree of the gesture. Is this gesture the same as that on the Tablet of the Orator or the figures that put hands directly to the mouth? How much of the gesture differences are those between profile and frontal views?

It has been noted that the hand-toward-mouth gesture is often made in relation to some important object — staff or torch, god head, manikin scepter, or lance (which must have more than military connotations). The stucco figure on Pier c, House D, holds what appears to be a mask in this position, much as the masks are held at Yaxchilan and Lacanha. The Pier d, House D, figure holds a serpent-staff. God L (fig. 15), in the Temple of the Cross, holds his cigar with much the same gesture. It has been noted that gestures are shown with or without explicatory objects, so that it is difficult to know whether the object defines the gesture — whether or not it is actually held — or whether the gesture has outside

Fig. 15 God L Panel, Temple of the Cross, Palenque. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

significance and adds another level of meaning to the holding of an object. With gestures like that of God L and the women holding the cord through their tongues, the gesture seems, on one level, utilitarian. Going back to the Olmec once more, the head was certainly the most important part of the body, and there seems to be no doubt that the mouth was the most important part of the head. The fact that ritual blood-letting took place in the tongue is significant. The fact that the hand goes between the mouth and the sacred object says something about the most important part of the body paying respect. The gesture without objects may refer to the acts that involve these important elements.

The jaguar skin with circles worn by God L is somewhat like that on the subsidiary kneeling figure on Yaxchilan Stela 20, a jaguar hide slung over the shoulders and decorated with waffled circles. On the Tablet of the Temple of the Sun, God L, supporting one end of the ceremonial bar, wears a draped hide and a loincloth, both of which are marked with waffled circles. It would seem that waffled circles have a broader meaning than the "black" or "sacrificial blood" assigned them by Ruppert *et al.*, for they are also used on garments, on the bodies of serpentine creatures, and as a means of designating jaguar spots. All of these representations may fit within a pattern of sacrificial implication. The motif is also shown on the garments of some of the figures on the piers of the Temple of the Inscriptions and of House A.

The cord or bead necklace, or whatever hangs down the back of God L in the Temple of the Cross, is worn by figures on a number of painted pots, as well as on the major figures on the Tablets of the Temples of the Sun, Cross, and Foliated Cross, (plates 1, 2, and 3) and some of the stucco figures. It is also found on certain figures at Yaxchilan, Bonampak, and elsewhere. It may relate to the spine so carefully defined in a cordlike fashion on God A in the Dresden Codex. (In the Dresden, the hand-toward-mouth gesture is most frequently seen with God A, although it is also often shown on God D. The folded-arms pose is most often encountered with God B, although God B appears in a number of different positions. God B is also usually sitting on something — on different seats — whereas God A is seated on the ground. Virtually all the figures sit crosslegged.)

The hand-raised-in-front-of-chest also appears prominently at Palenque, again with variations, but always with the palm down, as it usually appears on the vases. It is shown with slight variations on the three enthroned figures — the thrones are a little like the Yaxchilan "altars" — to whom ritual objects are being held out. Whereas the major figure on the Tablet of the Palace (plate 5) has a complicated headdress, the figure in similar position on the Tablet of the Slaves (fig. 16) has the simpler tied headdress associated with hand-toward-mouth figures. The oval tablet on House E shows the same major-figure pose, and the same simple, tied headdress; this time the woman holding the offering has hands raised toward the mouth.

The Temple XIV Tablet (plate 6) has a major figure in a rather unusual pose while a kneeling woman offering a manikin scepter makes a presentation gesture that brings her hands close to her mouth. The manikin scepter has folded arms and sits on a cloth. The two figures on the Temple of the Sun Tablet hold manikin scepters in this way. One of the manikin scepters again has folded arms, as does that held by the larger figure on the Foliated Cross Tablet (plate 3) and the recumbent manikin scepter on the Temple of the Cross Tablet. Ruz (1968: 37) seems to suggest a death association for the recumbent position when he speaks of the figures in the Madrid Codex that are lying on their backs with arms crossed on their chests and legs flexed; he thinks these

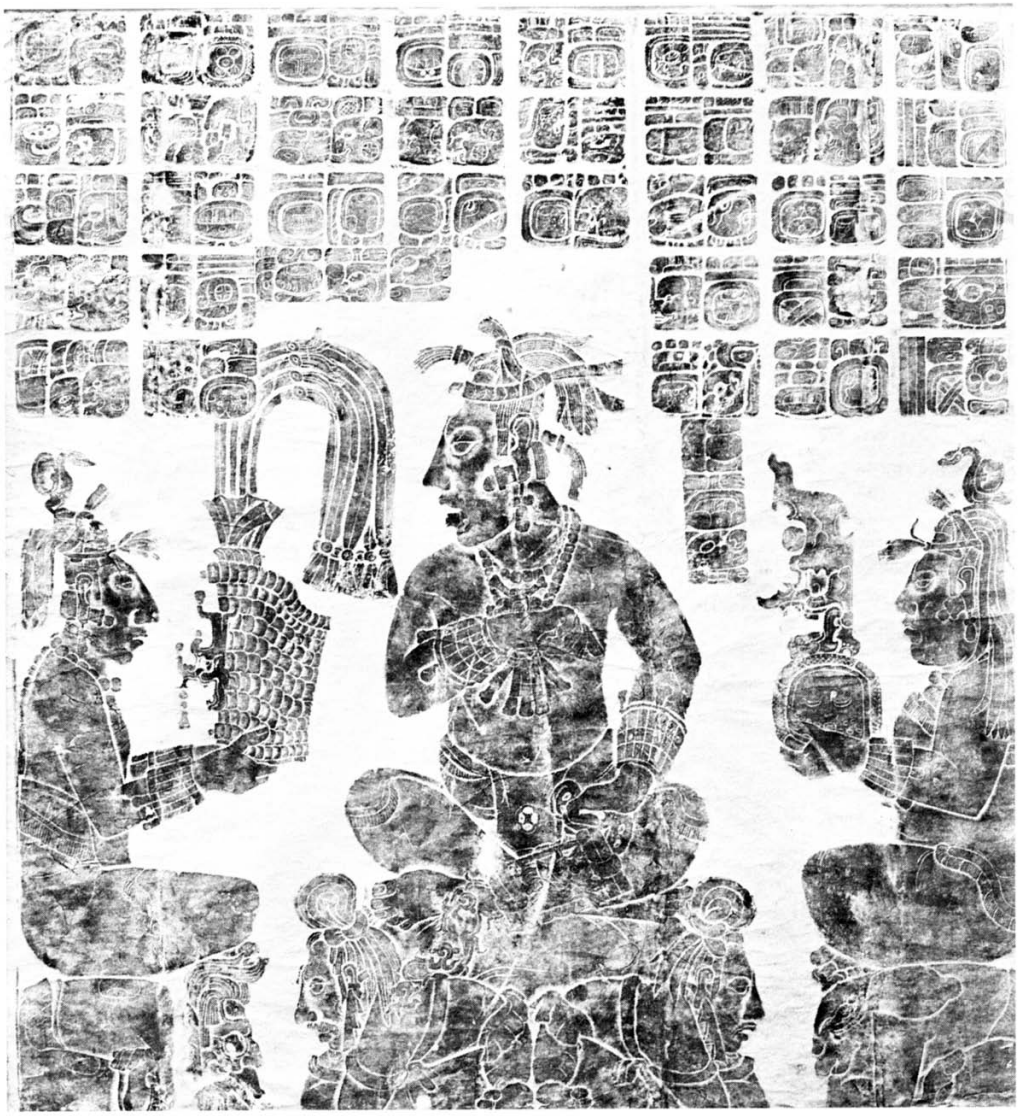

Fig. 16 Tablet of the Slaves, Palenque. Rubbing by Merle Greene.

figures are depicted as being in a sepulchre. He also points out (1968: 47) the Maya burial practice, not only of crossed arms and flexed legs, but of seated burials. This pose, therefore, may have a specifically funerary association. I know of no manikin scepter with folded arms at any other site, but they are quite common at Palenque. This pose has been seen elsewhere on subsidiary figures, and it appears so used in other contexts at Palenque, as on Pier e, House A, where one figure makes this gesture while the other puts one hand to the shoulder. It is interesting to note that the figures we take to be gods in Maya art, like the God K manikin scepters, often assume poses that are those of subsidiary figures in scenes which we believe to involve human beings, and are rather rarely shown in the poses of important human beings.

The figures in the courtyard on the base of House A at Palenque (figs. 17, 18) include four figures making the hand-to-shoulder gesture, one with folded arms, and one, the figure with the large penis, with hands apparently tied behind the back. The two figures that flank the staircase and the oversized figure second from the stairs on the north side are more richly dressed, although they also have simple tied headdresses. The two central ones have glyph panels on their loincloths. It has been suggested that these two are in the category of special prisoners (Joyce Marcus, personal communication), which may be so. However, these figures are not making the surrender gesture; they are making the hand-raised-in-front-of-chest gesture. This scene seems to be a version of what appears in the compositions on pottery: the major figures making the hand-raised-in-front-of-chest gesture, and subsidiary figures making the folded-arms and hand-to-shoulder gestures. No offerings are shown in the Palenque courtyard scene. The sacred object referred to may be the building itself, or

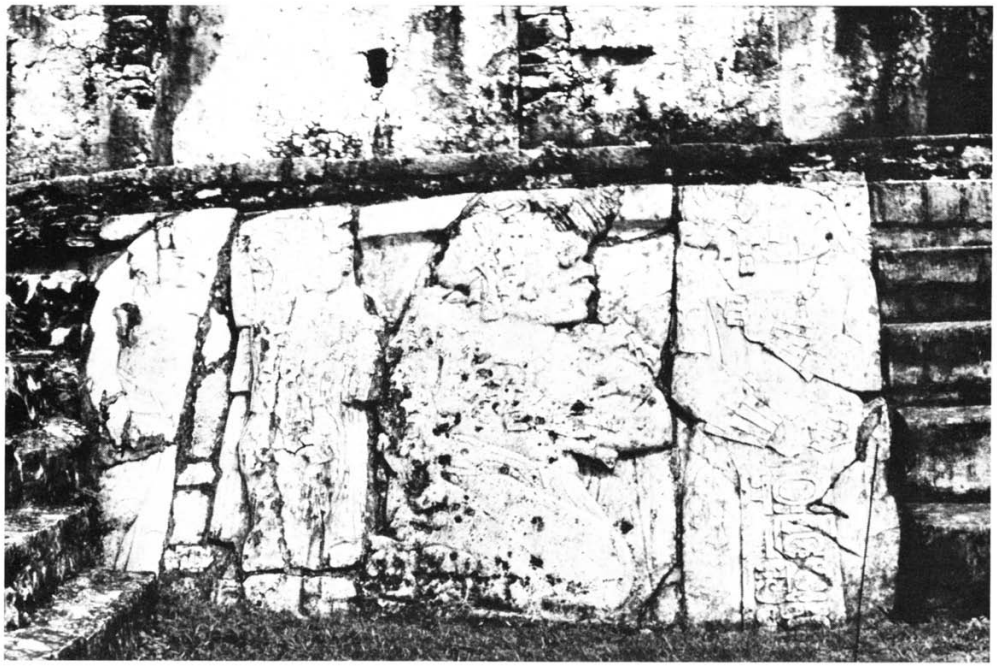

Fig. 17 Figures at the base of House A, north side. Photograph by the author.

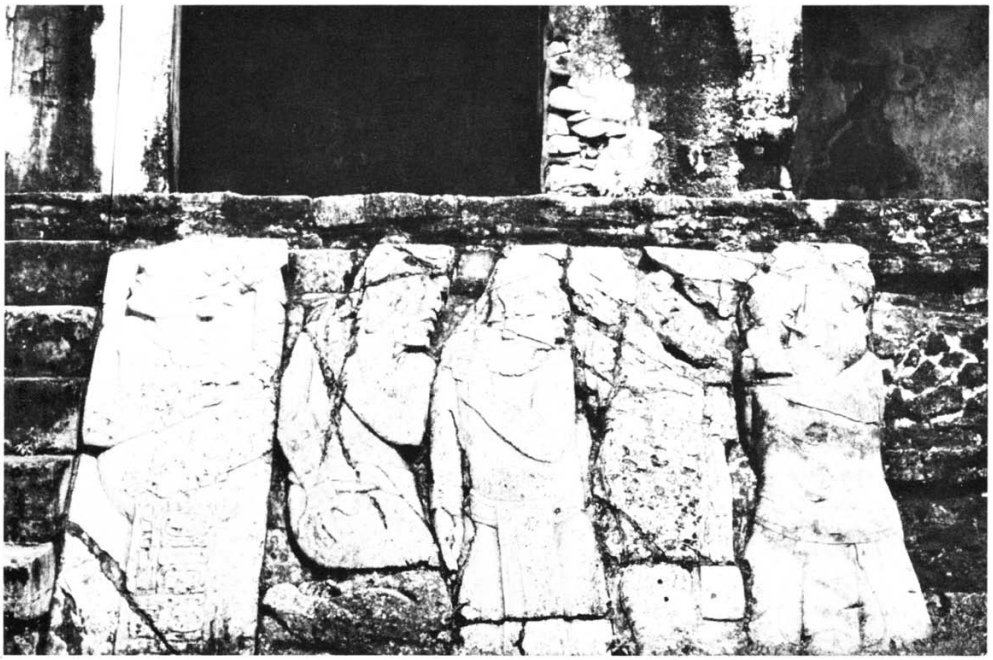

Fig. 18 Figures at the base of House A, south side. Photograph by the author.

what the building is thought to embody. This is also suggested by the Tablets of the Orator, Scribe, and Temple XXI, which flanked the entrances to buildings.

In summary, the hand-toward-mouth gesture suggests blood-letting rites and the holding of ritual objects. The hand-raised-in-front-of-chest gesture is associated chiefly with the acknowledgement of certain types of offerings, notably cylindrical vases. Perhaps some of the rites in which the major participants are shown with simple tied headdresses may involve purification associated with a rite of passage. Women are often involved in these rites, in self-sacrifice and the presentation of offerings. Proskouriakoff (1960: 471) has noted that "robed figures, which some have interpreted as male priests or penitents, are almost invariably associated with apellative glyphs prefixed by feminine heads . . . These heads are identified as feminine by a hatched oval on the forehead . . ." We have already noted this motif on women's garments and accessories, and its association with sacrificial ritual, and we have noticed other similarities between women and certain simply dressed male figures. We may assume that at least some offerings in the scenes examined are funereal, and some rites may have to do with the assumption of divine immortality. Death was an important part of the thinking and ritual of most Pre-Columbian peoples as part of a cosmology firmly tied to concepts of fertility and the continuation of power.

Tempted by Andean parallels, I am interested to observe that similar poses on the Maya monuments are taken by women and certain simply dressed male figures. In Mochica pottery scenes, I believe that women and certain simply dressed male figures participate in rituals in which they accompany the important dead as they pass into their immortality. Sometimes these figures are shown as dead, sometimes as alive. A tied cloth is part of their paraphernalia. I was encouraged to note this parallel when, on the return trip from the Mesa Redonda, I found in the Museo de Antropología in Merida a clay vessel from Mayapan which showed a skeletal head wearing flexible ear ornaments. I wonder if some of the Classic Maya figures which wear such ear ornaments and make the hand-to-mouth gesture do not accompany a great god-king to his immortality.

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