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Kukulkan's Realm

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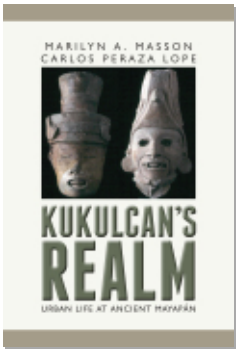

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Politics and Monumental Legacies

Carlos Peraza Lope and
Marilyn A. Masson

> "He shall declare his lordship. Perhaps not merely [or in vain?] did he raise himself to chieftainship, to priesthood, likewise to captaincy, during his reign, on his throne, on his mat."
>
> —Roys (1962:44), in reference to a Mayapán lord of K'atun 9 Ahau, AD 1303–1323

The topic of Postclassic Maya political structure has been studied extensively. Contact Period documentary accounts offer intriguing details and scholarly attention has focused on the changes that contrast political systems of this period with those of earlier Maya intervals (e.g., Roys 1957; Schele and Freidel 1990; Fox 1987; Schele and Mathews 1998; Jones 1998; Masson 2001a; Masson 2001b; Masson, Hare, and Peraza Lope 2006; Ringle and Bey 2001; Ringle 2004; Restall 2001; Sabloff 2007). This chapter provides an overview of historical and archaeological data that reflect aspects of Mayapán's modes of governance. As a result of recent research, the city's political organization can now be viewed more diachronically. Here we consider new findings within the framework of the foundation of the political capital and the rise to power of the Mayapán state. Archaeological chronology building has contributed significantly to this inquiry. The city's demise is treated separately in chapter 8. Complementary studies of monumental architecture art have been undertaken in collaborative research by Carlos Peraza Lope and Susan Milbrath. In particular, they correlate building programs at Mayapán with the major dynasties of Mayapán: the Cocom and the Xiu (e.g., Masson 2000; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a, 2009). Sustained

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efforts of the Proyecto Maya Colonial have developed archaeological correlates of the Kowoj ethnic group at Mayapán and in the Petén Lakes region (Rice and Rice 2009).

Monumental center art, including mural and sculpture programs, reflects Mayapán's position as a central node for religious pilgrimage, a place where top-ranking officials deliberated in political assemblies and as the seat of a military power of considerable might. The second half of this chapter reviews the highlights of Mayapán's major monumental works and the lasting testimonies of propagated state symbolism that they represent. Monumental displays can be read as strategies for power legitimation for many ancient complex societies. Particularly significant cross-cultural patterns include the expression of divine charters through founding creation mythologies and the explicit broadcasting of state terror in programs emphasizing warfare and sacrifice (e.g., Schele and Freidel 1990; Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993; Sugiyama 2004; Dickson 2006; Headrick 2007; McAnany 2010). Political art at the site's center also reinvents ancient dynastic and divine claims to power that echo those of the deeper Maya past but with a transformed cosmopolitan flair that also incorporates deities and creation myths from the broader Mesoamerican world, especially central Mexico (J. Thompson 1957; Proskouriakoff 1962a; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a; Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004; M. Delgado Kú 2009). Warfare was an instrumental device for the development and maintenance of the Mayapán state, and it was closely linked to the practice of captive sacrifice and a slave trade industry. The site's sacrificial burial shaft temples and the façade of the early Temple of Kukulcan glorify this institutionalized violence. The art programs of the epicenter reviewed in this chapter were the nucleus of a larger, site-wide array of features that fostered ritual and administrative leadership at the city. Chapters 3 and 4 elaborate on outlying ceremonial groups and other features that organized the cityscape and chapter 7 analyzes and compares the ritual furnishings across the city in the form of stone, plaster, and ceramic sculptural art.

In subsequent chapters we argue that governing elites were institutionally and spatially linked to the supporting population through the strategic construction and operation of symbolic and functional nodes in the form of elite residences or civic-ceremonial groups in the settlement zone. This articulation encompassed social, practical, and ideological realms. Outlying focal points replicated the functions of monumental facilities in the site center. In this chapter, we review the art and architecture of the central monumental plazas that provide a key frame of reference for understanding facilities in the city's neighborhoods that we discuss in subsequent chapters. Recent investigations

at outlying focal nodes such as the Itzmal Ch'en group and secondary elite House Y-45a allow for a full reconstruction of the activities at such localities (chapter 3).

House Y-45a has also been interpreted as the dwelling of a member of the Kowoj ethnic group, perhaps a subgroup of the Xiu who were of great political significance in Mayapán's affairs (P. Rice 2009b, 2009c). The Kowoj were also said to have been charged with guarding one of Mayapán's eastern gates, perhaps even Gate H, near to the Itzmal Ch'en group. Throughout this book, we engage this argument for Kowoj political affiliations at Mayapán as it intersects with various categories of data that we present and analyze.

POLITICS AT THE CITY

Late Postclassic Maya political organization, like much of the ancient world, was dynamic. Mayapán dominated the affairs of its confederacy and allies from at least the thirteenth through the mid-fifteenth centuries AD. Construction of the city's monumental center buildings began during the twelfth century, wars plagued the polity in the fourteenth century, and factional disputes aggravated by external factors led to its primary abandonment by AD 1441–1461 (K'atun 8 Ahau).

The Confederacy and Its Allied Territories

During Mayapán's apogee, much of the northern peninsula was united (figure 1.1). The confederacy included the territories of Ah Canul, Cupul, Tases, Cochuah, and probably more polities not mentioned in historical accounts, including northwestern provinces occupied from the Postclassic through to the present day, such as Mani, Sotuta, and many others (Pollock 1962:11). Mayapán was also allied with polities to the east along the Caribbean coast (Uaymil, Cozumel, Chetumal) and with the Petén Lakes region (Pollock 1962:11–12; Roys 1962:32; Ringle and Bey 2001; Pugh 2002; Rice and Rice 2009). Internal frontiers existed that were at times more autonomous or had shifting, contested alliances (Rice and Rice 2004:139; Alexander 2005). Polities independent from Mayapán include Chikinchel, Ecab, Canpech, and Champotón (Pollock 1962:11). One account notes that Mayapán had a dominion extending to a length of 120 leagues (501 kilometers), which would have covered much of the peninsula (Roys 1962:51). We base figure 1.1, a map of the confederated territories, allies, and independent locations with unknown political relationships to Mayapán, on the sage historical analyses of Ralph L. Roys (1962),

Grant D. Jones (1989), and Anthony P. Andrews (1993). Chikinchel's more tenuous relationships with Mayapán are supported by Susan Kepecs's (1999, 2003) archaeological data; the area was closely affiliated with Chichén Itzá and seems to have prospered before and after Mayapán's domain over the peninsula. This pattern suggests a potential animosity between Chikinchel and Mayapán. Another northern polity, Ah Kin Chel, disputed trade agreements with the Cocom of Sotuta even after Mayapán fell (Landa 1941:40).

In essence, we have little idea of the true extent of Mayapán's confederacy. There has been little Postclassic regional survey in Yucatán. Identifying subject towns or confederated polities within the northern peninsula has its own set of methodological impediments. Strong similarities in material culture exist between Mayapán and its allied trading partners that were neither subjects nor confederated, such as the sites of Cozumel Island (Connor 1983; Peraza Lope 1993) or northern Belize (Masson 2000, 2001b). While decorative differences (incised designs and vessel support shape preferences) can be observed in finer pottery between the east coast and Mayapán, the vast majority of slipped and unslipped sherds are macroscopically indistinguishable from Mayapán's most common type groups (Mama Red, Navula Unslipped) based on slip, paste, vessel form, and rim attributes (Masson and Rosenswig 2005). Lithic tool assemblages exhibit even greater similarity (Masson 2000). The styles of monumental buildings (temples, halls, and shrines) are broadly replicated at sites like Tulum, San Gervasio, and Caye Coco (Rosenswig and Masson 2002), although particular arrangements of these buildings into groups may be more diagnostic (Pugh 2002; Pugh and Rice 2009b). Mayapán house styles have not been ubiquitous at other contemporary settlements (chapter 5). Elite houses at distant political centers such as Tulum do emulate those of Mayapán (A. Smith 1962:178). It is possible that typical Mayapán commoner houses might be useful in delineating the influence of the city, and perhaps its formal confederated territories.

Some sites within a 12-kilometer radius of Mayapán (figure 2.1) have houses that are variants of those in the city (R. Smith 1954; Ruppert and Smith 1957). A total of ten other Postclassic sites, some with cenotes and temples, identified in surveys by Karl Ruppert and A. Ledyard Smith (1954), are present at distances from 3 to 12 kilometers from Mayapán's wall (table 2.1). Hoal, 3.5–4 kilometers to the north, has a cenote known at the Contact Period to have represented the boundary marker for the province of Maní, in which Mayapán was located. The site has architecture and pottery like those of Mayapán. Figure 2.1 illustrates the locations of sites located beyond 1 kilometer from Mayapán's wall. As prior surveys only generally described locations (table 2.1), some sites'

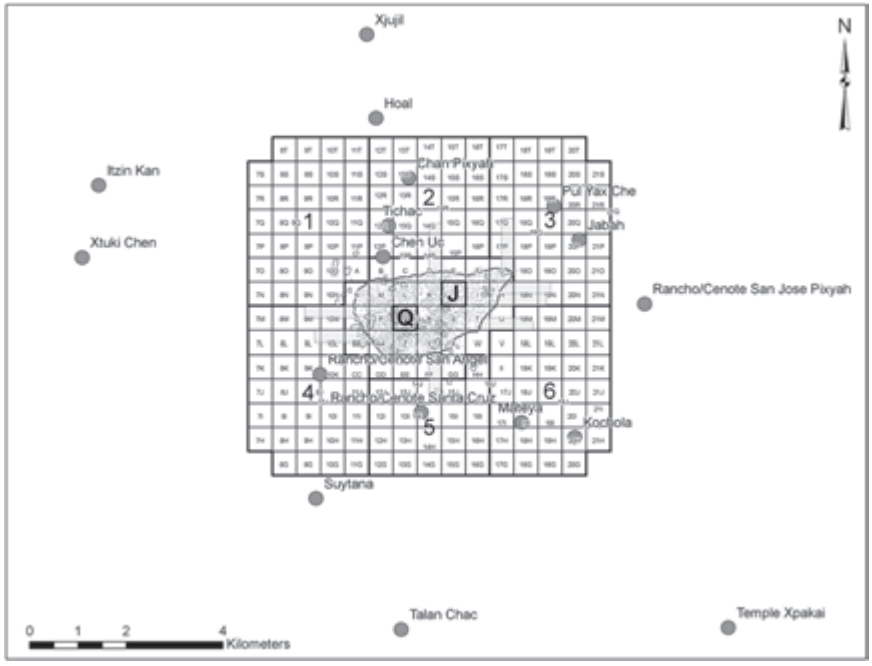

Figure 2.1. *Approximate location of settlements with Postclassic occupations near Mayapán. Locations of most of the sites were described in very general terms by Ruppert and Smith (1957); R. Smith (1954) described Santa Cruz and Tichac;. Tichac is modern Telchaquillo, and its principal pyramid dates to the Classic and Postclassic (R. Smith 1954).*

exact coordinates need to be determined (R. Smith 1954; Ruppert and Smith 1954).

One remarkable difference in Mayapán's political landscape compared to that of the Classic Period was the lack of similarly sized, competitive regional capitals. Mayapán dwarfed all lowland rivals by an order of magnitude (M. Smith 2005:419), and we infer that the same was true for Chichén Itzá, although for a time it may have had an influential peer in the polity of Uxmal (Kowalski 2008:252). Ralph Roys's (1957, 1972) analysis of Maya political geography at the time of Spanish contact cannot be outdone, and his efforts stand today as the best summaries of historical sources regarding the Mayapán confederacy, provinces in existence after the city fell, and variation in economic and political organization of these provinces. We learn, for example, that Mayapán's (smaller) peers were headed by regional centers along the peninsula's coasts.

Table 2.1 Postclassic sites in Mayapán's vicinity.

Site name, Direction, Type	*Description*	*Source*
Itzin Can Northwest Cenote/temple	Located 6 km northwest of Mayapán, large cenote with ample water. A principal radial pyramid similar to the Temple of Kukulcan, 8 m high, no Puuc stones visible. Also present were a colonnade, an elaborate elite Mayapán-style residence, and other dwellings. Classic through Mayapán occupation.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Tichac (Telchaquillo) North Cenote/temple	Located 1 km north of Mayapán. Pyramid next to cenote has significant Mayapán-era construction as well as earlier layers.	R. Smith 1954
Hoal North Cenote, boundary	Located 3.5–4 km north of Mayapán by northern Maní province boundary, cenote somewhat dry. The cenote itself was the historically named boundary marker for Maní. It has extensive underground passages. Dwellings extend east of the cenote. Site has Mayapán-like buildings and pottery.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Rancho Santa Cruz South Cenote/temple	Located 1 km south of Mayapán's wall. A 200 × 300 meter area of structures, including eight platforms and a small pyramidal structure that is near to a large jug-shaped cenote, which contains water. Mayapán era and earlier settlement.	R. Smith 1954
Rancho San Angel West Cenote/temple	Located 1–1.2 km southwest of Mayapán. Cenote and temple complex, with some residential settlement. Temple (4–5 m high) has Mayapán effigy censers, columns, and a blank stela.	Masson, personal observation
Jaba Northeast Cenote/temple	Located 1 km west of ruined main house of Hacienda Pixya, 4 km northeast of Mayapán's site center. Has accessible cenote with ample water, extensive houses, no boundary walls, and some stone was taken for the hacienda.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Ch'en Uc North Settlement with possible cenote	Located between Mayapán and Telchaquillo. Not a compact site, stones robbed by modern use. Houses on altillos, with Mayapán-like architecture. Cenote not reported, but name (Ch'en) implies one.	Ruppert and Smith 1957

continued on next page

Table 2.1—*continued*

Site name, Direction, Type	*Description*	*Source*
Chan Pixya North Settlement with cenote	Located 2 km north of Mayapán. Cenote is hard to enter due to restricted opening; it has water. Stones probably removed by modern activity, buildings scarce (small site), Postclassic architecture.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Xjujil North Settlement with cenote	Located 6 km north of Mayapán, good cenote, a number of structures in ruin, but Mayapán dwelling plans identified. No Puuc-style stones visible. Classic through Mayapán-era sherds.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Xtuki Ch'en Northwest Settlement	Located 6 km northwest of Mayapán, a small site with architecture of Postclassic date, no earlier buildings observed.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Suytana Southwest Settlement	Located 4–5 km southwest of Mayapán, with poorly preserved structures of Mayapán style. Of interest is an albarrada group of four structures on an altillo. No Puuc stones visible. Sherds mixed Classic and Postclassic Periods.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Talan Chaac South Settlement	Located 7 km south of Mayapán, no Puuc stones visible. One structure plan was discernible (resembles an atypical Mayapán variant), many structures in ruin. Pottery was not diagnostic.	Ruppert and Smith 1957
Mataya Southeast Settlement	Located 3 km south of Mayapán, two structure plans resemble shrines more than dwellings. No typical Mayapán houses observed. Classic and Postclassic sherds.	Ruppert and Smith 1957

Some of these towns greatly impressed Spaniards making first contact, such as Ecab, which they dubbed "Gran Cayro"; Chauaca was said to be very large (if dispersed); and Cachi had a large market square with permanent stone buildings where officials deliberated over trading disputes (Roys 1972:13, 17, 51; Piña Chan 1978:43). Conil also had a market court (Freidel and Sabloff 1984:191). Sustained archaeological work on the Postclassic or Contact Period has not been performed in these specific towns, but extensive surveys have found many Postclassic sites in parts of the peninsula especially near the northern, eastern, and western coasts (Andrews 1977; Andrews and Vail 1990; Kepecs 1999, 2003; Masson 2000). Coastal towns boasted the most elaborately constructed architecture compared to interior Contact-era sites that Europeans had the occasion to inspect (Roys 1972:19–20). Cozumel's Postclassic sites similarly reveal

a populous and prosperous network of settlements (Sabloff and Rathje 1975; Freidel and Sabloff 1984; Robles Castellanos 1986a, 1986b; Peraza Lope 1993), as did sites within the boundaries of the Chikinchel region (Kepecs 1999, 2003). Cobá and El Meco were also important Postclassic centers (Andrews and Robles Castellanos 1986), as was Pole, now known as Playa del Carmen (Márquez Morfin 1982). These studies are examples of a large body of work that has identified Postclassic Maya settlements.

Gauging the monumentality of the highest-ranking towns may never be discernible, however, as modern towns have been built over many of the Contact Period provincial capitals. The bases of razed Prehispanic platforms still impress the informed visitor today, as these are located beneath the foundations of churches built in the sixteenth century at towns like Tecoh, Maní, and others along Yucatán's Ruta de los Conventos. Some of these platforms date to the Classic or Colonial eras, but they may have also been part of Mayapán or post-Mayapán political landscapes. For example, the city of Tihó was emerging as a significant center on the eve of Spanish conquest (P. Rice 2004:80–82), but its plaza and buildings were dismantled in the construction of the original central buildings of Spanish Mérida. (Ligorred 2009). At the minimum, it is described as the "great town" of Tihoo, Ichkansiho (Tozzer 1941:57n279). The largest modern towns that populate Yucatán's countryside today (Sotuta, Mama, Maní, Teabo, Ticul, Tecoh, etc.) existed at Spanish contact and almost certainly have Prehispanic components. Development has taken its toll on Postclassic sites in general across the lowlands, along the east coast "Maya Riviera" (i.e., Xelha, Xcaret), and near the Belize-Mexico border, as exemplified by the modern cities of Chetumal and Corozal. The latter was the site of a political capital of equal significance to Tulum; Santa Rita's beautiful murals and public architecture of Postclassic date have long been destroyed (Chase and Chase 1988). Tulum is largely known for its walled epicenter, but its associated town, presumably beyond the wall, has never been documented. As noted in chapter 1, painted and stucco art in vogue during the Postclassic has been especially vulnerable to destruction, and rare instances of preserved elaborate programs at Tulum and Santa Rita hint at what has been lost (Miller 1982; Gann 1900). Most of Mayapán's murals, which decorated the majority of buildings in the monumental center, have been largely eroded or perhaps were destroyed in the city's final war (M. Delgado Kú 2009:202–18; P. Delgado Kú 2004:108; Peraza Lope et al. 1999a:65). The deterioration and destruction of Postclassic sites should not deter future research; even at Mayapán, these processes have not been uniform, and rich data await discovery. If anything, Postclassic-era research should be accelerated before more damage is incurred.

Roys (1972) and Sergio Quezada (1993) have analyzed Colonial-era politics and reveal variation in political units termed *provinces* by the Spaniards. Emic terms include *batabilob*, which were sometimes located within loosely organized, autonomous territories, and *cuchcabalob*, territories that were more hierarchically organized under the political authority of a *halach uinic* (Roys 1972). The fluid, even segmentary aspects of these entities during the Contact Period has been emphasized (Quezada 1993; Ringle and Bey 2001; Kepecs 2003), but instability is not surprising given the travails of European conquest and the epidemics of the sixteenth century. Similarly, little evidence is seen for residential wards or officials in the Colonial Period (Okoshi-Harada 2012), but bureaucratic complexity was clearly lost through time. It is important not to project the decentralized political landscape of the Contact Period to the Postclassic Period era prior to the fall of Mayapán. The tenuous nature of the available information is reflected in figure 1.1, which reveals the uncertain affiliated status of political territories during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries AD; boundaries are only approximated (Roys 1962; P. Rice 2004:30–32). Centralized polities after Mayapán's fall, according to Roys's estimation, include Cochuah, Maní, Hocabá, Sotuta, Cehpech, Champotón, Cozumel, Ah Kin Chel, Tases, and Tayasal (Roys 1957; P. Rice 2004:29–32). Prudence M. Rice (2004:33) observes that for the Maya area in general, intersite distances approximate 20–32 kilometers between political centers, or a reasonable day trip for purposes such as commerce or other essential interactions. This metric is not well understood for Mayapán-era Yucatán, but a regular network of large and small towns populate the northern peninsula, many of which predate the arrival of Europeans (Brown et al. 2006).

Mayapán's Largest Maya Contemporary

Parallels in the organization of Mayapán and Utatlán/K'umarcaj are apparent. The Guatemalan highland Postclassic center of Utatlán is the only contemporary political capital that may represent an analog to Mayapán in the Maya area. Both were the capitals of expansionary polities with reasonable territorial reach and both were hierarchically ranked far above their political peers. Leaders of confederated polities held lengthy residency at these political capitals, and the local version of the deity of Quetzalcoatl (Kukulcan at Mayapán, K'ucumatz at Utatlán) was the primary focus of religious patronage for each of them (Carmack 1981a:18), as for many Mesoamerican centers after AD 800 (Carmack 1981a:17; Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey 1998; Ringle 2004:169). Both cities were densely nucleated and defensible and incorporated

art and religious symbols from central Mexican groups with whom they were directly or indirectly in contact (Carmack 1981a:18; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:29). Carmack observes one key difference: merchants held a relatively minor position at Utatlán compared to Mayapán (Carmack 1981a:18). Utatlán's military emphasis, particularly in hegemonic empire-building in order to dominate access to valuables from the Pacific coast, is interesting, given Mayapán's parallel military potency and its intervention in the affairs of the hinterlands. Some have labeled Mayapán an empire (Russell 2008a), which is technically defined as a state that conquers other polities (Smith and Montiel 2001).

Council Rule

The institution of Maya divine kingship emerged in the Late Preclassic Period and is reflected in courtly art that celebrates the deeds of dynastic individuals (Schele and Freidel 1990; Freidel and Schele 1988; Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993; Inomata and Houston 2001; Martin and Grube 2008:17). Classic Period hieroglyphic texts legitimize claims of divine status and supernatural power and chronicle political and military prowess. Toward the end of the Classic Period, members of a growing noble class were included to a greater extent in the corpus of art and writing. These inclusionary practices may have been the first steps toward a council-rule government that was developed by the polities of Terminal Classic through Postclassic northern Yucatán (Schele and Freidel 1990:348; Ringle and Bey 2001; Sabloff 2007). Council rule, known as *multepal*, de-emphasized individual sovereigns and is reflected in monumental art that depicts assemblies of high-ranking officials (Ringle and Bey 2001; Ringle 2004). Mayapán was founded by multiple agents who "built houses for the lords only, dividing all the land among them . . . giving towns to each one according to the antiquity of his lineage and personal value" (Landa 1941:25–26). We further learn from Diego de Landa (1941:23–26) that Mayapán was initially a planned city that involved resettlement of commoners from confederated towns to provide services.

Colonial Period accounts describe the political organization after the fall of Mayapán among a suite of townships, or *cahcab*, which powerful families ruled. During the Colonial era, the *cah* was the most important entity of political, social, and economic integration; this term referred to a town, its outlying lands, and governed political units (Restall 2001:349) or a township in the general sense of the word. Most influential Colonial Maya family groups (*ch'ibalob*) were descendants of Mayapán's governing council (Restall 2001). Principal men were incorporated into oligarchical councils (*cabildo*) that rep-

licated some pre-Contact principles, and they differed in fundamental ways from the Spanish institution (Restall 2001:364). A *batab* official was appointed to govern towns above the cabildo. Large cabildos had as many as fifty officials, including religious offices.

Council rule also seems reflected in architecture at Cozumel. It is interesting to contemplate whether councils were important at smaller political scales below Mayapán and its confederacy, and we suggest that this was probably the case. The existence of multiple, large house groups and a lack of a single, dominant royal court may provide such an indication. The Early Classic city of Chunchucmil may have been organized by a federation of merchant families, as this city lacked the architectural signatures of political power displayed by its peers (Dahlin and Ardren 2002). A small Postclassic site in Campeche, Isla Civlituk, is interpreted as less centralized, as settlement lacks a specific site center (Alexander 2005:170). This pattern may alternatively represent an oligarchical system headed by town or village leaders (Masson 2001a; Rosenswig and Masson 2002; Ringle and Bey 2001).

Features such as royal tombs and temples dedicated to deceased kings were no longer constructed at Postclassic Maya centers. Multiple colonnaded halls at Mayapán and Chichén Itzá (where they are part of gallery-patio buildings) likely served as meeting halls or council houses for nobles participating in governmental affairs. Colonnade buildings are also associated with temples, altars, and ball courts at the end of radial causeways that extend outward from downtown Chichén Itzá (Cobos 2004:figures 22.3–22.5). A parallel pattern at Mayapán may be indicated by the association of colonnaded halls and temples with at least four major gates in the city wall and an internal portal gate (Strömsvik 1953; Hare and Masson 2012; Russell 2007). Although overt royal glorification is downplayed at Chichén Itzá and Mayapán, divine sanction was sought for major political rites of passage such as accession to office and investiture (Schele and Mathews 1998:254–55; Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey 1998; Masson 2000:234–38; Ringle 2004; P. Rice 2004, 2009c).

Lords and Kings at Mayapán

The institution of multepal is not extensively mentioned in historical documents, and its time depth remains a topic of study (Restall 2001:387; Ringle and Bey 2001:273–74). Council or mat houses date to earlier sites such as Uxmal or Copán (Ringle and Bey 2001:281). More importantly, council rule masked the tendency for paramounts to dominate political affairs, as exemplified by the fact that late Maya governors were considered the "first among equals." Mayapán's

own history was dominated by the actions of the Cocom and Xiu lords, and the Chels also ranked highly among the "three great princely houses" (Landa 1941:40; Roys 1962:60; Restall 2001; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:31–32, 35). Some fleeting accounts come close to suggesting a Mayapán monarchy. Landa (1941:26) states, "After the departure of Kukulcan, the nobles agreed, in order that the government should endure, that the house of the Cocoms should have the chief power." According to Landa's *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán*, a king at Mayapán had the name or title Cotecpan; Roys (1962:55) points out that this title incorporates the Nahuatl word *tecpan* for "government house" or "palace," which he equates with columned halls (Roys 1962:65). Cotecpan means "man over everyone" (A. Smith 1962:182; Tozzer 1941:24n131). Similarly, the Utatlán confederacy had a supreme ruler, the Aj Pop (Carmack 1977:13). This intriguing reference to a potential king of Mayapán is woefully incomplete and isolated.

For the time being, it is probably best to follow William M. Ringle and George J. Bey III's grounded suggestion that paramount authories dominated, and perhaps ruled, governing councils. After Mayapán fell around AD 1441, its major political families continued to exert significant influence into the Contact Period and are referred to as the "dynamic dozen" in Matthew Restall's (2001) sweeping summary.

Major Dynasties and Ethnic Struggles

The ethnic identity of Mayapán's nobility has been a topic of much consideration (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a, 2009; Masson and Peraza Lope 2010). Cross-culturally, claims of foreign origins commonly buttress elite authority, and Restall (2001:373–75) argues that Postclassic Yucatán elites similarly invoked mythical foreign origins. Restall (2001:373) points out that the use of a Nahuatl name like Xiu is not enough to infer central Mexican identity; such names were common among prominent Contact Period Yucatán families. But clear evidence for sustained contact, including political and economic alliances with port cities like the Gulf Coast Xicalanco (and indirectly, beyond to central Mexico) has long been observed. Many traditions integrated elite culture across Mesoamerica, at least from the Epiclassic Period onward (Diehl and Berlo 1989; Smith and Berdan 2003a; Pohl 2003a, 2003b; Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey 1998; Ringle 2004; Masson and Peraza Lope 2010).

Diverse social groups occupied Mayapán from localities as distant as southern Campeche or Tabasco, the Petén, and the Caribbean coast, as well as from Yucatán (Landa 1941:32; Tozzer 1941:34n172; Edmonson 1982:9; Masson and

Peraza Lope 2010). Foreign neighborhoods were sometimes established by nonlocal merchants at major trading towns at Spanish contact (Piña Chan 1978:43, 47). Prior efforts to identify ethnic enclaves at Mayapán based on frequencies of imported ceramics, Mexican-style sculptures, mortuary patterns, and foodways have been inconclusive, perhaps due to the small test pit samples for most of the residential zone (Masson and Peraza Lope 2010). More full horizontal investigation of dwellings, such as that undertaken at House Y-45a, is needed to address this question (chapter 3). Two facts confound the task of identifying ethnic signatures. The site in general was outward-looking and many households possessed a few objects of foreign origin or inspiration (Pollock 1962; Masson and Peraza Lope 2010). The Mayapán polity was also successful at promoting an emblematic state style that characterizes many formal artifacts and architectural characteristics (chapter 5).

Ethnohistorical accounts chronicle the names of Mayapán's ruling families (Tozzer 1941:36–37, 40; Ringle and Bey 2001; Restall 2001; Masson 2000). The Cocom and Xiu families vied for paramountcy among this class of governing elites, but the Cocom had greater power and dominated the affairs of the city (Roys 1962:29, 46; Landa 1941:58–59). A rise in Xiu family power marked the final decades, leading ultimately to a war that dismantled the city and its polity (Roys 1962:54–55, 56; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009). Hieroglyphic records indicate the antiquity of the Cocom name at Chichén Itzá (Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey 1998:190–91, 225; Kristan-Graham 2001), and the history of the Xiu traces back to Uxmal's heyday (Kowalski 2003, 2008). The presence of these and other key families at Mayapán indicates that members of ancestral ruling families in the northern lowlands led this city's confederacy.

The Cocom name lingers in Telchaquillo today, but it is not common. For example, Don Fernando Mena of Telchaquillo tells us that his grandmother's name was Cocom. This elder has worked for the Carnegie, INAH, and PEMY projects. Other names echoing those of antiquity held by our workers in Telchaquillo are more common, such as Cauich, Chel, Pech, Cobá, Pat, Chan, Chi, May, and Uc, which is interesting even though direct genealogical ties to the deeper past are not traceable. The Cocom family may have held sway over Mayapán's confederacy for the latter half of the thirteenth and most of the fourteenth centuries (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009:602), if not before, given tales linking them to founding events mentioned previously. Landa writes that the leader of this house was the man of "greatest worth" and was from the "most ancient" and "richest" family (Landa 1941:26; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:33). Milbrath and Peraza Lope (2003a:33–34; 2009:583)

expand on the idea that Puuc elements of the city's monumental buildings were linked to members of the Xiu faction (Ringle and Bey 2001:286), along with the city's stelae, given this family's ties to the Puuc region and Uxmal. For example, Hall Q-151's recycled Puuc-style Chac masks may possibly reflect the patronage of Puuc-derived Xiu groups (Ringle and Bey 2001:286). The serpent temples and art programs focused on Kukulcan and art with Mexican influence are attributed to the Cocom faction and their Chichén Itzá roots (Tozzer 1941:24n129; Proskouriakoff 1962a:132, 135).

The Cocom and Xiu at times may have disrupted the governing council. The Cupul and Canul families were allied with the Cocom during the Contact Period and the Chel family was allied with the Xiu at the time of Mayapán's fall (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:34–35). Tatiana Proskouriakoff (1962a:134) reports thirteen carved and twenty-five plain stelae from Mayapán; Peraza Lope's team has found one other stela in the site center (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009) and a new stela was found at Itzmal Ch'en Temple H-17 in 2009 (Delgado Kú, Escamilla Ojeda, and Peraza Lope 2012b). Stelae found regularly near round structures may have had historical content, linking ruling lineages to Kukulcan, the human founder of the city, rather than the deity, according to Proskouriakoff (1962a:136). Other names of Mayapán rulers are known. Hunac Ceel ruled either very early or very late in the site's history (Roys 1962:47). Various Cocom rulers' names are recorded (Roys 1962). The names and deeds of some Mayapán priests are also chronicled, including Ah Kin Cobá (Roys 1962:79); Ah Kin Chel, who was associated with the fall of Mayapán (Roys 1962:35); and Ah Kin May (or Ahau Can Mai). The timing of Tutul Xiu's control of the city is debated (Roys 1962:50), but most sources agree that this probably occurred late in city's history (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009). Ah Uitzil Dzul, who is linked to the final depopulation of the city, was a Xiu whom Roys (1962:72, 74–75) equates with Hun Uitzil Chac Tutul Xiu. An individual named Ulumil Ahau was involved in taking the city at its collapse (Roys 1962:74–75). The Kowoj group was affiliated with the Xiu and may even have formed a Xiu subgroup (Jones 1998:11; P. Rice 2009a:10–14). They and other Xiu may have also departed the city just before AD 1400, but migrations were likely multiple, and we know little of how many members of any particular ethnic faction left, remained, or returned to the city (P. Rice 2009a, 2009b). It is clear that Xiu groups were at Mayapán at the time of its fall, and they remained numerous and influential long into the Colonial Period (P. Rice 2009a).

Guardians of the gates of Mayapán included Zulim Chan at the west, Nauat at the south, and Kowoj at the east (Ah Ek was his companion),

according to Roys (1962:79); a north guardian is not listed. The ruler at this time was Ah Tapay-Nok Cauich (Cauich with the embroidered mantle), and Hunac Ceel was a "representative" of the office of Ah Mex Cuc, who was later declared a ruler (Roys 1962:79). The four "lineages from heaven"—Zacal Puc, Holtun Balam, Hoch'tun Poot, and Ah Mex Cuc Chan—are listed in passages that make reference to Chichén Itzá. Zacal Puc was a deified ancestor (Roys 1962:79–80). Roys concludes that Hunac Ceel was a member of the Canul clan, who were mercenaries in service of the Cocom of Mayapán at one point in time. One late Cocom ruler was also probably named Kukulcan (Roys 1962:80). The Cocom claimed Itzá descent, at least until the Itzá fell into disrepute during the fourteenth century (Roys 1962:81).

Priests

With the decline of divine kingship—an institution that centralized political and religious authority in a monarch—an expanded bureaucracy emerged of hierarchically ranked priests at sites like Chichén Itzá, Tulum, and Mayapán. Such offices could be hereditary or filled by secondary sons of the nobility, sometimes from infancy (Landa 1941:27). The primary evidence for this lies in proliferation of artistic programs that portray religious practitioners compared to earlier periods; ethnohistorical documents also provide rich details on nested religious hierarchies (Masson 2000:234–47; Masson, Hare, and Peraza Lope 2006:194–97; Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey 1998; Ringle 2004). If a complex priesthood existed in the Classic Maya era, this theme is de-emphasized in art and writing, although individual ritualists can be found among courtly attendants in carved monuments or polychromes. Mayapán's highest ranking priests held titles of Ah Kin May or Ahau Can May (Landa 1941:27). Prudence Rice (2004:79) suggests that these individuals presided over the 13 k'atun cycle—or *may*, as their name implies—but they also had diverse advisory duties and presided over a religious hierarchy (Landa 1941:27). High priests oversaw the placement of outlying priests in supporting towns and sent representatives to teach "letters" in hinterland regions. Letters presumably included skills in hieroglyphic writing, calendrics, astronomy, and other tools for perpetuating doctrine in the periphery (Roys 1962:50–51, 53, 56).

Political officials shared authority with councils of priests, who also were hierarchically organized and specialized according to ritual responsibilities. One high priest presided over the religious institutions of the state and counseled lords (Landa 1941:27). During the Postclassic and Colonial era in the

Petén Lakes region, political leaders co-governed in certain respects with high-ranking priests (Jones 1998:94; P. Rice 2009d:44). Council members who also shared authority included those individuals who were responsible for each of the 13 k'atuns in the may cycle and distinguished military captains (P. Rice 2009d:44). Earlier versions of tandem political and religious bureaucracies are identified at Chichén Itzá, where priestly officials bestowed political initiates with the rites and regalia of office—and this site is not the only example (Ringle 2004:170–77). As Ringle demonstrates, Epiclassic and Postclassic political officials throughout Mesoamerica received the vestments of governorship from priests, and councils of political and religious authorities helped to administer the affairs of major cities. This system created a complex and complementary system of power-sharing, although paramounts presided over such councils.

Political and religious duties and practices were not well separated in the Postclassic, as governing nobles' authority was founded on religious sanction and priests meddled regularly in political affairs. The collapse of Mayapán was instigated by the actions of one high priest, Ah Xupan, whose political clout also enabled him to help found the post-Mayapán polity of Ah Kin Chel (Tozzer 1941:36n177; Masson, Hare, and Peraza Lope 2006). The prevalence of the twin institutions of priesthood and lordship in late Maya politics is likely due to the growth of the noble class and efforts to achieve greater regional integration by inclusive, complex, ranked institutions. Sons of the Postclassic nobility, as in many ancient states, found occupations in political, religious, or military office or long-distance mercantile activities (Landa 1941).

Given the importance of elite interaction across regions of the Postclassic Mesoamerican world system (Smith and Berdan 2003a), comparisons of Mayapán's political and religious institutions to those of central Mexico are of potential significance. The organizational principles of Cholula reveal some key similarities. A Turquoise House (*Xiuhcalli*), at the city's great square was a facility where six councilors congregated. The two city leaders (Tlalquiach and Aquiyach) were of the Quetzalcoatl priesthood (Ringle 2004:210). Although Cholula was a religious center for the worship of this deity, it was also a political capital, capable of mobilizing military action. Eagle and jaguar knights were commissioned from the priesthood ranks. A captain general who provided oversight for six districts within the city led the secular council of six (Ringle 2004:210). Authority was also split between a priest and a king at Tula 2004:211) and in the Petén Lakes region (Jones 1998).

Mayapán was also a center for the worship of Kukulcan/Quetzalcoatl, for whom the city hosted periodic festivals; after its fall, the town of Maní

assumed this role (Roys 1962:63; Tozzer 1941:22n124). Regarding the Maní festivities, Landa (1941:157–58) states, "On the 16th of (the month) Xul, all the priests and lords assembled in Maní, and with them a large multitude from the towns." Roys (1962:63) expresses surprise and doubt that this Xiu stronghold monopolized Kukulcan festivals, which should have been a prerogative of the Cocom, who claimed descendancy from this deity. But this account alludes to the long-term importance of this entity in the Mayapán area and provides a glimpse of the large congregations that gathered for Kukulcan festivities. Mayapán was in fact within the territory of Maní, and as we discuss later, these rites were likely held as part of pilgrimage festivals at Mayapán's Temple of Kukulcan. At this Chic Kaban festival at Maní, Kukulcan was believed to descend from heaven to receive services and offerings on the last day of the five-day event (Landa 1941:158). Although some ceremonies linked to the festival were solemn, comedies were also performed.

Official Bureaucracy

Ringle and Bey (2001) outline official councils that ranked below batabilob who governed specific townships either independently or beneath a regional authority (halach uinic). Subordinate councils provided oversight for different operations in Contact Period governmental systems. Councils of *ah kulelob* and *ah cuchcabob* could represent *cuchteelob*, or residential wards; such districts were also represented by speakers, or *ah canob* (Ringle and Bey 2001:271). Documents offer lengthy lists of ranked offices within political and religious institutions that imply a well-developed administrative bureaucracy for Mayapán and other Postclassic/Contact Period centers. Beneath the paramounts of Utatlán or in towns in Yucatán, a composite list of appointments held by upper-class males includes duties of receiving guests, speakers or proclaimers, secondary governorships, mat officials, scribes or notaries, district deputies, judges, tribute collectors, military captains, logistical officials, k'atun lords, ball game counselors, territorial administrators, and a variety of specialized priests, singers, and sacrificers (Carmack 1981a:15–17; Restall 2001:table 11.3; Kintz 1983:table 11.1; Love 1994). In Yucatán, the Holpop officer was responsible for festivities along with other administrative duties (Ringle and Bey 2001:271). At Utatlán, three less powerful lords assisted the Ajpop ruler (Carmack 1981a:14–15). At the smaller K'ich'e polities of Tamub or Ismachi, the four rulers held lower positions in the regional hierarchy. Below the king, governing nobles held offices of principal men (judges, tribute collectors, military captains, and logistical officials), and priests separately officiated

ritual matters, holding titles of priests or sacrificers—Yaqui Winak/Aj Q'uixb or Aj Cajb (Carmack 1981a:16). The Tojil priest was the most highly ranked, and the deity Tojil was the patron god of war for the three confederacies of the Nima K'ich'e, Ilocab, and Tamub; the K'ucumatz (creator deity) priest was also important (Carmack 1981a:16). Other officials included the ball game counselor (Popol Winak, Pajom Tzalatz), sets of four priests of Tamub, territorial officials for *chinamit* (Utzam), and wall officials known as Aj Tz'alam (Carmack 1981a:17).

The Ah Cuch Cab collected tribute at the level of the residential ward (*cuchteel*), and performed additional duties of organizing conscripted military service and coordinating ceremonies (Roys 1957; Ringle and Bey 2001:271; Quezada 1993:41–42). K'ichean towns were divided into *calpul* social units linked to particular parcels of land. In central Mexico, *calpulli* also formed discrete residential zones and corporate socioeconomic groups (M. Smith 2011b). The deeper similarities of the Maya cuchteel to the K'ichean and Aztec calpulli are poorly known, but they are alike in having formed residential administrative units that pooled resources and service obligations. Another term, *tzucub*, partitioned noble family groups, subject towns, or central towns that served as seats of government (Ringle and Bey 2001:271). Membership in *ch'ibal* groups has recently been scrutinized: these may be analogous to great houses—something more than a patronymic descent group and something less than an all-encompassing corporate group linking members across disparate geographic locations (Ringle and Bey 2001:291–97). Possible evidence for named "houses" of families, affiliates, and their buildings at Chichén Itzá may also support the house society model, at least among elites (Kristan Graham 2001:343, table 12.1).

In Postclassic Yucatán, political offices were complemented by honorary calendrical offices held by priests or lords; some could preside over the beginning of a new 13 k'atun cycle, or may, others were anointed lords of particular 20-year k'atun periods (Love 1994; Rice 2004:79; Rice 2009d:23–25, 44). K'atun office rotations, and perhaps those of shorter calendrical intervals, provided further opportunities for members of local polities to participate in governance (D. Chase 1985a; Masson 2000). The beginning of new may cycles involved an extensive cadre of ritual specialists whose performances are detailed for Contact Period Mérida in 1539 (P. Rice 2004:80–83). Circumambulation of territories was particularly significant for sanctioning political boundaries in terms of sacred geography and ritual (P. Rice 2004). Landa claimed that the Mayapán state was divided among its founding lords, which corresponded at least in theory to thirteen geopolitical units (of unequal size), each of which were associated

with one of the thirteen calendrical periods with its own idol and priest (Tozzer 1941:25–26n136). Prominent lords set k'atun stones in confederated town centers and rotated the honorary burden of sponsoring calendrical celebrations (P. Rice 2004:75–76). Prudence Rice (2004) has recently argued for the great time depth of this geopolitical and calendrical system of power-sharing.

Investiture, Pilgrimage

Late Maya political capitals likely sanctioned official positions at subordinate settlements or allied, independent kingdoms. This conferral or investiture bound alliance networks of distant polities together, and it required pilgrimages to important centers to undergo rites of transformation and receive official regalia and holy religious sanction (Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey 1998; Ringle 2004). Contact-era examples are chronicled in the central Mexican kingdoms of the Mixteca (Byland and Pohl 1994:138–41; Pohl 2003a, 2003b) and Cholula, as well as in the earlier case of Chichén Itzá (Ringle 2004:167–69). Pilgrimages to major sites have long been recognized as important for the Mesoamerica area (Orr 2003; Freidel and Sabloff 1984; Shaw 2001). Complex ritual circuits within larger sites such as Chichén Itzá have been identified (Ringle 2004). Similar to the renowned case of Mixtec Lord 8 Deer's journey to Coixtlahuaca that culminated in his receipt of a nose plug, emblematic of a exalted political authority (Byland and Pohl 1994), the highest ranking lords of the K'ich'ean realm also received nose pieces in elaborate legitimation ceremonies (Carmack and Mondloch 1983:195–96; Carmack 1981a:13). A similar accession ceremony has been suggested for the North Temple scene at Chichén Itzá's main ball court (Villela and Koontz 1993:5). Reference to investiture at Mayapán may be gleaned from Colonial Period records; one governor of this site "ordained his lordships and knighthoods" (Roys 1962:50, citing from the Report of Tekal).

Cosmological Political Divisions

The organization of towns and regions into cosmologically significant divisions, such as four quarters or 13 (k'atun cycle) units, was conceptually important according to numerous Contact Period documentary accounts (e.g., Coe 1965; Carmack 1977, 1981a, 1981b; Fox 1987; P. Rice 2004:44, 2009d:25). Unfortunately, Postclassic settlements exhibit little evidence for quadripartite division, important as it was (Coe 1965), with the exception of radial pyramidal structures like those of Chichén Itzá, Mayapán, and some highland Maya sites (Fox 1987). The

principal pyramids at Chichén Itzá and Mayapán are dedicated to Kukulcan (figures 1.2, 1.3). Symbolism across Postclassic Mesoamerica has linked serpents with quadripartite structures and origin myths (P. Rice 1983:317; Schele and Kappelman 2001), including Mayapán, which was formed by the union of four "lineages from heaven" (Tozzer 1941:34n172). Similarly, Chichén Itzá was formed when the "four divisions" came together (Tozzer 1941:21n123).

At Mayapán, four guarded cardinal gates (Roys 1962:79) were especially important among the city's twelve gates. Perfect cardinal correspondences should not be expected on the ground, as revealed by Robert M. Carmack's (1981b:89–92, figures 1, 2) comparisons of the conceptual map of Utatlán (in the Título de Totonicapan) to the archaeological settlement. He found that cardinal principles are revealed in the presence of four main halls around the center's main plaza, but correspondence to the indigenous map is loose. Such divisions may have been more important for ritual and cosmological purposes than for defining social sectors of settlements, as Clifford T. Brown (1999) observes. He suggests that alignments of key focal architecture in the city may indicate quadripartite concepts of city planning. We discuss his model and elaborate on it in chapter 4, along with discussing the full range of features that divide the city's residential zone.

The division of regional political units in Mayapán's domain into thirteen divisions to correspond with the 13 k'atun cycle represented a significant juncture of cosmology and political geography (Roys 1962:64). For the k'atun cycle, each age was celebrated in a different location (shrine, temple, or other edifice) with its prescribed patron god, officiating priest, and accompanying prophecy; Alfred M. Tozzer (1941:26) also reports that the stones were set at different designated towns at k'atun endings. As lords of the confederacy resided at least part time at the center, we might also anticipate that celebration of these rotating burdens also occurred in different parts of the cityscape and throughout the region. Similarly, Diane Z. Chase (1986) finds evidence for rotating burdens of Uayeb (360 solar year ending periods) among upper-status residents at Santa Rita. Masson (2000) argued that the dispersal of turtle sculptures across Mayapán reflects rotated spatial and social responsibilities of calendrical celebrations such as k'atuns. The abundance of these objects at outlying ceremonial groups and the center in Mayapán implies that burdens were exchanged among regional constituents at the city and in their home territories. Proskouriakoff's (1962a) illustration of a Mayapán turtle sculpture engraved with thirteen Ahau faces strongly suggests that these objects were used in such a context (P. Rice 2004:67). It appears to be a Precolumbian version of a k'atun wheel illustrated by Landa (1941:167). At Caye Coco, Belize, an

elite residence had a turtle sculpture cache. A cavity in the turtle's carapace had four items that probably symbolized colors associated with the four directions, including a red sherd, a black obsidian blade, a yellow piece of flint, and a green serpentine ax; the turtle itself was white. While the turtle implies a k'atun rite, color directional symbolism was also associated with annual Uayeb rites of the solar year (Tozzer 1941:141nn684, 689). Prudence Rice's (2004, 2009c) model, which holds that regional rotation of ritual burdens of calendrical intervals was an integral component of political geography, is convincing, especially for the Postclassic Period, where references to setting of stones in various communities on k'atun intervals abound. The Paris Codex is also explicit on this point (Love 1994). Prudence Rice (2004, 2009c:26–27, 39–40) discusses this model in full detail as well as the fact that competing calendars were in place during the Contact Period (see also Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009).

CHRONOLOGY

Confounding Tales of Mayapán's Founding

Efforts to utilize the Books of Chilam Balam for reliable chronological or historical information (e.g., Barrera Vasquez and Morley 1949; Roys 1962:27; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:36) should be undertaken with considerable skepticism, as Antje Gunsenheimer's (2002) recent analysis shows these documents to be comprised of piecemeal segments contributed by multiple authors over two centuries. Nonetheless, kernels of information may prove to be useful, or even correct, if evaluated with different types of data (e.g., chapter 8, Masson 2000:table 6.8; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a, 2009).

The take-home message about Mayapán's founding is that it was refounded several times as a consequence of political power drives. Recent interpretations of the chronicles by Milbrath and Peraza Lope (2003a:35–36, table 1; 2009:599) argue that recurring founding events occurred with K'atun 8 Ahau (AD 1185–1204), K'atun 13 Ahau (AD 1263–1283), and K'atun 11 Ahau (AD 1283–1303). One stela from the city (Stela 6) has an AD 1283 date, identified by Sylvanus Morley (Pollock 1962:3). Stela 1 and Stela 5 most probably date to earlier k'atuns in AD 1185 and AD 1244, respectively (Pollock 1962:3). These dated monuments constitute the best evidence of the city's establishment as a major capital at least one hundred years prior to K'atun 13 Ahau, ending in AD 1283. Archaeological evidence provides additional support for at least twelfth-century origins (Peraza Lope et al. 2006). Serial founding events likely coincided with episodes of political coalescence and building construction, but such efforts may not coincide well with settlement chronology. Rival Cocom-

Itza and Xiu groups could have competed for prominence by hosting celebrations and erecting buildings during the city's initial decades (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a, 2009). The initial occupation of Mayapán clearly predated the city's heralded "founding" dates (Pollock 1962:10). Gaspar Antonio Chi (in Tozzer 1941:230–31) states that Mayapán fell (in AD 1420) 260 years after its founding, which may reflect a tendency to consider historical cycles in terms of the sacred calendar without concern for accuracy (Roys 1962:65). This claim generally corresponds with our evidence for the onset of monumental building toward the latter part of the twelfth century AD, but the end date falls short of the conventional view of 1441–1461. Landa (1941:37) claims that Mayapán collapsed five hundred years after it was initially established, but he may have referred to an earlier Classic-era monumental center in the vicinity, perhaps Tichac (modern Telchaquillo, 1 kilometer north of Mayapán's center), where the principal pyramid exhibits significant Classic and Postclassic construction (R. Smith 1954). The Xiu and some of their allies may have lingered at Mayapán until K'atun 4 Ahau (AD 1481–1500), when epidemics wrought final, complete abandonment (Roys 1962:73). The dates of Mayapán's fall, like the founding dates, are also contradictory. We explore this issue in chapter 8.

A minor settlement known as Mayapán may have been established in the first half of the eleventh century or even the mid-tenth century AD, prior to Chichén Itzá's fall, according to Tozzer (1941:24n129). Mayapán may have been a small shrine center at this time while Chichén Itzá was declining (Andrews, Andrews, and Robles Castellanos 2003). The Postclassic capital was probably founded in this location for historical reasons, as the generalized natural resources in this vicinity are broadly replicated in this part of the Northern Plains region of Yucatán. Curiously, there is a modern town in Yucatán named Mayapán, located about 22 kilometers to the southeast of the ancient city, but historical connections with the Postclassic political center are unknown.

Ethnohistorians debate the roles of legendary individuals instrumental in founding the city (Tozzer 1941:24n129). Tozzer suggests that Itza captains may have migrated to the Mayapán vicinity during the tenth century, but the League of Mayapán, an allegiance among peers (Uxmal, Mayapán, Chichén Itzá; Barrera Vasquez and Morley 1949:33–35), was likely formed in the twelfth century. In K'atun 13 Ahau (AD 1263–1283), a founding event marked by setting the mats (seats of rulership) in order. Major public architecture at the site center and royal residences may have been amplified or built at this time (Roys 1962:43, 71; Landa 1941:57). These activities were supposedly presided over by Kukulcan, as the political or religious leader who established peace and helped to select the location for the new city. As legend presents the tale, he partitioned the

confederated territory among the ruling nobility and named the city (Landa 1941:26). The settlement zone grew incrementally over the next half century (Roys 1962:43).

Mayapán may have risen to power following political treachery. Hunac Ceel, along with his followers, compelled a Chichén Itzá ruler (Chac Xib Chac) to covet and abduct the bride of an Izamal ruler. Political relationships broke down, leaving Chichén Itzá vulnerable to attack (Roys 1962:47), and Mayapán rose due to this opportunity. This occurred in K'atun 8 Ahau, presumably the one starting in 1185, but other interpretations are possible (Roys 1962:56). Chichén Itzá's diminished occupation continued until Spanish contact, under various leadership regimes (Roys 1962:48). The Postclassic settlements of Chichén Itzá and Uxmal may have been members of the Mayapán league, which may have existed prior to the plot of Hunac Ceel. Despite this indication of animosity, founding members of Mayapán are said to have been descendants of Chichén Itzá's nobility, the Cocom/Itza (Roys 1962). Other heroic histories concerning the founding of Mayapán revolve around the mytho-historical personage of Kukulcan (Landa 1941:23–24). The timing of his legendary involvement is unclear, but some experts suggest that his "second coming" was invoked in the mid-thirteenth century, perhaps as a response to political strife (Roys 1962; Masson 2000:259). Like King Arthur of Camelot, his actual existence remains a topic for speculation.

Given that multiple calendars were in use during the early Colonial era, Milbrath and Peraza Lope observe that if the twenty-four-year K'atun (popular in the eighteenth century) has greater antiquity, some founding k'atun events at Mayapán reach as far back as the eleventh century AD and better coincide with the timing of Chichén Itzá's decline (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:36). Currently little evidence exists for a prosperous political center from around AD 1000 to about AD 1150 in northern Yucatán by the usual gauge of monumental works (Andrews, Andrews, and Robles Castellanos 2003). Even using the alternative calendrical system, very few radiocarbon dates at Mayapán open up the possibility of major construction prior to AD 1100, and given the error ranges for C14 dates, the likelihood is strong that the onset of major construction at this political center was closer to AD 1150 or 1200.

Archaeological Chronology

Historical information on the timing of Mayapán's origins and rise to power are confounding due to the many versions of when and how this came about. Founding tales probably refer more to specific dynasties and construction programs than to a single, meteoric rise of the capital. Nonetheless, the

establishment of the monumental landscape was not gradual, since most of the public buildings seem to have been in place around AD 1200. Only four radiocarbon samples fall solidly within the eleventh century AD, and each of these could as easily date to as late as 1160 or 1190, given the two sigma ranges (figure 2.2). The contexts are also ambivalent (Peraza Lope et al. 2006), as two samples are from charcoal found in early plaza floors or construction fill and are not exempt from the "old charcoal problem" (i.e., the burned material could predate the deposit). A third sample, old copal, is possibly from the later surface of Q-95, but details of its context are unknown. A fourth sample dates pit features that lie beneath a monumental hall, and thus it does not date the architecture itself. For these reasons, we continue to skirt the issue of Mayapán's possible eleventh-century roots, as the evidence is not as strong as for the twelfth century. Indications are stronger in Mayapán's hinterlands of Belize for the origins of Postclassic occupations and pottery sometime in the eleventh century, perhaps close to AD 1100 (Masson 2000; Rosenswig and Masson 2002).

More archaeological research on earlier monumental phases at Mayapán is clearly needed. The chronology of the city has been recently refined with thirty-nine new radiocarbon dates from carbon, copal, wooden cinders, and human remains (figure 2.2; Peraza Lope et al. 2006). Most radiocarbon dates at Mayapán fall between approximately AD 1190 and 1450 (figure 2.2), although our sample is biased toward later activities that left the remains of copal and charcoal in final features. Some structures have as many as seven phases of modification, such as Hall Q-70 (P. Delgado Kú 2004:47).

Unlike many Maya centers, the monumental and residential architecture of Mayapán was not constructed over platforms of earlier periods. Late Preclassic pottery forms 0.4 percent of our test pit sample of 94,725 sherds—Early Classic sherds formed 0.3 percent and Late Classic sherds represented 0.2 percent. This sample includes all test pits and three fully excavated houses within the wall and test units outside of the city wall, where earlier materials were more common, as is indicated by pottery sherd distribution maps (figures 2.3–2.7). Terminal Classic pottery forms 3.8 percent of our total sample of sherds from the settlement zone, and Colonial pottery forms .01 percent. These data are from our 2001–2004 investigations (Peraza Lope et al. 2008:table 15.2). Surface collection results, which sampled more contexts, are equivalent, with Preclassic through Late Classic materials representing 0.1 to 0.3 percent, and Terminal Classic sherds forming 3.5 percent of the sample of 45,567 sherds (Peraza Lope et al. 2008:tables 15.3, 15.4). Ceramic material from the 2008–2009 seasons, totaling 195,686 sherds, yields similar results from seven fully excavated domestic structures and three civic-ceremonial contexts at the Itzmal Ch'en

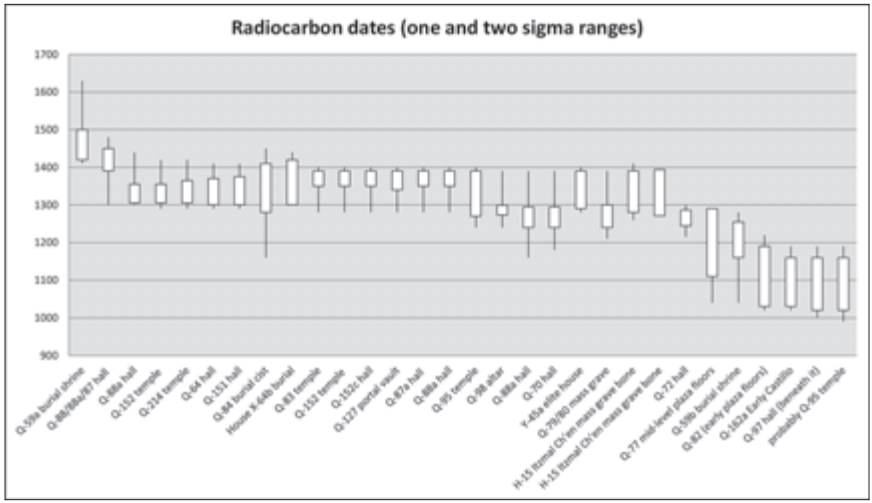

Figure 2.2. *Calibrated radiocarbon dates with results between AD 1000 and 1500 from Mayapán. Full results are reported in Peraza Lope et al. (2006:table 4), with the exception of a new second date for the mass grave next to Hall H-15 (with identical results to the first) that is included in this graph.*

group (Cruz Alvarado et al. 2012). From this sample, Terminal Classic sherds form 2.5 percent of the total sample; occupations in the Itzmal Ch'en area contributed to a higher admixture of Terminal Classic materials—for example, 5.7 percent of the Itzmal Ch'en temple (H-17) sample and 10.6 percent of a lithic workshop building in a nearby residential group (I-57).

The possibility of a Terminal Classic (AD 850–1000) site at the vicinity of Mayapán has been the topic of much analytical deliberation due to the higher quantities of sherds of this era compared to earlier periods and the potential historical links to a previous settlement (figures 2.3–2.7). Harry E. D. Pollock (1962:6) observed, "Not a single Florescent or Early Mexican building . . . has been found, and it seemingly was not until Middle Mexican times (abandonment of Chichén Itzá) or even later that any structure that now survives was erected." This observation has withstood the test of time. A total of 96 percent of the pottery sample from the monumental center and 95 percent of the walled settlement pottery sample dates to this period (P. Delgado Kú 2004:119), as figure 2.3 indicates (Peraza Lope et al. 2008). Nonetheless, Carnegie investigators lacked consensus regarding the importance of Late/Terminal Classic Maya settlement largely due to the ubiquity of recycled cut stones of the Puuc style. The question continues to prompt disparate views

(Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:8; Peraza Lope et al. 2006). Despite the reuse of Puuc style cut stone blocks in Mayapán's buildings (Proskouriakoff 1962a:92), as well as the fact that one central hall (Q-151, The Hall of the Chac Masks) has two mosaic Chac masks that were brought in from an earlier site, possibly Kabah (Proskouriakoff 1962a:95; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:11; P. Delgado Kú 2004:111), evidence for a major Terminal Classic city beneath Mayapán has not been forthcoming (Proskouriakoff 1962a:92). No architectural evidence for early buildings of this date has been found in fourteen years of INAH work at the site center (P. Delgado Kú 2004:144), nor in our own PEMY investigations. Most Puuc stones were brought from other sites in the region and were covered in plaster along with local stones, which would have concealed their decorative distinctiveness (P. Delgado Kú 2004:144–45).

There is no doubt, however, that Terminal Classic occupation in the vicinity of Mayapán was widespread given the admixture of sherds in Postclassic deposits. It is doubtful that this earlier settlement was conceived of as the political entity of Mayapán. The distribution of Terminal Classic sherds indicates that settlement of this period corresponds poorly to the heart of the Postclassic city (figures 2.3, 2.4). Rather than concentrating beneath the site center and the densely occupied downtown area around it, Terminal Classic materials are densest near or outside the city wall. It is important to remember that in almost all test pits and surface collections of the INAH, PEMY, and Carnegie projects, where Terminal Classic pottery is found it represents a minority of material that is mixed with greater quantities of Postclassic pottery (Peraza Lope et al. 2006). The large water-bearing Cenotes Itzmal Ch'en and X-Coton clearly attracted earlier settlement (figure 2.4, Russell 2008a). Burials of Late/Terminal Classic age have also been found in the eastern margins of Mayapán's walled enclosure, next to Postclassic Houses F-13b and H-11 (Peraza Lope et al. 2006; Latimer and Delgado Kú 2012). Whole vessels dating to periods prior to the Postclassic have not been recovered at Mayapán (P. Delgado Kú 2004:155), with one exception: Robert E. Smith's (1953) discovery of a Terminal Classic sealed burial cavern within Cenote X-Coton. Partial Terminal Classic vessels were found with two burials at House H-11 (next to the Itzmal Ch'en group), but the house itself was of Postclassic date (Latimer and Delgado Kú 2012). About 500 meters beyond the city wall, Classic Period architecture density increases and buildings are intact, often clustering near major cenotes in the periphery (Russell 2008a). Evidence points to a population of Terminal Classic age in Mayapán's vicinity that was aggregated into multiple, small settlement clusters around major water sources and other agrarian resources. Beyond the city wall, nodal archi-

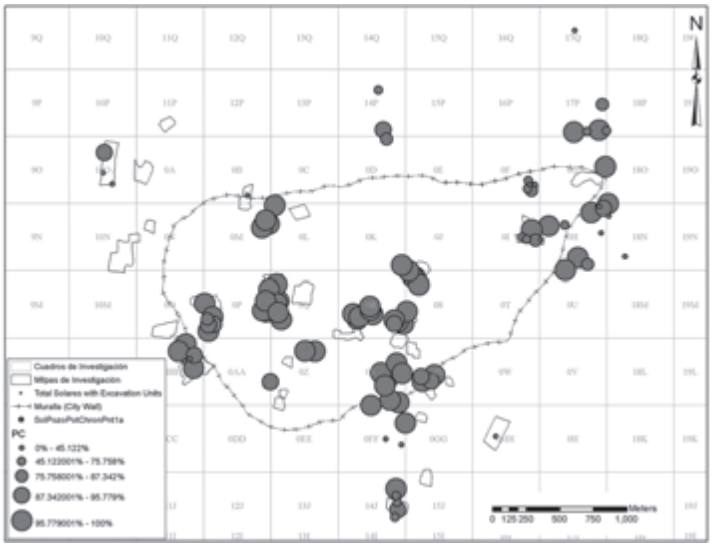

Figure 2.3. *Density of Postclassic ceramics in Mayapán test pits. Percentage shown is that of total ceramics per unit. Map by Timothy Hare with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

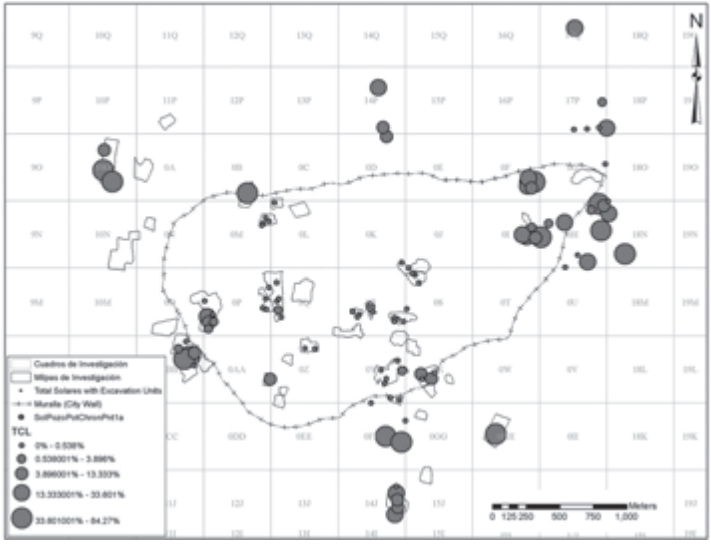

Figure 2.4. *Density of Terminal Classic ceramics in Mayapán test pits. Percentage shown is that of total ceramics per unit. Map by Timothy Hare with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

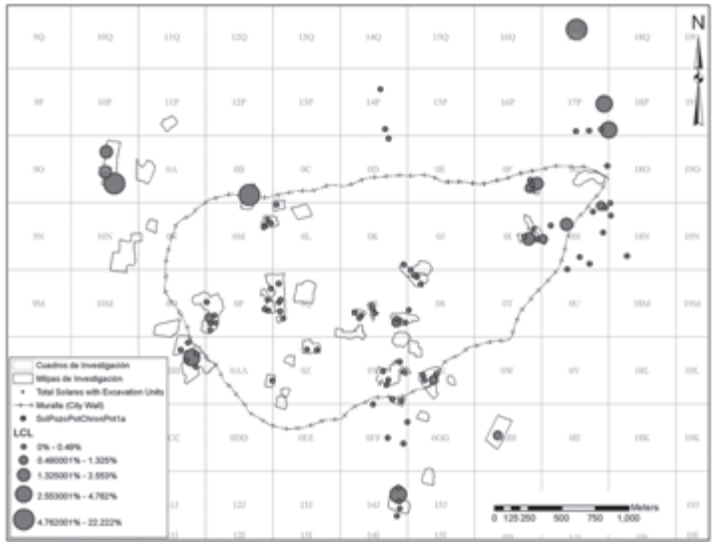

Figure 2.5. *Density of Late Classic ceramics in Mayapán test pits. Percentage shown is that of total ceramics per unit. Map by Timothy Hare, with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

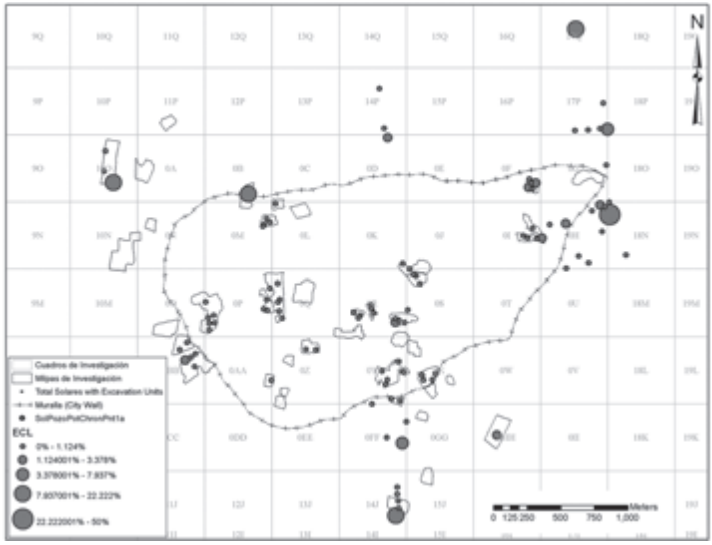

Figure 2.6. *Density of Early Classic ceramics in Mayapán test pits. Percentage shown is that of total ceramics per unit. Map by Timothy Hare, with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

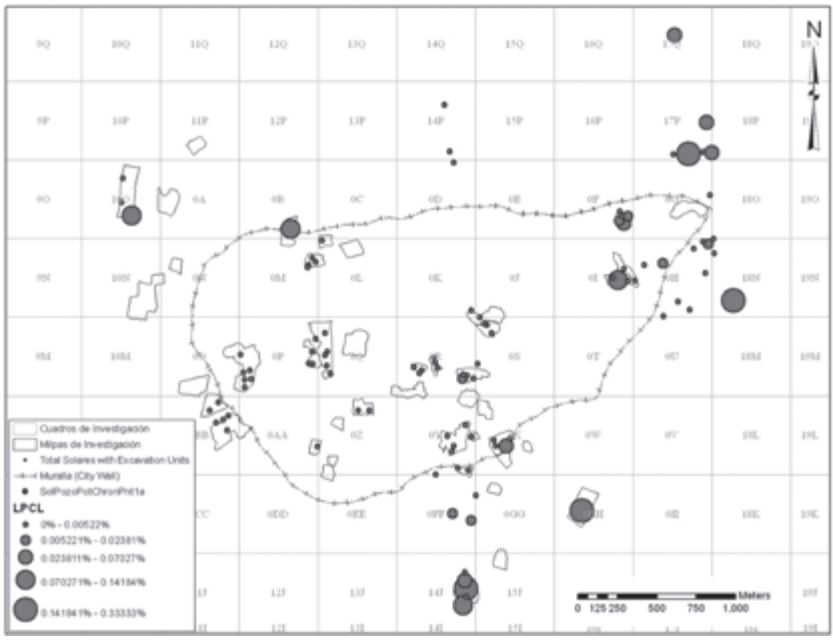

Figure 2.7. *Density of Late Preclassic ceramics in Mayapán test pits. Percentage shown is that of total ceramics per unit. Map by Timothy Hare, with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

tectural features such as shrines and outlying temples have been found that were probably important for dividing and marking Terminal Classic settlement zones in the area (Russell 2008a). These populations were likely linked to a larger town, probably Tichac (modern Telchaquillo), which has at least two standing Classic/Postclassic Period monumental edifices (Roys 1972:180; Proskouriakoff 1962a:92). Other Postclassic sites near Mayapán (figure 2.1) also had significant occupations during the Late or Terminal Classic Periods (Ruppert and Smith 1957).

The most interesting results of the new radiocarbon dates reveal a period of strife and violence that occurred prior to the city's mid-fifteenth-century fall. Between AD 1290 and 1400, two mass graves of descrecrated human remains were deposited in the plaza next to Temple Q-80 in the monumental zone and along the platform of the distant Itzmal Ch'en group (Adams 1953; Peraza Lope et al. 2002; Paris and Russell 2012). Hall Q-88a (the Maize Jaguar building) of the Templo Redondo compound was burned during the

same interval (Peraza Lope et al. 1999a). The cinders of its incinerated roof were not removed by Mayapán's inhabitants during the remainder of the site's occupation. Occupants of outlying elite House Y-45a also abandoned their dwelling during this time, taking pains to smash their fine pots in rear rooms, burn offerings, and fill the rooms with rubble before departing (Peraza Lope, Masson, and Delgado Sánchez 2008). These diverse classes of evidence suggest that the city declined in vitality and power at least 50–150 years before its official fall. This fourteenth-century (or late thirteenth-century) strife may correlate with historical accounts of Mayapán in the third Chumayel chronicle, which reports a depopulation of the city in K'atun 1 Ahau (AD 1382–1401) that presages the final downfall (Roys 1962:78). Migrations of groups such as the Kowoj to the Petén Lakes region probably date to this k'atun (Pugh and Rice 2009a:94).

Postclassic ceramic chronology of Mayapán and its contemporaries has been treated in considerable detail elsewhere (R. Smith 1971; Connor 1983; Peraza Lope 1993; Masson 2000; Masson and Rosenswig 2005; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a; Peraza Lope 2005; Peraza Lope et al. 2006; Peraza Lope et al. 2008; Cecil 2009; Cruz Alvarado 2010; Cruz Alvarado et al. 2012) and is not fully described here. The early (Hocabá) and late (Tases) phases of the Mayapán sequence (R. Smith 1971) have caused some confusion. The main utilitarian types and forms of the Mama Red and Navula Unslipped groups continue in both phases (Masson 2000; Peraza Lope et al. 2006; P. Delgado Kú 2004:121). More detailed modal observations are more useful for identifying temporal differences in paste and form for these Postclassic types (Cruz Alvarado 2010, 2012a). The manufacture of Chen Mul Modeled effigy censers in the latter half of the sequence represents the primary phase distinction at Mayapán, and this tradition may have originated in the late thirteenth (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003:7) or fourteenth centuries (chapter 8). Stratigraphic comparisons suggest that sherds of the Matillas Fine Orange group may be more ubiquitious in the earlier levels of Mayapán's occupation while Buff Polbox (Tecoh Red-on-Buff, Pelé Polychrome) pottery may be more common in later levels, but overlap throughout the occupation for both ceramic groups is observed (Peraza Lope et al. 2006:170).

Buff Polbox pottery has been of considerable interest to researchers at Zacpetén and other Kowoj settlements due to similarities in surface treatment and decoration shared with Kowoj pottery (Rice and Cecil 2009a; P. Rice 2009e). It is not, however, confined only to late contexts at Mayapán, nor is it found only in isolated locations as claimed (Pugh and Rice 2009a:92). The most decorated type of the Buff Polbox group, Pelé Polychrome, is rare in the

settlement zone, and this pottery is of greatest significance for Zacpetén comparisons. We have generally concluded it to be a high-status serving ware for Mayapán, due to its ubiquity at one monumental center hall (Q-88), one elite palace (R-86–90), and one elite house (Y-45). Distribution maps from test pit and surface collection contexts illustrate some tendency for Buff Polbox group pottery (mainly represented by the Tecoh Red-on-Buff type) to occur in slightly higher proportions (but not more than 2 percent of the samples) in clusters near the eastern Gate H, western Gate AA, and in the south central part of the city toward Gate X (figures 2.8, 2.9). The small proportions, however, do not constitute a strong indicator of social enclaves.

General resemblances between Kukula Cream group pottery, especially the Xcanchakan Black-on-Cream type and Terminal Classic Peto Cream pottery have contributed to efforts to divide Mayapán's pottery assemblages into two phases, with Kukula Cream sherds representing the best candidate for an earlier Hocabá phase diagnostic (R. Smith 1971). Like most other rarer Postclassic pottery types, they are recovered in low numbers in lots dominated by Mama Red and Navula Unslipped sherds; they also occur in contexts that have pottery considered to belong to the later Tases phase. A more detailed study has now been completed by Wilberth Cruz Alvarado (2010). In the settlement zone, frequencies are very low, but we do observe slightly higher proportions near to the Itzmal Ch'en cenote in our surface collection and test pit samples, where Terminal Classic pottery is also relatively more ubiquitous. This co-occurrence may lend weight to the Hocabá phase argument, but the higher frequency is marginal—near Itzmal Ch'en these sherds account for 1–3 percent of the sample, and elsewhere they are less than 1 percent.

Archaeologists are still working out the chronological details of northern Yucatán during the interval from AD 1000–1200 (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a, 2009:589; Peraza Lope et al. 2006). Some argue that Chichén Itzá ceramics (Sotuta Complex) lingered for at least a century after AD 1000, although the architecture of this site was completed earlier and not expanded after this date (Andrews, Andrews, and Robles Castellanos 2003). Chichén Itzá was probably occupied in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, although its power waned and new groups may have moved into the site (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:21). Anthony P. Andrews, E. Wyllys Andrews V, and Fernando Robles Castellanos (2003:152) and Ringle, Gallareta Negrón, and Bey (1998:189–90) are more inclined to view the Postclassic as a single ceramic phase. Recent work at Mayapán and in its hinterlands is in general agreement for a Late Postclassic Period from around AD 1100 to Spanish contact (Masson 2000; Masson and Rosenswig 2005; P. Delgado Kú 2004). In Belize

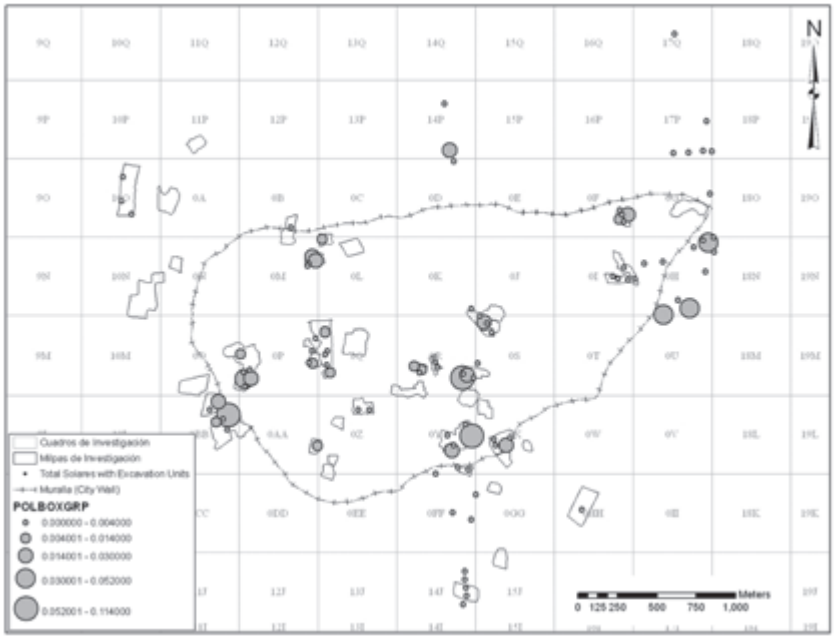

Figure 2.8. *Buff Polbox group pottery in Mayapán's test pits (mainly Tecoh Red-on-Buff). Percentage shown is that of total sherds per unit. Map by Timothy Hare, with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

the sequence is more nuanced, as pottery assemblages can be defined for the Early Postclassic Period (Walker 1990; Graham 1987; Masson and Rosenswig 2005), as can a post-Mayapán set of diagnostics that date to the segmented century beginning around AD 1450 and lasting into the Colonial Period (Graham 1987; Oland 2009). Architectural changes may have greater potential for tracking chronological and historical developments. For example, dance platforms and other features may be earlier, as they emulate the architecture of preceding northern sites. (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009:593–94).

A fourteenth-century resurgence in the Belize hinterland coincided with the rise in Chen Mul effigy censer use at Mayapán and an increase in site construction and trade at sites across the lowlands (Masson 2000). These efforts may have been part of a revitalization movement originating at Mayapán that emphasized ancient gods, myths, and symbols (Masson 2000), perhaps in response to severe societal and environmental stress (chapter 8). Milbrath and Peraza Lope (2009) make an argument for multiple, smaller scale revivals in

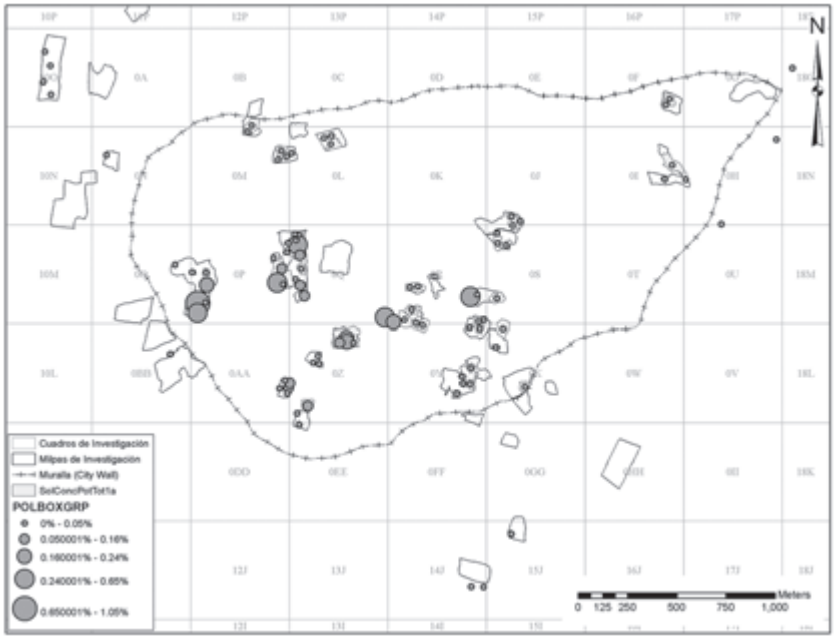

Figure 2.9. *Buff Polbox group pottery in Mayapán's surface collections (mainly Tecoh Red-on-Buff). Percentage shown is that of total sherds per unit. Map by Timothy Hare, with data from Peraza Lope et al. (2008).*

building styles and stelae erection throughout Mayapán's history (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009:596, 600). It remains difficult to address the timing of such phenomenon with the constraints of radiocarbon and ceramic dating, which can provide at best temporal accuracy within a one hundred-year period (Peraza Lope et al. 2006; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009:595).

MAYAPÁN'S PUBLIC BUILDINGS

A conventional approach to the study of political organization is to examine the distribution of types of elite architecture, including temples, large residences, and other large buildings of specialized function. Landa (1941:23–26) reveals that an inner enclosure, presumably the monumental center, was constructed first, which contained temples and houses for high priests and lords, followed by a resettlement effort that brought subject peoples from townships that were part of the confederacy to the city. These families built houses outside

of the monumental zone, as Landa tells it. This passage hints at the process of founding a political capital, although some details are glossed over. The monumental plazas of the city contain only colonnaded halls and ritual edifices; this zone is ringed by the largest and most elaborate residences, but they are clearly outside of it and a possible remnant of the inner enclosing wall. One possible explanation for this model is that halls were considered emblematic of "big houses," as was the case for Utatlán (Carmack 1981a). Alternatively, the fact that Mayapán's major palaces encircle the monumental zone a short distance away may have constituted sufficient proximity and nucleation to earn this concentric description. Today a rectangular wall surrounds the monumental civic-ceremonial groups. The wall was probably reconfigured from a rounded shape to its current form by ranchers before the Carnegie investigators arrived, but its location may approximate that of the earlier enclosure (Brown 1999). If Landa's account can be believed, the construction of the monumental core was initiated in an organized effort to found a political capital. As many of the monumental zone structures exhibit multiple Postclassic Period modifications (P. Delgado Kú 2004), it is not a simple matter to reconstruct the original appearance of the center.

Types of Buildings and Architectural Groups

Colonnaded hall courtyard groups, sometimes with temples, frame the monumental center (figures 2.10, 2.11). Most public buildings had composite roofs of wooden beams and masonry, which were plastered over (Proskouriakoff 1962a:94–95). The epicenter has twenty-two halls, and at least seven others are found within or near the city wall. Eleven temples are present at the monumental center, including one next to a portal gate that forms an eastern entrance to this zone. There are five general types of temples, including (1) large pyramidal structures housing an upper shrine room or two, (2) burial shaft temples housing an upper shrine room with an ossuary shaft, (3) radial temples (two to four cardinal staircases), (4) round temples, and (5) twin temples (only one exists at Mayapán, T-70). A variant of the first and second types include the serpent column temples defined by the Carnegie project (e.g., Q-58, Q-143, Q-159, Q-162, and Q-218), which had serpent effigies carved of plaster or limestone at the base of staircase balustrades or columns forming an entranceway to the upper sanctuary (Proskouriakoff 1962a; Pugh 2001). Four more temples are present in strategically important locations in residential zones inside the wall as well as numerous oratories, sanctuaries, shrines, constructed altars, and round columnar altar stones (Proskouriakoff 1962a:91; P. Delgado Kú 2004:135). Small custodial houses (e.g., Q-92, Q-93, Q-67, and

Q-68) are sometimes located next to temples (e.g., Q-95 and Q-58), as indicated in figure 2.10.

The Carnegie project defined oratory buildings as those with temple-like rooms supported by smaller substructures (Proskouriakoff 1962a). Unlike Mayapán's temples, oratories were often used for funerary purposes and were probably ancestral shrines for privileged families. Both oratories and temples tend to have stucco human effigies in front of the altars in their upper buildings. Shrines and altars can be freestanding, adjoined to building bases, or centered on internal benches; sanctuaries are small rooms attached to buildings. It is difficult to know whether Mayapán residents perceived differences among shrines, altars, and sanctuaries, as their associated materials exhibit considerable overlap (Proskouriakoff 1962a:90–91). In general, these features have anthropomorphic stucco sculptures, censers, and/or human bones or skulls (e.g., Adams 1953:149, Proskouriakoff 1962a:90, 100). Sanctuaries were built later in the building sequences at Mayapán's center (P. Delgado Kú 2004:132).

The Main Plaza is dominated by the Temple of Kukulcan at its southern edge (figures 1.3, 2.10); the Round Temple (Templo Redondo) (Q-152) is located along its eastern border; and Hall Q-81 (with Temple Q-80 behind it) defines the northern edge. The western side of this plaza has three colonnaded hall groups (Q-70, Q-72, and Q-54). The North Plaza is formed by the front of Temple Q-80, burial shaft Temple Q-58 to the west, and Hall Q-64 to the north. Additional smaller plazas are observed to the northeast, east, and south—for example, groups including Temple Q-95/Hall Q-97 or Halls Q-87/Q-99, Hall Q-151/Temple Q-153, and Hall Q-142/Temple Q-141 (P. Delgado Kú 2004:99, 107, 111). Other conspicuous groups are also present just south of the Temple of Kukulcan and outside of the Main Plaza (figures 2.10, 2.11). We agree with Gustav Strömsvik (1953:137) and Edwin W. Shook (1955:267) that the main entrance to the monumental zone was through a portal gate (Q-127) located just east of the site center (for a more dubious assessment, see Proskouriakoff 1962a:124).

Proskouriakoff (1962a:91) classified monumental center arrangements into basic ceremonial groups and temple groups. Basic ceremonial groups include a hall, shrine, and oratory and may or may not be spatially linked to temples. Temple assemblages are distinguished by a pyramidal temple with serpent columns that forms a right angle to a colonnaded hall, with a shrine centered on the hall that faces the temple, and an oratory (Proskouriakoff 1962a:91). These elements reveal a high level of standardization in civic-ceremonial groups. Archaeological research has revealed little functional difference between these types of groups.

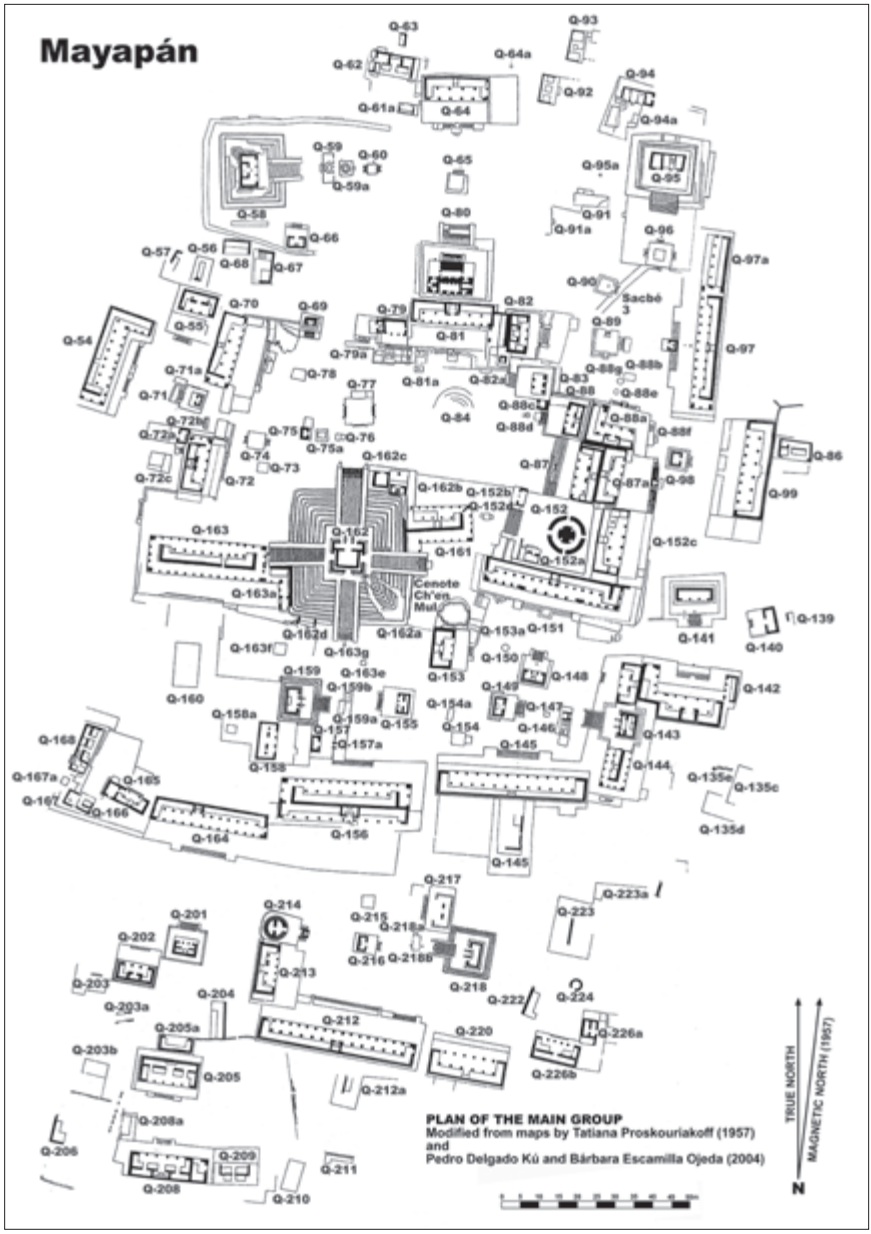

Figure 2.10. *Mayapán's monumental center. Map by Bradley Russell, compiled from Proskouriakoff (1962b:map inset) and P. Delgado Kú (2004:figure 8).*

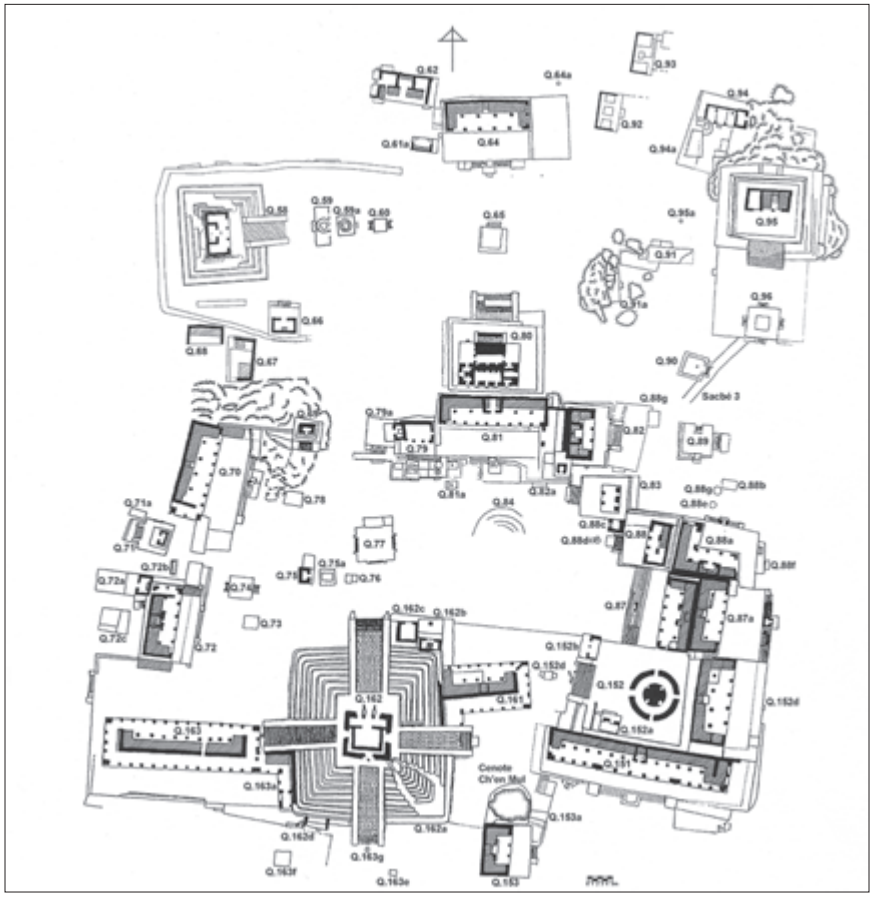

Figure 2.11. *The Main Plaza and North Plaza of Mayapán's monumental center, showing the locations of the Temple of Kukulcan (Q-162), Cenote Ch'en Mul, the Round Temple (Q-152), the Hall of the Sun Disks (Q-161), the Hall of Kings (Q-163), the Hall of the Chac Masks (Q-151), the Temple of the Painted Niches (Q-80), burial shaft Temples Q-58 and Q-95, and other associated buildings discussed in the text. Map by Pedro Delgado Kú and Bárbara Escamilla Ojeda.*

Remembering Chichén Itzá

Architectural conventions such as radial temples, round temples, and serpent balustrades and columns link Mayapán to Chichén Itzá (Proskouriakoff 1962a; Andrews and Sabloff 1986:433–56; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:11; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2009; P. Delgado Kú 2004:153–54, 156). Round

Temple Q-152 shares an alignment with Chichén Itzá's Caracol that faces the sunset in late April and mid-August, marking day intervals (105 and 206) useful for agriculture (Aveni 1980:269; Aveni and Hartung 1978:139–40; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:12). Equinox orientations are also identified (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:12; Aveni, Milbrath, and Peraza Lope 2004). The Temple of Kukulcan emulates its analog, the Castillo at Chichén Itzá (Proskouriakoff 1962a:91), in terms of serpent balustrades, nine terraces, four radial staircases, and a primary northern orientation (figures 1.3, 2.10; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:16). Subtle differences are also identified. Mayapán's Kukulcan temple may have originally had 65 steps per side for a total of 260, a number significant to the ritual calendar, whereas the Chichén Itzá temple stairs commemorate the solar year (Carlson 1982; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:17). A rattlesnake shadow appears on the Mayapán temple staircase around sunset at the time of the winter solstice, whereas this pattern is present at the Chichén Itzá temple for the equinox (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:17). The burial shaft temples of Mayapán generally resemble Chichén Itzá's Osario in having a central shaft containing human remains; we outline their differences later in this chapter. Mayapán, along with all of its contemporaries in the Maya lowlands, curiously lacks ball courts, a central feature of public architecture at Chichén Itzá and other Classic Period northern centers. Gallery-patio groups, a hallmark form at Chichén Itzá, include a long frontal colonnaded hall. The hall component continues at Mayapán without the square columned patio enclosure of its predecessor. Variants of Mayapán's public architecture and art have been identified at sites along the east coast of Yucatán (Freidel and Sabloff 1984; Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:24–25; P. Delgado Kú 2004:154), at northern Belize sites (Masson 2001a:96; Rosenswig and Masson 2002) in the Petén Lakes (Pugh and Rice 1997, 2009b:143–47; Pugh 2001:253, 2002), and in highland Guatemala (Carmack 1981a).

Recent Investigations

Many monumental zone buildings have been investigated archaeologically. The Carnegie project performed work at a selection of temples, halls, oratories, and shrines in the site center (Proskouriakoff 1962a; Weeks 2009). Some work involved formal excavation while other buildings had selected features cleared for mapping purposes (Proskouriakoff 1962a). Special features were tested—including dance and monument platforms Q-77, Q-96, and Q-84 (Proskouriakoff 1962a:104, 106, 109)—and plaza floors were trenched (Adams

1953). Peraza Lope commenced the INAH project in 1996 and has fully excavated and restored the majority of temples, halls, associated ancillary buildings, and attendant houses of Mayapán's Main Plaza and the adjacent North Plaza (Peraza Lope et al. 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2003; Peraza Lope, Delgado Kú, and Escamilla Ojeda 2002; Peraza Lope, Escarela Rodríguez, and Delgado Kú 2004). The details of monumental building construction have been fully chronicled in Pedro C. Delgado Kú's (2004) masterful Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán tésis. All mural fragments from the site center have been the subject of a recent synthetic study by Miguel Angél Delgado Kú (2009). Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Alfredo Barrera Rubio have published a suite of articles on newly discovered art objects and mural programs from the city (e.g., Peraza Lope 1999; Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a; Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010).

HIGH ART AT SELECTED MAYAPÁN BUILDINGS

Mayapán was a cosmopolitan world city, and its widespread contacts with other polities in Postclassic Mesoamerica are observed in diverse art styles (Pollock 1962:14; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:40; Masson 2003a; M. Delgado Kú 2009; Masson and Peraza Lope 2010). Various studies differ in their interpretation of the degree of direct contact between central Mexican Aztec polities, intermediaries in the Gulf Coast region of southwestern Campeche or eastern Tabasco, and Mayapán. This kind of debate often ensues in Mesoamerican archaeology whenever major political art incorporates styles recognized from another region (Chase and Chase 1988; Masson 2003a; Braswell 2003). As Masson and Peraza Lope (2010) point out, Aztec pottery or other trade goods are not found at Mayapán. In the equally distant Postclassic Soconusco region, settlements with close ties to the Aztec empire do have low quantities of Aztec pottery (Voorhies and Gasco 2004:figure 6.10). It is clear, however, that Mayapán was directly or indirectly in contact with central Mexico and that this interchange resulted in a mixture of art of local or international inspiration at the city (Pollock 1962:14; P. Delgado Kú 2004:156; Andrews and Sabloff 1986:433–56; Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004), although some similarities also date back to Chichén Itzá's apogee (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:26). Some of Mayapán's most conspicuous public art is reviewed in the remainder of this chapter, including programs at the Kukulcan temple and adjacent Halls Q-161 and Q-163, Temple Q-80, burial shaft Temples Q-58 and Q-95, and the Itzmal Ch'en temple and halls (H-17, H-15, and H-12).

The Temple of Kukulcan

Mayapán's principal pyramid, Q-162 (figures 1.3, 2.10, 2.11) bore the name of Kukulcan (Landa 1941:25). The cosmological and astronomical features of Temple Q-162's architecture, as well as comparisons to Chichén Itzá, have been well studied, and we have reviewed these findings in the previous section (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:16–19; P. Delgado Kú 2004:74). The temple has nine tiered levels and reaches a height today of 15 meters; its upper room would have added at least 2 meters to this height (P. Delgado Kú 2004:74). Sanctuaries Q-162b and Q-162c were later built at the plaza level in front of the pyramid, to the east of the northern staircase (P. Delgado Kú 2004:79–80). Sanctuaries Q-162d, Q-162e, and Q-162f are located at the rear (south) side of Q-162 (P. Delgado Kú 2004:114–16).

The Cenote Ch'en Mul was of symbolic significance at Mayapán, located to the immediate east of the Temple of Kukulcan (figure 2.11). Together with this temple it represented an ancient Mesoamerican temple-cave complex, and cavernous chambers within Ch'en Mul extend to beneath Round Temple Q-152 (Brown 1999:181; Pugh 2001). Rituals pertaining to the cenote may have taken place at the cenote temple (Q-153), located at the southern edge of its opening. Contrary to Colonial accounts, the cenote was not used to any recognizable extent for sacrifice or offerings (Roys 1962:49). Tests in the Cenote Ch'en Mul performed by Robert E. Smith (1954) yielded only general midden debris, some of which probably washed in from above. The cenote holds small pools of water. "Cenote" Ch'en Chooch on the Morris R. Jones (1962) Carnegie map, located just north of the monumental center, is actually a large sascab mine used for building materials at the site center and was not part of the sacred landscape (A. Smith 1962:213).

The INAH project exposed an earlier phase of the Temple of Kukulcan, Q-162a, at the southeast corner of the building (Peraza Lope et al. 1997; Peraza Lope 1999; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:19). This early building may not have been radial, as evidence for a north-facing staircase was not found—it was either destroyed or did not exist (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:18, 2009:592). A stucco frieze on the southeast corner of the interior temple (figure 2.12) illustrates the theme of war. Three scenes in the facade feature skeletonized figures (P. Delgado Kú 2004:79). Rectangular niches rather than heads appear above the torsos of these figures. Peraza Lope and his colleagues observe that skulls would have been placed in these niches (Peraza Lope 1999; Peraza Lope et al. 1999a:82, plates 236–43; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:18; P. Delgado Kú 2004:77). In one niche, human maxillary bone was found along with an effigy mandible of stucco (Peraza Lope et al. 1999a:82, plate 240; P.

Delgado Kú 2004:79; Serafin and Peraza Lope 2007). On the south, lower side of this façade, the skeletal figure has an attendant. The most striking of these three façade segments is on the east side (figure 2.12), where the hands of the skeletal figure are being pecked at by birds, perhaps vultures (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:18). An oversized, personified sacrificial knife is aimed at the figure's midsection. These personages stylistically resemble tomb stucco figures from a Postclassic tomb at Zaachila (Flannery 1983:figure 8.26), and they are rendered in an International style that is not characteristic of the Maya area, although a skeletal death god frieze is known from Tonina (Schele and Mathews 1998:figure 7:25). Peraza Lope (1999) interprets these figures as warriors glorified in death or cultic death god figures (Peraza Lope et al. 1999a:80–82), and the entities are similar to personages on pages of the Dresden Codex (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:18, 2009:592). The façade attests to underpinnings of violence and warfare associated with the early Mayapán state. This militaristic emphasis did not dissipate through time.

As the physical and cosmological center of the Mayapán world, Temple Q-162 was the nexus of a wide range of ritual activities essential to the unity and prosperity of the polity. Smaller art objects attest to the diversity of occasions hosted at the Temple of Kukulcan and its two adjacent halls. Higher proportions of whiskered merchants or warriors are found in this group among the effigy assemblage (chapter 7). Art commemorating females and the site's only Ehecatl (wind god aspect of Kukulcan) effigies also set the Temple of Kukulcan compound apart from other edifices. A nearly life-sized sculpture of a woman grinding maize on a stone metate commemorated the productive contributions of women to society (figure 2.13). This working woman, found by the INAH project, was featured prominently between Q-162's eastern staircase and the Cenote Ch'en Mul. The temple also had slightly more clay figurines than any other monumental edifice, which suggests that the owners left them near the temple as votive offerings, perhaps in the context of processions or pilgrimages (Masson and Peraza Lope 2012).

Stela 1 and Stela 9

Stela 1, now at the hacienda of Xcanchakan (at a nearby town), features two actors (Figure 2.14), marked by a K'atun bird and a K'atun 10 Ahau date, probably AD 1185 (Pollock 1962:3; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:39). Its larger protagonist is enthroned above and to the right of a lesser figure, and he is gesturing and speaking, as indicated by a speech scroll emanating from his mouth. This lord appears in the guise of Chac, with a Chac headdress and

Figure 2.12. *The stucco façade on an earlier phase of the Temple of Kukulcan (Q-162a) features skeletonized figures, as shown in this example from the building's east face. Note that the birds peck at the figure's hands and a personified knife is located beneath the figure's right arm. Illustration by Anne Deane.*

a reptile eye. A turbaned figure, also wearing a possible Chac mask, extends an offering to this lord. Both figures have headdress miters that Karl A. Taube (1992:figure 14) links to the priesthood and Itzamna, although other entities wear it. A similar theme is observed on Stela 9, found near round Temple Q-126. Like Stela 1, the principle figure is seated on a throne on the right, facing an eroded figure or set of offerings (including a tripod bowl) on the left. Two other fragments (Stelae 5 and 6) have probable dates of AD 1244 and AD 1283 (Pollock 1962:3).

Q-161—Hall of the Sun Symbols

Hall Q-161 was a multifunctional building decorated with scenes linked to celestial bodies, astronomy, mythology, and conjuring (Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004:439; M. Delgado Kú 2009:279–80, 295). Its mural was carefully covered in stucco during antiquity and was not visible during the final occupation of the site; INAH's investigations have uncovered it (Peraza Lope et al. 1997:90). Mayapán's murals in general resemble other International-style murals found broadly across Mesoamerica in localities such as central Mexico, eastern coastal Yucatán, and highland Guatemala (Proskouriakoff 1962a:137;

Figure 2.13. *A nearly life-sized stone sculpture of a woman working at a grinding stone was recovered at the base of the east staircase of the Temple of Kukulcan. Illustration by Anne Deane.*

Figure 2.14. *Stela 1 from Mayapán. Illustration by Kendra Farstad, from Proskouriakoff (1962a:figure 12a).*

Miller 1982; Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:28–29; Masson 2003a). The style of these murals has prompted suggestions that central Mexican artisans painted them (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:29–30; Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010:1–2).

The Q-161 mural originally had a series of eight yellow panels outlined in red-painted bands in which a sun disk is the central element (Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004; M. Delgado Kú 2009:222). The eight panels may be related to the eight solar years in the Venus almanac; star eye symbols descend from the panels' upper frames, also attesting to the importance of Venus (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:28; Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010; M. Delgado Kú 2009:295). The descending figures in this Venus almanac could be avatars of the sun (Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010:3). Alignments from the Round Temple (Q-152) toward Q-161 and the Castillo

mark key solar dates and lend credibility to this argument (Aveni, Milbrath, and Peraza Lope 2004; Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010:3).

From each sun disk at Q-161, a unique descending figure emerges. These personages are scarcely identifiable due to the mural's eroded state (figures 2.15, 2.16). On either side of the sun disks are two religious practitioners who use serpent staffs to help the disk descend (e.g., M. Delgado Kú 2009:226, 276, figure 69). The figures are elaborately dressed in textiles and head gear signifying their elite status, and they likely portray supernatural entities—gods or ancestors—who were called out from sun disk portals at the behest of serpent staff–holding priests. Miguel Delgado Kú (2009:276–78) argues they may represent deities such as the death god, the sun god, or Mayapán founder Hunac Ceel. One figure bears a large ring-shaped ornament in its headdress that is reminiscent of Tlaloc goggles, and another figure carries such an object or it is attached to his clothing (M. Delgado Kú 2009:figures 70, 74).

Of interest to us here are the pair of ritualists flanking each of the solar disks, whose serpent-headed staffs attach to the disks. These priests are clearly responsible for pulling down the disk from the sky band and coaxing the conjured entities to emerge from the sun symbols. Sun priests or Ah Kin May served as primary prophets for the may k'atun cycle, as Prudence Rice (2004:79), points out, but their power would have extended into a variety of political and official affairs, as discussed earlier in this chapter (Landa 1941:27). Another name for such supreme religious authorities according to Landa was Ahau Can May, which incorporates an ancient title for a political lord (Ahau). Might these manipulators of solar disks be sun priests? A second possibility is that they are Feathered Serpent priests, as they wield serpent staffs. The association of priests connected to serpent symbols and solar disk personages is reminiscent of themes in Chichén Itzá's Temple of the Jaguars. The Q-161 panels differ from imagery at Chichén Itzá in that snakes themselves are not being conjured at Mayapán and there are multiple sun disk figures at Mayapán rather than one primary figure (e.g., Schele and Mathews 1998:figure 6:33).

The existence of Feathered Serpent priests at Mayapán merits greater consideration given the importance of this office at Chichén Itzá. Ringle and his colleagues argue that Feathered Serpent priests performed the rites of accession for kings at Chichén Itzá, who are portrayed in sun disks at the Temple of the Jaguar (Ringle et al. 1998; Ringle 2004). They further suggest that high priests were important authorities in Chichén Itzá's governance, along with the king. Grant Jones (1998) has proposed an institution of paired rulership, consisting of a king and a priest, in the Petén Lakes region, a location to which some Itza migrated after Chichén Itzá's fall. Kowoj groups migrated to the Petén

Figure 2.15. *One panel from sun disk mural at Hall Q-161, Mayapán. The sun disk at center is flanked by two standing ritual practitioners who extend serpent head staffs to either side of the sun disk.*

from Mayapán later in time (P. Rice 2009d). Source material on Mayapán lacks explicit descriptions of formal paired authorities, nor does it emphasize serpent priests. Only three sculptures at the site may portray ritualists in the service of Kukulcan, wearing conical headdresses with three knots (chapter 7). Sun priests, on the other hand, were powerful, and their reputation endured long into the Colonial Period (Landa 1941:27). An idea of the ominous power of sun priests is provided by Tozzer (1941:27n146), citing a retrospective account as late as 1633, referring to the Izamal ruins: "There dwelt the priest of the Gods and they were revered to such an extent that it was they who were the lords and who punished and rewarded and who were obeyed with great fear . . . the priests were called and are called so at the present day . . . Ab (Ah) Kin."

The practice of conjuring deities who descended to receive offerings was routine for the Contact Period Maya area (Landa 1941:158). The diving god at Tulum may represent such a conjured entity, perhaps even Kukulcan, as described for festivals at Maní following Mayapán's collapse (Masson 2000:221, 231–37; Landa 1941:158).[1] The descending personages represented in the Hall Q-161 panels may portray dynasts who were later commemorated in the city's history or conjured in apotheosized form to sanction political actions in this life. It is hard to know the occasion for which they were conjured by the serpent staff wielders. Linda Schele and Peter Mathews (1998:230, 252) identify a sun disk ancestor on a lintel and mural of the Temple of the Jaguars while Ringle (2004) argues that sun disk figures may be initiates into

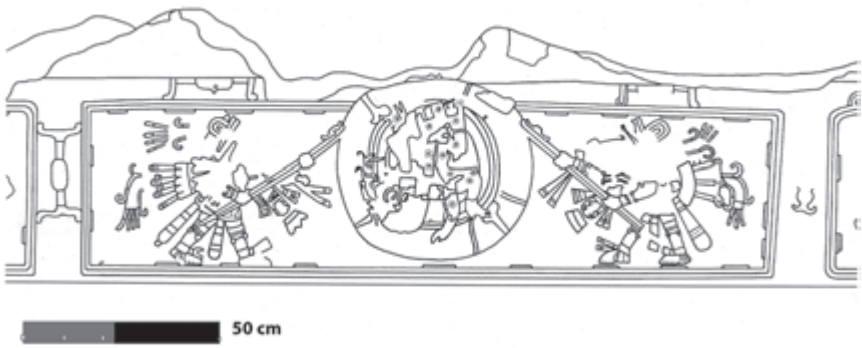

Figure 2.16. *Close-up of one figure descending from a sun disk panel at Hall Q-161, Mayapán. Reproduced with permission from M. Delgado Kú (2009:figure 72).*

political office at the behest of Kukulcan priests. It is highly likely that the panels portray conjured patron deities (or apotheosized patron ancestors) who presided over solar-Venus cycles (Milbrath et al. 2010). One other possibility must be reviewed: Might the panels illustrate the simultaneous manifestations of multiple beings? One creation scene on page 48c of the Mixtec Codex Vindobonensis (Byland and Pohl 1994:130, figure 58) shows four versions of a founder-hero, 9 Wind (a version of Quetzalcoatl), descending from the sky. Potentially analogous are the lintel paintings of the Mitla palaces, which depict epic heroes, officials, oracles, and patron deities of three major Oaxacan social groups (Pohl 1999:193). We know that Mayapán was held together by confederated factions who may have rotated the burden of solar or sacred calendrical cycles with the aid of their patron gods. The conjured beings from Mayapán's sun disks could represent some of those gods. The Q-161 panels hold many potential insights into Mayapán's political and religious organization.

Q-163—Hall of Kings

Hall Q-163 extends westward from the Temple of Kukulcan. It was named the Hall of Kings due to the recovery of seven nearly life-sized, fragmentary stucco portraits that covered its frontal columns (Proskouriakoff 1962a:95, figure 7p; Peraza Lope et al. 1999a:205–7; Peraza Lope et al. 1999b:photos 420–29; Peraza Lope 1999; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:26). The historical or mythical entities of the Q-163 portraits may not, however, portray "kings"

(figures 2.17–2.19). It is difficult to determine gods from ancestors who became deified in death (Proskouriakoff 1955:87; Masson 2000:224). Ancestors were often portrayed in the guise of gods such as K'awil in Classic Period Maya art (e.g., Looper 1991). We favor the interpretation that deities are represented on the Q-163 columns following Milbrath and Peraza Lope (2003a:26; Peraza Lope 1999:51), who identify the following personages: one deity with fangs, one column with the monstrous clawed feet of Tlatecuhtli (central Mexican earth lord), one Xochipilli, one Xipe Totec (figure 2.19), and one youthful pregnant female goddess (perhaps Tlazolteotl). Three male faces lack distinctive deity face markings, although two of these have whiskers and/or hollow eyes that may signify merchants (figure 2.18). One "merchant" has a bird (Quetzal) headdress that may be linked to martial capacities. Four examples exhibit the miter headdress, including the Xipe Totec, four other males, and one whiskered male.

In central Mexico, portraits of deified rulers or their offices were among the corpus of Aztec and Tlaxcalan Postclassic art. Richard F. Townsend (1979:31–33) describes these statues, or *teixiptla*, which became the focus of community ancestral rituals. Townsend's (1979:34) thoughtful analysis describes the teixiptla as embodiments of communities (of people and perhaps places) and their relationship to the supernatural realm, or the "animating spirits of the universe." In contrast, the cliff carvings of Mexica emperors (now greatly destroyed) on the hill of Chapultepec emphasized historical individuals rather than dynastic offices or symbols (Townsend 1979:33). Townsend points out that deceased Aztec royalty were sometimes portrayed in deity attire. He specifically mentions Xipe Totec as one example, and this entity is the most clearly portrayed personage at Q-163. The columns of Q-163, whether they portray gods or historical persons, probably reference the founding mythology of a paramount and his social group. Although Mayapán's ruling council was hierarchically ranked (Ringle and Bey 2001), the doctrine conveyed in the Q-161 and Q-163 programs is one of relatively equal representation of multiple supernatural players. The lack of individual glorification may be masked, however, by the portrayal of multiple supernaturals who legitimated the heroic histories of a particular paramount dynasty. The fact that the Q-161 mural was covered suggests revisionist history.

Other halls may have had similar stucco portraits to Q-163, suggesting that each hall commemorated the otherworld patrons of its dynasty. Vestiges of plastered columns suggest that stucco portrait figures might have graced the pillars of Q-163's corollary, the Q-161 sun disk panel colonnade (Peraza Lope et al. 1999b; Peraza Lope 1999; P. Delgado Kú 2004:151–52). Behind (south

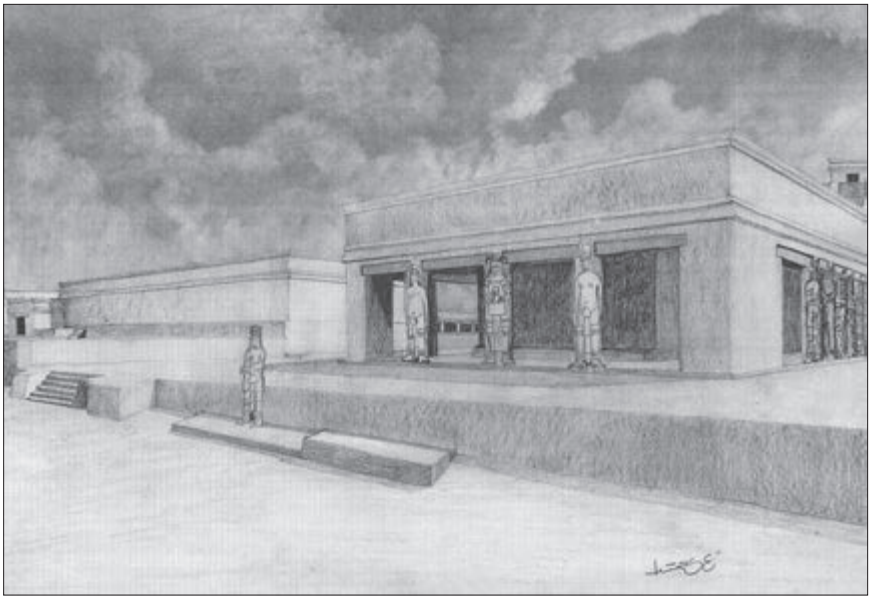

Figure 2.17. *Hypothetical reconstruction of Hall Q-163, the Hall of Kings, showing how sculpted columns may have appeared. Illustration by Luis Góngora, courtesy of Carlos Peraza Lope.*

of) the Temple of Kukulcan, Hall Q-156 was also "decorated with life-sized human figures modeled in high relief stucco on the columns" with the "feet of the figure in place, and a fragment of a well modeled stucco head was found nearby" (Proskouriakoff 1962a:116, figures 7q, r). In fact, portions of anthropomorphic stucco sculptures are relatively common on columns of other halls (P. Delgado Kú 2004:152), and one can envision a resplendent monumental center with stone-roofed, plastered columned buildings filled with art and portraiture visible to pedestrians in the plazas. Within most buildings, colorful, elaborate murals commemorated themes of high culture in myth, history, religion, and astronomical science. Luis Góngora's artistic reconstruction of Hall Q-163 captures the feel of the original appearance of such halls (figure 2.17).

Q-80—Temple of the Painted Niches

Temple Q-80 is atypical for Mayapán in that it has seven small interior rooms—some of them vaulted—on all sides of the building (Winters 1955a; P.

Figure 2.18. *Stucco portrait of a merchant deity from a column at Hall Q-163. Photo by Bradley Russell.*

Figure 2.19. *Stucco portrait of Xipe Totec from a column at Hall Q-163. Photo by Bradley Russell.*

Delgado Kú 2004:90–95). The frontal staircase of the building descends to the north. The north wall of the rear, southern room (Room 1) has a resplendent mural that the Carnegie project found, which depicts five painted effigy temples with built-in niches that represent the doors of these temples (Winters 1955a; Proskouriakoff 1955). This scene, referred to as the Temple of the Serpent Heads mural (M. Delgado Kú 2009), has four reptiles with gaping mouths that are painted between the temples. These reptiles have been linked to the founding mythology of the city (Pugh 2001; Masson 2003a; Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010:4), perhaps even to Kukulcan, with respect to his role in bringing together four divisions at Chichén Itzá and uniting four lineages from heaven at Mayapán (Masson 2003a). Recent detailed descriptions of this mural are provided by Miguel Delgado Kú (2009:142–55). Timothy W. Pugh (2001) has argued that these reptiles may represent primordial crocodile deities linked to a particular creation flood myth. He also argues that

five serpent temples were important to the center's cosmological organization with respect to this origin myth.

Different markings on the bands above the serpents have been variously suggested to imply different mythological places, social entities associated with them (Masson 2003a), or Venus imagery (Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010:5). Turquoise or *chalchihuitl* symbols indicate Venus symbolism in this program (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:27) and for the murals of Q-95 and Q-152 (Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004; M. Delgado Kú 2009:192, 217). Kukulcan is widely linked to myths and movements of the planet Venus. The great square of Cholula, a hub for Feathered Serpent ritual and pilgrimage (Pohl 2003a), contained a Turquoise House. Quetzalcoatl's Temple of Turquoise at Acatlán is also shown in the Codex Nuttall (Nuttall 1975:15; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:27). Mayapán was obviously the center of Kukulcan veneration in the Maya world, and Feathered Serpent priests at this city may have operated out of a religious edifice similar to those of other Postclassic centers. In Landa's lifetime, Mayapán's Temple of Kukulcan was known to have been named for this entity, and perhaps Q-80 was a Xiuhcalli facility used by politico-religious councilors of esteem. With multiple vaulted rooms, the building is unique at the city, and the fact that it is centrally located across from the Temple of Kukulcan reflects its significance (figures 2.11, 2.20). It is noteworthy that the site's four Venus ceramic censer effigies are concentrated at Shrines Q-79/79a and Hall Q-81 (chapter 7); these structures are adjacent to Temple Q-80.

Other layers of celestial and cosmological symbolism have been well argued for this mural. Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope (2004:431) suggest that the red paint dominating the upper part of the scene and the black paint at the lower part refer to the sun's daily cycle of rising and setting, drawing on the symbolism of these colors outlined in the Chilam Balam of Chumayel (Roys 1967:64–65; M. Delgado Kú 2009:159). The temples, their niches, and the serpents may signify the temple-cave complex (Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope 2004:431). Proskouriakoff (1962a:137) was the first to observe that the stylistic conventions of this mural were comparable to those in vogue in contemporary central Mexico. Mural fragments were also found beneath two stucco floors and a thick layer of fill in Temple Q-83, a small edifice immediately east of Q-80 (Peraza Lope et al. 1999b:122–23). It is referred to as the Mural of Substructure Q-83 and shows the feet of human actors, costume regalia, and a serpent band, and it exhibits a style and color scheme that strikingly resemble the Structure 16 and Structure 25 murals of Tulum (M. Delgado Kú 2009:166, 171).

Serpent Temples

Serpent sculptures at Mayapán are not confined to building forms classified as serpent temples by Howard D. Winters (1955b) and Proskouriakoff (1962a). That classification was based on the presence of serpent columns and/or balustrades at five structures: Q-162, Q-218, Q-159, Q-143, and Q-58. Despite these shared features, the buildings differ in some ways, and they also share additional characteristics with temples not classified as serpent temples. For example, Q-162 is the only radial pyramid in this group (figure 2.10). Three other temples had serpent sculptures in their surface rubble: Q-95, Q-82, and H-17. Structure Q-95, which lacks evidence for serpent columns or balustrades, is highly similar to serpent Temple Q-58, with its central mass burial shaft that descends to bedrock from the top of the structure. The size and prominent placement within the site center also distinguish Q-95 and Q-58. The other two structures, classed as an oratory (Q-82) and temple (H-17), similarly possess single upper-room sanctuaries with rear central shrines that are present on the smaller serpent temples (Q-159, Q-143, and Q-218). Miguel Delgado Kú (2009:129) suggests that serpent iconography in various elements of Mayapán's temples is more broadly attributable to parallels with Chichén Itzá. The presence of serpent art reflects the importance of Kukulcan veneration at such edifices as Q-95, Q-82, and H-17, where fragments derive from staircase or upper temple decorative features. Serpent temples as discussed by Pugh (2001) do not represent a complete picture of the sacred, commemorative monumental landscape of Mayapán, although he reveals their special importance.

Stone serpent fragments are generally common at the site center (Masson 2000), as pieces are present at twelve other structures beyond those described in the preceding paragraph, including altars, shrines, and sanctuaries (e.g., Q-71, Q-82a, Q-88b, Q-90, Q-96), halls (Z-50), and monument or dance platforms (Q-84, Q-77). [2] No more than two individual serpents are represented among the fragments of most structures. Temple H-17 at the Itzmal Ch'en group is an exception (chapter 3).

An architectural enclave that may be linked to Kukulcan priests lies in a court formed by the cenote temple (Q-153), Halls Q-151 and Q-145, and Temple Q-143. Near raised Shrine Q-149 in this group, two sculpture heads were found. Each has a human face and a conical headdress with three knots (Proskouriakoff 1962a:96, figure 8c). The headdress and knots are part of Quetzalcoatl regalia across Mesoamerica during the Postclassic (Miller and Taube 1993:141), and this group may have been a focal point for the activities of Feathered Serpent

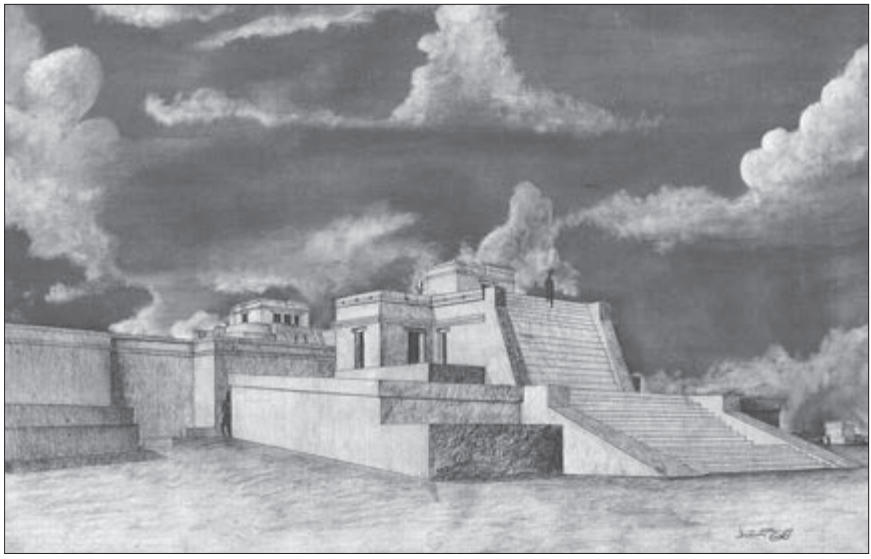

Figure 2.20 *Hypothetical reconstruction of Temple Q-80, the Temple of the Painted Niches, with the summit of the Temple of Kukulcan seen in the background. Illustration by Luis Góngora, courtesy of Carlos Peraza Lope.*

priests. The group's location, adjacent to the Temple of Kukulcan and Cenote Ch'en Mul, makes it a logical locus for activities focused on this deity, although Q-80 may have been a formal facility for this purpose, as suggested previously. Given the importance of this deity, it is logical that multiple ritual groups at the city provide evidence of religious practice in his honor. A third example of a sculpture with this headdress was found at outlying House P-33 (chapter 7).

Winters (1955c:411–12) and Proskouriakoff (1962a:139) identify interesting variants in serpent head iconography at the site. Two examples are particularly distinctive. The head at Structure Q-159 has earth lord riders astride it and at Structure Q-218 a gouged eyeball protrudes from the snake's head. Quetzalcoatl, in his Ehecatl form, is shown with a similar gouged eyeball in the Borgia and other Laud codices (Díaz, Rodgers, and Byland 1993:27), although other deities can share this characteristic (Díaz, Rodgers, and Byland 1993:30, 31, 35). Eyeball gouging was a popular form of sacrifice in Postclassic central Mexico (Díaz, Rodgers, and Byland 1993:62, 63). Proskouriakoff (1962a:136) was the first to link earth monster depictions at Mayapán to the central Mexican deity of Tlatecuhtli.

Burial Shaft Temples Q-58 and Q-95

A central theme of the city center's art and architecture is oriented toward death and sacrifice. Two burial shaft temples represent the most conspicuous of such features (Shook 1954a; Masson and Peraza Lope 2007). Structures Q-58 and Q-95 are located at the northwest and northeast corners of the monumental zone and seem to have marked the boundaries of the ceremonial precinct (figures 2.10, 2.11, 2.21, 2.22). Structure Q-58 reaches a height of 8 meters (Peraza Lope, Delgado Kú, and Escamilla Ojeda 2003:31) and Q-95 is 5 meters tall (P. Delgado Kú 2004:104).

Shafts at Q-58 and Q-95 were planned from the beginning of construction, as they are incorporated into two construction phases at Q-58 and are associated with two ceramic phases at Q-95. Chen Mul effigy censers were present in the upper half of the Q-95 shaft (Shook 1954a). Gustav Strömsvik, of the Carnegie project, was lowered into each of the shafts to investigate them (Shook 1954a:256). The shaft of Q-58, the Crematory, was looted, although a few remains of children and adults were recovered intact at its base (Shook 1954a:256). Over forty adults and subadults were found in the Q-95 shaft (Temple of the Fisherman), along with sacrificed animals and birds, offerings of broken vessels (including effigy censers), metal artifacts, and objects of conch and stone (Shook 1954a:271). Of four such temples, Q-95 is the only one with a sacrificial stone still in place (Shook 1954a:271; Peraza Lope et al. 2003:50), although a stone was present near H-18, in front of the Itzmal Ch'en temple (H-17).

Two other more modest burial shaft shrines were reported at the Cenote X-Coton and the Itzmal Ch'en groups, although these shafts do not extend to bedrock (Shook 1953; Chowning 1956; Masson and Peraza Lope 2007). As smaller examples are only detected through excavation, others probably exist at the site. For example, Temple R-19, in the settlement zone to the east of the monumental center, has never been investigated, but like the X-Coton group and Temple Q-58, it also has three frontal plaza-level altars (one of which is round). Except for H-18, Chen Mul effigy censers were abundant in the shafts. At H-18, the censers were instead concentrated at a nearby plaza-level shrine, H-18a (Chowning 1956:455). The Cenote X-Coton group has a double temple/shrine, T-70 (figure 2.23), that features two separate upper enclosed rooms. This design was implemented late in the construction sequence of the temple (Shook 1953:210–12), which Proskouriakoff (1962a:130) reclassed as a shrine due to its small size. Oratory T-72, next to Temple/Shrine T-70, had a small circular burial shaft, 1 meter deep, in which the cremated human remains of adults, children, and animals were found (Shook 1953:209). It is possible

that the human remains in this oratory were funerary rather than sacrificial, although the presence of significant quantities of animal bones and censers, as well as the practice of cremation, are unusual among Mayapán burials (Smith 1962; Masson 2009). A small round shrine at the Itzmal Ch'en group (H-18) also had a burial shaft with (noncremated) interments that were very clearly sacrificial victims (Chowning 1956:446–47). Fifteen individuals were placed in the H-18 burial shaft. The heads were disarticulated from the bodies and some skulls were missing. Except for one adolescent, all were adults. Ann Chowning (1956:447) observed that these individuals were placed in the feature one or two at a time and that they were sacrificed.

Three facts link Shrine H-18 to the Feathered Serpent deity. First, it is round structure, a hallmark of the veneration of this god (Pollock 1936). Second, a conch shell was placed at the base of the shaft beneath the victims; this shell or other large shells are emblematic of Quetzalcoatl/Kukulcan. Third, serpent sculptures represent a large majority of decorative items found at Temple H-17 (chapter 3), the principal edifice of this group. Other shaft temples shared serpent symbolism: Q-58 is a serpent column temple and Q-95 probably portrays Kukulcan on its mural, as we will discuss shortly. Marilyn A. Masson and Peraza Lope (2007) have published a detailed argument for the association of burial shaft temples with creation mythology involving the Feathered Serpent based on the observation that they are regularly associated with round buildings, sets of three altars, or nearby cenotes. Temple Q-58 (a serpent column temple) has two round frontal altars and three altars altogether. Temple T-70, next to Structure T-72 (with a burial shaft) has three altars, one of them round. H-18 is round. Both the H-18 and T-72 groups are next to major cenotes (P. Smith 1953). Only Q-95 lacks any of the associations described for other shaft temples. Other temples that lacked burial shafts are also associated with cenotes and round structures, such as Q-162 and H-17.

At Chichén Itzá, the Osario has a similar burial shaft. The Osario is a serpent temple linked to Cenote Xtoloc (Proskouriakoff 1953:266, 1962a:133; Shook 1954a:254). Its shaft terminates in a subterranean cavern that had a deposit of human bone (E. Thompson 1938:50) that was similar to the remains from the Mayapán temples. These remains were disarticulated and partly charred (like those of T-70), but they were of Terminal Classic age. A square shaft above the cavern descends from the Osario's surface, and it had seven layered interments, each with offerings (E. Thompson 1938). The articulated, stratified burials of this shaft imply reverential treatment, unlike the disarticulated, bone-filled shaft temples of Mayapán or the lower cavern of the Osario (Proskouriakoff

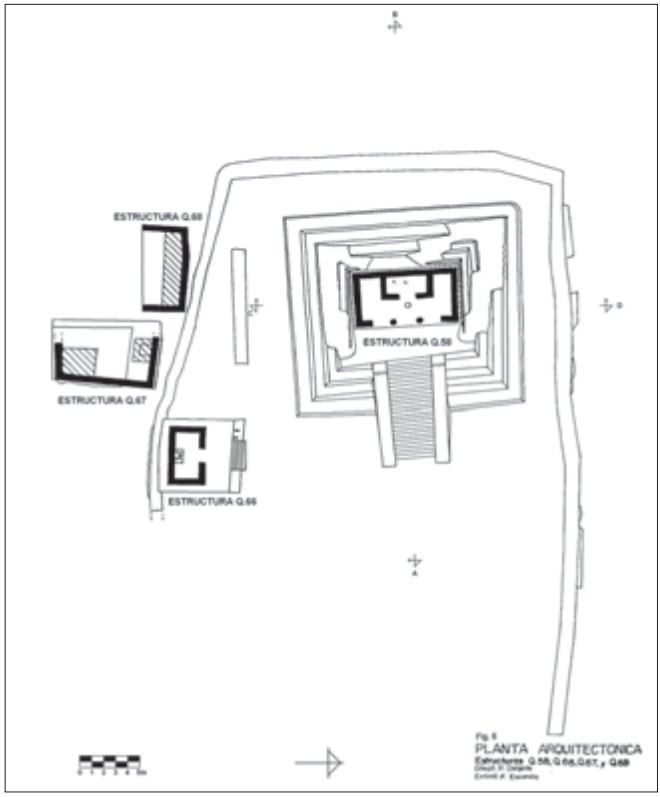

Figure 2.21. *Burial shaft Temple Q-58, Oratory Q-66, and custodial house group Q-67/Q-68 (from P. Delgado Kú 2004:figure 63).*

1962a:133). The shaft graves of Osario at Chichén Itzá are contemporary with Mayapán (Proskouriakoff 1962a:133), as offerings included Mama Red tripod vessels, a Navula Unslipped tripod cup, copper bells of Late Postclassic style, Chen Mul effigy censers (E. Thompson 1938:figures 16a–d, 16f, 16g, 16j, 21), and crystal and turquoise ornaments that E. H. Thompson (1938:7) recognized as late. Only one other possible burial shaft temple has been reported in Mesoamerica, from the site of El Tajín. Rex Koontz (2002:115) summarizes the investigations of the Pyramid of the Niches at El Tajín by S. Jeffrey K. Wilkerson (1990:161) and Jürgen K. Brüggemann (1992:77), which had a vertical shaft descending from the upper sanctuary. As bone preserves poorly in this region and no remains were present in the shaft, its use is unknown (Koontz 2002:115).

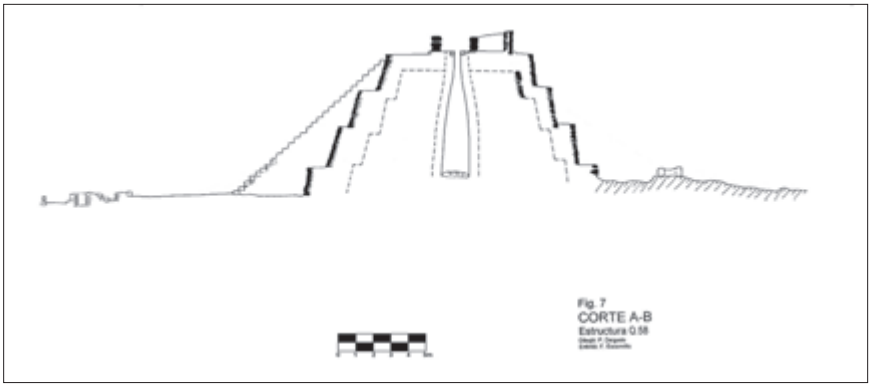

Figure 2.22. *Cross-section of burial shaft Temple Q-58 (from P. Delgado Kú 2004:figure 7).*

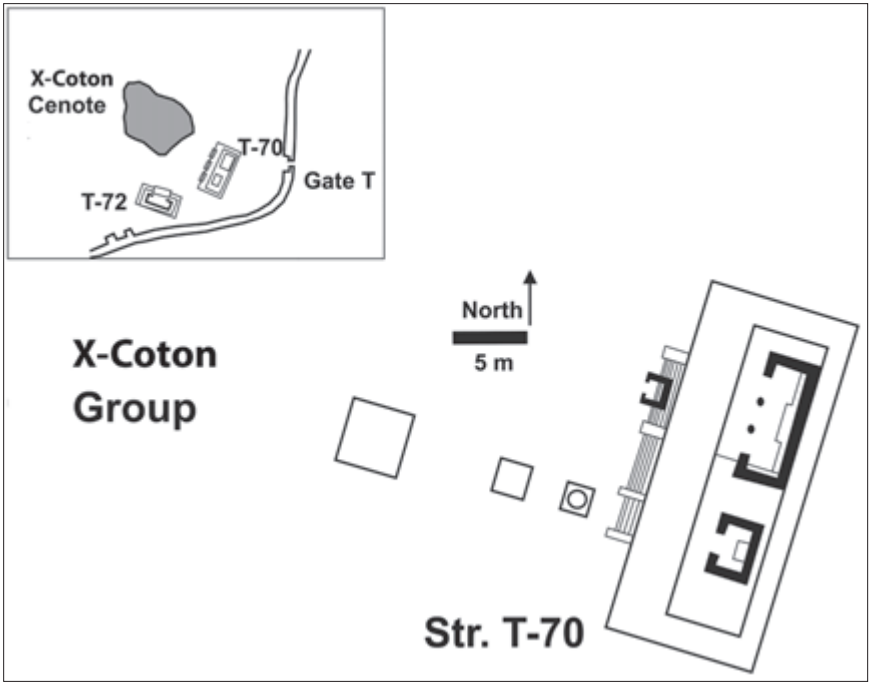

Figure 2.23. *Double Temple/Shrine T-70 and Oratory T-72, with cremation burial shaft, next to Cenote X-Coton by Gate T, Mayapán (from Shook 1953:figure 1).*

The Fisherman Mural

Two themes are evident in the art of Temple Q-95 and its associated buildings that form a courtyard at the center's northeast corner. The first is a creation myth that is implied by a mural on top of a bench in Q-95's upper room (figure 2.24). The second theme is that of death, which is related to the first theme of the resurrection and recreation of the human race. The mural displays the watery underworld, populated by three impaled fish, one uninjured fish, a crocodile bound by its limbs, one water serpent, and a central human figure—a.k.a. the Fisherman (Peraza Lope, Delgado Kú, and Escamilla Ojeda 2003:53; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:28). Detailed studies of this mural have been undertaken by Peraza Lope et al. (2002:287), Barrera Rubio and Peraza Lope (2004), Milbrath and Peraza Lope (2003a), Masson and Peraza Lope (2007) and Miguel Delgado Kú (2009). The serpent is marked with a Venus (chalchihuitl, turquoise) symbol (M. Delgado Kú 2009:192), and importantly, this snake resembles the water Chicchan serpent of the Madrid Codex, which has possible Venus associations (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:28; Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú 2010:7). Miguel Delgado Kú (2009:195–96) observes similarities in the portrayal of the protagonist in this mural with the Mixtec codices (particularly the Codex Nuttall) and the Borgia Codex.

The fisherman on the mural may be Kukulcan/Quetzalcoatl. An identifying feature includes the figure's oversized olive shell pectoral (figure 2.24). Kukulcan wears a collar of olive shells on page 4a of the Dresden Codex (Taube 1992:figure 27a). Other associations are significant. The Dresden Kukulcan is identified by the glyph for God H (Taube 1992:60), which in the Classic era is linked to wind (Ik), as are the Classic Water Lily serpent and the Ehecatl manifestation of Quetzalcoatl (Taube 1992:59). Water serpents like the one on the fisherman mural are sometimes linked to wind, and by extension, to Kukulcan. Other interpretations merit consideration. The Venus associations identified by our colleagues are compatible with an identification of Kukulcan, who is often linked to Venus symbolism.

The Aztec myth of the Fifth Sun, the current creation era in which we now live, seems to be commemorated at Temple Q-95. Principal evidence in support of this hypothesis is the pairing of the (probable) Kukulcan figure in the mural with death god imagery, including small Mexican death god sculpture at Q-95 (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a) and a significant quantity of other death god imagery of the Q-95 group (chapter 7). The association with vanquished marine animals is also important. In this myth, Quetzalcoatl (and

Tezcatlipoca) transformed themselves into sea serpents and slew a crocodilian earth monster (Tlatecuhtli) that had been terrorizing the earth, which was at the time covered in water. Quetzalcoatl's next mission was to retrieve the bones of the humans from past creation eras; these bones had been turned into fish (Taube 1993:37–39; M. Smith 2003a:194). In the process of retrieving them, Quetzalcoatl is said to have fallen into a deep pit and the bones became fragmented. The retrieved bones were combined with blood offerings by Aztec gods, and a paste ground from them created the next generation of humans. The deep shaft of Q-95 may represent the underworld pit of this myth, and the deposition of human bones may have been intended to help in reenacting creation events. Perhaps the fish on the mural represent the former humans of the past creation, destined for retrieval by the central figure.

Our *Mexicon* article (Masson and Peraza Lope 2007) was not the first to identify the fisherman mural with this myth; David Stuart (2006:178). presented this argument in his book on Palenque, as a consequence of his discussions with Karl Taube. Gabrielle Vail (2006) also links the crocodile in this image to a central Mexican myth in which a beast of this type is speared by Quetzalcoatl. Milbrath, Peraza Lope, and Delgado Kú (2010:8) point out that myths in the Chilam Balam books also feature a crocodile slain by a Maya personage, Bolon ti ku, after a flood, and it makes sense that the myth would be adapted in ways deemed suitable to the Maya area. Some parallels in the Popul Vuh myth are easily identified, such as where the skeletal object of desired retrieval is a decapitated head. The transformation of the Hero Twins into catfish in the underworld prior to their ultimate victory is another intriguing reference to fish.

Still, the Aztec mythological parallels are quite close, and it is noteworthy that central Mexico, not the Maya area, has a tradition of temples associated with mass sacrifice at Teotihuacan and Tenochtitlan (Sugiyama 2004; López Luján 1998:183–84). In the case of Teotihuacan, mass sacrifice is explicitly associated with the Feathered Serpent Pyramid, among others. Oddly, the only sacrificial burial shaft temples for Mesoamerica are from Mayapán, with the possible exception of the Osario's burial cavern deposit of Terminal Classic age at Chichén Itzá. Although the Bonampak murals indicate the capture and torture of a large number of individuals, and their impending sacrifice is implied (Miller 2000), there is little archaeological evidence of sacrifice of large numbers of people in the Classic Maya Period. Exceptions seem to include dynastic conquest, as at Colha or Cancuen (Hester et al. 1982; Demarest 2013). Maya art illustrates plenty of captives and the sacrifice of individuals in the context of creation myth reenactment or as part of royal funerals (e.g., Freidel,

Figure 2.24. *Mural on a bench at the top of Temple Q-95, the Temple of the Fisherman, Mayapán. Illustration by Anne Deane.*

Schele, and Parker 1993:237, 314; Schele and Mathews 1998:109), and in these respects, Maya art is not unique in Mesoamerica.

Objects from the debris of Temple Q-95 and its associated buildings reveal the importance of death gods. An Aztec-style death god sculpture was recovered at the temple (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a) along with five skull cup fragments and two skeletal face censers (chapter 7). This is the greatest number of skeletal ceramic objects recovered from any context at Mayapán. Shrine Q-89 (named Death House), in the courtyard space in front of Q-95 and Hall 97/97a, had nine skeletal stone heads that projected from the building from attached stone spikes (Peraza Lope, Delgado Kú, and Escamilla Ojeda 2003:110–11). This is the only such concentration of skull sculptures found at the site. Other than a disarticulated set of human remains within a corner of Shrine Q-89, no unusual objects or features were encountered within it (Peraza Lope, Delgado Kú, and Escamilla Ojeda 2003:107). Shrine Q-89 may represent a skull platform (*tzompantli*), or alternatively, a *tzizimime* shrine. Both types of features have skull iconography in Postclassic Mesoamerica (M. Smith 2003a).

Platform Q-96, immediately to the front of the staircase, also has a skeletal ring sculpture. This performance or gladiatorial platform emphasizes the significance of public ritual in this location. Just to the west of Q-95, more human remains were deposited in an ossuary tomb in a specialized building (Q-94). Clearly, Q-95 was a place associated with death and sacrifice.

Leonardo López Luján (1998:183–84) has documented the sacrifice of probable war captives at the Templo Mayor that were perhaps timed with a Xipe Totec annual ritual. He argues for concepts of dually opposing deities (solar and aquatic) incorporated into this temple's offerings and the timing of its rituals. Perhaps similar duality underlay the construction and use of two major sacrificial temples at Mayapán, Q-95 and Q-58.

Notably, the serpents marking the columns of Temple Q-58 had earth monster attributes with claws (Proskouriakoff 1962a:100, figure 60). Other than this important reference to Tlatecuhtli, the materials at Q-58 reflect a different set of symbols compared to Q-95. Mayapán's magnificent Monkey Scribe effigy censer was found face-down in the soil behind Temple Q-58. This effigy must have been previously housed in the upper temple. Its imagery draws deeply from traditional Maya creation mythology that is quite apart from the Aztec Myth of the Five Suns (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003b). Like the Aztecs, the Maya had multiple creation myths. A relatively high proportion of enigmatic male personages are portrayed on other effigy censers from Q-58. These examples lack diagnostic deity attributes and may depict warriors (chapter 7).

It is a shame that so little iconography remains from Q-58, as it is difficult to understand concepts of duality or opposition embodied in the symbolism of Q-58 and Q-95 and the sacrificial rites enacted at them. As this temple was looted prior to the Carnegie project, other diagnostic objects may have been removed (Shook 1954a:255–56).

WARFARE AND SACRIFICE

Activities at burial shaft Temple Q-58 and Q-95 buildings helped to generate terror among the subjects and residents of Mayapán and strengthened political power by demonstrating what state authorities were capable of (Dickson 2006). One account, the *Relación of Chunchuchu*, described a "burning furnace" at Mayapán into which those who committed certain crimes were thrown during the Colonial era (Tozzer 1941:124n576). This intriguing allusion may refer to the occasional use after the city fell, although the materials reported by Shook (1954a) from within Q-95 seem to have been of Prehispanic origin. Accounts of sacrifice are ubiquitous during the Colonial Period (Landa 1941:115–17; Scholes and Roys 1938), but France B. Scholes and Roys pondered whether levels intensified in response to the extreme stress of the impacts of European contact. Although sacrifice was supposedly introduced to Yucatán by the "Mexicans" and performed at the insistence of priests, the Colonial era was rife with continued sacrifices, even Christian-inspired crucifixions, among decentralized townships, if documentary accounts can be believed (Tozzer 1941:115–16n532, 533).

Sacrifice at Mayapán tied this polity to earlier traditions where the enactment of creation mythology called for sacrifice (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993). Stanley Serafin and Peraza Lope (2007) argue that dismemberment of individuals, like those next to Templo Redondo, may have been linked to gladiatorial sacrifice and mythological enactment of tearing apart the earth monster, the same myth that may have been significant for rites at Q-95 (Masson and Peraza Lope 2007). Unlike Classic Period Maya art, individual actors responsible for such activities at Mayapán were not acknowledged in lasting artistic works. Another major difference may be the sacrifice of men, women, and children at Mayapán, as only male captives are shown in Classic Period political art. Clearly, some dynastic families were fully annihilated, and women were not spared, similar to Colha (Hester et al. 1982; Massey and Steele 2006) or Yaxuna (Ardren 2002). For Mayapán's burial shaft temples, lords or war chiefs captured individuals of mixed ages and gender, and priests would have performed the sacrifices (Shook 1954a). Heart extraction on the tapered altars

at Mayapán would have been one of several sacrificial methods, including gladiatorial sacrifice by tethering victims to ring stones or upright sculpted stones or wooden beams (Tozzer 1941:115; Freidel and Sabloff 1984:153). Arrow sacrifice at Canpech (Campeche) occurred on a wooden platform that supported multiple large sculptures (Freidel and Sabloff 1984:153).

Two possible gladiatorial sacrifice stones with perforations (other than the Q-96 example) for tethering were in front of Hall Q-81 (Winters 1955b:402; Proskouriakoff 1962a:138; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:16; Serafin and Peraza Lope 2007:245). Tapered sacrificial blocks were also present near the principal pyramid (Q-162) as well as at Temple Q-95 (Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:16; Shook 1954b:98, figure 1a, c). The Totonicapán model map of Utatlán (Carmack 1981b) indicates a platform for gladiatorial sacrifice (*zoquibal*, or place of the obsidian hatchet) that supported a round stone for tethering prisoners, as well as a skull rack altar (*tzumpan*). Circular platform Q-84, located in the city's Main Plaza, may have been a place of sacrifice, as a tapered sacrificial stone was found near it (Shook and Irving 1955:133; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:15). The Maya codices have several references to captives, sacrifice (decapitation), and trophy heads (Bricker and Bill 1994: 195–99).

Mayapán's monumental center is, among other things, a graveyard where many sacrificial victims were interred. Most human remains at the central buildings were non-funerary (Serafin and Peraza Lope 2007; Serafin 2010). For example, in a passageway between Round Temple Q-152 and Hall Q-152c, cranial and long bones of twenty adults (or near adults) were found in Burial 29 (Peraza Lope et al. 1999a; Milbrath and Peraza Lope 2003a:15; Serafin and Peraza Lope 2007; Serafin 2010:71). Another concentration of human remains (Burial 27) overlay this (Peraza Lope et al. 1999a:197; Serafin 2010:72). Between Q-162 and one of its frontal sanctuaries, nine individuals were interred; all but one skeleton was disarticulated (Peraza Lope et al. 1997; Serafin and Peraza Lope 2007; Serafin 2010:72). Serafin (2010:74) reports that additional non-funerary human remains were recovered in the west plaza of the epicenter. Only a few shrines or off-structure contexts reveal reverential mortuary treatment. The presence of two ground-level mass graves is documented—one next to epicentral Temple Q-80 and the other next to the outlying Itzmal Ch'en ceremonial group (Adams 1953; Peraza Lope, Delgado Kú, and Escamilla Ojeda 2003; Peraza Lope et al. 2006; Paris and Russell 2012). The governors of Mayapán ruled with an iron hand, backed by military might. This strategy was only partly successful. If the mass graves at Q-80 and Itzmal Ch'en reflect Mayapán war casualties, then the consequences of a militaristic state were eventually experienced at home. These desecrated human remains lie in two of

the most sacred precincts of the city; their interment with effigy censers sets them apart from other non-funerary remains and implies that the individuals were from Mayapán.

These findings hint at a brutal picture for the underpinnings of power of the Mayapán state. Although sections of the Maya chronicles critique the regimes of this city and their abuses of power, few specific historical details are offered. As summarized by Roys (1962:44), K'atun 9 Ahau (AD 1303–1323) was one of terror, war, adultery, and sin, and K'atun 7 Ahau (AD 1323–1342) was one of corruption and immorality (adultery, indecency). K'atun 5 Ahau (AD 1342–1362) was perverse and without shame; rulers lost political power; fertility was low; and governmental dysfunction is described poetically as "they bite one another, the kokob snakes and the jaguars . . . they are greedy for dominion" (Roys 1962:44) and "he shall bite his master, the tame dog" (Roys 1962:45). Some of this critical commentary may be run-of-the-mill factional propaganda (retrospective or otherwise) that is difficult to distinguish from larger societal unrest. Whatever its origins, this discontent may have culminated in a revolution in K'atun 3 Ahau (AD 1362–1382) in which many rulers were questioned, tortured, deposed, and replaced (Roys 1962:45–46). New archaeological features found at Mayapán lend credibility to these accounts (chapter 8).

We do not know with whom Mayapán may have waged war, but warfare was endemic. Gaspar Antonio Chi reported that vassals served personally in the wars of Mayapán, "of which there were many" (Tozzer 1941:230). External warfare with groups outside of the Maya area seems unlikely due to prohibitive distances. War was probably waged within the Maya lowlands, perhaps aimed at rebellious *batabils* who resisted tributary obligations. Military power would have also supported regional mercantile activities by guaranteeing the safety of merchants, as is common in many ancient states. The objective of obtaining war captives for the slave market was also probably important. Slaves were a key export product from Yucatán into western markets at Xicalanco and beyond (Scholes and Roys 1938; Roys 1972:34–35). In the sixteenth century, the rulers of Hocabá warred with their neighbors in order to capture slaves for sale (Roys 1962:47). Other historical sources are more elusive; under one lord, Tutul Xiu, the land was annexed into the Mayapán state through diplomatic efforts (and modest tribute) instead of by force, yet military conscripted service was expected from subjects (Roys 1962:50). This description sounds more than a little propagandistic, and depending on the source, both Xiu and Cocom rulers can be portrayed as benevolent at different points in time.

SUMMARY

The information on Mayapán's political organization is undeniably rich. Our review of selected sources at the beginning of this chapter demonstrates the bureaucratic complexity of political and religious offices. The view that emerges is one of a sophisticated secondary state that was anything but "degenerate" (chapter 1). The origins of the Mayapán confederacy are shrouded in layered events of dynastic assertion, construction, calendrical celebration, formal (if not necessarily peaceful) rotation of political authority, cycles of centralization, decentralization, and reorganization. We use the term *dynastic* loosely, in the sense that the city's history was diverted repeatedly by the strong hands of powerful hereditary noble corporate groups who vied for paramountcy within the framework of the multepal confederate system.

The archaeological chronology for the city has been refined with the aid of radiocarbon dating, with some hints of early activity in the monumental center in the eleventh (and perhaps tenth) century, prior to the establishment of Mayapán as the political capital. Earlier occupations in the area as far back as the Late Preclassic are indicated by pottery from survey of the environs of Mayapán, but dispersed agrarian settlement clusters characterize most prior periods. Population levels in the periphery rise considerably during the Terminal Classic Period, but Postclassic-era construction activities within or near to the great wall razed earlier architecture.

The art and architecture of the major monumental works in the site center reveal standardized patterns of civic-ceremonial groups, and at the same time we can now discuss a range of art programs sponsored by a pluralistic, dynamically changing set of governing elites. The monumental buildings illustrate the periodic renewal of the city's divine charter as a political capital. Individual factions also celebrated their own leadership entitlements with mural, stucco, or other sculptural art at halls and smaller temples or oratories that portray venerated ancestors and patron gods. Civic-ceremonial edifices were furnished with effigy censers during annual Uayeb rites, k'atun intervals, and other calendrical events (D. Chase 1986, 1988; P. Rice 2009f:300–301). The result is an impressive array of public monuments and art that reveals a blend of emblematic state codes and idiosyncratic decorative elements that broadcasted cosmopolitan elite status. The Temple of Kukulcan began as a war or death god monument, with grisly figures and skulls displayed conspicuously in stucco facades. The importance of this temple, as well as many others at the site, for the veneration of the founding personage of Kukulcan is revealed in serpent or Ehecatl imagery, quadripartite concepts, temple-cenote/cave complexes, and round temples. Monumental art reveals that priests made use of

central Mexican Quetzalcoatl myths but also drew on knowledge of creation myths from the deeper Maya past, as suggested by the Monkey Scribe effigy from Temple Q-58. Like many earlier Maya cities, Mayapán's monuments hailed themes of critical importance to the power of its regimes: creation myths, warfare, sacrifice, gods, divine ancestry, cosmology, and the productive activities and food staples that sustained its citizenry.

The multi-entity programs of Halls Q-161 and Q-163 that extend to the east and west from the Temple of Kukulcan do not single out the deeds of individual monarchs but may commemorate the divine mythology of a series of political entities or the supernatural sanction of one or two paramount families. A potential parallel is found in the Mitla lintel paintings that celebrate selected dynasties of Postclassic Oaxaca and their cosmogonies while the palaces in which they were located served as unifying facilities where royals convened to feast, trade, consult oracles, recap history, and negotiate differences with the aid of the paintings (Pohl 1999). Key art programs at Tulum also record events critical to the history of this city's ruling dynasts, some of whom are presented in a cosmological framework involving supernaturals or their impersonators (Miller 1982; Masson 2000, 2003a). The Mitla paintings provide details of selected, multiple players, and by analogy, it is likely that the Mayapán halls similarly recorded mytho-historical heroes of city's nobility. The sculptures, stelae, and columns reveal portraits of venerated personages in stone, stucco, or stelae form; some of these were probably historical individuals. Although much public art focuses on deities—and the Postclassic Period differs from the Classic Period in terms of the emphasis on dynastic figures—it is important to recognize that dynastic art did not disappear altogether at Mayapán. The significance of this tradition is diffused by the fact that sculptures are numerous and spread out at multiple halls and oratories. Additional diverse religious themes derive from murals that emphasize deities and creation myths. The significance of historical art is also obscured by its smaller scale, its eroded state, and the erosion of nearly all of the hieroglyphs on Mayapán's stelae. Chapter 7 considers examples of portraiture of historical individuals more comprehensively.

In the next chapter, we look more closely at examples of civic-ceremonial features located outside of the monumental center at Mayapán. We argue that colonnaded halls and elite residences replicated functions of the edifices of the monumental center, as nobles sometimes hosted political gatherings or religious celebrations in their homes. It is also true that the use of halls varied through time and across space, and we discuss how halls functioned differently from one another. Analyses of halls and elite residences excavated by the

Carnegie and INAH projects are supplemented with new data from our own investigations at the Itzmal Ch'en group and secondary elite Residence Y-45a. Chapter 3 provides detailed comparisons of these edifices, which contribute to our argument in chapter 4 that outlying focal nodes reflect the long arm of Mayapán's governing elites; they were strategic facilities that integrated the settlement zone into urban society as a whole.

NOTES

1. Tozzer (1941:158n804) speculates that there was a temple dedicated to Kukulcan in Maní after the fall of Mayapán. But Landa's passage refers to both the town and province of Maní, and given the fact that Q-162 was named for Kukulcan and that Mayapán was located within the province of Maní, we should entertain the possibility of post-occupational use of the Mayapán temple for this ritual, especially as it involved conjuring the deity. As Tozzer notes, only two such temples within Yucatán bore Kukulcan's name (the other is at Chichén Itzá), and there is no evidence at this point for a significant Postclassic temple in the Colonial town of Maní.

2. Hall Q-161 also has a serpent sculpture, but the sculpture may have tumbled down from Temple Q-162, the Castillo, which lies adjacent to and above the hall.