Ancient Mesoamerica, **11** (2000), 185–198
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MONUMENT 65

A great emblematic depiction of throned rule and royal sacrifice at Late Preclassic Kaminaljuyu

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Abstract

Monument 65, thus far the largest sculpture discovered from the almost completely destroyed site of Kaminaljuyu, has much to tell us about the enigma of this ancient city. Carvings on two sides of the flat tablet resonate with the most sacred concepts of the "Miraflores" people of Late Preclassic Kaminaljuyu. Partly because of the highly problematical picture further field archaeology can provide of Kaminaljuyu—a picture already problematical—but also because of the inherent value of a comparative orientation, I employ an explicitly comparative approach in order to speculate about the ideology encoded on the monument. According to such a comparative perspective, the depictions identify Kaminaljuyu rulers as conventional world- or cosmos-creators and sustainers, functions realized by the sacrifices of royal proxy victims or "twins" of the ruler. The captive scenes, shown on Side A, represent the duality of rulership expressed in a twinship of first, immortal "priest" or administrator—the ruler in his religious role—sacrificing a victim representing a first ideal man or "king," and, by virtue of this, representing the ever-dying or magical fertility of the polity. On Side B, the creation seems to be manifested or metaphorized by the *axis mundi*.

Monument 65, by far the largest extant sculpture from Kaminaljuyu, is one of the largest carved stones from pre-Columbian America. After the great throne, Stela 10 (Kaplan 1995:190), Monument 65 constitutes perhaps the most important sculpture of the ancient city because of its remarkable depictions. These depictions encode the rulership ideology of the city during the Late Preclassic period, the time of the city's greatest expansion and when much of the sculptural corpus of the city was created (Parsons 1986:103–104). Lee A. Parsons, whose 1986 catalog greatly advanced the study of Kaminaljuyu sculpture, observed that the iconography of Monument 65, which he described as a "most important stone," could "not yet be fully interpreted" (1986:58). The present analysis is the first to describe the monument in detail and includes an analysis of the scene on the reverse side. Parsons was aware of this scene but because of how the sculpture was stored at the time of his examination he was unable to examine it fully. Here I analyze the monument from a Mesoamerican context but, in addition, from a wider context, the extensive anthropological and historical literature on "kingship." In so doing, I am following the lead of many social and cultural anthropologists who have written of "kingship"—a particular kind of sacral-civil rulership—as a general phenomenon as well as of other Mesoamericanists such as Gillespie (1989) and Houston and Stuart (1996) who have tried in varying degrees to apply a comparative anthropological perspective to central problems facing the analysis of Mesoamerican rulership and complex government.

Perhaps demonstrating emergence from a post-modern period, several eminent anthropologists, whose focus both direct and indirect is "kingship," recently have reinvoked the cross-cultural goals of anthropology. Arens (1984:356, citing Needham 1970:xix), who wrote about "kingship" in southern Sudan, spoke of a "revived interest in 'the greatest of all anthropological problems, namely the explanation of cultural resemblances.' " Vansina (1990:260) recently reaffirmed that "[a]t heart anthropology is the comparative study of cultures" (compare Turner 1969:203). For at least the past three decades during which the synthesis of social and cultural anthropology has held sway, "kingship" has been considered an important cross-cultural topic (e.g., see Baines 1995; Beidelman 1966; Bloch 1989; Cannadine 1985; Feeley-Harnik 1985; Heusch 1982, 1985; Nelson 1977, 1987; Ray 1991; Sahlins 1981a, 1981b, 1985; Valeri 1985; cf. Turner 1969:102), and as T. O. Beidelman (1987:548) affirmed, "[s]acred rule, divine monarchy, remains a more pertinent and powerfully generative topic for anthropologists than many give it credit for being."

An approach emphasizing "universals" should not be misconstrued; easy answers, in the sense of asserting "functions" for social beliefs and rituals and selected without regard for context and history recall a much older, and quite inadequate, anthropology of the nineteenth century and more recent visitations. Pertinent are Evans-Pritchard's (1965:3) and Wittgenstein's (1979) vehement objections to the dangers of "functional explanations." Evans-Pritchard (1965:8–10) attacked "armchair" anthropology, by which he meant a theoretically unsystematic selection of data—a selection made without regard for the social and cultural context—in order to support a ready-made argument. Thus he charged Sir James Frazer for too often producing a "just so story" similar to the tale of "how the leopard got his spots" (Evans-Prichard 1965:10–12). As an alternative to "armchair" anthropology, Evans-Pritchard (1965) proposed a deep contextual knowledge of a particular culture that enabled explanations of cultural phenomena primarily

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through their relationship to other phenomena within the same culture. Significantly, however, he also criticized work which lacked "a body of theory" with which to select and interpret data (Evans-Pritchard 1940:261). I suggest that a cross-cultural theory of "kingship" can help to advance our understanding of Mesoamerican phenomena and of certain fundamental aspects of Kaminaljuyu although the understanding achieved must be considered quite abstract in nature. Comparative analysis seems, by default, especially appropriate for Monument 65 because the sculpture, in the major details, is different from any other monument from the southern Mesoamerican area. I have attempted a comparative analysis here, however, not only because ready comparisons within a local or interactional context do not exist but also because such analysis seems to be productive on its own basis.

PROVENIENCE AND DATING

On July 30, 1983, children playing in a sewage construction trench close to the junction of 30th Avenue and 6th Street in Zone 7, Guatemala City and near to the Kaminaljuyu archaeological park, saw part of a carving on a massive rock slab; workmen notified city authorities and the slab was excavated; and two days later, another fragment was found nearby. The find placed the monument 400 m southwest of the Kaminaljuyu Acropolis and 100 m southeast of Mound B III-1 (Parsons 1986:58). For further reference, it was discovered approximately 500 m from the site near the junction of 6a Street and 14th Avenue where the large fragments of Stela 10 were unearthed in 1955; such associations are meaningful primarily, of course, if the location represented the initial deposition which seems likely, although by no means certain, because of the great size of Monument 65. Apparently after some breakage at the base, the sculpture was removed to the storage area of the national museum of archaeology and ethnology. Although queries were made, further contextual information about ceramics or other artifacts found with the sculpture remains unavailable. On the basis of stylistic trait patterns drawn from his widely accepted chronology for art from the southern highlands and Pacific Coast, Parsons (1986:58, 127) attributed Monument 65 to the early Arenal phase, approximately 200 B.C.–A.D. 1. Based on stylistic associations and a revised Kaminaljuyu ceramic sequence (Shook and Popenoe de Hatch 1997), I suggest an approximate date of 150 B.C.

PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS

A single oversized pale volcanic stone that was not hewn entire but rather flattened from the original boulder slab, Monument 65 is 290 cm in height, 200 cm at its widest, and approximately 33 cm deep overall. The base is chipped; Dr. Guillermo Mata-Amado saw other pieces of this monument, probably from the bottom, at the recovery site (personal communication 1995), and Sr. Rodolfo Yaquián, restoration specialist in the national museum, showed me several pieces from the bottom that were not used in the display. Originally, the panel was as much as 40 cm higher or approximately 330 cm in height. This compares reasonably with the gargantuan Olmec La Venta Stela 3, which is approximately 426 cm in height.

STYLE, DEPICTION, AND CONTENT: SIDE A

I have arbitrarily assigned "A" (Figure 1a–e) to the side in which the carving has been known and reproduced hitherto, and refer to it as the *recto*. The other side (Figure 2a, b), Side B, is referred to as the *verso*, which is reproduced here and available for analysis for the first time since my 1995 report. I propose that Side A reflects an exoteric, Side B an esoteric, view of the same themes. Using a combination of relief and intaglio, or, as Parsons (1968:58) wrote, "an artificially flattened surface, in slightly raised and rounded relief accented by indentations around the edges," on the better preserved Side A, the sculptor carved a scene or series of scenes which are highlighted by an "unusual amount of uncarved background space" (Parsons 1986:58), which has the effect of straightforwardly conveying its message as if to emphasize the unambiguity of its importance.

Parsons (1986) associated Monument 65 with a series of "Early Arenal Low-relief" sculptures from Kaminaljuyu. These include, among others, the following: Altar 1, which I have identified as a massive throne (Kaplan 1995:187); Altar 8, which may have been a miniature "throne" (Parsons 1986:55) although not functionally a royal seat; the cylindrical or drum-shaped Altars 9 and 10, which seem sculpturally to represent incensario rituals; Stelae 1, 20, and 25, the latter of which seems to depict a ball player (Parsons 1986:57); and Monument 63. Most of these sculptures, by contrast with Monument 65, display profuse, convoluted, and heavily conflated symbolism and imagery. Parsons's grouping of them was based on only a rough stylistic similarity and by discerning a common content (with several sculptures characterized as "Miraflores") reflecting "dynastic" concerns (1986:104). Not only because Parsons' "Arenal" grouping seems somewhat arbitrary, but also because of the distinctiveness of the scenes, the analysis concentrates on the monument as a singular object and not as a member of a group of sculptures. Similarly, it might be useful to try to relate the monument to other sculptures from a Late Preclassic Kaminaljuyu interaction sphere. Such an area might have extended throughout the central Guatemalan highlands, including the partially destroyed site of Chocola 150 km to the west and El Portón 140 km to the north, reaching perhaps to Abaj Takalik, some 180 km away on the southwestern coast of Guatemala, and to Izapa, some 230 km away on the southwest coast of Mexico. To the south it might reach as far as Finca Arizona, 100 km distant, and possibly including the sites of Bilbao and El Baúl, and even as far as Chalchuapa, 200 km away in El Salvador. Yet further, it might have extended 500 km away to coastal Chiapas and elsewhere on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. I have not attempted to compare the monument to other sculptures from such a putative sphere for lack of space and reliable data but, perhaps even more, because the focus here is on the "meanings" as such which Parsons (1986:108) decried as lacking in discussions of Kaminaljuyu. While determining the nature of relationships between polities, and between sculptural styles and content, is important, just *what* one considers to be related should be addressed also. This is to say that while it is important to search for links between sites and sculpture, it is equally important to identify the cultural and historical meanings that are at issue, that is, precisely what it is that one is linking.

On Monument 65 the sculptor depicted several figures in three tiers. Along the center of the great stone, two seated figures repose on what traditionally have been called "altars" or "table-altars" that have four legs and beveled block tops, which I have called formal thrones for the rulers of Kaminaljuyu and which are represented notably by Stela 10, Altar 1, and the Incienso Throne (Kaplan 1995). In the lowest register, below and to the right of the third figure, the carving is lost due to breakage. This figure, however, undoubtedly also had been depicted sitting on a four-legged throne.

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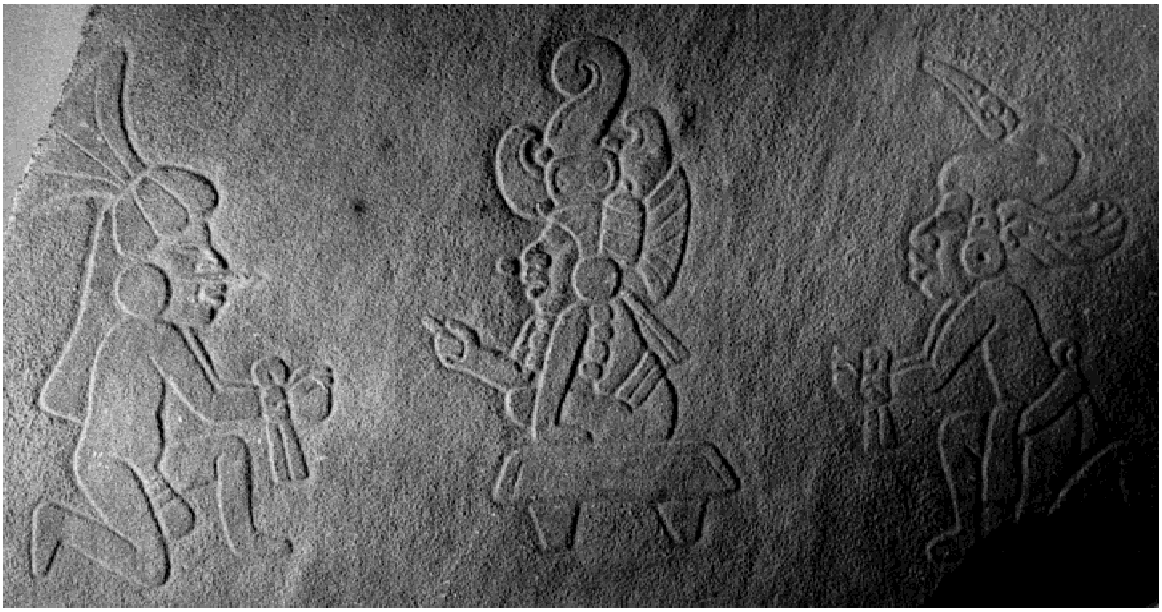
a

Figure 1. (a) Monument 65, Side A / *recto*; (b) top tier, Side A; (c) middle tier, Side A; (d) bottom tier, Side A; (e) Monument 65, Side A / *recto*. Drawing by Fernando Luín and Jonathan Kaplan.

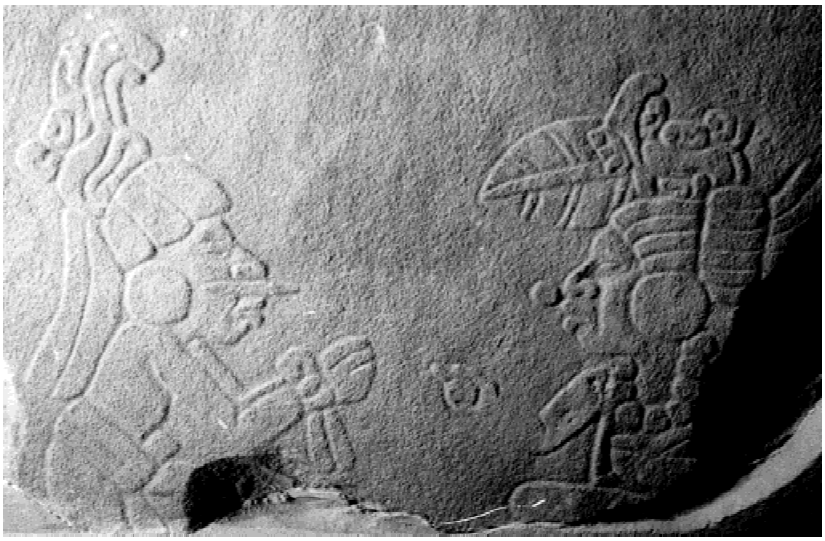
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b



c



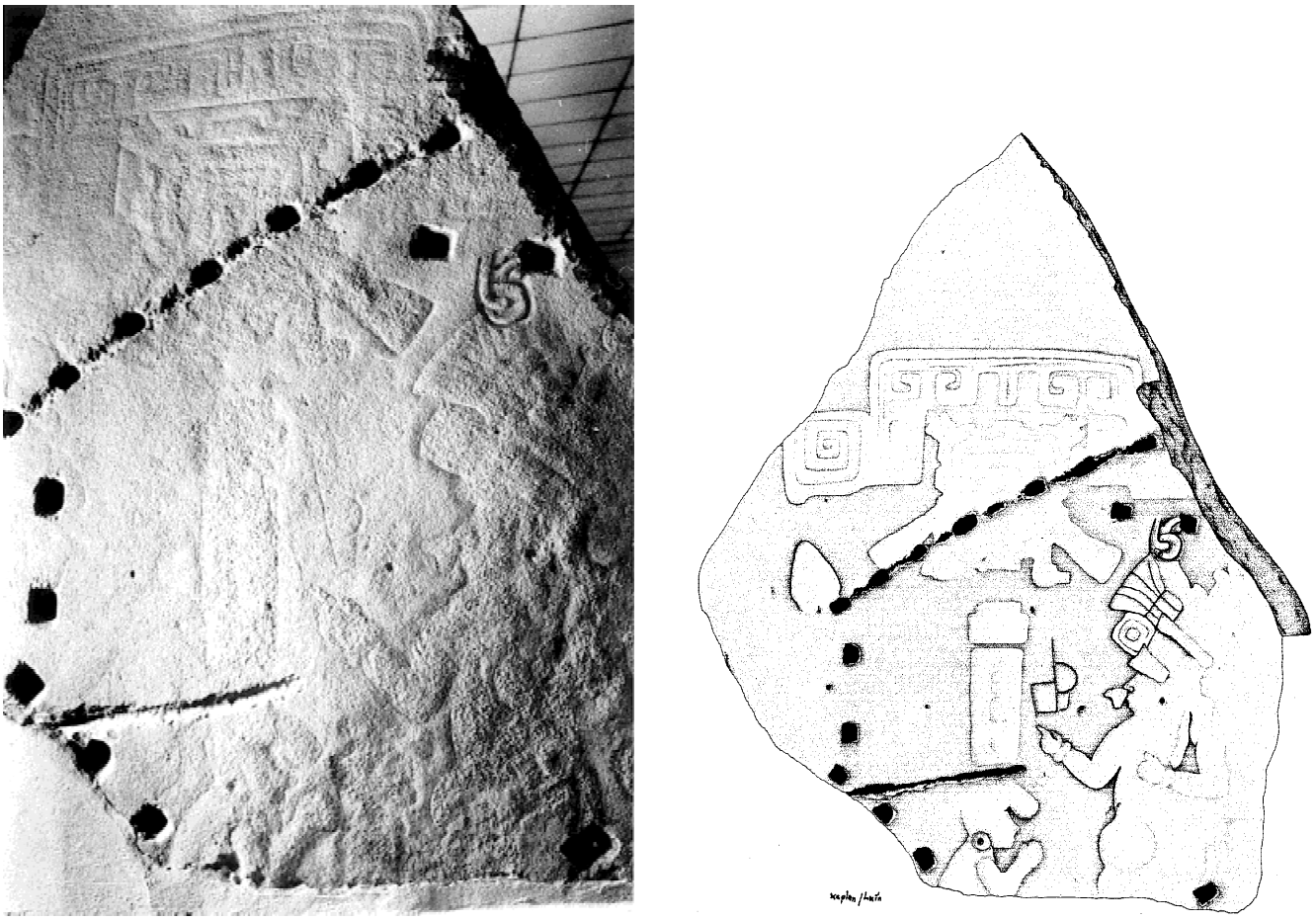
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a b

Figure 2. (a) Monument 65, Side B/*verso*. (b) Monument 65, Side B/*verso*. Drawing by the author and Fernando Luín.

The other figures, evidently captives and which must originally have been six in number, face the seated figures in pairs. All three seated figures wear a nose bead which would have been made of jade. This seems to signify the highest elite status because only the principal figures depicted on the great thrones, Stela 10 and Altar 1, also wear such nose beads; the figure depicted on La Mojarra Stela 1 as well wears the same kind of nose bead. Each of the seated figures gestures with his index finger toward the left of the composition. The two higher seated figures appear to be issuing a command to the two stripped or nearly stripped figures who, with arms held out and bound at the wrists, from either side appear both to entreat and pay them homage. To the right of the lowest of the three seated figures, the other in a pair of bound supplicants presumably had been carved.

Even as Proskouriakoff (1960) first showed otherwise for many personages depicted on Classic Maya sculpture, do these figures represent nonhistorical, completely abstracted entities? Is the scene perhaps a pedagogical account of a Kaminaljuyu mythos? Whatever the ideas encapsulated, do the seated and kneeling figures represent historical persons as much as or more than they represent idealized events and concepts? Is the scene a commemoration of one simultaneous event or of three different events? Do the three depicted figures represent the same ruler shown on different occasions, three different rulers, perhaps each from a different polity, meeting for a joint ceremony, or three different rulers in a dynasty or at least some sort of Kaminaljuyu ruler sequence?

Parsons (1986:58) observed "three of the captives seem to be naked and phallic [while] . . . two others have distinct loin cloths." In fact, the eroded condition of the carving makes it difficult to determine whether the carved lines by the groins of the figures represent distended genitalia or are instead the traces of belts or sashes, which otherwise would be their only clothing. Impressing the viewer, however, is that even if not completely nude the kneeling figures have been stripped of most of their clothing. Nudity in Maya and other Mesoamerican art has long been interpreted as indicating the debasement and humiliation of captivity. Another view, which I consider below, interprets nudity in captives and victims as conforming to a ritual and ideological liminality prefatory to nonpiacular sacrifice for the *res publica*.

Each of the figures, seated and kneeling, wears a distinctive headdress; I describe the headdresses of the seated figures below. Just as the genuflection and denuded condition of the kneeling figures likely signifies they were captured in warfare, their headdresses seem to identify them as members of a foreign elite. Parsons described the captive to the left in the top register as having "a flame like headdress," and the right as wearing a "beaded turban." He described the left captive in the middle register as "having a plumed, tripartite [hair dressing]." The right captive wears "a long-beaked

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bird [headdress] with a serpent-framed wing behind his ear spool." The final visible captive in the lower register has a "tripartite hairdo surmounted by a profile dragon headdress" (Parsons 1986:58). The bird headdress of the left captive, middle register, merits more comment. Because of the aquatic environs of the bird depicted and the Maya belief in a watery boundary separating the human world from the underworld (Hellmuth 1987), the headdress may have a sacrificial implication which, because of the value of elite or noble captives, might have had general connotations of the "refinement" of nobility. On many Classic Maya ceramics, noble persons wear headdresses adorned by an aquatic fowl (heron, cormorant or other); for examples, see Reents-Budet (1994:244), Tate (1992:261), and Hellmuth (1987).

Despite the distinguishing characteristics of their headdresses, the three seated dignitaries are similarly dressed and laden. If a historical occasion is depicted, does it represent a single occasion or a trio of occasions closely related in time in which all three shared as contemporaries or three occasions in which the same person appears, albeit differently attired? There was likely a council of elders at Late Preclassic Kaminaljuyu, an institution presumed for the Classic and attested for the Postclassic Maya in the form of the "Popol Na," and attested ubiquitously worldwide, for example, among Indo-European peoples, the Germans by their *thing* and the Celts by their *einechlan*. Nevertheless, the prominence given to three throned figures on the giant Monument 65 tablet—not one figure depicted at different times, as I will show but rather three different figures each sole in monarchical authority—supports an argument against a council as a *fundamental* institution of rule (e.g., Lincoln 1981, 1991). Formal triarchies worldwide are almost nonexistent. This is the case even as diarchies are attested ubiquitously, and diarchies, as Indo-European mythologists and others have shown, not only heuristically, as I describe more fully below, may be considered a manifestation of "kingship" worldwide, that is, of monarchical sovereignty which in turn represents a duality that yokes the worldly administration of rule, on the one hand, to the otherworldly essence of undying, ever-dying, fertility, as the "state." This duality is often metaphorized or mythologized in twinship, attested also in ethnographically observed ritual as a profound theme often having to do with a "dangerous" fertility (e.g., see Evans-Pritchard 1956:3, 128–133, 156–157; Turner 1969:44–93). A council conceivably would have exercised but a partial restraint upon the powers possessed by the kind of singular leader seemingly depicted on Monument 65 *recto*, and we must conclude that each ruler in his own time would have been sole in the exercise of particular authority and unique in his embodiment of a corporate numen. But the captive scene itself most strongly suggests three different rulers. Captive sacrifice for rulers, as many scholars have shown, constitutes, ideologically, proxy sacrifice of the ruler himself, and ruler autosacrifice constitutes the original or primordial creation of social well-being and order in the cosmos—the constituting of the "state"—as I discuss below.

The headdresses of the three seated figures also appear to specify distinct individuals. The headdress of the top figure includes an eroded sign that resembles the Maya glyph for *chan* or *caan*, homophones meaning both "sky" and "serpent" (Figure 1b). The headdress of the middle figure contains a three-scrolled, four-beaded cartouche with what appears to be a Maya *k'in* sign (Figure 1c). This could represent the ubiquitous crossed-bands sign known from both Preclassic Olmec and Zapotec art and from the Classic Maya, often interpreted as representing the sun and/or the sky but having other connotations (discussed below). The three curling elements on either side and on top of the *k'in* sign resemble the foliation of the "sprouting Quadripartite badge" on the Delataille Tripod, reproduced by Hellmuth (1987:Figure 5), and other Early Classic depictions on ceramics, and may represent part of an icon of fertility. What appears to be a cacao leaf is fixed to the front of the headdress of the lowest figure (Figure 1d; Parsons 1986:58). Following Umberger (1984), who identified name glyphs carved in or near headdresses of important individuals in Postclassic Central Mexico, I suggest the uppermost figure may have been called "Lord Chan/Serpent or Sky," the middle of the three "Lord K'in/Sun," and the bottom "Lord Cacao." If the headdresses of the figures depicted do contain names, I suggest the named individuals were historical persons shown performing the same requisite captive-presentation ceremony during their respective periods of rulership. Even if we are to conclude that the headdresses of the seated figures do not contain names referring to the wearers as specific individuals, it cannot be proposed simply that the *emblematic*, that is, special or elevated, uniformity of the attire and gestures of each, all of which in part must have been dictated by conventions of office and ritual, means the carving is not a portrait of particular historical occasions.

The depictions of seats on Side A, which belong to a long Mesoamerican tradition of thrones, provide further support for the identification of the seated figures as historical, or at least as chronologically differentiated rulers or governors, with paramount official status in the community. A disjunction exists, on the one hand, between an imprecise use of "throne" by Mesoamerican art historians and the typological use of the often associated term "king" by Mesoamerican archaeologists in culture evolutionary schemes (e.g., Flannery 1972), on the other hand. Some Mesoamerican scholars use the concept of thrones in a formal, standardized, iconic, almost codified sense (for the Preclassic Olmec, see e.g., Coe and Diehl [1980:294], Grove [1973:134–135], and Lowe et al. [1982:95]; for the Classic Maya, see, e.g., Miller and Taube [1993:165]). Surely we can classify some Mesoamerican monuments by certain common formal and/or depictive elements, which had a similarly quite specific denotation of meaning to forms, and depictions found, for example, among ancient Old World sculptures. I have suggested (Kaplan 1995) that four-legged "table altars" with beveled block edges and a rich sacrificial and underworld iconography fulfilled the role of the formal seats or thrones of religious (sacrificial) *cum* political (administrative) leaders in the Late Preclassic southern Mesoamerican area. Even if the depictions of figures seated on four-legged seats by themselves are insufficient to identify the figures as rulers, that these depicted seats were consciously and indeed quite formally understood to represent rulership among the Classic Maya is clear from epigraphy. Customarily, anthropologists cite language nuances to reveal and discriminate intentional or emic meaning in ethnographically and historiographically studied peoples and cultures (Evans-Pritchard 1965:7). Words denoting particular intentions corresponding to depictions of powerful elite, for example, figures on highly formal seats, are found in Mayan hieroglyphic texts. Epigraphers have identified the glyphs for the verbs *chumwan* (locative) and *chumlah* (passive completive) to mean "seated" and "was seated [in rulership]" and which depict part of a human figure seated in profile.

POSSIBLE COMPARATIVE THEMES ON SIDE A: "STATE SACRIFICE"

An interpretation of the scene consistent with well-known themes ubiquitous in Mesoamerican art, from the *danzante* figures of Monte Albán to scenes of ballplayers presented to rulers at El Tajín and

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throughout Classic Maya art, suggests that the kneeling pairs were captured in battle and represent the triumph of their captors in what the Aztecs called *xochiyaotl*, the "flowery war." As many have described, rituals involving captives are important propaganda. Accordingly, one might interpret such scenes by reference to the Aztec postaccession "coronation war," which Townsend (1992:206) described as intended to "prove [the new ruler's] leadership in battle, to win tribute, and to capture prisoners for sacrifice. . . ." Perhaps we should be no more specific in our supposition than that on the *recto* we are looking simply at a dynastic sequence, with sets of twin captives, present in such number for no particular reason except as battle trophies.

Other meanings, however, are possible and might elucidate such an important emblematical rendering from Kaminaljuyu. It is my belief every detail of the carving was included for a conscious purpose and that the twinning of captives provides the spur to compare possible twinned or dual meanings found so frequently in rulerships in other cultures; the pairing of victims on Side A might have represented in some obscure manner to the Kaminaljuyu polity an exoteric pairing of ruler and victim, in which one of the captives represented one aspect of the ruler and the other captive another aspect. While the *tinsila* of the Swazi ruler come to mind (see below), all I can suggest explicitly is that *both* members in the victim pairs were paired off with the ruler between them. To derive such possible meanings, we can consider not only Maya and other Mesoamerican beliefs and practices but also rituals of rulership worldwide in which victims of sacrifice so often represent stand-ins or proxies for ruler autosacrifice. In many societies important captives were victims of nonpiacular sacrifice. Hence, for the sake of the public good, they were sacrificed as proxies of the ruler, the latter who, as the physical and spiritual corporate entity, was responsible for the continuing life and order of society and the cosmos. A depiction on the Olmec throne, La Venta Altar 4, seems to comprise not only the general theme but in several details closely resembles the scenes on Monument 65. The Olmec sculpture depicts a ruler emerging from or seated within a cave and holding one end of a tether tied around the neck presumably of a captive; Grove's (1973:130) interpretation that the rope indicates "kinship" and the tethered figure is an ancestor figure seems implausible in light of the overwhelming comparative material attesting otherwise. A customary theme in Classic Maya art and thought, the Bonampak murals strikingly depict the symbiosis of ruler and sacrificial victim (Miller 1986:114; cf. Schele and Miller 1986:214 on "victorious lords" wearing "depictions of captives as costume elements"). Particularly in Room 2, they show captors torturing and witnessing the torture of prisoners and then the captors performing autosacrifice. The sacrifices of captured Classic Maya rulers, probably all by decapitation—Yich'a:k B'alam of Seibal by a ruler of Dos Pilas, K'an Hoy Chitam of Palenque by a ruler of Tonina, Waxaklahun Ub'a:h K'awi:l from Copan by a ruler of Quirigua, for example—but also most likely the sacrifice depicted on Kaminaljuyu Stela 10, represented what, I suggest here, idealized or epitomized Classic Maya "state-sacrifice," that is, sacrifice which was imbued with meanings having to do with the creation of the rightly ordered society and cosmos, and the "true humanity."

Accordingly, to more fully understand royally sanctioned sacrifices such as decapitation, we should consider that the meaning of these sacrifices was not simply or only a triumphant celebration of victory in battle or conquest but rather "state sacrifice." Similarly, the frequent depiction of nudity among captives in Mesoamerican art perhaps represented not merely an ad hoc or ad hominem humiliation. Several writers have observed that scenes of denuding of underworld lords, followed by their decapitation by the Hero Twins, appear fairly commonly on painted and carved Classic Maya pottery; the "Metropolitan Vase" provides one such example. Another example of the sacrifice of an old god appears on a vase from Chama, now in a Duke University collection (Hellmuth 1987:Figure 27). A young lord, one of the Hero Twins, pulls God N, or Pauahtun, from a shell with one hand while he raises in his other hand either an ax or knife shaped like the flint ax wielded by the principal figure on Kaminaljuyu Stela 10, around the stem of which is wrapped the bloodletting "triple bow tie" or "triple-knotted bow tie," in the phraseology of Classic Maya iconography. The depictions of the stripping of these old gods of their vestments and ornaments suggest a practice of divesting captives of all clothing, save pieces of bindings of bark paper or cotton, at the cost of their cultural and individual integrity and indeed of their identity. Removal of clothing symbolically reduces the nonhuman underworld order which the underworld gods represented to a blank pregenerative condition. One may, therefore, equate the old gods of the underworld with a pure, abstracted potentiality or "life"; cross-culturally, wealth and plenty often are associated with the underworld. A more apt equation might be of the slaughtered maize god, a nocturnal entity, Hun Hunajpu, to the numinous Osiris, the sun of the underworld, whose dismembered body floating in the Nile flood conveyed agricultural prosperity—the "life" of the "state"—to Egypt. Similarly, Hunajpu and Horus might be considered diurnal solar entities. Accordingly, in a liminal phase sacrificial victims were rendered pure, in the sense of a first sacrifice representing the "profanation of first fruits" (Hubert and Mauss 1898:72), in order to play their roles in a transformation to fertility and righteous order represented by the "state," a perpetually living sacred sodality, source of material prosperity but also of existential continuance; a decapitation theme displayed not only on Kaminaljuyu Stela 10 but also on Monument 62, the Incienso Throne, and other Kaminaljuyu monuments reiterates these notions.

"KINGSHIP" AS A DUAL CONSTRUCT: A CROSS-CULTURAL THEORY

Some further elaboration may be helpful here. In anthropology and historiography "king" is a notoriously unwieldy term. The ubiquity of its use is despite the opinion that, as Young has said, "[a] category which has been made to include, in Africa alone, the Dinka master-of-the-fishing spear and the Aga Khan of the Shia Imami Ismailia sect can scarcely be of much analytical value" (1966:136). And Mabbett has commented, "[I]t could be argued that kingship does not exist; it is a word for an infinite variety of political relationships, and they cannot be studied as a unity" (1985:1). Despite the many and very varied examples in the sampling universe of figures called "king" by historians and anthropologists, like many after Frazer (e.g., Arens 1984), it is possible to conclude, based on the reasoning of writers such as Geertz (1980) and Sahlins (1985), that "kingship" is a roughly unified construct, but according to qualitative criteria as opposed to such quantitative ones as amount of land or population controlled, parameters which vary greatly with respect to rulers denominated "king".

Proverbially, the "king" is both tyrant and scapegoat. This seeming contradiction is explicable by deeper reflection on the nature of rulership and complex governance. An eminent denominated

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writer on Swazi "kingship," T. O. Beidelman (1966:542), asserted "the profoundest forms of sacrifice requiring the most searching analyses are those related to royal ritual in which a divine ruler or his or her vicarious representative is both officiant and actually or by extension, victim." Writing about the Nuer, Evans-Pritchard (1956:208, 257) emphasized the centrality in sacrifice of the identification of sacrificer with victim of sacrifice, implying that, in a certain sense, existentially every sacrifice is sacrifice of oneself. Accordingly, one can construe the victim in royal sacrificial rites conceptually is always part of the ruler, his other, objectified self, his corporate body, that is, the "state." Mythologically and folklorically, this duality is frequently expressed in accounts of twins. In Indo-European societies, the sacrifice of one twin, an idealized human, by the other, a first priest or administrator, produces the cosmos, humanity, and society (Guntert 1923:315–394; Lincoln 1981:69–95; Puhvel 1975:155).

Among Indo-European societies, there is a fixation upon twins as the outward manifestation of a belief that the elements of existence, order and continuing individual and collective life, come from the body of a sacrificial victim who represents a primordial "king," "self" (possibly in the folkloric or mythological sense of Manu, the "self-born"), or *alter* (as objectified ideality). Indeed, the special, often dangerous, fertility represented by twinship is one of the most fundamental and enduring beliefs in ethnography, history, mythology, and folklore. The special connection of twinship to "kingship" is described, for example, by Yorke (1983) for "joint kingship" in sixth-century Kent, and by Beidelman (1966:390) on the coming-of-age ceremony for the Swazi ruler, the *inkosi*, in which the *inkosi* was provided with doubles or twins, called *tinsila*, a term meaning "king's attendants, body servants, close resemblances, but also dirt or body filth." These important agents of the *inkosi* "[were] thought to absorb many supernatural dangers otherwise injurious to him" (Beidelman 1966:390). One of the *tinsila* was associated with the right side of the *inkosi*; he became a leader in war ritual; the other *insila*, associated with the left side, became "a leader of national rites both for fertility and royal deaths" (Beidelman 1966:390).

For the Maya, the Hero Twins, Hunajpu and Xbalanque, are sons of Hun Hunajpu, the latter who, in a dismembered state and representing magical fertility, fathered the Twins and "true" humanity from his union with Lady Blood. Classic Maya rulers were modeled ritually and ideologically on the Hero Twins, the "first kings" (Coe 1989:169, 178, 182). That there are, in the Popol Vuh, two of each, Hun Hunajpu and Vucub Hunajpu, on the one hand, and Hunajpu and Xbalanque, on the other, must be considered aspectual, like the Vedic Nasatyas. The pairs Hunajpu and Xbalanque, and their father and uncle, each represent one being, respectively, each pair corresponding to "life" and "death." The integration or incorporation into one body of the two—possessing a most numinous ritual meaning—enables transcendence of contingency and decay and the winning of the "life" Hocart spoke of as what "kings" brought to men. Correspondences are found also in Central Mexico; "Quetzalcoatl" means both "feathered serpent" and "precious twin" (Furst 1995:90). Quetzalcoatl was the culture-heroic god of Central Mexico, responsible not only for the invention of writing but of humankind following a visit to Mictlan, the underworld. Quetzalcoatl's "twin" brother, or *nagual* in Nahuatl and *way* in Classic Mayan (Houston and Stuart 1989, 1996:291–292), was the skeletalized god Xolotl (cf. Quiñones-Keber 1991). Xolotl accompanied Quetzalcoatl to the world of the dead where the latter obtained the "bones of a man and a woman" and took them to Tamoanchan, the "place of our origin" (León-Portilla 1969:37), ground them up and "bled his male organ on them to impart life" (León-Portilla 1969:31). The underlying proposition is that rulers or "kings" are always dual beings, the individual and the "corporation sole" (cf. Kantorowicz 1957:3); from the "king," person and institution, devolves the "state," the "land," and the "people" but also what Hocart referred to as the quest for "life" (Needham 1970:xxxiii).

Albeit the analysis just offered is highly abstract and speculative, it seems sensible to suppose, based on the scene of captive presentation to rulers on Side A, that the "Miraflores" people idealized and sacralized society as the product and project of the ruler whose special nature, projected upon and incorporated through sacrificed captives, engendered a magically fertile and continuing social "life" and history. They did this employing cross-culturally manifested concepts and beliefs. Analysis of throne and sacrifice rituals on Side A provides us with what I have speculated is half of the "message" of the monument. Side B seems to offer further and complementary insights.

SIDE B

The analysis of Side B (Figure 2) is more tentative and speculative than that of Side A because of a less clear thematic depiction, but also because of the effacement of much of the carving. Parsons has been the only writer until now to describe Monument 65 in any detail (see Parsons 1986:58), and he was limited to analyzing Side A only because the massive sculpture lay in storage on blocks with Side A facing up and he was unable to study the carving on the reverse side. Even with the sculpture displayed upright but without creating special conditions for viewing all that can be discerned on Side B is a series of approximately 10-cm-wide pockmarks pitting the center and left area that seem to represent the effects of jackhammers employed in the construction of the modern sewer which occasioned the discovery of the monument.

The shallow and eroded carving on Side B is visible only after strong light is cast on the monument at a sharply oblique angle. A profile figure appears on the viewer's right, who originally was shown seated and who gestures in the direction of a much eroded, vertically set, rectangular central element which has traces of hieroglyphic blocks or cartouches; the object calls to mind a tall, portable, tree-like standard. Without having seen Side B, Parsons questioned whether the carvings on both sides were made at the same time (1986:58). Upon viewing both, a close similarity of plastic form and of theme and action indicates that Sides A and B were carved by the same artist as part of the same project. The gesture of the principal figure on Side B resembles the gestures which the seated figures make to their respective captives on Side A of the monument, for he appears to be motioning to a smaller figure squatting below him; the posture of the latter is very similar to that of the bound, kneeling captives on Side A, but the posture compares also with that of the autosacrificing figure on Kaminaljuyu Altar 1. As I describe below, the central columnar object, with its almost entirely effaced glyphs, appears to be growing out of this smaller figure. Its large, almost top-heavy upper part contained a crossed-bands sign within a conch outline. The particularities of the scene, in which the larger figure is pointing both to the probably ancestral ruler or possibly captive figure below him and to the central column as if to make sure there is no mistaking its importance, suggest that the column represented a real or actually physically constructed object like the so-called Classic Maya "flap-

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staff," even if it seems to have been conflated in the depiction as a glyphic column.

Preclassic sculptors from southern highland and coastal sites, such as Izapa, typically arranged totalistic or cosmological designs into three vertical parts representing (roughly in our terms) conventions of sky, earth, and underworld. The scene on Side A of Monument 65 is arranged in such a vertical manner. The depiction on Side B originally emphasized a vertical as well as a horizontal or lateral organization for what may have encompassed, if not a cosmological totality in the same manner of some sculptures from Izapa (e.g., Stela 5), at least a narrative or several-character scene in which certain highly important ritual functions were recorded.

On Side B, the uppermost element, a bar with scrolls, resembles an Izapan sky sign, but has other iconic referents. The outline of the object is similar to the outline of the cross-banded central object on the block of Izapa Throne 1, which Norman (1976:253–254) described as that of a conch shell. It also resembles the outline of the form in the top register above a seated figure and atop the column on Izapa Stela 8 (Norman 1973:Plate 16), a depiction which includes a throne at the bottom. As I discuss below and as is supported by ethnohistoric attestations, many scholars have observed that conch shells may have been used along with *Spondylus* shells to collect blood during autosacrifice. The bloodletting connotations are underscored by the watery underworld associations of the conch.

Crossed-bands signs first appear with the Early and Middle Preclassic Olmec, where they are classed in Joralemon's (1971) study as Motifs 62, 67, and 99–104. Robertson (1974:79) referred to crossed bands in Classic Maya iconography as "the most significant element of the tripartite" sign, otherwise known as the "quadripartite badge." The sign appears in the rear head of the figure known in Maya iconography as the "bicephalic monster," a symbolic and iconographic two–headed beast which represents "the arc of the heavens, the front head being identified with Venus, pulling behind it the fleshless head of the sun in the underworld" (Miller and Taube 1993:45). Robertson cited earlier suggestions about the crossed bands in Mesoamerican art, noting Lounsbury's observations at the First Palenque Roundtable on crossed bands in the codices. Observing that in the codical texts "the crossed bands occur as a fifth direction after the four previous frames take you [sic] through the four directions," Robertson (1974:80:n. 7) concluded the "crossed bands sign [may signify] a fifth direction" (cf. "the sacred precinct, the Fifth Direction of the Centre," Clendinnen 1991:18). The Classic Maya "quincunx" or **bi** hieroglyph and sign for "road" or "way," *beh,* signify the five directions or specifically the fifth direction (see Schele and Mathews 1998:27). Accordingly, the possibly conch-outlined, cross-banded icon at the top of Side B represents something central and numinous in the religion of both Kaminaljuyu and Izapa; in a most abstract sense it might allude to a fifth direction, verticality, and dimensionality.

A three-part spatial organization in which a surface was divided into lateral areas for two protagonists who flank a central element, normally a hieroglyphic column or a ruler, was used to express a variety of ruler themes in the sculpture of several Classic-period sites. Contemplating a likely missing symmetry on Kaminaljuyu Altar 1, it seems probable another figure on Side B of Monument 65, lost due to erosion, originally had been positioned symmetrically with respect to the figure on the right-hand side, flanking and facing the columnar object or glyph column from the left. Counting the three figures on Side A, I further propose possibly six rulers, conceivably of a single lineage, were once represented on the monument, with the presumptive pair of figures on Side B flanking the column comprising the immediately preceding ruler and the contemporary ruler, and the probably autosacrificing figure seated beneath the column representing a euhemerized founder ancestor from whom "grew" the glyph "tree." The latter is comparable, in my view, to the blood-sacrifice creations of "trees" depicted on monuments from Izapa, for example, Stelae 5, 10, and 25, and is reminiscent of Classic Maya ideology which presented the ruler as founder of cosmos, man, and order, indeed as Hun Hunajpu, the fruit and seminal part of the underworld tree, the tree of maize.

THE AXIS MUNDI

The *axis mundi*—a concept and icon found in many other cultures and which includes the *bade* of Bali and the Saxon Irminsul—for the Classic Maya was the huge ceiba tree, which represented a magical verticality permitting movement between natural and supernatural strata; sometimes it was iconized as a maize plant. Elaborate multiple and conflated metaphors were employed for the tree by which, for example, sacrificial blood from heart sacrifice, envisioned as the sacred blood-symbol encrusted tree in the center of the sarcophagus lid of Hanab Pakal (cf. Schele and Miller 1986:268), in effect, in the most abstract sense *creates* the dimensioned universe. In a more mythological-narrative sense, the tree metaphorizes the journey of the dead ruler through the underworld and back via resurrection as the maize god, manifesting fervently the faith that the divine "king" lives on, indeed, with a magical, world-creating fertility and "life." The columnar "tree"—the hieroglyphic column with dynastic-origin history represented as cosmic history and possibly conflated as the world tree—depicted in the center of Kaminaljuyu Altar 2 (Figure 3) might well equate with the tree depicted on Izapa Stela 5, "one of the most complex representations of the world tree ever carved" (Miller and Taube 1993:186). Izapa Stela 5 seems to illustrate conflated themes of human and cosmos creation, since humans are hanging, like fruit, from the limbs of the tree, and the tree extends from the watery underworld, iconized by wave scrolls, up to the sky panel at the top of the stela. Two incensario rites are in progress, one on either side of the tree, the one on the left conducted by a conically hatted old or skeletalized man and an acolyte, and the other, on the right, conducted by an apparent ruler figure, who is shielded by a parasol held by an attendant. The ruler figure holds what appears to be a bloodletting instrument in his left hand. Hence, the tree may have been conceived to be created by ritual operations just as on Monument 65 *verso* the central column (possible "world tree") seems to rise from the probably autosacrificing lowermost figure; compare, also, the bottom of the depiction on Izapa Stela 8 of a throne, the throne constituting a numen or node of transcendent or supernatural access. I suggest the depiction of conflated metaphors of tree, glyph column, and spouting blood, thus, seems to surround the notion of the throned ruler for Late Preclassic Kaminaljuyu, as many scholars have identified for the Classic Maya and, sometimes using different iconography and symbolism, for Central Mexican rulers. Taube (1992:131, citing Garibay 1979:32) pointed out "in the *Historia de los Mexicanos por sus pinturas*, Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca transform themselves into a pair of trees to raise the heavens." Possessing an ideology whose claims transcended and superseded everything else, as mentioned, the location of the ruler's special seat was at the vertical and horizontal center of the universe. Thus I speculate, together with Side A, completing the *recto* side, Side B fulfils or explains the external or worldly narrative of captives brought before throned rulers prior to sacri-

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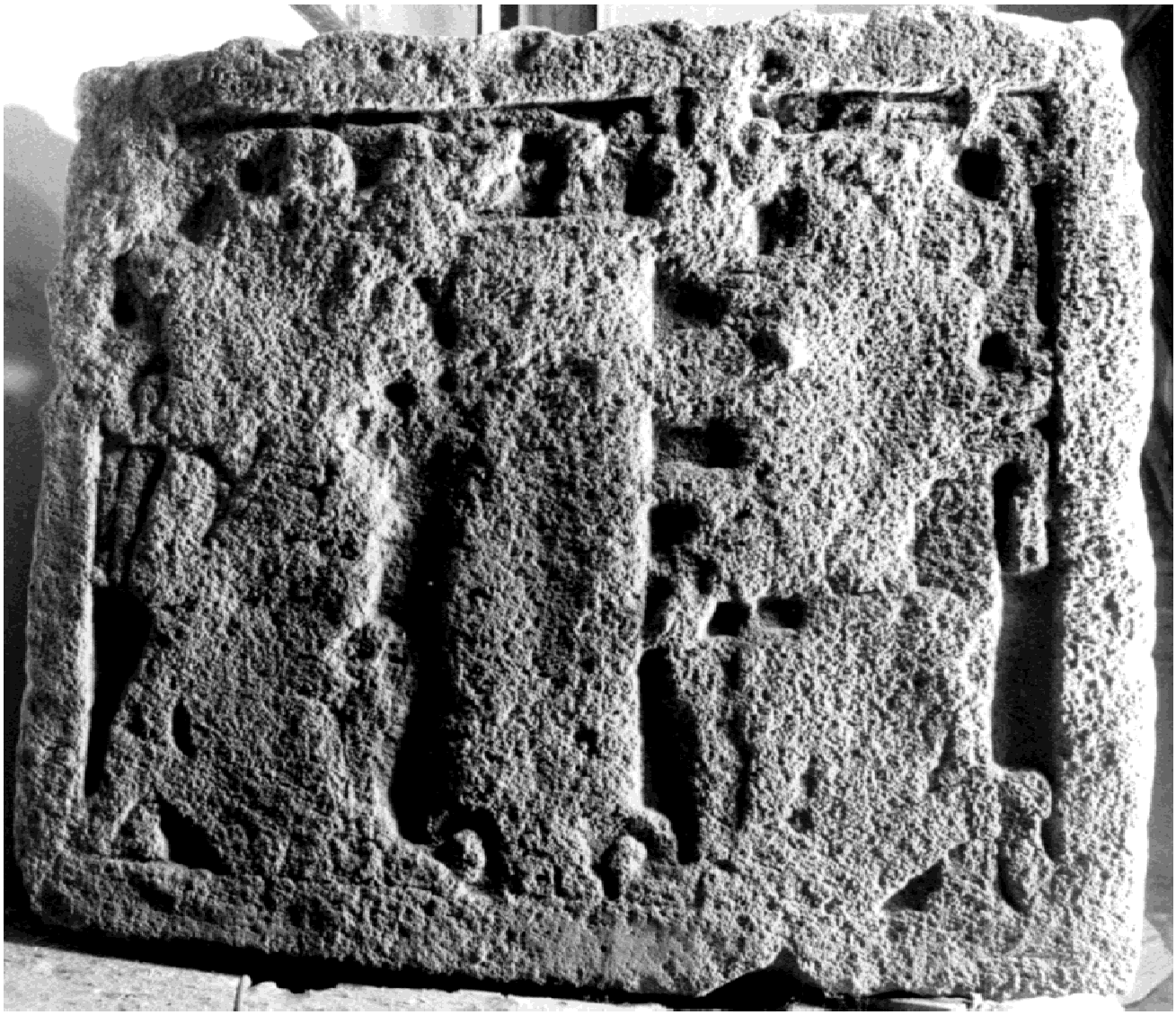


Figure 3. Kaminaljuyu Altar 2.

fice by its more esoteric depictions of what it is that royal sacrifice produces and enables: the tree of life, social or human order, and creation itself, all perhaps once encoded or implied in a proto-dynastic inscription.

CONCLUSION

In his pioneering study of Kaminaljuyu sculptures, Parsons (1986:96) speculated about the sociopolitical developments at Late Preclassic Kaminaljuyu. He proposed that two lineages, the "Miraflores" and the "Arenal," represented by two different art styles—Monument 65 exemplifying the latter—competed for control of the polity. I believe an interpretation may be made which is truer to the complexities and subtleties of Monument 65 and its significance.

Monument 65 is one of a handful of enormous monuments from Mesoamerica which displayed a profound ideological message in the sense of a "billboard." In an earlier paper I described Stela 10, a great ruler's throne, as depicting a ruler impersonating a shark-toothed Jaguar God of the Underworld or nocturnal solar entity engaged in a decapitation ritual (Kaplan 1995:194), presumably a public or nonpiacular sacrifice; the iconography of the reconstructed mask found in Tomb II, Mound E-III-3, Kaminaljuyu (Shook and Kidder 1952:Figure 81a), a ruler's deity-impersonating ornament, supports such a nocturnal solar/decapitator interpretation. I suggest Monument 65, when considered with other monuments from Kaminaljuyu such as the thrones, Stela 10 and Altar 1, provides more Preclassic evidence of the elaborate politico-religious institutions and programmatic ideology of a probably dynastic, probably Maya, rulership several hundred years before the earliest Classic Maya Long Count dates (I qualify "probably Maya" because linguistic analysis of the hieroglyphic text on Stela 10 indicates the presence of both Mixe-Zoque and Mayan protoglyphs).

The meanings of the depictions on the two sides of the monument speculatively may be summarized as follows: Side A, the *recto*, depicts rulers receiving captives, not merely for show as war trophies but also (to whatever conscious degree) for exoteric proxy sacrifice for the *res publica*, indeed, as world creating; Side B, the *verso*, centrally contains a hieroglyphic column possibly representing a world tree produced by esoteric ritual sacrificial op-

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erations, probably penis bloodletting such as is depicted on Altar 1. Both meanings refer to world- and life-creation by the ruler for the sake of the tribe, society, and the "true humanity." Considered in the context of the extensive anthropological literature on "kingship," outlined in abbreviated fashion, sacrificial victims in ruler rituals seem to represent ritually: (1) pollution and debasement, constituted as the idealized human dying twin, sacrificed ostensibly for transgression of the *pomerium* but esoterically in a manner akin to a "first fruits" profanation; (2) disorder—the *faux* order of the underworld-oriented cosmos; (3) the underworld order broken down so that purification and sublimation may occur and; (4) the "creative," indeed, cosmogonic and sociogonic venture of stand-in sacrificial death for the "king," who in turn represents chthonic fertility, envisioned as a tree, and/or solar rebirth and righteous or divinely sanctioned reordering around himself of both the cosmos and human society. In sum, I propose sides A and B together demonstrate the enduring nature of a capacity in humans to invent an institution, "kingship," in which life and death concoct together, in the manner of individual and "state," existential "self" and "other," and historiopoeia to construct society and social meaning.

That I propose such a dually constructed "kingship" often described in cultural evolutionary typological terms as a "chiefdom" or "maximal chiefdom" (e.g., Michels 1979) should not be interpreted as contradictory. Indeed, I have proposed little that might not apply in general terms to later Classic Maya rulership which undoubtedly evolved, in turn, yet more complex and elaborate beliefs and ritual practices. The relevant practical assertion, in my view, is that a specialist focus, whether cultural evolutionist-inclined or cultural/cultural historical, need not deter us from considering how the analysis of elite ideologies in Mesoamerica can be assisted by the identification of cross-cultural determinants in human sociogony and in the particular elements of complex governance at Kaminaljuyu as elsewhere. It remains, accordingly, to affirm that some utility lies in proposing coherent themes and meanings for Late Preclassic rulership at Kaminaljuyu, admittedly highly abstracted, in play in the scenes on this most important monument, and to stress that the ideological skeleton I have constructed is rendered with the sole purpose of advancing our understanding of the events and processes that took place at this great enigmatic southern city. Finally, it is hoped that the ambitious nature of this paper, and the many deep issues but touched upon in it, will not cloud for too many readers a point perhaps more fundamental than any other, that Mesoamerican politics and peoples—and in addition to the Classic Maya!—were capable of extraordinarily complex and meaningful beliefs, practices, and achievements, no less than the most magnificent of the ancient Old World.

RESUMEN

Kaminaljuyu es uno de los misterios grandes en la historia y la historia cultura mesoamericana. Por lo que su tamaño grande pero también su estado aparentemente anomalístico y periférico, se ha sido estudiado y describido por teoristas quién tal vez han enfatizado innecesariamente métodos e interpretaciones processualistas. Más recientemente, se ha sido disminuido por mayanistas enfatizando tierras-bajas autoctonía. Este es aún como se ha sido presumido por mucho tiempo haber hecho influencia fuerte sobre la civilización maya y otras civilizaciones mesoamericanas. El grande Monumento 65, descubierto en 1983, puede decirnos mucho acerca el misterio de Kaminaljuyu. Tallados sobre dos ladas de una tableta grande resonan aparentemente de los más sagrados conceptos de la gente "Miraflores" de Kaminaljuyu en el preclásico tardío. Las representaciones identifican a los gobernantes de Kaminaljuyu como mundo o cosmo-fabricantes y sostenientes de lo que A. M. Hocart refiere a "la vida" de la sociedad, y cual es realizado por los sacrificios de victimas reales o "gemelos" del rey. Las escenas de los cautivos, que aparecen sobre Lado A, representan la dualidad del rey expresado en una gemelidad de un "sacerdote" primero e inmortal sacrificando a un hombre primero ideal o "rey," lo último representando la fertilidad siempre-muriendo mágica del "estado." Sobre Lado B, lo que es la creación es manifestado o metaforizado por el *axis mundi*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In Guatemala, I thank Licenciada Dora Guerra de Gonzalez, director of the Museo de Arqueología e Etnología, for permission to bring equipment into the Museum over several days in 1992 so that I and Fernando Luín could light and draw Monument 65. To Rodolfo Yaquián, *restaurador* at the Museo de Arqueología e Etnología de Guatemala and Dr. Guillermo Mata-Amado I am grateful for much information about the discovery of the monument. Dr. James Brady supplied lighting equipment. In the United States, I am beholden to the constructive criticisms of three anonymous reviewers. Dr. Stephen Houston kindly corrected the names and spellings of the Classic Maya rulers referred to in this paper. Finally, to the late Edwin M. Shook, longstanding mentor of southern area archaeology, I am greatly indebted not only for his kindness and friendship over many years but for many suggestive comments and for his tenacity, in general, in furthering the study of Kaminaljuyu.

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https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956536100112015 Published online by Cambridge University Press