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## A New Teotihuacan Lord of the South: K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat (578-628 C.E.) and the Renaissance of Copan

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Classic Maya inscriptions recorded political discourse commissioned by title-holding elite, typically rulers of a given city. The subject of the inscriptions was manifold, but most of them described various period-ending ceremonies connected to the passage of time. Within this general framework, statements contained information about the most culturally significant life-events of their commissioners. This information was organized according to discursive norms involving the application of literary devices such as parallel structures, *difrasismos*, ellipsis, etc. Each center had its own variations and preferences in applying such norms, which changed during the six centuries of Classic Maya civilization.

Epigraphers have thus far rarely investigated Classic Maya political discourse in general and its regional-, site-, and period-specific features in particular. It is possible to posit very general variations, for example the presence or absence of secondary elite inscriptions, which makes the Western Maya region different from other areas of the Maya Lowlands (Bíró 2011). There are many other discursive differences not yet thoroughly investigated. It is still debated whether these regional (and according to some) temporal discursive differences related to social phenomena or whether they strictly express literary variation (see Zender 2004). The resolution of this question has several implications for historical solutions such as the collapse of Classic Maya civilization or the hypothesis of status rivalry, war, and the role of the secondary elite.

There are indications of ruler-specific textual strategies when inscriptions are relatively uniform; that is, they contain the same information, and their organization is similar. This frequently coincides with iconographic and formal artistic programs together constituting a geographic and time-specific visual discourse (Borowicz 2003; Just 2006; Nielsen 2003). Just as iconographic motifs, themes, and programs indicate relationships with older monuments, it is possible that the texts have such interconnections.



Discourse analysis maintains that intertextuality is an important feature of any literary culture where texts are evolving by using and discarding materials from previous texts. Sudden changes in discourse might be an indication of political and social processes and can help to add more information about the ideological tenets of ancient societies. Similar processes in visual discourse may also indicate socio-political changes, such as the responses of the commissioner to construct a new image for an audience that supposedly was well aware of the alterations compared to previous representations.

In this article I analyze the monuments of the eleventh Classic period ruler of Copan, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, who ruled from 578-628 C.E.<sup>1</sup> Also known to Mayanists by the nickname "Butz' Chan," this king altered the image and text format to become the model for subsequent generations of rulers. I concentrate on textual and visual discourse strategies that involve, on the one hand, the use of similar word-choices, syntax, foreign language expressions, and on the other hand, similar motifs and themes. I show that K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat brought several innovations into the discourse of Copan inscriptions, and he rearranged visual and textual discourses and created a new image of rulership. His discursive strategies coincided with an innovative compositional stela format in which image and inscription shared the same monument. I also suggest some possible causes of these changes by looking at the geopolitical situation of Copan and propose that these innovations ultimately revitalized the dynasty after the former rulers' monuments had been destroyed. My aim is to combine visual and textual discourse analyses to unravel the common patterns they elicit, but also to show the differences.

## 1. Textual Discourse

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<sup>1</sup> The phonological structure of Classic Ch'olan might have had a 10-vowel system, or better said, it may differentiate between short and long vowels, but at present evidence, its indication in the script cannot be proved satisfactorily; therefore, I am not using them in my paper (Bíró 2011; Gronemeyer 2014; Wichmann 2004a). However, there was a difference between glottal and velar spirants as was suggested by linguistic reconstructions (Kaufman and Norman 1984:86) and as was indicated in the script (Grube 2004). In case of the morphological system, I accept the idea of the existence of an aspectual system based on the opposition of completive/incompletive aspects with ergativity as detailed most recently by Sanz González (2006; 2007). Also, the texts exhibit a basic VOA/VS or occasionally AVO, OVA and SV word order (Bricker 1986; Mora-Marín 2004; Schele 1982). Therefore, the foreground is completive and the background is incompletive or other non-completive aspect. Past, present, and future depend on the discourse but usually it is the past, and the translation is VERB-ed, HAD VERB-ed, WAS VERB-ed or WAS VERB-ing.

To sum up the problem of orthography and transliteration/transcription: when a given text is presented there will be either full broad transliteration and/or broad transcription using the alphabet designed by the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages. Single <?> directly following a graphemes indicates uncertain decipherment or unknown reading; <#> indicates erosion, and </> indicates an alternative reading of a sign. Transliteration will be found in **bold face** letters, with syllabographs in **lower case** and logographs in **UPPER CASE**, separated by hyphens. As I do not accept the existence of morphosyllables, this category of signs will not be represented in my transliterations. Transcription is in *italics*, and every independent lexeme will be written in lower case letters. Any reconstruction (historical, internal, and palaeographical) is in square brackets [...]. I use free translations.



Although there are many current definitions of discourse, sometimes in disagreement with each other, I use discourse as a series of utterances applied in a given context (Assmann 2000; Brinton 2001; Hanks 1986; Hanks 1987; Hanks 1989; Josserand 1991; Josserand and Hopkins 1998; Tannen, Hamilton, and Schiffrin 2001). In turn, written discourse is a series of recorded linguistic utterances. These utterances are regulated by different rules involving the basic grammar of a given language and limits of expressivity which together constitute discursive formations.

Discourse is embedded in social relations and affects them in various ways, such as expressing hierarchical and social boundaries, identity, separation, expectations of future, historical consciousness, and other social phenomena. As institutionalized language does not express all human behaviors, discourse is only a partial window into the human lives of a historical period.

Discourse in general has been frequently narrative; that is, it recounts events by using the construction of human action as a compositional feature. Narrative discourse is analyzed by many, but among epigraphers it was Kathryn Josserand who first looked at Classic Maya texts from a discursive viewpoint concentrating on time frame, actors and plots, also introducing into Classic Maya studies such concepts as event-line, episode, peak, background, and foreground (Josserand 1991). She also showed that inscriptions contained poetic discourse (Josserand and Hopkins 1998), which was later confirmed and elaborated on by Kerry Hull (2003) and Alfonso Lacadena (2009).

One recurrent problem is the identification of genres, in itself a problematic concept created to interpret Western literary products. Some scholars discovered various genres within Classic period texts (García Campillo 1995; Tokovinine 2003), while others emphasized overarching similarities (Josserand and Hopkins 1998; Stuart 1995) in certain aspects. While Stuart (1995) noted that the monumental discourse can be interpreted within a dedicatory framework, where the culturally sanctioned motivation of monument commission was the dedication of different structures, Josserand and Hopkins (1998) pointed out that monumental texts *per se* are political discourse.

When defining genres, different scholars abide to various parameters, resulting in a wide array of divergent classifications. While some favor content-based analysis (Tokovinine 2003), others prefer context and form as the main information. Hanks (1987; 2000) argued for the usefulness of Bakhtin's formalist genre theory supplemented with Bourdieu's theory of practice. Therefore, genres would be regular groupings of thematic, stylistic, and compositional elements, which would be embedded in a specific orienting framework with interpretive procedures and sets of expectations. On the range of inclusiveness, Bakhtin (1986) differentiates primary and secondary genres, meaning that the latter would incorporate some of the former. The nineteenth-century "novel" incorporates direct speech and indirect speech equally; thus, it is a secondary genre.

According to Bakhtin (in Hanks 1987:672-673), there is a range of other analytic terms that pertain to "finalization" or "the constructive process whereby a work became complete" (Hanks 1987:672) which can be: 1) thematic, 2) stylistic, and 3) structural-compositional. In turn, finalization is manifold, such as in units, episodes, verses, meta-discursive or reception-oriented. Hanks (1987), again using the practice theory of Bourdieu, examined 1) regularization-officialization, 2) reception, 3) actuality-incompleteness, and finally, 4) indexicality, or reference-making to people, places, and time. Combining these general analytics, he argued for the existence of an "official Maya" genre represented by several letters which in Spanish received different names in the colonial northern Yucatan (Hanks 1987).

Other possible criteria for the identification of genres are the metadiscourse or texts produced by the speech/literary community. Comparative examples abound in the scholarly literature (Pollock, Elman, and Chang 2015). While ancient Egyptian civilization produced various texts, they hardly conformed to



the genre theory developed by literary critics (Baines 2007). Nevertheless, in many cases the scribes themselves classified these texts, as the case of Mesopotamia shows (Black et al. 2004). Indeed, Aristotle's own genre theory is such a culture-specific classification that is useful in the analysis of the guiding principles and expectation of his particular speech community, while its universal value is questionable (Bizzell and Herzberg 2000).

The colonial period has several written texts that do preserve native classifications (or meta-discourse). Among these in the Yucatan there are at least three relatively frequent terms applied: healing prayers (*u thanil*), songs (*u kay*), and history (*u kahlay*; (2010). Kathryn Josserand and Nicholas Hopkins (1998) presented another case where in modern Ch'ol formal features, namely parallel structures, reflect discourse ranking. Here she notes that prayers for gods will use only parallel structures, while less "hot" discourses implement a deviceless form. Modern ethnographic meta-discourse is detailed eloquently by many authors: for Ch'orti', see Fought (1972) and Hull (2003); for Tzotzil of Chamula, Gossen (1974); for Tzeltal of Tenejapa, Stross (1974); for Yukatek, Bricker (1981); and for Chuj, Maxwell (1997).

While these authors deal with oral discourse, the connection between oral and written discourse was pointed out by Hull (2003) and Lacadena (2009). The use of poetic devices and other discursive features led Hull to propose that Classic-period literacy was less integrated than it is usually conceived by epigraphers, concurring with Houston and Stuart (1992) that Classic texts were performed and read out loud, and most importantly, fleshed out for a listening audience.

Meta-discursive classification such as verse or poems, chronicles, novels and their theory in Modern Europe, or the *kavya* and its theory in Sanskrit in ancient India (see Hull and Carrasco 2012; Pollock 2006) thus far is lacking from Classic-period inscriptions, but this does not rule out its existence in the past. While in modern and colonial texts these classificatory terms occur frequently at the beginning or end of narratives, Classic-period inscriptions often begin with an Initial Series date and end with the names and titles of the protagonists. Therefore, identifying genres remains an elusive enterprise; nevertheless, the combined use of text-internal features, metadiscursive classifications, colonial and ethnographic analogies, narrative contexts (that is, the physical setting of a given text), the commissioner, the intended message, and the intended audience all help to define genre(s) within Classic-period literacy.

Maya texts, in the past and the present, possess multiple literary devices (Arzápalo Marín 1987; Breton 1994; Bricker 1981; Bricker and Miram 2002; Christenson 2007; Edmonson 1971; 1982; 1986; Gossen 1974; Hanks 1987; 1989; Hull 2003; Hull and Carrasco 2012; Knowlton 2002; 2010; Lacadena García-Gallo 2009; 2012; Maxwell and Hill 2006; Restall 1998; Sam Colop 1999; 2008; Barbara Tedlock 1992; Dennis Tedlock 1992; 1996; 2003; 2010). These texts are not, however, embellished by means of phonological parallelism (rhyme, metrical rhythm), but instead, by means of syntactic and semantic parallelism (couplets, diphastic kennings). Some modern scholars in translation used the couplet too often, and in some cases it is unnecessary or wrong to employ them (see the critique in Tedlock 1983:230). Maya poetics is indeed the *paralelum membrum* with two, three, or more lines (*bicolon*, *tricolon*, *tetracolon* and more) with semantic parallel, synonymous concepts, metaphors, descriptive epithets, chiasmus, kennings (*difrasimos*), and so on.

Therefore, in my discursive analysis I use a mix of the theories of Josserand (1991) and Hanks (1987) in defining where:

- 1) the *time frame*, meaning "when it occurred" (usually the dates of the events occurred in the given text);
- 2) the *event* or "what happened" (in linguistics, the triad of verb, object and subject);





- 3) the *indexical* or the place and person (the toponym and the agents);
- 4) the *episode*, composed of at least one time frame (or date), one event and one or more indexical clause; and
- 5) the *theme*, composed of more than one episode.

I assume that in Copan under K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, the *k'altun* "wrapping-stone" was employed as the "finalization"<sup>2</sup> of the overall genre mentioned in the texts. Therefore, the *plot* is sequential and described the period-ceremony, the *background* is the "old information within the text," and the *foreground* is the peak event (Josserand 1991).

## 2. Visual Discourse

Images as communicative messages are well attested in the discipline of art history. Among Mayanists, formal and iconographic analyses are a growing source of information about many aspects of Classic period civilization (Benson and Griffin 1988; Clancy 1999; 2009; Coggins 1975; Fields and Reents-Budet 2005; Hellmuth 1987; Houston and Stuart 1998; Kubler 1967; Miller and Martin 2004; Proskouriakoff 1950; Schele and Freidel 1990; Schele and Miller 1986; Spinden 1913; Stuart 1996). Classic-period monuments have been analyzed from various viewpoints using a number of theoretical stances to address formal characteristics (Clancy 1999, 2009; Proskouriakoff 1950; Spinden 1913), while others investigate iconography and the meaning of motifs and themes (Baudez 1986; 1994; Kubler 1969; Looper 2003; Nielsen 2003; Schele and Miller 1986; Stone 1989; 1995; Taube 1985; 1987; 1988; 1993; 2000; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2010). Because of those different viewpoints epigraphers and art historians have sometimes reached contradictory interpretations on the relationship between image and text (Baudez 1994; Berlo 1983; Kubler 1967; Newsome 2001; Schele and Miller 1986).

Recently, Bryan Just (2006) again applied the term visual discourse to indicate that certain motifs and themes which form coherent sets could be well established and therefore selected by patrons and artists to communicate personal expectations as well as communicate deeper meaning to their audience. This matrix is similar to linguistic discourse and therefore analyzable according to the ability of the observer to recognize motifs and their combinations as utterances in a specific context which is as wide as the observer can manage. In this vein Just's approach, which he applied to Teotihuacan and the Maya, is a modern version of Kubler's symbolic analysis, with the exception that Just is using epigraphic sources in a much more thorough way.

James Borowicz (2003) similarly uses the term iconographic program to denote both the symbols and icons on a given monument and how the monument was designed. In turn, he contends that once

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<sup>2</sup> In Bakhtin's (1986) discourse theory, "finalization" refers to a well-formed genre, as it is "dead," meaning that it is stable and finalized; for example the tragedy or the epic. I believe that the text of the *k'altun* ceremony was a stable genre in the Classic period. In the Postclassic period, the wheel of *k'atun* (or *utz' k'atunob*) was another stable genre which had a well-organized structure, beginning with the face of the *k'atun*, followed by the place name of the *k'atun*, the gods seated with the burden of the time, the events and the prophecy, and at the ending it finished with the name of the *chilam* who brought the prophecy to the people.



iconographic programs were set they could remain in use for centuries, and therefore sudden and abrupt changes in programs indicate socio-political change.

What my article attempts to present is that such an iconographic program was set up by K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat and was continued by his successor, albeit with more alterations throughout two hundred years of development. Before presenting how this program coalesced from different previous elements, I will present the visual and textual discourses of Copan before 578 C.E. to serve as a basis of comparison to the discourses developed during the rule of K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat.

### 3. Monumental imagery before the reign of K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat

Copan’s sculptural tradition received particular attention by art historians from the inception of Maya studies. Spinden (1913), Morley (1920), and Proskouriakoff (1950) worked out the dates and the development of its sculptural tradition. Later studies added significant details, and with new monuments came new interpretations (Baudez 1994; Clancy 1988; Fash 2004).

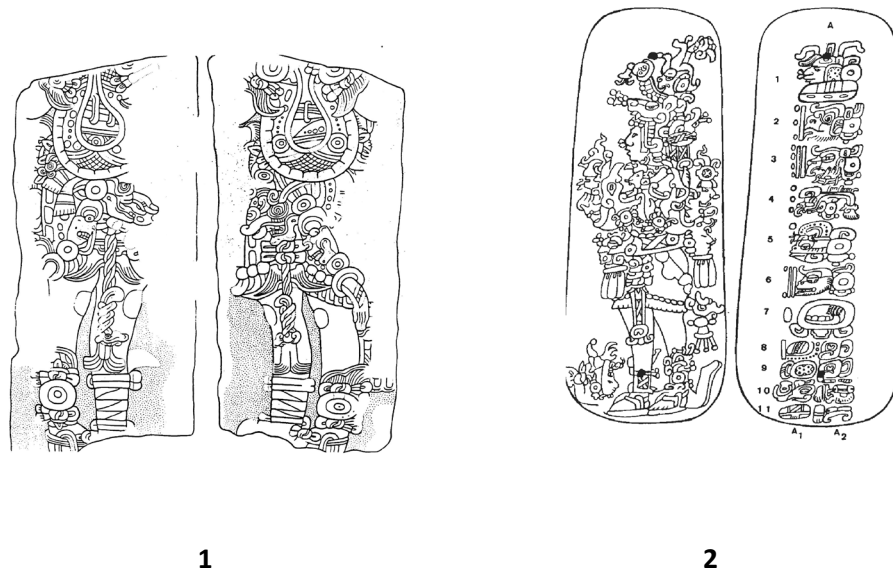
**Table 1.** Copan stelae dedicated between 613 and 761 indicating name, date, location, text (G)-image (F) ratio, compositional format, and rulers.

Name, Date & Location	Text & Image Ratio	Compositional Format	Ruler
Stela 18-?, Village	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	Paneled	11
Stela 7-613, Village	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	Paneled	11
Stela P-623, M-Str.16	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	Paneled	11
Stela E-652, M-Str. 1	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	Paneled	12
Stela 3-652, M-Middle Plaza	Text-Image, 2G, 2F	Recto-verso Analogous	12
Stela 2-652, M-Str. 9 & 10	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	Paneled	12
Stela 12-652-Valley	Text, 4G		12
Stela 10-652-Valley	Text, 4G		12
Stela 19-652-Valley	Text, 4G		12
Stela13-652-Valley	Text, 4G		12
Stela 23-652-Valley	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	Paneled	12
Stela 5-47-667-Village-Gr. 8	Text-Image, 2G, 2F	Recto-verso Analogous	12
Stela 1-667-M-Str. 9	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	HR Paneled	12
Stela I-677-M-Str. 3	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	HR Paneled	12
Stela 6-682-Village-Gr. 8	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	HR Paneled	12
Stela J-702-M-Great Plaza	Text, 4G		13

Stela C-711-M-Great Plaza	Text-Image, 2G, 2F	Recto-Verso Analogous	13
Stela F-721-M-Great Plaza	Text-Image, 1G, 3F	Wraparound	13
Stela 4-726-M-Great Plaza	Text-Image, 1G, 3F	Wraparound	13
Stela B-731-M-Great Plaza	Text-Image, 2G, 2F	Recto-Verso	13
Stela A-731-M-Str. 4	Text-Image, 3G, 1F	HR Paneled	13
Stela H-731-M-Great Plaza	Text-Image, 1G, 3F	Wraparound	13
Stela D-736-M-Str. 2	Text-Image, 1G, 3F	Wraparound	13
Stela M-756-M-Str. 26	Text-Image, 1G, 3F	Wraparound	15
Stela N-761-M-Str. 11	Text-Image, 1G, 3F	Wraparound	15

Flora Clancy (1988) and Barbara Fash (2004) both suggested a general pattern of compositional format and relation of text and image. For the Early Classic, Copan has a particular pattern of monument destruction that often makes the analysis of these monuments difficult (Morley 1920; Sharer 2004).

At present there are at least 35 monuments known in this group representing the period from 9.0.0.0 to 9.6.10.0, after which there is a more secure sequence of monument dedications (**Fig. 1a,b**). During this period, both the Copan Main Group and the Copan Village were locations of royal monuments, whereas after 9.6.10.0, the only secure royal monument in the Copan Village is Stela 7, dedicated around 9.9.0.0, followed by the very late dedications of Altars T and U (after 9.16.12.5.17). The decision to prioritize the Main Group certainly happened during or after the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat and K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil, and the succeeding kings kept this pattern, except that K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil also dedicated monuments more widely throughout the valley.



**Fig. 1a.** 1. Copan Stela 35 (drawing by B. Fash), 2. Leiden Plaque (drawing by L. Schele).

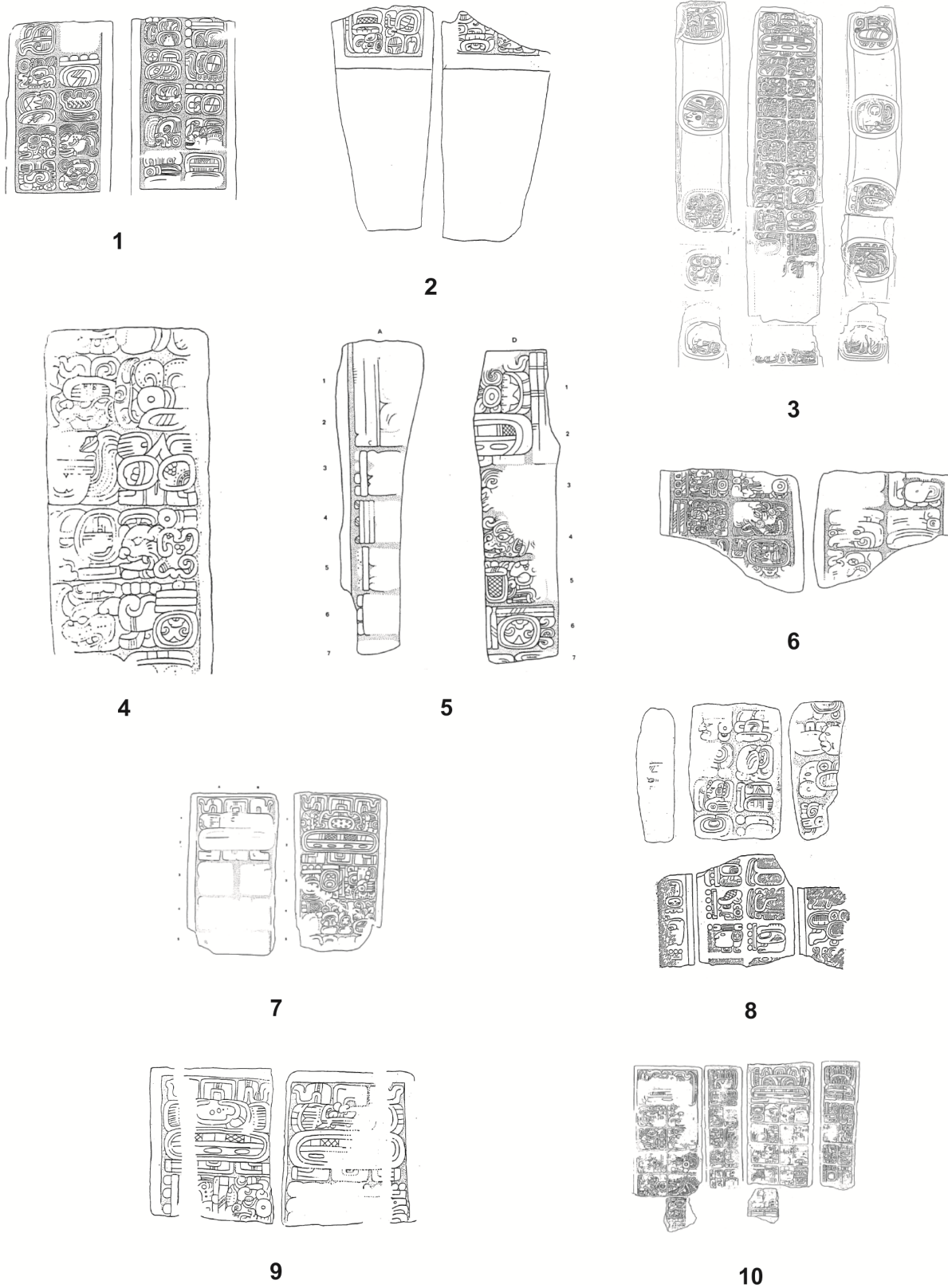


Fig. 1b. Early Classic-period Copan stelae, 1. St. 49, 2. St. 48, 3. St. 63, 4. St. 32, 5. St. 26, 6. St. 24, 7. St. 16, 8. St. 20, 9. St. 17, 10. St. 15, (all drawings by B. Fash).





Most pre-578 C.E. monuments are fragmented and broken as Morley (1920) and most recently Sharer (2004:306) pointed out. All intact or complete monuments before the dedication of Stela 9 (Ruler 10) come from excavations. That is, they were already buried in ancient times, which contributed to their preservation. Surface monuments from the same period are all fragments, including parts of other incomplete monuments. Most of the intact or complete monuments are built into the structures where they are found and are usually designated as steps or altars (Motmot Marker, Xukpi Stone, Papagayo Step, Ante Step, Azul Step and CPN 3033). Another buried intact monument is Stela 63. To assign monuments to the rulers and to date them is a difficult issue, but recent research provides a better reconstruction now than in previous periods (Martin and Grube 2008; Morley 1920; Prager and Wagner 2017; Schele 1990a; Schele and Loope 1996; Stuart 2004; Stuart 2008).

**Table 2.** Rulers and monuments of Early Classic Copan.

Ruler and Date	Monuments
1 <sup>st</sup> ruler (>416-427<)	
2 <sup>nd</sup> ruler (>435<)	Motmot Marker, Stela 63, Azul Step? <sup>3</sup>
3 <sup>rd</sup> ruler (>437<)	Xukpi Stone <sup>4</sup> , Stela 46?
4 <sup>th</sup> ruler	Papagayo Step Riser <sup>5</sup> , Stela 34
5 <sup>th</sup> ruler	Papagayo Tread, Stela 20?
6 <sup>th</sup> ruler (472?-495<)	Stela 16?, Stela 24, Stela 28, Stela 49, Stela 53
7 <sup>th</sup> ruler (>504-532)	Stela 15
8 <sup>th</sup> ruler (532-551)	CPN 3033, Ante Step
9 <sup>th</sup> ruler (551-553)	
10 <sup>th</sup> ruler (553-578)	Stelae 9, 17

The list does not contain all of the early monuments in Copan as there are several stelae and altar fragments that at present cannot be assigned securely to any of the rulers. What is important is the

<sup>3</sup>Prager and Wagner (2017:7) suggested to the author that the Azul Step was carved during the reign of Ruler 2, contrary to Stuart, who previously had assigned it to the reign of Ruler 8.

<sup>4</sup>Stuart (2004:245) analyzed the inscription of the stone and identified at D1-2 the tomb of Ruler 2 (E-F). Logically, the Xukpi Stone was carved for Ruler 3.

<sup>5</sup>Although seemingly the monument was made in the reign of Ruler 4, Prager and Wagner (2017:19) have recently found the beginning of the name of Ruler 5 (yu-...) on the tread of the step at G2b. They believe that the riser of the step was indeed carved in the reign of Ruler 4 as a stela. and later it was re-carved and re-used by Ruler 5.

recent dating of Stela 28 to 9.3.0.0 and the assignment of Stela 53 to Ruler 6 (Prager and Wagner 2017:19-20).

What is clear from the new dating and ruler assignments is that the combination of text and image on stelae was rare before K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, but not unknown as was claimed by previous authors (Fash 2004; Morley 1920; Proskouriakoff 1950). The securely-dated Early Classic Stela 53 (**Fig. 2**) has three fragments, one of which clearly represents part of a headdress, while its text mentions a stone-wrapping ceremony at a 1-*winikhab'*, which probably corresponds to 9.1.0.0 (455). Ruler 6 is mentioned on Stela 53, which indicates that he was in power by 495, but close to his death as his successor was already celebrating the period ending in 504 (Prager and Wagner 2017:19-20).

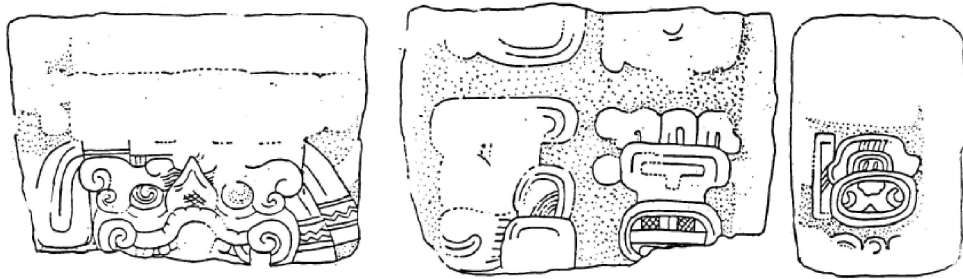


Fig. 2. Copan Stela 53 (drawing by B. Fash).

This is the first stela where a royal portrait merges with the text. Stela 60 is another undated monument where one side shows the typical Copan frontal figure with the flexible ceremonial bar (Clancy 1999). The proportions of the figure, especially his slim form, recall the portrait on Stela P, which makes it very probable that Stela 60 was a monument of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat.

Taking into account the example of Stela 53 (Ruler 6), it remains true that there is an exceptionally text-heavy presentation on stelae from the Early Classic to 554 C.E., when Ruler 10 erected Stela 9, which features three sides containing glyphs and one side with a royal portrait. From the same period, altars contain figural representations; however, these are not royal portraits, but rather images of supernatural entities.

The only royal portraits from this period are found on floor markers. The images of Rulers 1 and 2 on the Motmot Marker, which was sealed after a short period of time, had restricted public access, and a similar composition on the central floor marker of Ballcourt Ila was also not easily accessible (**Fig. 3**; Fash, Fash, and Davis-Salazar 2004). The stair steps that follow are all glyphic and most probably less

accessible than the stelae in the Main Group or in the area of the Village. The steps were continuously used into the Late Classic period. Considering the stelae erected from 578 to 756 by Rulers 11-15,<sup>6</sup> there is a perceptible growth in the importance of images on monuments. First, images are featured in the majority of the stelae (78% or 18 out of 23 stelae), and more importantly, they occupy more space. For example, the stelae of Rulers 11 and 12 have one figural side, while under Ruler 13 the majority of stelae have two or three image-bearing sides. In comparison to Copan, monuments from Tikal, Naranjo, and Caracol from the Early Classic onwards conventionally juxtapose image and text on stelae.

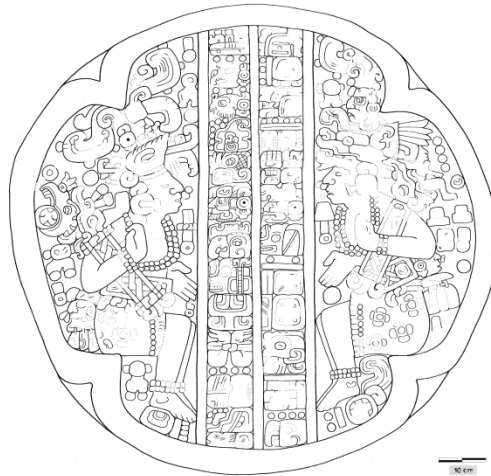


Fig. 3. Copan Motmot Marker (drawing by B. Fash).

Around 554 (although perhaps later with K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat in 578) Copan's rulers rejected the concept of text-focused monuments and replaced it with the frontal portrayal of the ruler common in the northeastern Peten (see Fash 2004; Kubler 1984; Proskouriakoff 1950). The depiction of rulers in elaborate costumes and surrounded by a heavy use of motifs occupying free space, remained popular for Copan monuments.

As Baudez (1999) noted, the frontal pose with splayed leg and frontal portraiture is attested in the site of Quirigua on Stelae U (480 C.E.) and 26 (493/495 C.E.), which coincides with the rule of Copan Ruler 6 whose Stela 53 is, as I have argued above, the first monument that shows frontal portraiture. Therefore, it is probable that the first application of such a representation in the southeastern region came from the middle of the fifth century, and it was influential enough to be imitated in the other major settlement of the region, most likely a subordinate of Copan.

K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's monumental comparisons emphasize certain representational characteristics, including frontal royal portraiture and images combined with texts, a trend beginning in the mid-fifth

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<sup>6</sup> Ruler 11 is K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, Ruler 12 is K'ahk' Uti' Chan K'awil, Ruler 13 is Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil, Ruler 14 is K'ahk' Joplaj Chan K'awil, Ruler 15 is K'ahk' Yipyaj Chan K'awil and Ruler 16 is Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat.



century. K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's stylistic canon set a representative example that was later imitated by all of his successors and remained in use until the rule of Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil.

In 578 C.E. there is a clear iconographic program change where the emphasis shifted from text to figurative stelae, although other monument types do not show such a programmatic change. Monumental steps remained entirely composed of glyphs and do not show any perceptible representational change from Early to Late Classic periods. Altars from this period bear either texts or the image of a supernatural or deceased ancestor combined with text. Altar forms remained rectangular or drum shaped, similar to stela styles, and both were common in the Early and Late Classic periods (Spinden 1913). Following these representational modifications, it is possible to hypothesize that Copan's rulers concentrated their messages on stelae, and the subsequent changes in representational strategies were focused on this monumental format.

#### 4. Pre-578 Textual Discourse

It is widely accepted by epigraphers that Copan's inscriptions during the entirety of the Classic period have their own particular discourse topics that generally place emphasis on period ending ceremonies, monument dedications, and various other rituals that are unique to the site and to the southeast Maya region. Therefore, even the most expert epigraphers find difficulty in reading them (Martin and Grube 2000; Martin and Grube 2008; Stuart 1995).

The first researcher who emphasized Copan's textual discourse differences was David Stuart (1995:118-123). He rightly pointed out that overall, Copan's texts are strikingly ahistorical in comparison with texts from the western Maya region, the Petexbatun, and the northeastern Peten. This ahistoricity consists of a scarcity of details about familial relationships, accessions, warfare, and intersite and interregional interactions otherwise recorded in inscriptions at other sites. According to Stuart, Copan's texts are frequently ornate name-tags for monuments with records of specialized ritualistic information, much of which has not yet been securely deciphered. A break from this pattern is only seen during the time of Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil's reign. The Hieroglyphic Stairway lists his birth, accession, and death as well as other events familiar from texts at other sites. Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil has been hailed as innovative by art historians, not only for his presentations in textual discourse, but in the three-dimensional qualities of many of his sculptural commissions (Baudez 1994:250-251; Newsome 2001; Proskouriakoff 1950:129; Von Schwerin 2011) With his death in 738, Copan's rulers reverted back to the same terse textual discourse, although they kept many of his sculptural innovations and continuing the writing of the Hieroglyphic Stairway. Changes to the monumental program came again with the sixteenth ruler, Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat, who discarded the stela form in favor of highly figural altars and panels.

The name-tagging of stelae, recently discussed by Adrienne Tremblay (2007:82-129), is believed to be one of the main characteristics of Classic-period inscriptions in general and appears to be a phenomenon specific to Copan and Quirigua. Tremblay observes the relationships of stela-name tagging and royal portraiture and the interconnection of aspects of visual and textual discourses:

Most of Copan's stelae can be divided into two groups: those with ruler portraits, and those without. The group with portraits occurs generally later than those without, with the exception of the stela program of Smoke Imix God K, which consists of stelae both with and without portraits. Although the number of named stelae without portraits is





small, a slight difference can be seen between those early names and the later names of portrait stelae. These early names are more abstract, and focus on subjects such as time periods. As Copan’s kings became more interested in deity manifestation and ritual and as political situations changed, more three-dimensional portraits began to appear on stelae, and their proper names became direct references to the images carved onto the stelae (Tremblay 2007:83).

From this insight it is also possible to gauge that K’ahk’ Uti’ Witz’ K’awil’s reign occupied a middle position, with his use of visual discourse both harkening back to older times but also employing newer concepts. One innovation of K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat is the link between three-dimensional portraiture and stela-names. For Tremblay, Stela P is not only the first such monument and therefore a likely innovation, but also shows strong interconnections between visual and textual discourse.

Another avenue for investigation is the examination of the discourse of Early Classic monuments, namely their content and use of certain lexemes and strings of lexemes, which I call formulae. Texts may present different content in relation to monument types, which may be similar in both the Early and the Late Classic periods. Also, texts may use different lexemes and formulae according to the period or to individual rulers. Such an investigation is inherently problematic because of the almost complete lack of continuous discourse on Early Classic stelae. Among the stelae, a continuous discourse is present on Stelae 9, 15, 16, 20, 32, 49 and 63, although none of these monuments are complete. It is more fruitful to examine the similarities and differences in the texts of altars and steps, two groups that fared better and continued to be used into the Late Classic.

From Table 3 it is possible to list the stelae in a rough order of succession, although they are not always dated exactly and sometimes the dates are not certain.

**Table 3.** Copan stelae dedicated from ca. 430 to 568, listing name, date, text-image ratio.

Stela 35	Image 2F
Stela 63	Text 3G
Stela 46	?
Stela 34	Text 2G
Stela 20 -9.1.10.0.0 (465)	Text 4G
Stela 16 -9.1.17.4.0 (472)	Text 2G
Stela 24 -9.2.10.0.0 (485)	Text 2G
Stela 25 -9.2.10.0.0 (485)	Text 1G
Stela 28 -9.3.0.0.0 (495)	?
Stela 49	Text 2G
Stela 53	Text-Image 2G, 1F
Stela 15 -9.4.10.0.0 (524)	Text 4G
Stela 21	Text 4G
Stela 22	Text 1G
Stela 25	Text 1G
Stela 26	Text 2G
Stela 32	Text 1G
Stela 48	Text 2G
Stela 50	Text 1G



Stela 9 -9.6.10.0.0 (564)	Text-Image 3G, 1F?
Stela 17	Text 2G

The first important discursive element that Early Classic monuments utilized is the Initial Series Introductory Glyph (ISIG) as an indicator of “beginning” in general. The ISIG in Classic period texts preceded the Long Count, but at Copan in the Early Classic it was carved on all distinct stela sides and frequently not preceding Long Count dates. Examples include Stelae 15, 16, 17, 21 and 26. The only other complete stela where this discursive device is not present is Stela 63, where the ISIG is restricted to its usual position in front of the Long Count. K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat’s two stelae have the all-distinct ISIG format harkening back to the previous kings’ monuments.

Because of the fragmented and broken inscriptions of many of the stelae, it is difficult to discern the formulae and patterns of discourse. Apart from the dates on such stelae as 16, 17, 22, 25, 26, and 50, small segments of discourse appear on Stelae 9, 15, 20, 32, 48, 49 and 63 (see Fig. 1b). Better preserved texts remain on the steps, altars, and the Motmot Marker. Stela 63, produced under the second ruler, has three discourse segments: (1) the erection of the stela; (2) the impersonation ritual; and (3) the son-of-father expressions. The lexemes used in these expressions: *wal-*, *b’ah-an* and *unen*, were rare in later Copan stela texts, and the “son of father” or the “son of mother” expressions are uncommon in Copan relative to other Classic-period sites’ texts. Indeed, there are only four cases at Copan where those expressions appear in the texts: Stela 9 *mihin*, CPN 3033 *mihin*, Stela N *unen*, and finally Stela 8 *al*.

One of the most important elements of Classic Maya discourse was the worship of the ancestors, in particular, the founder of the dynasty. This is ubiquitous in Copan texts and not only on stelae. K’ihnich Yax K’uk’ Mo’ was referred to in pre-578 inscriptions on Stelae 15 and 63, as well as the Motmot Marker, Xukpi Stone, CPN 3033, and Altar A. Nevertheless, there are more forebears cited in several texts, such as the 2nd ruler (Stela 15) and the 7th ruler (Stela 9), and of course the step CPN 3033, which animated the house of the member of the dynasty under the 8th ruler, listing seven previous kings (Prager and Wagner 2017).

In the fragmented early texts, the *winik* (humans) are accentuated instead of the *k’uh*, or gods. Indeed, the patron deities, Chante’ Ch’oktak and B’alun K’awil, which later kings proudly referenced in their texts, first appeared on the Ante Step in 542. The formula, *ha’ob’* “they are...,” followed by a list of deities, first appeared on Stela 9 in 554.

Uniquely, several monuments (e.g. Papagayo Step, Stela 34) use the first or second person ergative pronouns, in contrast to the norms of Maya monumental discourse. These terms are limited to the Western region in the Late Classic period, although they are more frequent in polychrome ceramics during the eighth century. For Late Classic Copan, two texts use the first or second person ergative pronouns, namely Stela 7 and the text of Temple 22 step.

The broken and fire-damaged Papagayo Step (**Fig. 4**) provides a unique perspective on ancestor worship and the role of the king:

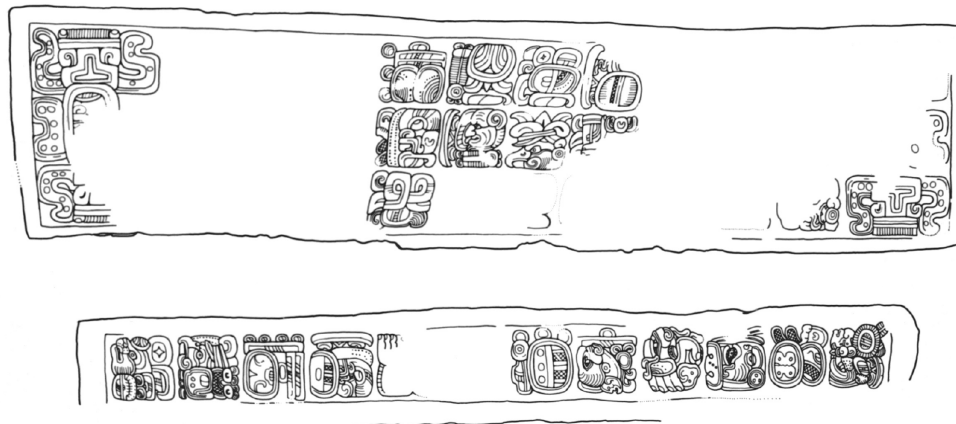


Fig. 4. Copan Papagayo Step (drawing by B. Fash).

ISIG? # ux b'alun pik # ak'uhil # yatij<sup>7</sup> ta ch'ahb'[ij] ahk'b'[a]l wajaw[i]l umam[a]t ? # #u-?-tz' ya-  
 ?-yu-? # ? ISIG  
 ? ub'ah akab' ch'en che[h]en<sup>8</sup> tun k'ab' hix wak ? nal ux hab' te' # uch'am k'uh? uk'uh[ul] hab'  
 b'olon junlajun winik ? ch'ahom ch'up? puj ajaw

<sup>7</sup> The *y-at-ij* is usually translated as “he bathed it” or “he accompanied it;” however, neither solution is linguistically possible. The root is a transitive verb *\*at*, and the root *at* “to bathe” in Mayan languages is always intransitive (Kaufman 2003:532–533). Wald (2007:413) argued that *at* “to partner” is a transitive root in Tzeltalan languages. Prager (2013:262) recently proposed that the root is *at* “to count” (vt.), and on Copan Stela 2 and 12 the context—*utzutzlaj atij* and *utzutzlaj yatij*—is better translated as “his finishing-count” and “his finishing, his counting.” Moreover, this verb is usually connected to the period-ending ceremony and the Paddler Gods, which were associated with time. In colonial Tzotzil (Laughlin and Haviland 1988:137–138), *'at* is a transitive verb:

<i>'at</i> , tv.	to count, belong to, be in partnership with, <i>contar</i> .
<i>'atbilon</i>	I am a partner, <i>parcionero</i> .
<i>'atel</i>	account, sum, <i>cuenta de lo que es contado</i> .
<i>'atob 'os</i>	clock, <i>reloj</i> .
<i>'atolaj</i> , iv.	to count, <i>contar</i> . (1) <i>prudente</i> , (2) <i>sabio que discurre mucho</i> .

<sup>8</sup> The collocation **ch'e-e-na** (or in other contexts **ch'e-he-na**) has, at least, two different interpretations. According to Grube (1998) is a quotative word and its meaning is “it is/was said” (or “so says” in Law et al. 2013), meanwhile Hull, Carrasco, and Wald (2009) interpreted it as first-person quotative expression and they have translated as “I said.” Therefore, I have left both solutions in the translation with slash punctuation.



“... three-nine bundle... your god of... their counting [the days] amid the engendering of my lordship  
you were their grandfathers, ...  
... the image of your city, I have said/so says, Tun K’ab’ Hix, the Six ? Cornfield and Three Year Tree... he grasped the gods [when] it was the divine year of Nine-Eleven Month...the Incenser, the Valley and the Cattail Place Lord.”

The complex noun *ch’ahb’il ahk’b’al*—without the *ajawil* “lordship” and the *mam* “grandfathers”—was a frequent expression in stela texts during the Late Classic, at Copan and elsewhere.

During the Early Classic period from the first to the tenth rulers, Copan kings never used the divine references Yopat or K’awil in their coronation names. The naming preferences included several animals, animated objects, and the title K’ihnich, as exemplified by the names K’ihnich Yax K’uk’ Mo’, ‘Netted-Jaguar’ Tok K’ik’ (Ruler 2), Tun K’ab’ Hix (Ruler 4), Yuhka’? (Ruler 5), Muyal ? Chan Ahk (Ruler 6), B’ahlam Nehn (Ruler 7), Wi’l Ohl K’inich (Ruler 8), Sak Lu’ (Ruler 9), and ? B’ahlam (Prager and Wagner 2017). These patterns, especially the first, second, fifth, and ninth names, are unusual and maybe calques or mirror translations of foreign language terminology, potentially from Teotihuacan and Proto-Nawan (Bíró and Davletshin 2011; Davletshin 2012; Prager and Wagner 2017).

In sum, the textual and visual discourse of Early Classic Copan emphasized the *winik* (humans); accordingly, the most important theme was the royal ordering of time, which I refer to as the periodic theme (see Bíró 2011:9-11). In the periodic theme, the same events, like *k’altun*, *chumtun*, *chok*, *tz’ap lakamtun*, etc., were narrated by definite time periods. The most frequently mentioned period is the *winikhab’*—the twenty-year period called *katun* by Colonial Yukatek speakers—though this was not the only one. Sometimes more than one event can be recorded in a single text, such as the end of a period (*tzutz*), the seating of the *tun* (*chumtun*), the planting of a stela (*tz’ap lakamtun*), and the scattering of blood by an elite person.

In the Early Classic period the periodic theme was omnipresent, yet other themes such as war or war campaigns and biography also appeared in monumental discourse on stelae in the Peten and later in the western region. During the Late Classic period, these themes spread everywhere but the southeast region, where only one small-scale text on a cylindrical fragment refers to conflict, part of the famous war between Copan and Quirigua in 738. Thus, in the following section, I will argue that at Copan, this periodic theme became pervasive beginning in 578 and developed into the detailed events and the multitude of deity impersonations used to aggrandize the king, ultimately culminating in the ‘baroque’ texts of Waxaklajun Ub’ah K’awil (Newsome 2001).

### 5.1 Innovation (or neo-archaism) in visual discourse: Sculptural style during the reign of K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat

Iconographic programs can be evident even when the individual traits composing the program are not examined. In the case of Tikal, James Borowicz (2003) distinguishes at least three iconographic programs from 292 to 600 C.E. A fourth program should be added, which begins in the Late Classic period with the stelae of Jasaw Chan K’awil I. Piedras Negras, on the other hand, due to its lack of stelae imagery in the Early Classic period, presents only one strong iconographic program with the niche-stelae and warrior





stelae. Tonina from the 550s to the very end of the Classic period presents one remarkably consistent stela program. These programs were quite enduring, and changes are frequently connected to political upheavals. At Copan, one early stela iconographic program corresponds to the profile representation of the ruler holding a flexible ceremonial bar. While this pose is employed widely by the lowland Maya during this period, the flexible ceremonial bar is very specific to the Copan region. This program was replaced by the full textual stelae of Ruler 2 (or Ruler 3), which continues until the rule of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, who sets a different iconographic program. Namely, he recombined text and imagery, possibly following the antecedent of Stela 53, if this monument was in fact dedicated by Ruler 6.

Iconographic programs are rarely complete innovations and generally amount to adjustments of small elements in the total composition, where a single motif from a former program is rearranged to achieve novelty. Sometimes these changes can be connected to interactions with cultures outside of the Maya lowlands, while in other times they reflect intra-regional contacts. K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's main iconographic program consisted of (1) a frontal representation of the ruler with (2) a frontal face, (3) holding a flexible ceremonial bar in his hands, with (4) splayed feet, (5) a belt and apron with a loincloth and, with (6) a typical headdress that consists of a zoomorphic part and then successive layers of additional anthropomorphic masks (although usually one), and (6) the shield and flint motifs under the belt area.<sup>9</sup> These six traits would be kept largely unchanged by K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil, but with minor additions and alterations by Rulers 13 through 15.

All of these traits are found at other sites but never in such a combination, which makes the Copan monuments of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat unique. The question that remains is what this combination of elements was intended to express. Here, of course, there is a necessary pause for reflection, because an iconographic program can be interpreted in many ways by the receiving audience, and this was certainly true in the past as it is in the present. What an analysis can reveal is the position of certain motifs in a system of significations that may accrue new meanings in novel compositions, although they might preserve their former meanings.

It is important to emphasize the origin and possible meaning of the frontal pose with a frontal face on stela, which is rarely employed during the Classic period (Proskouriakoff 1950). Preclassic stelae south of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec represented a profile view of persons either sitting or standing, and this

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<sup>9</sup> The shield and flint motif is the symbol of war and the army among the Classic Maya and elsewhere in Mesoamerica. At Copan it is possible to identify the actual ritual in which the kings hold the shield and flint. On Altar X the text narrates: *utzak[aw] tok' pakal* "he grasped the flint and shield." The iconography, however, shows the period-ending ceremony where the Paddlers wrap a cord around sign of time (*k'in*) and the altar (*k'altun*). The first date (9.8.12.7.18 11 Etz'nab' 1 K'ank'in) and the grasping of the shield and flint event occurred before the 3 Ajaw period ending which I suppose to be 9.9.0.0.0 3 Ajaw 3 Sutz' (613). Therefore, the altar would be one of the monuments of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat. Contrary to Wagner (2003), the text of Altar Y is not about the birth of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat but the god before the period-ending ritual. The translation follows: *sihyaj chan k'ahk' ti' k'uh 18 ? ? ochk'in kalomte' ub'ah utzak k'uh wi[n]tik ajaw ?* "it is born the Serpent Fire Mouth God, ? west *kalomte'*, the image where Wintik lord ? grasped the god." The iconography again shows the Paddlers wrapping the altar with a cord; however instead of the *k'in* glyph, a serpent undulates behind of the knot. Altar Y was perhaps made for the 9.9.15.0.0 *lajuntun* ceremony of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat.



was adopted by the Preclassic and Classic Maya who preserved that convention until the end of the Late Classic. A change of position toward a more frontal lower body with legs splayed was one of the hallmarks of the Late Classic; however the face generally remained in profile. K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, therefore, adopted a trait that was not generally applied at other Classic Maya sites or by his successors. By consistently using this representation, it differs dramatically from his contemporaries.

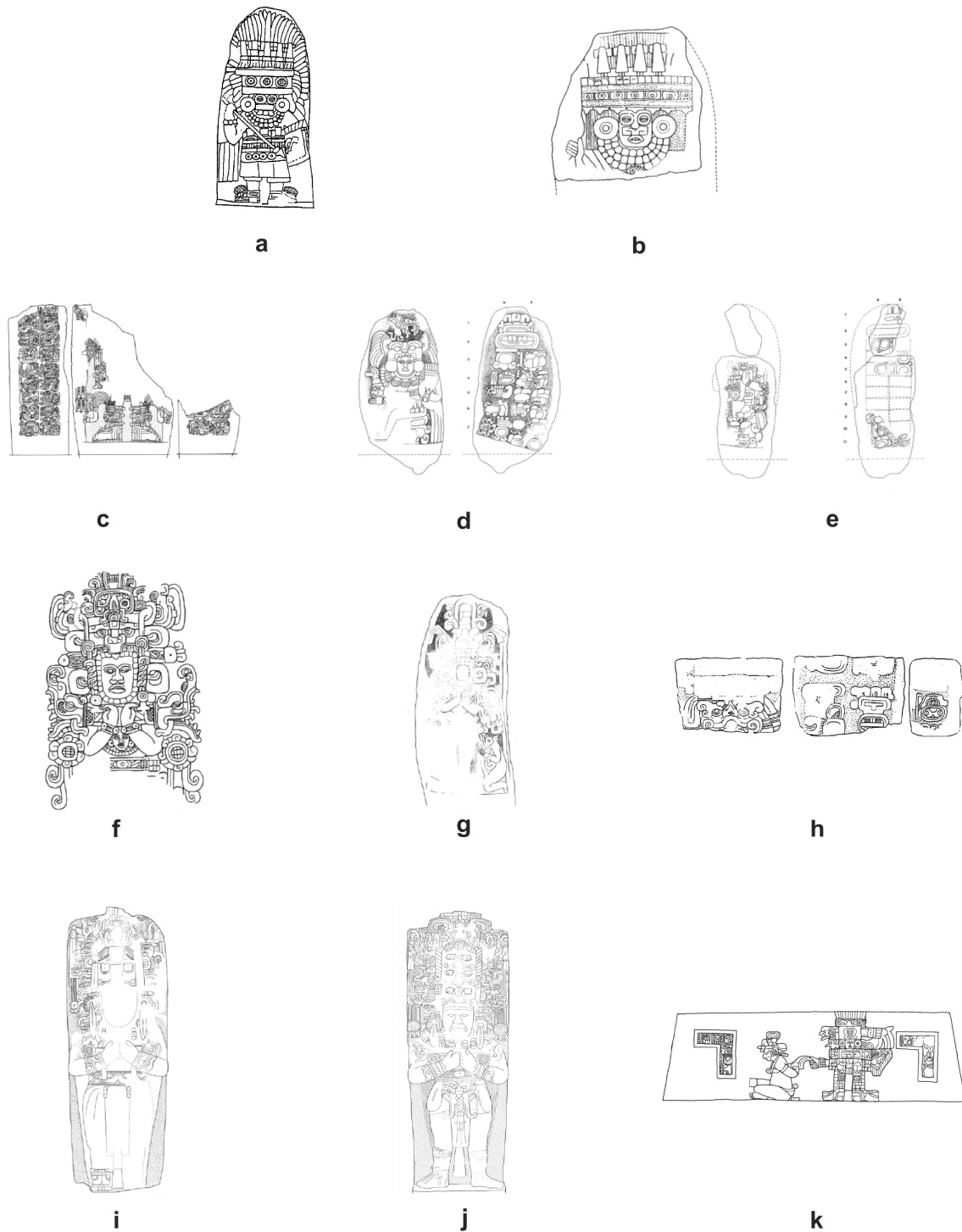
Fully frontal representations are connected symbolically to Central Mexico, especially to Teotihuacan and its art, where such representations are used in stone carvings, painting, and ceramics (Baudez 1999; Klein 1976; Pasztory 1978). Frontality, as such, was not an invention at Teotihuacan, as it was applied from the very Early Formative period and was connected to three-dimensionality itself. On Middle and Late Preclassic architecture in the Maya area and elsewhere in Mesoamerica, frontal depictions were the most common way of representing deities and rulers; however, for two-dimensional low-relief slabs, full-figure frontal representation was rare.

Cecelia Klein (1976) and Esther Pasztory (1978) emphasized that frontal representation was strongly connected to deities and their impersonators at Teotihuacan, although warriors were also frequently portrayed as such, which undermines her original assertion. Proskouriakoff (1950:112) originally pointed out that representation with a frontal body and profile face became the norm in the Late Classic period. More recently, Gillespie (2007) argued that this change indicated a different conception of embodiment and a significant difference in royal portraiture in the Late Classic period with the concomitant development of three-dimensionality. Baudez (1999) not only emphasized the citation of Teotihuacan and three-dimensionality as motivations for frontal representations, but also observed that a frontal face and body make the ruler more menacing to look at, resulting in an awe-inspiring image. All these former insights are enlightening, and I would like to add some particular observations that lead me to accept the original idea of Pasztory (1978) that full-frontal portrayal was a Teotihuacan-derived motif that became used by Maya rulers differently in various sculptural environments.

There are very few fully frontal (body and face) stela images from the Classic period (**Fig. 5**). The first such images in stela are the representations of Yaxha Stela 11 and Tikal Stela 32, which represent Teotihuacan<sup>10</sup> warriors in the style of Teotihuacan using rectilinearity lines which they completely enclosing the forms that they encircle, and they had a complete iconographic array typical of a highland Mexican warrior as represented in the metropolis. Among these stela, Yaxha Stela 11 is complete, and for the first time features the splayed-legged pose with a frontal face, together with a typical tasseled headdress, square shield and lance, and with the figure wearing a goggle-eyed mask. The same pose and iconographic elements are found on Tikal Stela 32. The frontal representation was not only a privilege of Teotihuacan warriors, as proven by an unprovenanced stela that shows a full-frontal personage with torches in his hand, most probably in preparation for the New Fire ceremony (Hellmuth 1987:Fig. 14). Although neither of these stela can be precisely dated, they likely date to the period of 378-420 C.E., the heyday of the Teotihuacan entrada into the northeastern Peten (Coggins 1975; 2002; Martin and Grube 2008; Paulinyi 2001; Proskouriakoff 1993; Schele and Freidel 1990; Stuart 2000).

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<sup>10</sup> The term "Teotihuacan" replacing "Teotihuacano," was first recommended by Gordon Whittaker in 2012 at a Teotihuacan conference in Bonn and Berlin (personal communication, 2017).



**Fig. 5.** Frontal representations in Maya sculpture: **a.** Yaxha St. 11 (drawing by N. Grube), **b.** Tikal St. 32 (drawing by W. Coe), **c.** Tikal Stela 2 (drawing by L. Schele), **d.** Tikal Stela 4 (drawing by W. Coe), **e.** Tikal Stela 18 (drawing by W. Coe), **f.** Quirigua Mon. 26, upper fragment (drawing by M. Looer), **g.** Uaxactun St. 20 (drawing by I. Graham), **h.** Copan St. 53 (drawing by B. Fash), **i.** Tonina Mon. 150 (drawing by I. Graham), **j.** Tonina Mon. 168 (drawing by I. Graham), **k.** Tikal Stucco 5D-57 (drawing by L. Schele).



The proposal that frontal representations were considered non-Maya and connected to a specific set of foreigners is amply demonstrated by two representations of Jasaw Chan K'awil I (682-734), who portrayed himself in an archaic Teotihuacan style on the wall of Tikal Structure 5D-57. Here he is depicted with splayed feet and full-frontal posture, and this is the last such image to appear on Late Classic Tikal monuments (Miller 1978). The ideal warrior, for the Classic Maya elite, was clad in Teotihuacan attire and carried the weapons and insignia of the highland city (Coggins 1979; Schele and Freidel 1990; Stone 1989; Stuart 2000). Particularly at Piedras Negras, the image of the warrior with splayed feet and a frontal pose, holding a rectangular shield and darts appears consistently on the stelae of Piedras Negras throughout the Late Classic period. The frontal warrior pose remained in vogue on architectural sculptures at Copan from the reign of the K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat onwards (personal communication Jennifer von Schwerin April, 2015).

The full frontal pose, as a sign of Teotihuacan identity for the Maya, is used throughout the Early Classic period and remains so into the Late Classic, in combination with the appropriate iconographic motifs at Piedras Negras, Tonina, Copan, and Quirigua. In comparison to Piedras Negras, the rulers of Copan, Quirigua, and Tonina sometimes replaced the shield and lance with a ceremonial bar held in front of the body in a well-known pose established in the very early Early Classic period (Clancy 1994). This arrangement creates a mixed Teotihuacan-Maya image, although rare sculptures at Teotihuacan show a similar hand-position, namely the "symmetrical 'cupped-hand gesture' that renders the two arms bent at the elbows and the hands, fingers curled over or around the thumb, drawn to the chest" (Clancy 1994:14) The first stelae where the full frontal pose was presented with a ceremonial bar date to the second half of the fifth century; for instance Uaxactun Stelae 26 (445 C.E.) and 20 (495), Quirigua Stela U (480) and Monument 26 (493/495), Caracol Stela 2, Tikal Stela 23 (between 504 and 537), and Tonina Monuments 150 (577) and 168 (577). It also appears in Ichpaatuun in 593 and continues into the sixth century. The rulers of Uaxactun, Caracol, and Tikal discarded this pose by the sixth century and erected stelae where the rulers had the mixed frontal body and profile head.

According to this reconstruction, during his reign, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat adopted a pose that was already a hundred years old and only used at the other periphery of the Classic Maya lowlands, at Tonina. While Tonina combined the pose with a growing application of three-dimensionality and later applied the profile view in panels and other monuments, Copan's rulers preserved the full-frontal pose until Stela 23, and more significantly until the accession of Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat in 763. Copan's rulers began to work with more three-dimensionality at the end of the seventh century—one hundred years after Tonina (Baudez 1994). Although, the program of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat was an innovation compared to previous Copan rulers' programs, the style in fact emulates the monuments of northeastern Peten, albeit in a conservative fashion.

K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's successors are even more conservative in their adherence to the style and iconography of Ruler 11's monuments (Fash 2004; Proskouriakoff 1950). I argue that this representation highlighted the ruling dynasty's Teotihuacan connections, which had been emphasized on building facades and texts since the dynasty's inception. When the image of the ruler began to appear on stelae erected in the plaza, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat conveyed the same message that had been transmitted by K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo': metaphorically he "became" Teotihuacan, if not in blood, at least in image. Such message is conveyed both through a pose ultimately connected to Teotihuacan warriors and deity impersonators as represented at Teotihuacan, as well as by royal insignias.





## 5.2. Visual Discourse: Iconographic Motifs

Iconographic motifs and their interpretation is a sub-discipline itself, which became even more vigorous in Maya studies after the decipherment of the writing system. Much is known about Classic Maya iconographic motifs, which are securely identified at least in the cases of the most frequent elements (Schele and Miller 1986; Stone and Zender 2011). It is well-known that costumes, headdresses, and hand-held objects all represent, in a complex ways, the identity of a ruler or noble. There is however, still a lack of understanding of all the elements present. Even the most frequently depicted iconographic motifs lack their Classic-period names, and because their meanings are multiple (as well as affected diachronically and spatially), not all suggestions are equally plausible.

Headdresses are critical elements for expressing the ruler's identity in Classic Maya iconography. Among the problems is their wide variety, which frequently precludes their understanding. There remains a lack of thorough investigation of their distribution, contexts, and identification (Le Fort 2000; Proskouriakoff 1950:50–58; Van Stone 1996). In general, headdresses can be part of the costume assemblage, repeating or supplementing it, or they can be completely independent, carrying various symbols.

Costumes convey complex messages. The various elements, such as belt, loincloth, skirt, apron, pectorals, wrists and ankle ornaments, and masks can potentially display iconographic motifs that identify the ruler as the personification of supernatural entities, or point to different social functions including gender. For some, the king is the representative of the cosmological World Tree, connecting different layers of the sky and the underworld (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993; Newsome 2001; Schele and Freidel 1990; Schele and Miller 1986), while others emphasize solar identifications and cycles (Baudez 1986; 1994; 2008). These previous interpretations all have their merit; however, the examination of each monument within a discrete temporal and spatial context results in the discovery of novel patterns (seeLooper 2003; Tate 1992). Also, rulers may have wanted to transmit various messages in one monument, but at the same time, they certainly had some overall representational program in mind as is shown by similarities among the monuments of one ruler. As we will see, there are various iconographic motifs that indicate K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's emphasis upon a connection to Teotihuacan, similar to Early Classic Maya rulers such as Yax Nun Ahin I at Tikal. This can be attested in the ruler's stelae, especially in the headdresses he wears.

During the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, there are at least three headdresses on monuments that can be analyzed (taking into account Stela 18; **Fig. 6**). All headdresses are composed of a main zoomorphic head with smaller masks on top. The top-most mask is always the leafy Jester God, or Ux Yop Hun, "Three Leaves-Paper" (Steinbach 2015; Stuart 2012), the prime symbol of ajaw status. This being is likely the mythical first ruler of the northeast Peten who acceded at a place called Chih Ka' or "Maguay Grinding Stone" (Stuart 2014).

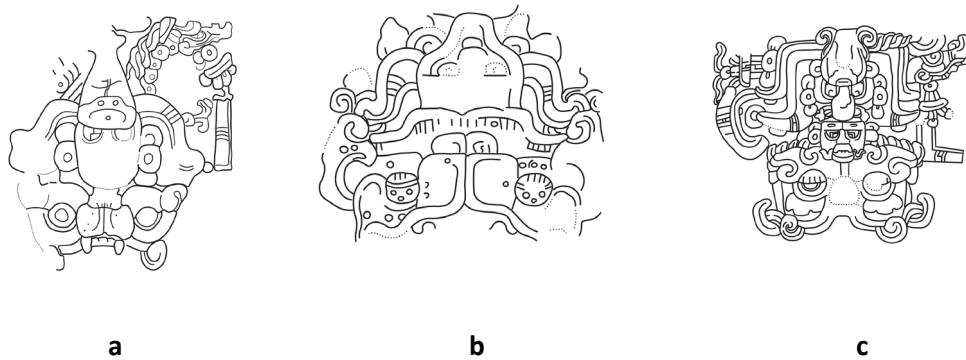


Fig. 6. Royal headdresses at Copan: a. Stela 7, b. Stela 18, c. Stela P (all drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

Stacked masks were common regionally and are shown on K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's stelae. There are at least two on Stela 7 (Fig. 6a), and on Stela P, three masks were stacked vertically atop the main zoomorphic mask (Fig. 6c). On Stela P, the first and best preserved of these masks is the Sun God, on top of which we see the Piscine Jester God or maybe the *xok* "shark," with gills on his face and chin, an upturned nose, and spiral pupils. On its forehead is a tiny T533 logogram, an anthropomorphic Jester God with corn leaves. Sprouting from its top are *figus* leaves, symbolizing the Avian Jester God. Here, as in other Maya images, this vertical format refers to the three distinct parts of the cosmos; that is, the watery realm or the Underworld, the cornfield or the terrestrial realm (the domain of humans), and lastly, the celestial realm (Steinbach 2015:118-124).

There are three zoomorphic masks on each stela of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, and these headdresses, I believe, each represent one of the dead kings who previously ruled in the city. On the fragment of Stela 18, there is a feline with *hix* marked eyes and ears topped with a triangular motif identical to the one on Stela 2 (Fig. 6b). Because the fourth ruler was Tun K'ab' Hix, it is possible that the zoomorphic mask element on Stela 18 refers to the name of this king. Likewise, for Stela 7, the jaguar would be the seventh ruler B'ahlam Nehn (Fig. 6a).

On Stela P, there are two zoomorphic headdress masks. The small mask below the Piscine Jester God is the Sun God, with crossed eyes and fins on his chin (Fig. 6c). The large mask below has been identified by Baudez as "a reptile helmet in serpent or crocodile form" (1994:94); however, this mask in fact indicates part of the name of K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', the founder of the Copan dynasty (Fig. 7). Above the mask are feather elements (*k'uk'*), and the eye has the heavy eyelid of the macaw *mo'*. This can be compared to the Rosalila temple lower panels where the Sun God wears the same mask (Agurcia Fasquelle 2004:107). Taken together, the mask-composite is "read" beginning with the Sun God, K'ihnich, followed by K'uk' Mo'. Taken together with the upper part of the headdress depicted on Stela P, the entire composition can be identified as K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo' Ux Yop Hun, which is later mentioned in the accession formula of the thirteenth ruler, Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil, recorded on Stela J: "he took K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo' Ux Yop Hun" (Fig. 8a; Stuart 2012:127). Further, on the west side of Stela C, there is a similar mask-composite of K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', topped by the Ux Yop Hun motif (Fig. 8b).

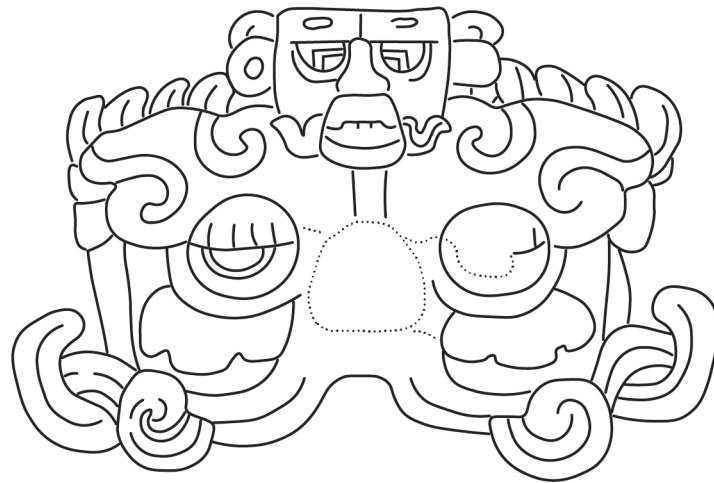


Fig. 7. Detail of royal headdress on Copan Stela P (drawing by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

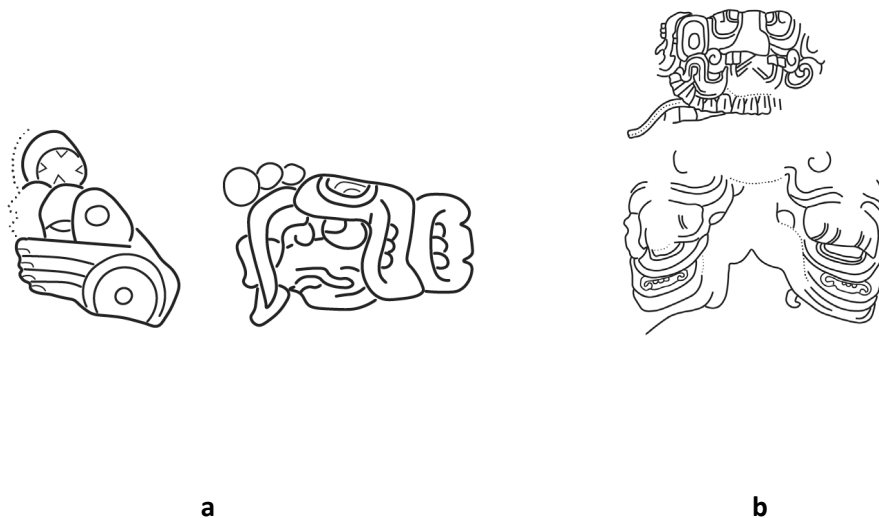
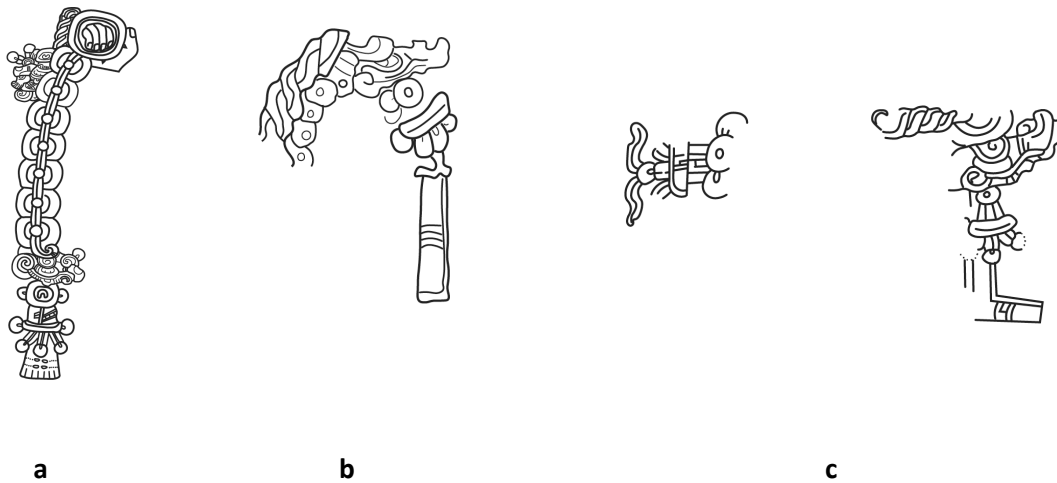


Fig. 8. a. detail of Copan Stela J text, b. detail of headdress on Copan Stela C (drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

Above and behind the headdress mask-composites depicted on Stelae 7 and P appear braid-and-tassels motifs (Fig. 9). These also feature chains of circular elements and terminate in shark-ear flares (maybe *xok tup*; Fig. 9b, c). On Tikal Stela 31 (Fig. 9a), Sihyaj Chan K'awil grasps this device, to which is attached a headdress. The braid-and-tassel motifs that appear on the Copan stelae have an identical structural position, being attached to headdresses. This headdress-composite continued to appear on Copan stelae until the reign of the fifteenth ruler, worn in the following arrangements: ancestor-Jester God, ancestor-god-Jester God, or god-Jester God. This development more or less evolves from the ancestor format to one in which only gods are featured.



**Fig. 9.** Braid-and-tassel motifs, details of headdresses shown on: **a.** Tikal Stela 31 (drawing by P. Bíró after W. Coe); **b.** Copan Stela 7; **c.** Copan Stela P (all drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

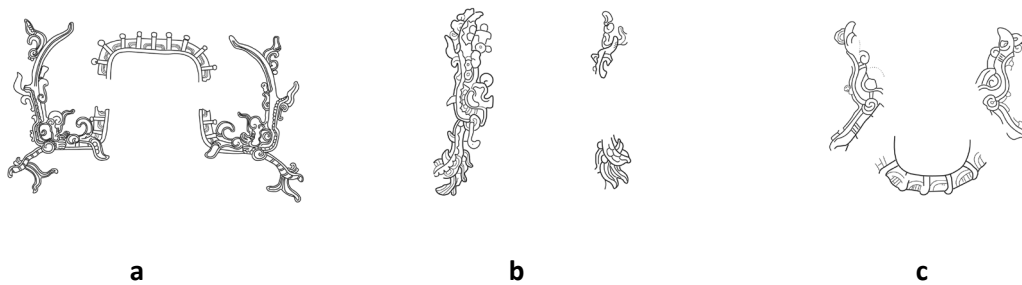
At Copan, as elsewhere, the headdress-composite was akin to the so-called Mask Flange Iconographic Complex (Carrasco 2005), the best examples of this motif are the censers of Palenque (see Miller and Martin 2004:Pl. 122-125). This complex evolved gradually from the Middle Classic to the Late Classic. During the Late Classic period either the kings had a mask of the Sun God or the Jaguar of the Underworld (or Jaguar of Fire), or simply appears with the youthful facial features of the Maize God (Carrasco 2005:156-206). At Copan, the monuments of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat display the latter type of imagery.

On Stelae 7 and P, the headdress is positioned atop a jeweled headband, and the king's earplugs are represented as a quincunx logogram reading **BIH** "road." Both above and below the earplugs are breath serpents, and the ruler's chin is framed by a turtle mask, symbolizing the earth.

Later, during the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil, the previous format, where the headdress had a large mask and the Jester God crown (Stelae 2, 3, 7, 18, 60, P and E), transformed to stacked multiple masks emphasizing deity impersonation. This format stayed in fashion until Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat abruptly changed the style and iconographic motifs in his sculpture programs.

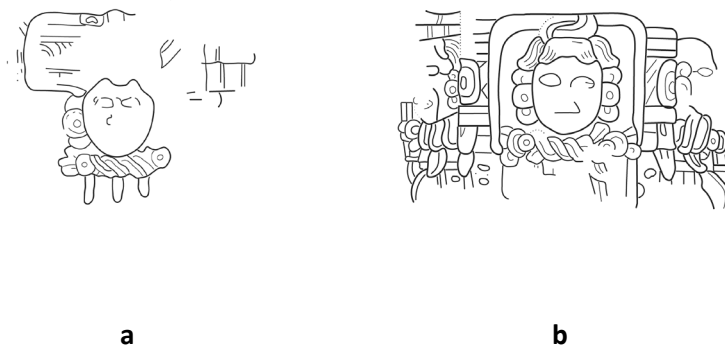
On Stelae 7 and P below the head, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat is depicted wearing a pectoral of youthful god which I believe is the Foliated Maize God or Ajan (**Fig. 13 c,d**; Taube 1985; Zender 2014). Under the pectoral, the king holds a flexible ceremonial bar (Clancy 1994), one of the quintessential elements of Copan iconography. The ceremonial bar is represented as a double-headed creature. The bar itself continues below the ruler's hands and terminates in two serpent heads near the elbow region. During the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, the ceremonial bar features a Water Lily Serpent although later rulers added the insect form, known as the Sak B'ak Chapat "White Bone Centipede" (**Fig. 10 b,c**). Apart from these, on Stela 6, K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil holds an example of the War or Teotihuacan Serpent (in Classic Ch'olan, Waxaklajun Ub'ah Chan "Eighteen-Headed Serpent"). K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's wristlets

bear a mix of iconography and writing, reading **na-b'i XOK**/*nahb' xok* “the pool/sea shark” (**Fig. 13 c,d**). This was expanded by subsequent kings, who added *tz'ak xok*, *chan xok*, and so on.



**Fig. 10.** Bicephalic serpents: **a.** Palenque Sacrophagus Lid, detail (drawing by P. Bíró after M. G. Robertson); **b.** Copan Stela 7, detail; **c.** Copan Stela P, detail (drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

Although the stela texts of Copan do not mention any war-related activities, the emblem of the shield-and-flint that explicitly symbolizes war, captive-taking, and conquest is present (**Fig. 12**). On K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's stelae, this emblem is above the belt, whereas later, during the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil, the shield-flint emblem is either above or below the belt. This complex gradually disappears on Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil's monuments, although it re-emerges during the reign of Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat.



**Fig. 11.** Belt assemblies: **a.** Copan Stela 7, detail; **b.** Copan Stela P, detail (drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

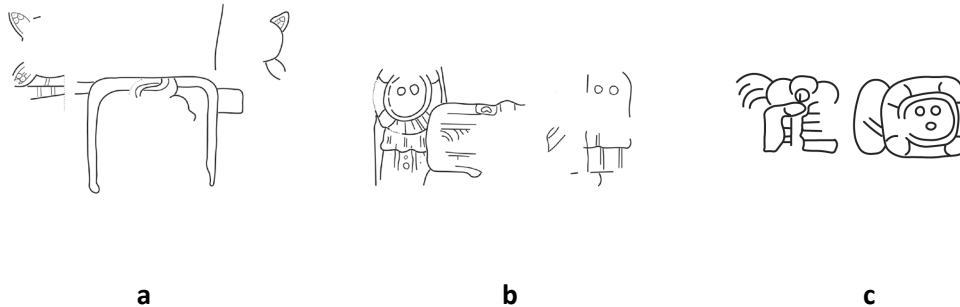
Below the shield-and-flint emblem, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's belts initially had one mask (Stelae 60 and 7), but later included three masks (Stela P). During the reigns of subsequent kings it remained the same (**Fig. 11**). These head masks usually represent Foliated Maize Gods with pendant stone plaques, although there were other gods; for example, the Pax Gods on Stela 1. Underneath the belt, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat wears a skirt made of jaguar skin, and the loincloth terminates in long serpents (**Fig. 13 c,d**). Although the lower parts of both stelae are eroded, judging from other monuments, it seems likely that the anklets would be similar to the wristlets.

The motifs used by K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat's sculptors derive fundamentally from Early Classic formulae, emphasizing agricultural symbols, such as the germination of corn. This is apparent in the imagery of the



ceremonial bar, pectorals, belt masks, and the three-leaf paper headdress complex. The Paddler Gods symbolize changing temporal cycles and usually appear in the double-headed serpent's mouth.

The flint-and-shield motif, which appears in the waist area of the stelae, may have been intended to convey a martial aspect of rulership without necessarily depicting captives or mentioning military actions in the text (**Fig. 12**). On the other hand, as explained above, the stela sends a message of the ruler as a Teotihuacan person himself, through his frontal pose and later, through the addition of Teotihuacan costume.



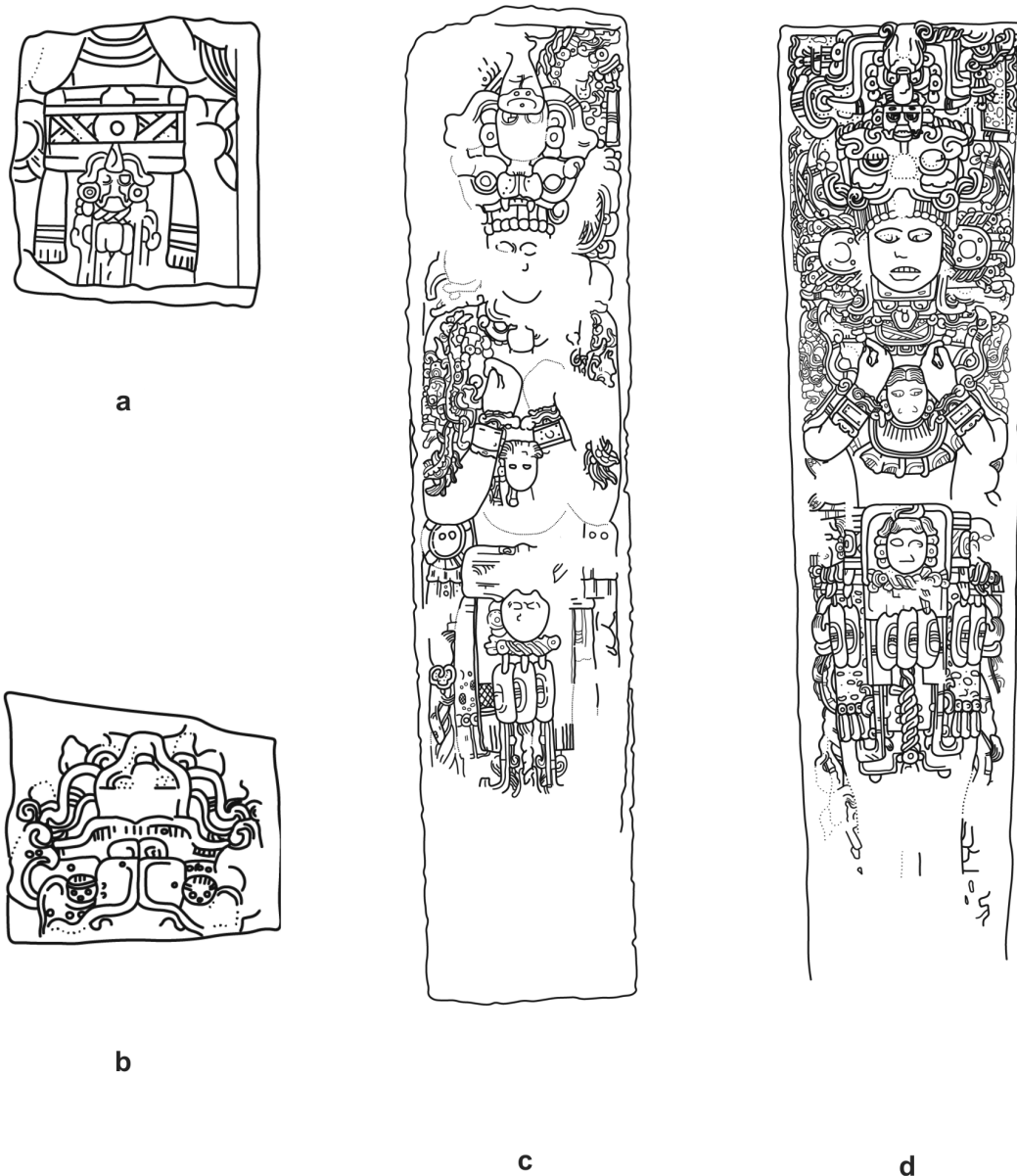
**Fig. 12.** Shield-and-flint motifs at Copan: **a.** Stela P, detail; **b.** Stela 7, detail; **c.** Altar X, detail of inscription (drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

At Copan, while such stylistic and iconographic discourses were already widely applied in architectural contexts during the Early Classic period, it was a novelty to present them on stelae. After the fall of the highland metropolis, it seems that the rulers of this far-removed Classic Maya site sought to emphasize their personal Teotihuacan identity. From a phenomenological standpoint, the visibility of these monuments is certainly different from that of the architectural sculpture. All of these stelae were between 2.5 and 3.5 meters tall; therefore they represented the ruler in a stature far over life-size but yet differed from architectural sculpture, where people had to look up substantially higher to view the representations.

To speculate further, bringing the ruler down from lofty building facades and making his representation accessible in plazas could have served to emphasize his personality, but also the linkage between his body and deity manifestation. What these stelae seem to communicate was the growing importance of the rulers vis-à-vis the world of supernatural entities.

## 6. Textual Discourse of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat

There are at least four stelae (7, 18, 60, and P), presumably carved during the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, though there would have been additional monuments that were destroyed by the Late Classic inhabitants or by modern villagers, such as Stela 18 (**Fig. 13a**; Morley 1920:96-102). Presently, two stelae remain to record the deeds of this ruler. Stelae 7 and P celebrate the period-ending ceremonies of 9.9.0.0.0 (613 C.E.) and 9.10.0.0.0 (623 C.E.) and establish the primary discourse pattern that subsequent kings applied in their stela programs. Even Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat used the same formula, but presented in the format of altars and wall panels.



**Fig. 13.** Monuments of Copan Ruler 11: a. Stela 60; b. Stela 18; c. Stela 7, front; d. Copan Stela P, front (all drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

Although several textual passages are eroded on both stelae, enough remains for us to undertake an analysis of the most important passages. It is also possible to compare this text to other earlier inscriptions as well as to the next generation of monuments produced at Copan. Below I present the translation of the texts, first in broad transcription and transliteration, then following a free translation.

Both of the texts have comparable formats and contain the same episodial structure. Various poetic devices that appear on Stelae P and 7, such as semantic parallel couplets, the *ch'ahb'il ahk'b'al* disphrastic kenning, the repetition *yichnal* and *ub'ah*, and even the parallel sentence, are the ubiquitous



in subsequent stelae texts. Further, both stelae begin with an Initial Series; episode 1 of both texts describes period-endings with the thematic verbs *k'al* and *tzutz*; and they narrate the formation of the stela (*pat*). In each case, the gods and the ruler participated together in the ceremony, but only the king performed the blood sacrifice or the engendering rite (*ch'ahb'il ahk'b'al*). This kenning, which is composed of *ch'ahb'il*<sup>11</sup> or “fasting, creation” and *ahk'b'al* or “darkness,” became an abstract noun, which I have translated as “engendering.” It may have been used to indicate that the person has a capacity to create someone or something or has reproductive power. As such, it seems to have been a metaphor for the conjuration of the gods who witness the ritual (Knowlton 2010:21-32).

Frequently in the inscriptions of other sites, Episode 1 takes the form of the all-important period-ending ritual as the “tying of the stone” (*k'altun*).<sup>12</sup> Here, at Copan, from the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat onwards, the details of the commemoration of the period-ending become the focus of stela discourse. It was rare for a biographical theme or martial theme to be inscribed on monuments at Copan. Instead, the inscriptions describe the main events of the period-ending ritual, culminating in the stela erection and finally, several lexemes that correspond to motifs in the apparel and insignia of the ruler represented on the front of the stela. It was crucial that ancestors had a role in this discourse, and the most important ancestor was K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', the founder of the dynasty.

#### Stela 7 (Fig. 14)

?-WINIK-HAB' 9 PIK 9 WINIKHAB' 0 HAB' 0 WINIK 0 K'IN 3-AJAW YIHK'IN? u-TI'-HUN-na 11-hu-li-ya K'AL-ja-? ?-UH? u-CH'OK-ko-K'AB'A' 20-10 3-TE'-SUTZ' u-K'AL-TUN-ja PADDLER1 PADDLER2 ? u-TZUTZ-PIK u-KAB'-ji-ya #-K'UH KAB'-#-K'UH #-4-AJAW 9-K'AWIL u-K'UH u-HUN-na u-K'UH u-CH'AB' ya-AK'AB'-li ch'a-ho-AJAW NAH-K'AK'-?-na-CHAN-na NAH-'DOUBLE-SERPENT' ja-k'a-ni-wa CHIT-K'UH SIYAJ-ya-ja CHAN-na YOPAT K'AK'-TI'-CHAN K'UH-ch'u?-pi-AJAW-wa #

? # TZIK-YAX-[PIK]# ? ? # K'AK'-TI'-CHAN-na [YOPAT] yi-ICH-NAL-K'UH # PADDLER1 [PADDLER2] yi-chi-NAL-la [K'UH?] 4-CH'OK-TAK 4-[AJAW?]-TAK 3-a-ya-pa-ni 10+ e?-le-K'IN-ni AJAW 3?-CH'AB?-b'i-ya

?-pa yi-ta-ji AJAW-wa? K'UH-li? 9-K'AWIL PADDLER1 PADDLER2 ma?-pa-ni u-k'a-ja-li ?-le-?-? wa?-?-WI'L?-TUN? 5-xi-pi-NAL CHAN-na-NAL-K'UH KAB'-la-K'UH SIYAJ-ya-ja-?-CH'OK? ta-WATER-ta-? [tu?]-pa-ta?-K'UH? tu-PAT-u?-TUN?-ni? NAH?-CHAN wi-ki-ti-CHAN-na CH'EN-na?-NAL ha-i yo-OTOT 12-TZ'AK-b'u-li 3-WITZ-a-AJAW

<sup>11</sup> See Ch'orti': *ch'ajb'ey~ch'ab'eyi* “to fast, to go without food” (Hull 2005:26); Colonial Tzeltal: *ch'abaj* “to fast,” *ch'abajel* “fast” (Laughlin and Haviland 1988:194); Yucatec: *ch'ab* “abstenerse de deleites carnales, ser casto y hacer penitencia, criar, hace de nada, criar de nuevo”(Barrera Vásquez, Bastarrachea Manzano, and Brito Sansores 1980:120).

<sup>12</sup> In Proto-Cholan and Proto-Tzeltalan languages there are no root *k'al* that fits the contexts such as *k'altun* and *k'ahlaj hun tub'ah* expressions; however in the Guatemalan Highlands and Yucatecan languages, the root *k'al* “lo amarro, se cerro” or “wrapping, to tie up” (Proto-Mayan \**k'al* in Kaufman 2003:1000), may refer to the binding of stones with ropes or cloth bands or closing the headband of the king (see Stuart 1996).



? winikhab' 9 pik 9 winikhab' 0 hab' 0 winik 0 k'in 3 ajaw yihk'in uti'hun[il] 11 huliy nah k'al-?-  
[aj]jil<sup>13</sup> ?-uh? uch'ok k'ab'a' 30 uxe' sutz' uk'altun[aj] ? ? ? utzutzpik ukab'jiy [chanal] k'uh  
kab'[al] k'uh ? chan[te'] ajaw 9 k'awil uk'uh[il] uhun[il] uk'uh[il] uch'a[h]b'[il] ya[h]k'ab'[il]  
ch'aho[m] ajaw nah k'a[h]k'? chan nah ? jak'niw chit k'uh si[h]yaj chan yopat k'a[h]k' [u]ti' chan  
[yopat] k'uh[ul] ch'up? ajaw

? # tzik yax pik # ? ? # k'a[h]k' [u]ti' chan [yopat] yichnal k'uh # ? ? yichnal k'uh? 4 ch'oktak 4  
ajawtak 3 ayapan 10+ elk'in? ajaw 3? ch'a[h]b'iy?  
? yitaj [yax] ajaw [yax] k'uh[il]? 9 k'awil ? ? ma?-pan uk'aj[i] ?-el?-? wa? wi'? tun? 5 pix/xip  
nal chanal k'uh kab'[aj] k'uh si[h]yaj?? ch'ok? ta-? ta-? tupat? k'uh tupat? tun? nah? chan  
wi[n]tik chan ch'en ?-nal ha'i yotot 12 tz'akb'u[i] 3 witz[a'] ajaw

### Episode 1

It was the tying-stone of the Dusk God and the Dawn God, and the Wind? God.<sup>14</sup> **The** Heavenly Gods and the Earthly Gods with Four Lords and Nine K'awils cultivated /tended (i.e. supervised) the completion of bundle (a cycle of time). **There** were the gods on his headband (of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat) and there were the gods of the engendering of Incenser Lord (with) First Flower? Snake and First 'Double-Serpent'. **K'ahk'** Uti' Chan Yopat, Divine Valley Lord breathed into life the Companion Gods and Sihyaj Chan Yopat.

Episode 1 is composed of four events and either the king or the gods are the actors (indexical). The time frame is the date on which the period-ceremony occurred. The peak event, or the foreground, is the king himself. The finalization is the *k'altun* ritual already referred to in the first event. The poetic device is accentuated through semantic parallel couplets. The first part of the episode has two events beginning with compound nouns and finishing with the gods as agents: they are the owners of time (*uk'altun* X gods, *utzutzpik ukab'jiy* X gods). The first ritual is *k'altun*, which is the most important

<sup>13</sup> The Lunar Series Glyph C has not yet been fully analyzed by epigraphers. From other inscriptions, the morphology of the collocation is composed of the ordinal number (first-*nah* and the 3rdERG+number or *u-2*, *u-3*, *u-4* and so on); then the transitive verb *k'al* "to tie" and follows several head graphemes: the Lunar Maize God, God A, and Underworld Jaguar (Grove 2014). At the end, there are two suffixes, the first one is a nominalizer *-aj* (compare to **u-TZ'AK-AJ**, **u-K'AL-HUN-AJ**, **pi-b'i-na-AJ**) and the second one is an relational construction *-il*. The translation is "first/second/third etc. tying-of the ...." or *nah k'al ... -ajil*.

<sup>14</sup> I have paraphrased the Paddlers Gods as Dusk and Dawn based on the suggestion of Wichmann (2004b). The spellings are NIGHT-**NAH/na** and DAY-**ti**, respectively, and they always occur as a pair, often with another god of which the reading of the first part is unknown and the phonetic complement is **na** (Stuart 2016). The NIGHT-DAY pair also appears as one of the logograms in the **TZ'AK** composite digraph set, used in the distance number formula with the rough translation "adding of" (*utz'akaj*). The Paddlers often appear preceded by the collocation *yatij* "they counted it (the time)", implying that the Paddlers count the time, from night to day and so on. The Paddlers are essentially the gods of time, which is why are common in inscriptions relating to the period-end ceremony.

ceremony of the Classic Maya ruler, in which the king either alone or with assistants tied the commemorative stone. This ritual is part of the periodic theme discussed earlier.

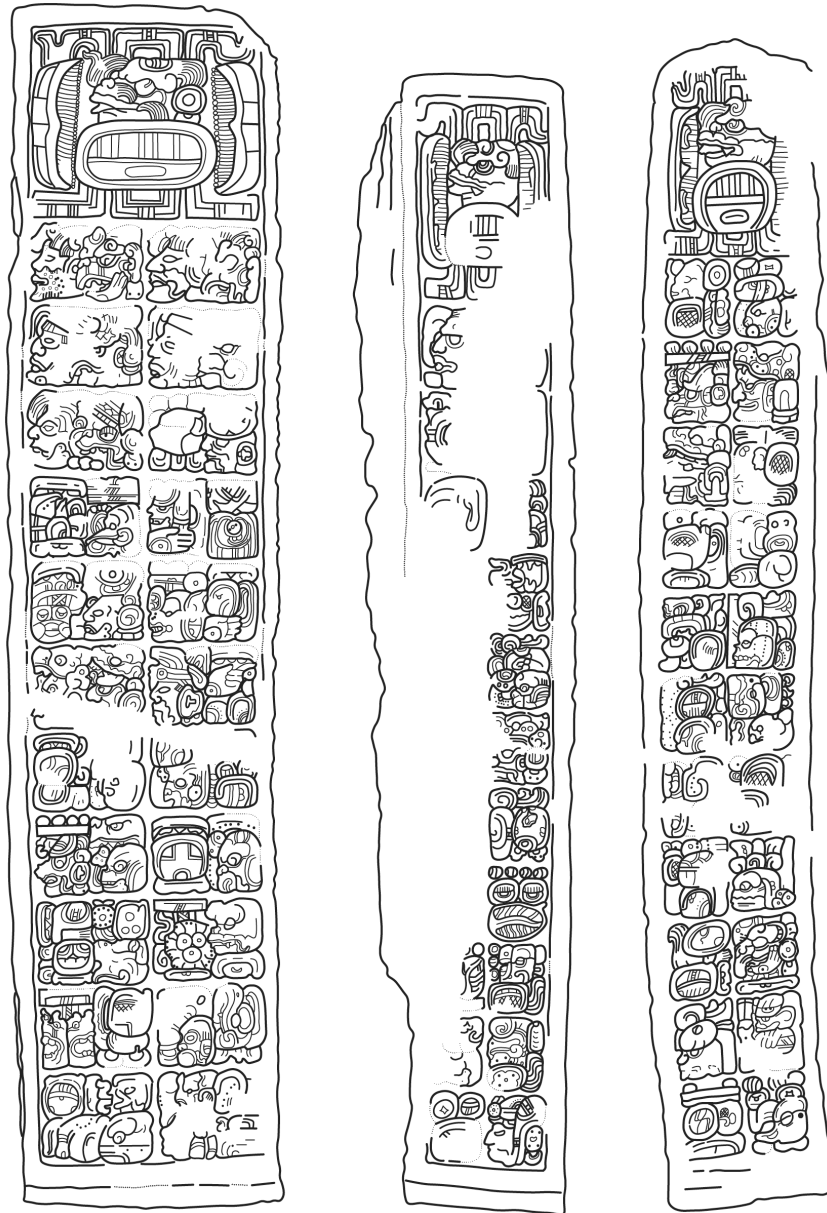


Fig. 14. Inscription of Copan Stela 7 (drawing by P. Bíró after B. Fash).





Time was certainly important to the people of the Classic-period cities, although there were changes in the use of time periods as organizing principles, at least as they were represented in texts. In the periodic theme, the same events, which were connected to different period-ending rituals, such as *k'altun*, *chumtun*, *chok*, *tz'ap lakamtun*, etc., were narrated through definite time periods. The most frequently mentioned period is the *winikhab'* (the twenty-year period called *k'atun* by Classical Yukatek speakers), although this was not the only one celebrated. The above-mentioned events were the focal points of lesser known rituals connected to these period endings, but to the readers or and to the "hearers" of the texts, they could expand these unmentioned parts as they actually saw them or even participated in them. Sometimes more than one event can be recorded in a single text, like the end of a period (*tzutz*), the seating of the *tun* (*chumtun*), the planting of a stela (*tz'ap lakamtun*), the naming of the monument (*uk'ab'a'*) or the scattering of blood by an elite person. The norm is to mention one event, as in the Palenque Temple of the Inscriptions tablets, or several events, as exemplified by various tablets from Pomona. On Copan Stela 7, more than one ritual is mentioned.

The Classic Maya period-ending ceremony was just one of the many rituals observed in Mesoamerica, and the general structure of the process whereby manufactured things are animated has endured to the present. Brian Stross listed seven steps of the ensoulment of a made thing:

1. Purifying, cleaning, and sweeping. These are different words for what might be seen as a single element in the ritual animation and dedication of an artifact...
2. Measuring. To measure a thing is equivalent to giving it a place in space (and time), assigning it boundaries that can be defined in other terms...
3. Naming. To assign a name to a thing is equivalent to giving the thing a place in the human mind, thus assigning it mental boundaries. Names may be given to parts of a thing in replication of the process of manufacture, as a metaphorical process of gestation and birth.
4. Assigning guardianship. To assign guardianship of a thing means to give it an owner and protector—a deity, parent, or owner...
5. Transferring or transmitting "animateness." To transfer to the manufactured item the quality of "animateness" from a human, animal, or other living entity is equivalent to bringing an artifact to life—in other words, giving it a soul...
6. Clothing the thing. To clothe something is equivalent to giving it protection by means of a covering or shield that functions also as a boundary between the thing and the rest of the natural world...
7. Feeding. To feed something is equivalent to maintaining its animateness. All that is animate must be sustained or maintained with some sort of feeding (Stross 1998:32–33 in Carrasco 2005:49–50).

The text of Stela 7 (and later also on Stela P) lists five of the seven steps mentioned by Stross, namely purification (by blood), naming (birth), the assignment of guardianship (by the gods and the kings), transfer or transmission of "animacy" (breath, see below), clothing the thing (tying), and feeding it (with smoke and harvest for the gods, see below). In this text, the lexemes were sometimes used metaphorically, such as "birth" for the naming of the stela or "feeding," embodied in the title *ch'ahom*, literally "he who does the smoke."





a



b

Fig. 16. Ja-k'a-ni-wa expression on Copan Stela 7: a. photo by B. Riese, b. drawing by P. Bíró.

After the double-headed serpent grapheme, the text continues with a unique verb “he breathed them into life” (*jak'niw*<sup>16</sup> *chit*<sup>17</sup> *k'uh*) (Fig. 16). The “breath” is one of the above-listed steps of the

<sup>16</sup> Although the drawing is unclear, photographic documentation confirms a reading of this block as: **ja-k'a-ni-wa**. The lexeme *jak'niw* is composed of the transitive root *jak'*-, the *-n-* intransitivizer and *-Vw* antipassive suffix (Barbara MacLeod, pers. comm. March 2015). The root in Modern Mayan languages means as “to drown, breathe” (Kaufman 2003:1333):

pM \*jaq'

YUK *jak'* v comer como golosina

MOP *ja'kmi* (comiendo o bebiendo) se ahogo

pCh \*jäk' vt to pant, sigh, choke

CHR *jak'* v respirar

CHL *jak'* v aspirar

MAM *jaq'* vi ahogarse

MAMt *matx ja7q'b'i* se ahogo

MAMo *ma jaq'wi* se ahogo

*Jak'niw chit k'uh* is an antipassive object incorporation construction, and the translation would be “the companion gods got breathed into life” (see Lacadena García-Gallo 2003).

<sup>17</sup> The lexeme is *chit* and usually occurs in three contexts: 1) in the *chit k'uh* expressions; 2) the long name of the Water Lily Serpent as *yax chit witz' nah chan/kan* and 3) the father-of-son expression. I suggest that the *chit k'uh* expression at Copan is connected to the Water Lily Serpent, and by the context, it refers to the gods who emerge from the mouth of the snake (see Colas 2004:192–195; Prager 2013:518–525). At Copan, the full name of the Water Lily Serpent (see Stela P and Altar J' in Schele 1987; 1990b) is **YAX-CHIT-ta TIL-wi JUN-na WITZ'-na ka-KAN/TIL-wi-CHIT-ta-K'UH** and also there is an example of the text of the eaves of Palenque as **YAX-CHIT TIL-la CHIT-K'UH** (see the Table 80 in Prager 2013:521). Another epithet of the Water Lily Serpent has an undeciphered grapheme, which it is



Mesoamerican ritual animation process, and here the ruler has made the inanimate thing into a living object. This object is the ceremonial bar or Chit K'uh Sihyaj Chan Yopat. It is indeed crucial that here for the first time, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat used in his crown-name (*k'alhun k'ab'a'*) a god name (Yopat). In this way, he followed the northeastern Peten pattern in which kings employed a theonym in their name after their accession.

The name of the god has an etymology of *yop* "leaf" and an unknown suffix *-at*, the same suffix in *chap-at* "centipede." This creature is the symbol of the aquatic realm where maize sprouts in the form of the Maize God, and the rulers of the Classic period often wear a headdress depicting the Water Lily Serpent as a symbol of their control over agricultural fertility.

The first episode concludes with the king's name and title, following a clause in which he is given the title *ch'ahom*, literally "he of the cast smoke," a reference to feeding the monument and the gods.

The text of Episode 1 is embodied on the front of Stela 7 in the form of the crown on top of the jaguar head, which probably refers to the seventh or tenth ruler (**Fig. 13c**). It is also embodied in the ceremonial bar the king holds. This bar represents the Water Lily Serpent that emits gods (*chit k'uh*) when the ruler breathes them into life.

I refer to episode 2 as the "itinerary procession," in which the ruler visited different places and conjured the gods, likely in the context of additional events that composed the period-ending ceremony.

### Episode 2

... .. First Count Bundle ... .. K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat ... in the presence of gods ... the Dusk God and the Dawn God, in the presence of the gods, the Four Youths and Four Lords, the Three Cotton Place Lords/Living Sprouts, the 10+ Eastern? Lords, and the Three Bloodletters?.

...First Lords and First Gods, Nine K'awils, the Dusk God and the Dawn God... accompanied him. It was the harvest of ... ..Five Pix/Xip Nal, of the Heavenly Gods and the Earthly Gods. They were born the ... Youths? from water, from ... with his formed gods, with his formed stone the First? Snake at Wintik city, at... Cornfield, here, at the dwelling of the 12th successor of the Three Mountain Water Lord.

Unfortunately, this part of the stela is broken or eroded; therefore it is difficult to know the exact meanings of the events described in the text. However, the rest of the inscription narrates that the ruler did an unknown ritual in front of (*yichnal*) several gods including the Paddlers and the patron gods, composed of the Four Young Ones, Four Lords, and Nine K'awils. It is likely that the eroded signs were verbs, perhaps including the derived transitive term *yatij* "he counts it," which it usually connected to the Tzik Yax Pik entity (see Copan Stelae 2 and 12).

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composed of double-hands, a head, and the **HA'-EK'** logograms. The *chit* is perhaps a reverential title for father (like *kit* in Yukatek) or perhaps related to colonial Yukatek *ket* "cosa igual, pareja" (Barrera Vásquez, et al. 1980:521; first suggested by Barbara MacLeod). This epithet seems to refer to the two gods who come out of the double-headed serpent.

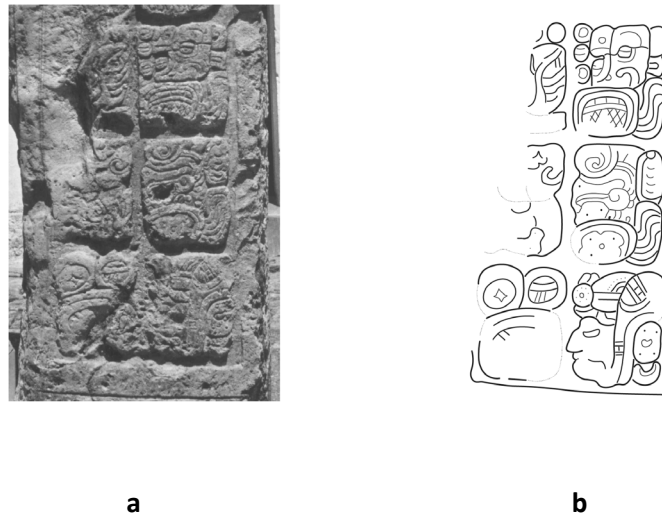


Fig. 17. Final blocks from Copan Stela 7, episode 2: **a.** photo by B. Riese, **b.** drawing by P. Bíró.

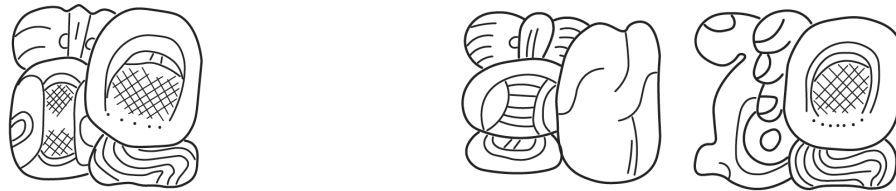


Fig. 18. Toponyms from Copan Stela 10 (drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

At the end of the first part of episode 2 there is a list of numbered entities: 3-**a-ya-pa-ni**, 10+ **e?-le-K'IN-ni** and 3-**CH'AB'?-b'i?-ya** (Fig. 17). The last two possibly translate as 10+ Eastern Lords and Three Bloodletters (from *ch'ahb'* “to fast, to create” and the instrumental suffix *-ib'*, so literally “instrument to do fasting”, and *-iy* demonstrative suffix).<sup>18</sup> The first expression is composed of the number three and *ay(a)* and *pan*. This *pan* compound occurs at Copan and Naj Tunich in several compound nouns: **ma-ja?-pa-ni**, **ma-ko-pa-ni**, **tzo-ko-he-ke-pa-ni** and **mo-no-pa-ni/na** (Fig. 18b). At Copan, the expressions are always in the context of lists of gods, and recently the author and Albert Davletshin (Bíró and Davletshin 2011) have proposed that the words were borrowed from Proto-Nawan. Noting that *pan* might come from Nawa *pan* “on the surface of, for or at a particular time” or *pa:n-tli* “flag, banner”

<sup>18</sup> David Mora-Marín (pers. comm. 2017) has suggested that instead of *ch'ahb'ib'* the collocation would be *ch'ahb'* where the **b'i** is a phonetic compliment to the previous logogram.





(Karttunen 1983:186–187), it is possible to interpret these collocations as toponyms. Thus, *ayapan* comes from two morphemes, where the first lexeme is Proto-Nawan \**a:ya*: “cotton or henequen cloak, blanket,” and the meaning would be “three cotton place” (Dakin 1982:122).

Alternatively, the etymology may come from the verb *ayan* “to exist” and *pan* “sprout” [Ch’orti’ in Wisdom (1950), suggested by MacLeod and Sheseña (2013)]. The translation would be “three living sprouts” or “three born sprouts.”<sup>19</sup> If the Mayan solution is correct, then it is possible that the mask in the belt area of the royal portrait on Stela 7, a head of the Maize God with a tuft of hair, could represent the young sprouts. Later stelae, among them Stela P, depict three similar masks attached to the king’s belt.

The other expressions from Copan Stela 13 are difficult to find in Mayan languages. *Makopan* is perhaps related to *makom*<sup>20</sup> “blackberry” (Modern Tzotzil; Laughlin 1975:227). *Tzokhekpan* might be related to *tzoc-otz* “sansapote” (Ch’olti’; Morán 2004) and *hek* “strip, branch, corn leaf, split off” (Modern Tzotzil, Laughlin 1975:149-150) or from Yucatec (Barrera Vásquez, et al. 1980:195-196), where *hek* has entries including: “classifier particle,” “corn leaf,” and “put something on another.”

After the completion of one side of the stela, the next side follows again with a list of gods beginning with the reconstructed formula *yax k’uh yax ajaw* “first gods, first lords,” followed by the patron deities: Nine K’awils, the Paddlers, **ma-?-pa-ni**, and another sprouting plant.

Next is the collocation **u-k’a-ja-li/uk’ajil**, which is a possessed noun composed of the 3rd-person ergative pronoun plus either the transitive verb *k’aj* “conocer, reconocer, recorder” (“to know, to recognize, to

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<sup>19</sup> From Colonial Tzotzil (Laughlin and Haviland 1988:156), from the root ‘oy “be, have, possess,” some examples relevant to *ayan* may be:

<i>'ayan</i> , iv.	be born, be created, <i>nacer</i> .
<i>'ayan butzuy</i>	grow feather crest, <i>encrestado con cresta de pluma</i> .
<i>'ayan tzalub</i>	grow a comb, <i>encrestado como gallo o gallina de castilla</i> .
<i>'ayan k’op</i>	have subject be revived, <i>recrearse algo</i> .
<i>'ayanajes</i> , tv.	to supply, <i>proveer</i> .
<i>'ayanajesbil</i>	supplied, <i>proveido</i> .
<i>'ayanel</i>	being, natural state, social standing. (1) <i>estado o grado en que esta cada uno</i> , (2) <i>natural cosa</i> , (3) <i>sustancia</i> .
<i>'ayanel</i>	<i>Christmas, navidad</i> .
<i>j'ayanajesvanej</i>	<i>provider, proveedor</i> .

<sup>20</sup> The collocation **ma-ko-(ma)** is rare in the inscriptions. Apart from Stelae 7 and 10, it occurs on Copan Stelae A and H (**xa-ma-na ma-ko-ma** and **4-TE'-ma-ko-ma**, respectively) and on the South Door East Panel of Structure 11 (**4-ma-ko-ma**) as one of the guardians (*koknom*) of the city. A single example occurs on Calakmul Stela 51 (**ma-ko-ma**). From these examples it is clear that the referent of this expression (**ma-ko-ma**) is usually grouped in sets of four and is associated with the cardinal direction north, although other directions might be possible.

remember”; Yutatek) or the Proto-Ch’olan root *k’äj*, a transitive verb meaning “to harvest corn,” and the nominal derivation *-VI* (Fig. 19). Therefore, there are at least two options to translate *k’ajil*: either “memory, recording” or “harvest” [in colonial Yukatek *k’ahal* “memoria del que se acuerda de alguno” in Barrera Vásquez et al. (1980:363); see *k’äj* in Kaufman and Norman (1984:123)].<sup>21</sup> The context of the second proposal is better, for as a consequence of listing gods and sprouts, there could be a harvest of the Five Pix/Xip<sup>22</sup> Nal (lords) and the heavenly and earthly gods.

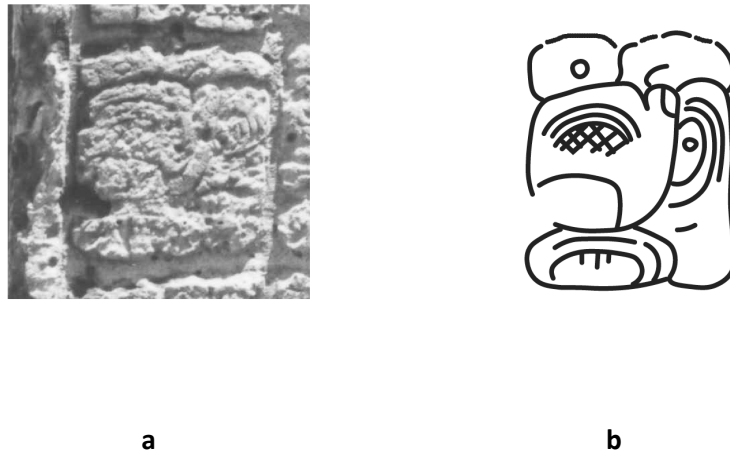


Fig. 19. U-k’a-ja-li expression from Copan Stela 7: a. photo by B. Riese, b. drawing by P. Bíró.

The last event of episode 2 is a peak event where the princes (maybe the Four Young gods) were born from the water and the made-gods (the effigies) and the stone Water Lily Serpent appear in the house of the ruler. The iconography of Stela 7 helps us to understand this event. Underneath the belt area, two serpents undulate downward toward the feet of the king. On the upper part of one of them appears the water symbol, indicating that the animal lives in an aquatic region. This creature is again the Water Lily Serpent, and the gods are presumably born from its mouth. The *pat-tun* might refer to the event when the artists carved the stela; therefore it specifically alluded to the two carved serpents.

As poetic features, the peak event is composed of two couplets (*ta...tu...*), and at the end highlights the persona of the ruler with the independent pronoun *ha’i* (Fig. 20), as in:

*si[h]yaj ? ch’ok*  
*ta ? ta ?*

<sup>21</sup> The word appears only on Caracol Stela 22 at the end of the narrative. After the period-ceremony ritual (*k’altun*), the text concludes with the expression *i k’aj* “was recorded, was made public.”

<sup>22</sup> Apart from this example (**HO’-xi-pi-NAL**), it appears on Copan Stela 13 as **HO’-pi-xi-NAL**. From these two examples it is impossible to choose the transliterations between *xip* and *pix*, and for this reason it remains untranslated.

*tupat? k'uh? tupat? utun? nah ? chan  
 wi[n]tik chan ch'en ? nal  
 ha'i yotot 12 tz'akb'ul 3 witz'a' ajaw*



a



b

**Fig. 20.** Peak event from inscription of Copan Stela 7: **a.** photo by B. Riese, **b.** drawing by P. Bíró.

The event took place in Wintik, specifically in the house of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat. The narrative of Stela 7 ends with a reference to the king as the successor (tz'akb'ul) of the Three Mountain Water Lord, K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo'. This discursive element is later used on other stelae of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat (Stela P) and by the next generation of kings.

Viewed as a comprehensive narrative composed of image and text, Stela 7 is primarily concerned with fertility and the appropriate rituals performed by the ruler for the gods. Here, explained in more detail than in any other instance of Classic Maya stela discourse, the king provides nourishment for the gods in the form of maize seeds as part of the period-ending ceremony. The stela image and accompanying motifs from the head of the king through the ceremonial bar and the belt area are aligned with the content of the text. Importantly, none of the ruler's biography appears in the inscription. This special type of discourse for stelae recurs in the king's next monument.

### Stela P (Fig. 21)

Stela P, which was “made animate” ten years after Stela 7, features an almost intact text. It is therefore useful to examine its discursive pattern in comparison to the earlier stela.

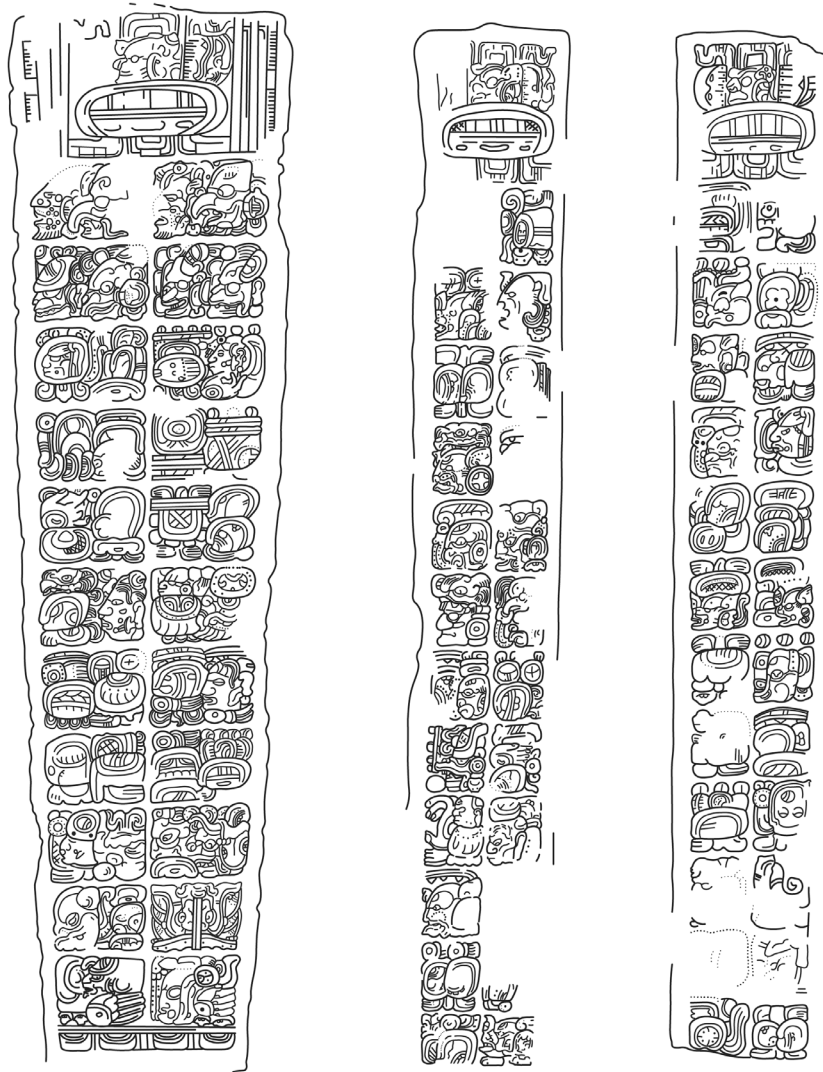


Fig. 21. Inscription of Copan Stela P (drawing by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

? WINIK-HAB' 9 PIK 9 WINIKHAB' 10 HAB' 0 WINIK 0 K'IN 2 AJAW AH-TI'-HUN-na 9-hu-li-ya 3-  
 K'AL-?-ja ?-u-K'UH-K'AB'A' 20-10 13-K'AN-JAL-wa TZUTZ-ja TAN-na LAM-ma-LAKAM-TUN-ni u-  
 KAB'-ji-ya JUN/IXIM ?-JUN-WITZ' u-PAT-ji b'a-AJAW-wa u-u-ti-ya-u-u-ti IL-ji tu-CH'AB' ti-  
 AK'AB'-li 4-WINIK-HAB'-ch'a-ho?-ma K'AK'-TI' CHAN-na-YOPAT TIL?-wi CHIT-K'UH-ta 'DOUBLE-  
 SERPENT' ja-la K'AL-la XOK?-? K'UH-?-K'AL-YOP-T533-la



# nu-tzu-NAL-la ch'u?-pi-AJAW NOJ-la KAL-ma u-TZ'AK-AJ u-B'AH u-# ta-K'UH PADDLER 1  
PADDLER 2 MAM-K'UH u-SAK-ku-K'UH 4--AJAW-wa 9--K'AWIL YAX-K'AL-ku-yu-K'UH? ?-? ?-?-si  
u-B'AH #ti-? ti-? #ku-?-# yu-tu-ku ch'u?-pi-CH'EN-na

u-PAT-na-ja ?-a-?-ni 3-wi-ti-ki u-CH'EN-na-ja ch'u?-pi-CHAN-CH'EN u-B'AH-ji-u-CH'AB' YAX-  
K'UH YAX-AJAW-wa wa-ku-xa?-ja ki-li-ku-mi ma-pa-tz'i-ni k'a-lo-tz'i ma-la 3-a-ja-la a-AJAW-wa  
u-TZ'AK-b'u-li 3-WINIKHAB' ch'a-ho-ma K'INICH YAX-K'UK'-MO' [ch'u?-pi] a-AJAW-wa OCH-  
K'IN-ni KAL-ma

? winikhab' 9 pik 9 winik-hab' 10 hab' 0 winik 0 k'in 2 ajaw [y]ah[al] uti'hun[il] 9 huly u-3 k'al-?-  
ajil ?-? uk'uh[ul] k'ab'a' 30 13 k'anj[al]w tzu[h]tzaj ta[h]nlam[al] lakam tun ukab'iy jun/ixim? ?  
jun witz' upat[i]j b'ah ajaw u[h]tiy u[h]ti il[i]j tuch'a[h]b'[il] ti [y]a[h]k'ab'[i] 4 winikhab' ch'ahom  
k'a[h]k' [u]ti' chan yopat til[i]w? chit k'uh ta? ? jal k'alxok? ? k'uh[ul] ? k'al yop ?[na]l # nutz nal  
ch'up? ajaw noj[o]l kal[o]m[te']

utz'akaj ub'ah u-# ta k'uh ? ? mam k'uh usaku[n] k'uh 4te' ajaw 9te' k'awil yax k'al kuy k'uh? ?-?-  
?-?-is ub'ah # ti ? ti #k-?-# yutuk ch'up? ch'en

upatn[a]j[al] ?-a-?-n 3 wi[n]tik uch'en[a]j[al] ch'up? chan ch'en ub'aj uch'a[h]b'[il] yax k'uh yax  
ajaw wakuxaj kilcum mapatz'in k'alotz'in mala' 3 ajal ajaw utz'akb'ul 3 winikhab' ch'ahom  
k'i[h]nich yax k'uk' mo' ch'up? ajaw ochk'in kal[o]m[te']

### Episode 1

**Ixim ? Jun** Witz' cultivated/ tended the completion of the half-diminished banner-stone. **The** First Lord built it. It happened that they (i.e. the gods) saw amid the engendering of the Four K'atun Incenser K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat (with) the Burning? Companion Gods with the 'Double-Serpent' and (with) the tied weave shark? [headband] ? and the tied divine ? leaf ? cob ... the put-together-cobs (on) the Valley Lord, South Kalomte'.

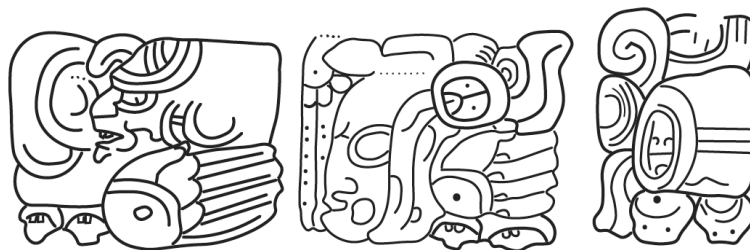
Episode 1 on Stela P, similar to that of Stela 7, narrates a period-ending ceremony in which the first event is supervised by the Water Lily Serpent. Then follows the formation of the stela and the engendering formula conducted the king himself. The epithets of the king include the four *winikhab'* incenser, the valley? lord, and the southern *kalomte'*. Interestingly, the gods witnessed the ritual in which the ruler conducted auto-sacrifice. The text mentions the ceremonial bar's name with the burning Companion Gods (the Paddlers), which are represented on the front of the stela. The *uhtiy uhti* (it had happened, it happened) collocation focuses on the following event, in which the ruler was the only participant in this ritual.

The text is followed by four glyph blocks (one of them eroded) that until present have not been analyzed by scholars. The first two collocations have the same spelling pattern in which the first half consists of various graphemes followed by a second half composed of the logogram **K'AL** holding other graphemes (Fig. 22): ja-la K'AL-la XOK?-? K'UH?-K'AL-YOP-T533-la #nu-tzu-NAL-la.





a

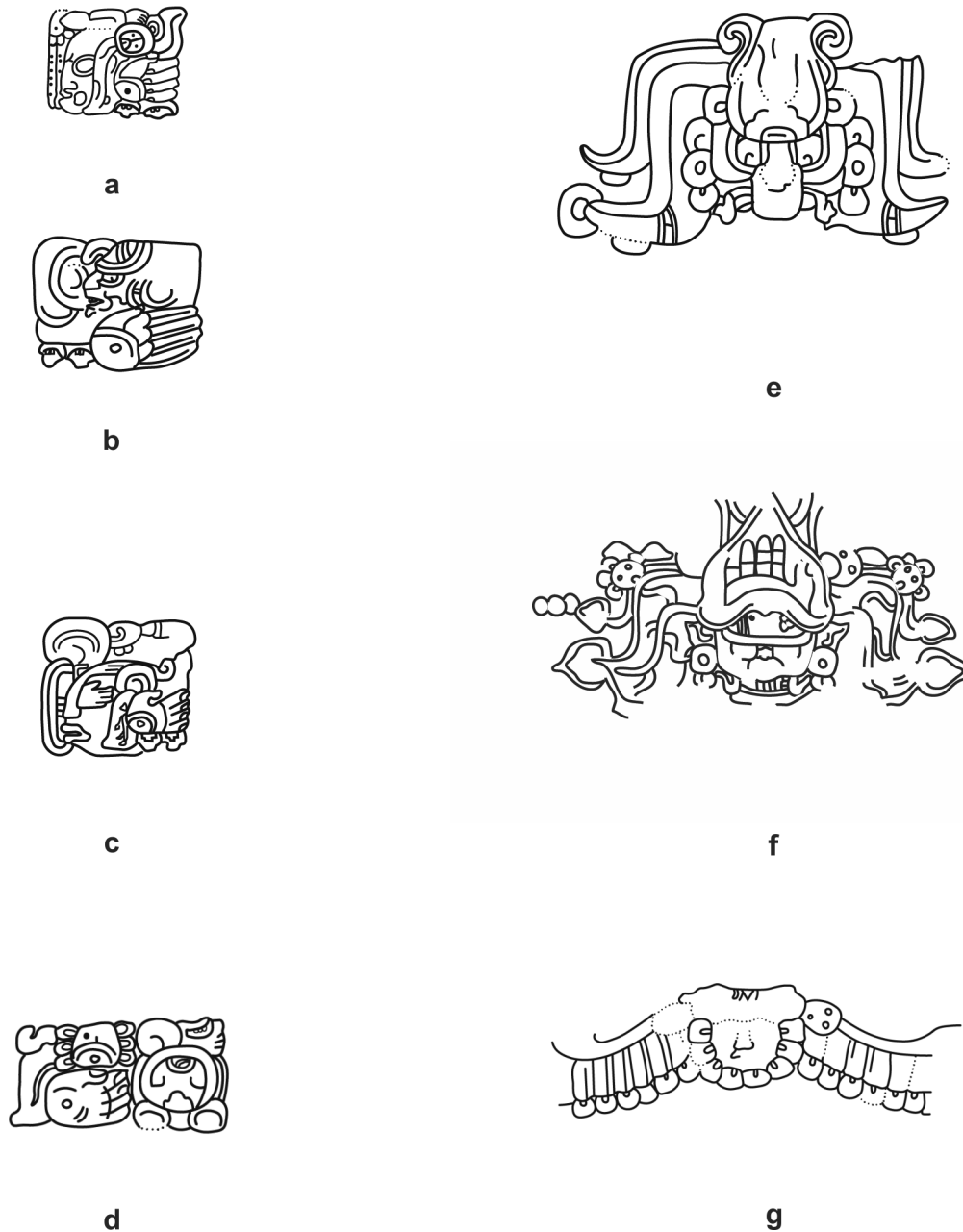


b

Fig. 22. Headdress expressions on Copan Stela P: a. photo by A. Tokovinine, b. drawing by P. Bíró.

It is crucial to note that in the second block, the sign on the top of the **K'AL** grapheme is the Anthropomorphic Jester God (Foliated T533; Fig. 23a). Therefore, the three glyph blocks likely name each Jester God represented on the front of the stela above the K'inich Yax K'uk' Mo' complex. Although in other inscriptions, the three Jester Gods are called collectively Ux Yop Hun or "Three Leafy Headbands," here on Copan Stela P, the text lists them separately. In comparison with other examples (*k'alhun*), I believe that the ordering of the graphemes begins with the *k'al* "to tie," followed by the specific name of the headband:

- Stela P **K'AL-ja-la-XOK?-?** (Fig. 23b)
- Stela P **K'UH?-K'AL-YOP-T533-la** (Fig. 23a)
- Stela 2 **NAH-PH9-NALK'AL-YOP-NAL-la** (Fig. 23c)
- Stela 12 **K'UH?-PH9 K'UH?-#**
- Stela 5 **K'AL-yo-xo WINIK-NAL-la** (Fig. 23d)



**Fig. 23.** Correspondence of headdress references in texts and images: **a**, **b**, and **e**. Copan Stela P; **c**, and **f**. Copan Stela 2; **d**, and **g**. Copan Stela 5 (all drawings by P. Bíró after B. Fash).

In these contexts, the names of the headband always occur in the sentence after the double-headed creature's name. In three instances they end with the **NAL** "corn cob" term. On Stela P it is reconstructed as *k'al k'uh[ul]? yop T533 [nal]*, and perhaps the Stela 2 headband was *k'al T533 nal*. In front of west side of Stela 5 (**Fig. 23g**), the headband features a human face surrounded by petal-like beads, and in Yucatec (Barrera Vásquez, et al. 1980:980) *yoxil* is glossed as *capullo*, meaning "cocoon, bud, pod." The Stela 5 headband, then, may be translated as "tying-of-the pod/flower-man cob."



On Stela P (**Fig. 23b**), the first headband is composed of *jal* “weave” (Proto-Cholan; Kaufman and Norman 1984:121) and the front of the monument clearly shows the king wearing a headdress fronted by *xok* or the Piscine Jester God. The second one is *k'al k'uh[ul] ? yop T533 [na]* and the third one presumably would appear in the following, eroded block. The fourth block (**Fig. 22b**) has a collocation **nu-tzu-NAL-la/nutz nal**, and *nutz* is found in Yukatek as “encajar una cosa en otra, y juntar encajando, reunir las cabezas de los tizones que arden para avivar el fuego, reunirse” (Barrera Vásquez, et al. 1980:591). The translation of this headband, therefore, would be “put together the cobs,” which refers to the headband worn by the king in the stela portrait.

Overall, the text of episode 1 is presented on the front of the stela: the king wears three headbands and the mask of Yax K'uk' Mo', and he holds the double-headed serpent out of which the companion gods (the Paddlers) are born.

### Episode 2

**In** his time there was the image of his engendering with the gods (such as) the Dusk God and Dawn God, the Grandfather Gods and the Elder Brother Gods, the Four Lords and the Nine K'awils, the Tied First Owl God? and ... .. **There** was the image of his engendering with the Dusk God, with the Dawn God... at Yutuk, at the Valley.

**He** formed ... at Three Wintik, he built (or dug out) [the tomb?] at the Valley. **There** was the image of his engendering (with) the First Gods and the First Lords, Falcon ... and Green Snake, Raccoon Lord and Tlalok Lord (from) the Place of the Captives, Place of the Abundance of Corn Lords. **This** was the ordering of the Three K'atun Incenser K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', Valley Lord and Western Kalomte'.

Episode 2 (the “itinerary procession”) is a magnificent narrative about the engendering of gods at different places throughout of the valley, as if the king revitalized the entire settlement. The verse construction again has several couplets, and the sentences are parallel, as in the example of Stela 7. This trope serves to emphasize the king's actions as part of the ritual.

The first event repeats the engendering formula, a transitional story of episode 1. The gods are put in a parallel clause, beginning with the Paddlers, who are the Grandfather and Elder Brothers. Then follows the patron number-deities (Four Lords and Nine K'awils), possibly culminating with the triad gods. The formula *umam k'uh usakun k'uh* occurs on Stelae 2 and 12, and the full epithet appears on Stela J where both nouns have the 3rd-person ergative pronouns (Prager 2013:559, table 87). As written on Stela P, the formula indicates that the Paddlers are the gods of the patron deities: the Four Lords, Nine K'awils, Tied First Owl God?. This unusual clause hints at the theology of the Classic Maya, indicating that certain gods, specifically the Paddlers, could be owned by patron deities (Prager 2013:561).

After this clause begins the image-formula (although the block is broken) with the Paddlers, and then the story describes different building events in each part of the settlement. The first barrio is Yutuk--maybe Group 9, the Village, or the plaza where the stela is located (Bíró 2010), followed by Wintik,



probably referring to a structure in the Acropolis zone. Both Yutuk and Wintik, which are part of the settlement of Chup?, which, according to the text, the king seemingly “dug out” (*uch'en[aj][al]*).<sup>23</sup>

In this clause there are two unique expressions. The first has the root *pat*, which is either a verb “to form” or a noun “building,” preceded by the third person singular ergative pronoun *u-*, and followed by two derivational morphemes: the *-n-* intransitivizer and *-aj* thematic suffix (Lacadena García-Gallo 2004). Usually epigraphers have accepted that this *-n-aj* morpheme is added to a non-CVC root transitive verb to derive a passive; however, the ergative pronoun hints that *upatnaj* is a transitive verb, a participle, or a nominal. Indeed, this form of nominal sometimes occurs as in *utz'ihb'najal* “the painting/writing of,” or *yuxuln/wajal* “the sculpture of,” etc. Therefore, by analogy with the above examples, I reconstruct *u-pat-n-aj-a[l]* and *u-ch'en-n-aj-a[l]* and translate these terms as “the formation of” and “the digging of” (see Lacadena García-Gallo 2004:186-191). Basically, they are a semantic couplet referring to the process of construction.

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<sup>23</sup> In Ch'orti' (Wisdom 1950:719):

ch'endar	hole, burrow, grave, vat
u ch'endar e ch'o'k	rat hole
u ch'endar e bah	burrow of taltuza
u ch'endar e chamen	grave
u ch'endar e bohnib	dye vat
u ch'endar e tumin	perforation in pendant coin
ch'ener	(coll. form) lines, wrinkles
ch'ener u k'ab	wrinkles of palm
ch'ener u chikin	grooves of ear
ch'enir	hollowed out, empty, open, pertaining to a hole or cavity, living in a hole or cave
ch'enlan	be dug out or concave, indented or cracked
ch'enlan ut e biir	the road's gullies (as after a rain)
ch'enles	dig, excavate, mine, make concave (as the top of a mortar)
e haha'ar u ch'enles e biir	the rain gullies the trail
ch'enk'ah	crack or open up of itself

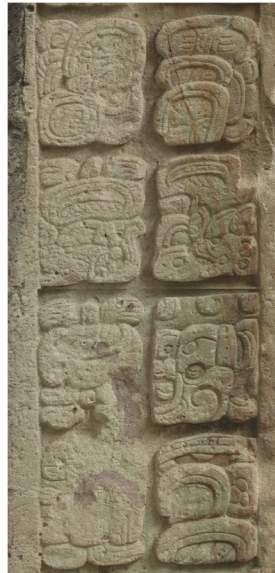


Fig. 24. Segment from Copan Stela P inscription (photo by A. Tokovinine).

Next is the second *ub'ah uch'ahb'* listing Proto-Nawan gods, beginning with the epithets First Gods-First Lords and then the god list: Wakuxaj, Kilikum, Mapatz'in, and K'alotz'i[n]. Following this is the place where they came from: Mala' Ux Ajal "the Place of the Captives, Place of the Abundance of Corn" (Fig. 24; Bíró and Davletshin 2011; Prager and Wagner 2017).<sup>24</sup> The clause ends with a reference to the founder, K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', who has the same epithets as K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, but the cardinal direction is west instead of south:

#### Stela P, first episode

4 winikhab' ch'ahom  
 k'a[h]k' [u]ti' chan yopat  
 ... ch'up?ajaw  
 nojol kal[o]mte'

#### Stela P, second episode

3 winikhab' ch'ahom  
 yax k'uk' mo'  
 ch'up?ajaw  
 ochk'in kal[o]mte'

<sup>24</sup> The reconstruction of the lexemes from Classic Nawatl: Wakuxaj \*wak(tli)... "Falcon..."; Kilikum \*kil(tic)+\*kum(atz) from K'iche'an Proper "Green Snake;" Mapatz'in \*māpa(chin)+\*tz'in(tli) "Lord Raccoon;" K'alotz'in \*tlālo(k)+\*tz'in(tli) "Lord Tlālok;" Mala' \*mal(li)+\*tlah "Place of the Captives," and the last lexeme is a Classic Ch'olan: Many-Elote Place Lords (see Karttunen (1983). The two toponyms supposedly referred to Teotihuacan if the Nawa etymology is correct. Correspondingly for the Maya of the early seventh century, the city was a symbol of war and sustenance as its own murals illustrated.



Episode 2 has a tricolon structure and semantic couplets abound. The peak event is when the king formed and built the monuments, and again, a tricolon emphasizes the toponyms (The tricolon is underlined and the semantic couplet is in **boldface**):

*utz'akaj ub'ah u[ch'ahb'] ta k'uh*

**PADDLER1 PADDLER2**

*umam k'uh usaku[n] k'uh*

**4te' ajaw 9te' k'awil**

*yax k'al kuy ? ? ?-is*

*ub'ah # **ti PADDLER1 ti PADDLER2***

*# yutuk ch'up? ch'en*

*upatnajal a-?-Vn 3 wi[n]tik*

*uch'enajal ch'up? chan ch'en*

*ub'ah uch'a[h]b'*

***yax k'uh yax ajaw***

***wakuxaj kilikum***

***mapatz'in k'alotz'i[n]***

***mala' 3 ajal ajaw***

*utz'akb'ul 3 winikhab' ch'ahom*

*k'i[h]nich yax k'uk' mo'*

***ch'up? ajaw***

***ochk'in kal[o]m[te']***

In this episode, it is difficult to know who the agent is in each clause. The agent of the first formula (*ub'ah...*) should be K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat but the agents of the other two clauses are uncertain. These three actions are expressed as nouns (*upatnajal*, *uch'enajal*, *utz'akb'ul*), followed by the founder, K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo'. Prager and Wagner (2017) have suggested that the last noun, *utz'akb'ul* is an expression in the 'successor of' formula, for example, *ulajun tz'akb'ul* "the tenth ruler after (the founder)", and for this reason they have read the clause before *tz'akb'ul* as the full name of Ruler 2. However, the derived noun hints at other solutions; namely, K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo' would be the agent who was believed to have built the locales such as Yutuk and Wintik and other communities of the valley (embodied by the emblem glyph) during the fifth century.

In rare cases, *tz'akb'ul* refers to the agent who made the rituals, for instance in the inscription of CPN 3033, where after the object (SN9) follows the expression *ha'i tz'akb'ul* and the name of Ruler 8, clearly meaning "the ordering" in this context. In another example from Caracol Stela 16 (D14), the text lists the participants in the ritual, and at the end, after the *tz'akb'ul*, follows the name of Ruler 7 of Copan, as the most important ritualist.

The second option would be that the current ruler, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, enacted the building process in two parts of the settlement in the guise of the founder. On Stela P, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat wears the headdress of K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', thereby becoming an embodiment of the first king of Copan. He also listed the first gods with Proto-Nawan names, as brought by the founder, and he seemingly imitated the building process of K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo' to revitalize or re-found the center with his own patron deities. Another imitation is the usage of the *kalomte'* title, albeit in this case K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat employs the south direction, possibly signifying a more local identity than K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', who had the prestigious title of western *kalomte'*, connected to Teotihuacan.





Other inscriptions from Copan indicate that K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo' came from Caracol and later went to Teotihuacan, receiving foreign objects such as the western K'awil (Stuart 2004, 2008). Then he arrived at Wintik and transformed the Copan Valley settlement, which became one of the most important sites in the Classic Maya Lowlands (Andrews and Fash 2005; Bell, Canuto, and Sharer 2004; Davletshin 2012; Stuart 2004).

When researchers encountered Stela P they noted its peculiar location. The front of the monument is visible, but its back and sides, where the text is located, were squeezed between Structures 10L-23 and 10L-16 in the Western Court (Morley 1920). Apart from Stela P, there are four monuments in the Western Court: Altars H' and I' by K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil and Altars Q and V, which were produced by Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat. Buried monuments include the Xukpi Stone (commissioned by Ruler 2 or 3), the Azul Step, and CPN 3033 (both Ruler 8). Structure 10L-16 is the most important shrine in the city, where the tombs of the founder and potentially the second ruler are located. Structure 10L-16 is adjacent to Altar Q, which lists the kings of Copan; however, in the Western Court, Stela P was the only stela and it was used by each ruler to celebrate various rituals. According to Agurcia Fasquelle and Fash (2005), Stela P was once placed in front of the Rosalila/Azul structure which was for close to a century the principal ancestral shrine at Copan (Agurcia Fasquelle and Fash 2005:209). Later, the building was buried in a termination ritual in which it was covered in a thick coat of stucco followed by a layer of stone.

As discussed above, the headdress of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat on Stela P is composed of a frontal feather bird mask (*yax k'uk' mo'*) and a smaller cross-eyed head with two fangs (*k'inich*), and on the top of it appears the Ux Yop Hun, the symbol of kingship. In Copan Classic-period rulers usually held this headdress bearing either the names of their forebears or their own name. On the Rosalila Temple, the K'inich Yax K'uk' Mo' image appears on its lower panel, in almost the same style as that of Stela P. On the second floor of the temple is the head of K'ihnich Taj Wayab' (the "Hot Torch Dreamer"), one of the deities used by the first Teotihuacan-influenced rulers in the fourth century (e.g. Yax Nu'n Ahin I of Tikal). The name Wi'l Ohl K'ihnich Taj Wayab', the eighth ruler of Copan, is also recorded on the Azul platform fifth step (Stuart 2004).

After the tenth ruler, every king's crown name had a theonym. This alteration of kingly names was paralleled at other cities in the lowlands. Although Rulers 12 to 15 used the K'awil theonym, Ruler 11 and Ruler 16 used Yopat. This pattern hints at different sub-lineages within dynastic family. A similar pattern is known for Piedras Negras and Yaxchilan.

Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat may have emulated K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat by erecting his monuments where the first Yopat-king set up his monuments. It is also possible that he moved the monuments of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat to their current locations in the Acropolis and close to the Village zone. Rulers 13 and 15 used exclusively the Acropolis, Great Plaza, and Hieroglyphic Stairway Court area for stela dedications. It is also likely that Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat "re-founded" the site in memory of the defeated Waxaklajun Ub'ah K'awil, but at the same time he made peace with the king of Quirigua as he went to the city and together with local ruler, K'ahk' Jolow Chan Yopat celebrated the nineteenth *winikhab'* (Looper 2003:196; Martin and Grube 2000:225).

## Discussion



Among the fascinating questions researchers might ask of Classic-period Copan history is what prompted such a change in the stela program, that is, from the only-text bearing stela to the image-and-text version ones? I argue that the historical impetus for this change may be rooted in the demise of Teotihuacan after about 550 C.E. Those Maya sites that remained after Teotihuacan's decline transformed their own art programs in order to highlight their own uniqueness. K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat combined the existing concept of figural stelae and hieroglyphic texts in a unique manner. This novelty parallels the innovative use of a theonym (Yopat) in the king's crown name, following practices established in the courts of the northeastern Peten, Tikal, Caracol, and/or Naranjo. Critical as well was his use of the south *kalomte'* title instead of the west *kalomte'*. Previously, in the Copan (as elsewhere) text the founder, Yax K'uk' Mo' used the west *kalomte'* which in the Early Classic period was connected to the power of Teotihuacan. K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat became a local *kalomte'* in the quadripartite ideal world of the Maya, presenting himself as one of the ideal high lords of the lowlands. He left this legacy to the next kings, the best example being Stela A, where the city stood with three other major sites, Tikal, Calakmul, and Palenque.

Prior to the reign of K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, Copan witnessed a dramatic period of sculptural and architectural destruction. According to a study by Robert Sharer (Rice 2004)(2004), this episode was limited to the decade between 554 and 564 C.E. Sharer proposed that this destruction might have been caused by an internal revolt owing to elite competition, a commoners' rebellion, or perhaps the timed desecration of monuments (Sharer 2004:311-314). He also argued for a pattern of intentional demolition of monuments and architecture at other sites in the Maya lowlands. However, the pattern of building destruction at Copan is distinct from similar instances at other sites.

Another theory by Rice (2004) suggested a K'atun-based scenario for monument destruction at Copan; however, Sharer did not accept the basis of this argument. I have also criticized Rice's model (Bíró 2009; 2012) as have other scholars (see the comments to Rice 2013). Consequently, Rice's approach is unlikely to offer a reasonable explanation of what occurred during this crucial time at Copan.

External causes have also been proposed. For example, a foreign army could have attacked the city and destroyed its monuments, focusing demolition in the main ceremonial centers such as the Acropolis and Group 9, where kings had set up most of the stelae and altars. The timing of this destruction between 554 and 564 C.E. perfectly matches specific episodes of conflict between Tikal and the Kanul (Calakmul) dynasty.

So how was Copan connected politically of the greater Maya realm? The founder of the dynasty at Copan, K'ihnich Yax K'uk' Mo', appears to have come from Caracol (Stuart 2008). Later in the 530s, Copan, under the leadership of Nehn B'ahlam, became involved in the politics of Peten. The Copan king is said to have overseen a ritual recorded on Stela 16 at Caracol, which was a vassal of Tikal. For this reason, it is likely that Copan had at least a friendly relation with Tikal. Although it is still not clear exactly how the destruction of monuments at Copan occurred, it would therefore seem reasonable to suppose that it was somehow related to the fall of Tikal at the hands of the Kanul dynasty. Although I will not delve in details, this event sequence would have begun sometime around 508, when the Tikal ruler Wak Chan K'awil was born (Martin 2003; 2004; 2005). Only a few months after this, Wak Chan K'awil's father, Chak Tok Ihch'ak II, died, and intriguingly, his death was recorded at distant Tonina (Martin and Grube 2000:37). Another piece of this puzzle is the capture of Chak Tok Ihch'ak II's *yajawte'* (war leader) by Yaxchilan just thirteen days after his death. Presumably Tikal conducted a military



campaign into the western Maya region, arranged to support an allied state, probably Piedras Negras. In 510, the king of Piedras Negras traveled to Teotihuacan to receive a sacred object (Bíró 2011). After Chak Tok Ich'ak II's death, a royal woman ascended to the throne at Tikal in 511, a very rare event in the Classic period. On Tikal Stela 12, however, a ruler named Kalomte' B'ahlam has the title "the 19th in the line" succession formula, indicating that the queen partnered him in governance (Martin 2003; Martin and Grube 2000:38-39).

The 'joint rulers' remained in power until at least until 527, after which there is a gap of ten years in the historical record at Tikal. The next king, Wak Chan K'awil, returned to Tikal from exile and subsequently became a powerful figure; for instance, he supervised the accession of a new Caracol ruler in 553 (on Altar 21; Martin 2005; Martin and Grube 2000:39). At the nearby city of Naranjo, the king's accession was supervised by a Kanul ruler in 546, indicating the growing possibility of conflict between the two hegemonic powers and its subsequent spread throughout the lowlands.

At Copan, after only two years in power, the 9th ruler was dead and the next king's accession was one month after the Caracol king's accession. There is no evidence that Wak Chan K'awil supervised the Copan ruler; however it is possible that Copan at this time joined the Teotihuacan group which formed after the arrival of the Teotihuacan general Sihyaj K'ahk's entrada at Tikal. This "New Order," dubbed by Martin and Grube (2000:29-31), refers to the kings who had connections to the mighty metropolis in the Mexican Highlands, either through pilgrimage to Teotihuacan or by accepting its supremacy. In the Maya lowlands, the most powerful city of the New Order was Tikal. When Teotihuacan saw a period of upheaval in the middle of the sixth century, the Kanul House based at Calakmul took advantage of this situation to disrupt the New Order.

This systemic change between the Early and Late Classic periods during the mid-sixth century affected the lowlands so dramatically that epigraphers formerly referred to this period as the "hiatus" in order to explain the gap in production of texts at a number of cities (Proskouriakoff 1950:111–112; Willey 1974). Contrary to Guenter (2002), I believe that there was indeed a hiatus, or at least a period where an unusual number of destruction events occurred at various sites, all connected to the collapse of the Teotihuacan New Order. This power shift presumably triggered internal and external conflicts among the Maya polities in the early to mid-sixth century. This was especially focused in the western region and in the northeastern Peten amongst the sites allied to the Kanul and Tikal houses. Despite a lack of inscriptions at these sites, events recorded at sites such as Yaxchilan, Tonina, and Caracol allow for partial reconstructions of the power shift. From the viewpoint of modern researchers, it appears that at the onset of the Late Classic period, Kanul rulers wrested the scepter of power from Tikal.

This political shift had implications for sculptural style. Proskouriakoff (1950:111) pointed out changes in the sculptural style of this time period. For example, "the pose of the principal figure on stelae was changed when the figure stands with both feet pointing in the same direction to one in which the feet are shown as pointing outward in opposite directions where the torso is in front view." Additionally, the dominant stucco mask programs of the Preclassic and Early Classic periods, featured on the facades of monumental architecture, were abandoned in favor of monuments placed in central plazas where they presented residents with a direct image of the ruler impersonating the gods and ancestors.

Whatever the reason for monument destruction at Copan, by the time of Ruler 10, the city had begun to renew itself. In 564, Ruler 10 erected Stela 9 in Group 9, which corresponded to the most mutilated part



of the settlement. It is likely that Stela 9 was the same class of monument as the early stelae, although it is unknown if it had a figure or only inscriptions.

Ruler 11, K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, combined the early figural-style monument from the Peten and neighboring Quirigua with the early text-style monument of Copan. The best example of this is to compare Stelae 7 and P with the earlier Quirigua Monuments U and 26, considering both the iconography, the style, and the inscriptions (Looper 2003:39-46). Although these two Quirigua stelae, which date to the late fifth century, have a wrap-around composition, the figure posture is similar to Copan stelae, where the figure is frontal and holds a ceremonial bar. The headdress on Quirigua Monument 26 is composed of the three Jester Gods (the piscine, the anthropomorphic, and avian forms). With several additions, this iconography was renewed by K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat in his stelae and was followed by his successors. The texts of the early Quirigua monuments are, however, fundamentally different from Copan; they are short and do not describe the apparel of the king.

This combination of archaic style of the previous era and the textual description of the king's rituals involving headdresses became the quintessential image-text formula at Copan during the Late Classic. If the text of Stela P in fact narrates the major renovation of the settlement after its destruction, then this act of urban renewal by K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat justifies his use of the southern *kalomte'* title.

## Conclusion

In this article I have revisited two monuments of the Copan king K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat (ruled 578-629) who lived during the threshold period when the Teotihuacan hegemonic state was in the process of collapse. With these monuments, he transformed the image of the king in relation to his city. Through careful analysis of the style and iconography of these monuments, together with their hieroglyphic texts, it has been possible to make several new conclusions. I have demonstrated that the genre of the Copan stela text during this period is a description of the image of the king on the front. Later generations imitated this format of text until the penultimate ruler of Copan. I have proposed that the Jester-God crown is mentioned in the text by three different names and that the Maya referred to it as *nutz nal* "united cobs." The stelae also narrate the ceremonial processional route of the kings. While K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat employed one monument in each *k'atun* festival, his successor, K'ahk' Uti' Witz' K'awil, once erected eight stelae to celebrate a single ceremonial cycle in 652.

The kings of Copan designed monuments combining text genres and frontal poses prior to K'ahk' Uti' Chan Yopat, but he formalized it, establishing patterns of form and iconography that were imitated by later kings. Oddly, Copan texts almost never directly refer to war or royal lineage. Contrary to Baudez's (1994) belief that the text does not explain the image, the text indeed describes the costume of the kings from the head to the belt area. Moreover, it describes the ceremonies during which the king wore these items.

This systemic change of the stela composition occurred in the context of the Early/Late Classic transition period in the Maya lowlands. It is my belief that after Teotihuacan began to collapse, each Maya polity tried to adjust to the ongoing wave of hegemonic wars that subsequently erupted in the central lowlands. In the case of Copan, the new kings claimed to be the heir of the already disintegrated New Order of Teotihuacan and Tikal.



As Barbara Fash (2004:261) pointed out, “Ironically, the Teotihuacan artistic and theological tradition is much more visible in the art of Copan after the fall of the Central Mexican city than when it was in power.” This process emerged in the lowlands during the early seventh century (Stone 1989), but at Copan, K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat harkened to the ancient founder with his Teotihuacan gods. K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat also rebuilt the city after the destruction of its shrines and the texts. He opted to employ a neo-archaistic style and texts in order to commemorate the period-ending festival. K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat was also the first ruler at Copan to use the divine crown name Yopat; or better to say, he was the first god-king at Copan, a pattern that emulated the dynasties of the northeastern Peten. His achievements crumbled after 140 years of development when Yax Pasaj Chan Yopat—ironically using the same theonym—decided to revert back to the prior formats self-representation, even creating ornate altars in the plaza that emulated neighboring Quirigua. However, this is a different story suitable for another article.

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