

Introduction: Reinterpreting Early Classic Interaction

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Since the remarkable discovery in 1936 of foreign ceramics and *talud-tablero* architecture (platforms with façades consisting of inward-sloping basal elements stacked with rectangular bodies containing recessed insets) at Kaminaljuyu, Guatemala (Figure 1.1), the nature of interaction between the central Mexican culture of Teotihuacan and the Maya of southern Mexico and Central America has been a fundamental question of Mesoamerican archaeology. During the fifty years that followed, few scholars doubted that the presence of central Mexican-style artifacts and architecture in the Maya region represented an actual migration and colonization of southeastern Mesoamerica by population segments from the great city of Teotihuacan.¹ These “resident Teotihuacanos” formed enclaves in previously existing Maya sites—frequently depicted until the 1970s as empty ceremonial centers—and, in the most extreme models, were responsible for stimulating nearly all aspects of the Late Classic Maya florescence. Specifically, economic determinists argued that state-level political organization emerged in southern Mesoamerica as a direct result of Teotihuacan influence. To a great degree, this conclusion was based on the comparison of the monumentality of Teotihuacan with the less impressive architecture of Kaminaljuyu.

Although there were a few dissenting voices, the Teotihuacan-centric view maintained currency well into the 1980s. In part this was due to the strength of the voices supporting the preeminence of Teotihuacan—voices that not only dominated the North American academy, but also counted in their number some of the loudest, brashest, and truly extraordinary individuals in the colorful history of Mesoamerican archaeology. In the intervening years, many of these voices have fallen silent, have mellowed to a muted *basso profundo*, or have simply ceased to be relevant.

A second reason that Teotihuacan-dominance models retained precedence until recent years is that the 1960s saw unparalleled developments in our understanding of Teotihuacan and important Classic Maya sites where central Mexican-style art, artifacts, and architecture are found. Three large-

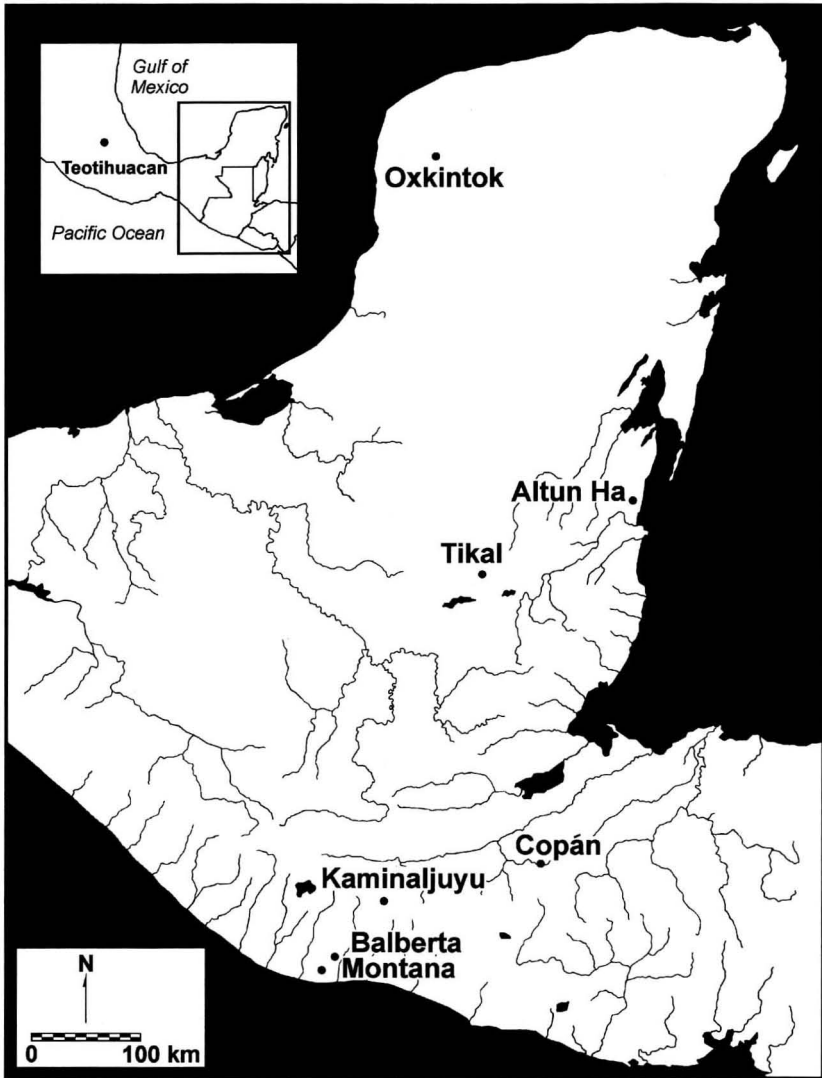


FIGURE 1.1. Sites discussed in this volume.

scale projects, which focused on regional survey, mapping, and extensive excavation, were conducted at and around the great city itself. The Teotihuacan Valley Project (1960–1964) and its successor, the Basin of Mexico Settlement Survey Project (1966–1975), gave dramatic new insight into 13,000 years of ecological adaptation and human settlement in central Mexico (e.g., Blanton 1972; Parsons 1971, 1974; Sanders 1965, 1970, 1981; Sanders and Price 1968; Sanders et al. 1979; Wolf 1976). Results of these projects were so im-

pressive that aspects of their methodology have served as models for most subsequent surveys in Mesoamerica.

Concurrent with William T. Sanders' survey and test pitting in the Teotihuacan Valley, Ignacio Bernal of Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia excavated and restored most of the major structures along a 2 km stretch of the Street of the Dead, the north-south "avenue" that forms a principal axis of Teotihuacan (e.g., Acosta 1964; Bernal 1963; Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología 1966). At an intermediate scale, the Teotihuacan Mapping Project of René Millon, Bruce Drewitt, and George L. Cowgill created a detailed map of the 20 km² city, complementing survey with systematic surface sampling and small-scale excavations (e.g., Cowgill 1974; Drewitt 1966; Millon 1964, 1966, 1967, 1970, 1973, 1981). These three projects, as well as Laurette Séjourné's (1959, 1966a, 1966b) excavations in several apartment compounds during the years 1955–1964, transformed Teotihuacan from a poorly understood site to one of the best-studied cities in Mesoamerica.

At the same time, great strides were made in southern Mesoamerica. The Tikal Project (1956–1970), directed first by Edwin M. Shook and in later years by William R. Coe, conducted excavations, survey, and restoration on a scale never before seen in Central America. Many important discoveries, particularly of foreign-style ceramics in Burials 10 and 48 and in several so-called problematical deposits (see Chapter 6), and of central Mexican motifs on Stelae 31 and 32 (Chapter 8), pointed directly to a connection with Teotihuacan. Also of great importance was the ambitious Pennsylvania State University Kaminaljuyu Project (1968–1971), directed by William T. Sanders and Joseph W. Michels. Little or no evidence of interaction with Teotihuacan was found in most portions of the site, but additional *talud-tablero* structures and a few tripod cylinders were found during excavations in the Palangana (see Chapter 3; Cheek 1977a). Theoretical contributions by project members, although not representing a unified voice, provided the first anthropological perspectives on Teotihuacan influence at Kaminaljuyu (see Chapter 4; Sanders and Michels 1977). Additional projects conducted in the 1960s and 1970s at sites in the Maya area, including Altun Ha (Chapter 9), Becan (Ball 1974), and Dzibilchaltun (Andrews 1979, 1981: 325–326), continued to find evidence—chiefly in the form of *talud-tablero* architecture, imported or copied central Mexican ceramics, Teotihuacan-inspired iconography, and green obsidian from the Pachuca, Hidalgo, source—of interaction with non-Maya societies in highland and Gulf Coast Mexico. Other projects adopted what David M. Pendergast (Chapter 9) calls "Teotihuacanomania,"

and reported a central Mexican presence at sites as widely separated as Chichén Itzá and Bilbao (Parsons 1967-1969). Still others designed ambitious projects to find Teotihuacan influence where comparatively little exists (e.g., Hellmuth 1972, 1986). Given that in 1970 Teotihuacan was by far the best-understood Classic-period site in the Mexican highlands, and that evidence for some sort of interaction with central Mexico was either found or perceived at many Maya sites, it is not at all surprising that Teotihuacan was widely viewed as *the* pristine state of Mesoamerica: a kind of “mother state” that inspired—or even mandated—the evolution of all other state-level political systems from Jalisco to Honduras.

As a result of this research, the 1960s and early 1970s saw the definition of a “Middle American Co-Tradition” (Parsons 1964), a “Middle Classic” period of A.D. 400 to 700 (Parsons 1967-1969; Pasztory 1978b), and a “Middle Horizon” of A.D. 200 to 750 (Wolf 1976). The last, proposed in an attempt to replace the traditional Preclassic/Classic/Postclassic chronological scheme of Mesoamerica with a horizon/intermediate periodization borrowed from Andean studies, was put forward by a small group that included no scholars from Latin America and only one Mayanist (Pasztory 1993:116). Fortunately, the horizon/intermediate scheme now has few adherents and has been scrapped as too cumbersome and inaccurate. Although the concept of a “Teotihuacan horizon style” may have some crude utility, it has been abandoned because it blurs regional distinctions, implies a long-outmoded culture-area concept of evolution, and generally is “out of step” with processual archaeology (Demarest and Foias 1993; Pasztory 1993; Rice 1993). Moreover, the term “Middle Horizon” is neither developmentally neutral nor purely chronological, as its proponents suggested. Finally, improved regional chronologies demonstrate that interaction with Teotihuacan dates to different times at different sites, in some cases was intermittent, and in others was so long in duration as to contradict the very definition of the horizon concept.

In addition to referring to a period of posited Teotihuacan hegemony throughout Mesoamerica, the term “Middle Classic” has also been used to discuss very different processes limited to the central Maya lowlands. During the sixth century, Tikal and other sites in its sphere of political influence ceased to produce carved monuments bearing Maya dates. The period from A.D. 534 to 593, therefore, has been called the Middle Classic Hiatus, and at Tikal itself the interruption seems to have lingered to the end of the seventh century. An interesting twist was put on Teotihuacan-influence models by Gordon R. Willey (1974), who proposed that this hiatus—once thought to

be characteristic of all lowland Maya sites—was caused by the withdrawal of Teotihuacan trade relations. In other words, he suggested that the Middle Classic Hiatus was the *antithesis* of a period of Teotihuacan domination. In Willey's view, the Middle Classic was the beginning of an intermediate period, not a horizon. Nonetheless, recent breakthroughs in the study of hieroglyphic inscriptions strongly indicate that events leading to the downturn in the political fortunes of Tikal during the Middle Classic Hiatus were linked to other Maya sites rather than to Teotihuacan.

Since "Middle Classic" has been used in three distinct ways—one that denotes a period of Teotihuacan influence, one that indicates a period after such interaction, and one that may have nothing at all to do with Teotihuacan—it seems best to avoid this confusing term. For this reason, we have opted in this volume to refer to the late fourth through sixth centuries as the late Early Classic.

Many of those who once considered the polities of the Early Classic Maya to be chiefdoms were archaeologists who worked at Teotihuacan or who used the central Mexican city as a measuring stick. They envisioned archaic states as polities dominated by one primate center, as the Basin of Mexico was during the Classic period. In contrast, Maya populations were more dispersed. Some leading Maya scholars of the day still supported the "empty ceremonial center" view of Maya sites, strengthening the Teotihuacan-centric argument. Because major lowland sites were not considered urban, scholars assumed that Early Classic Maya polities were not states. It is astonishing that today, after more than thirty years of demographic research, there are still some who deny that the Maya had true cities.

It should surprise no one that depictions of Early Classic Maya polities as chiefdoms that developed into states during the Middle Classic only because of the inspiration or military might of Teotihuacan did not sit well with some scholars. As a group, Mayanists were less sanguine about the passive, Teotihuacan-centric view than their counterparts working in highland Mexico. Without doubt, a few saw Teotihuacan-dominance models as unwanted attacks on the unique and brilliant innovations of Maya civilization, just as some of their predecessors had hoped to reject the temporal priority and cultural importance assigned to the Gulf Coast Olmec (see Foreword); it simply could not be that drab, repetitive, and seemingly illiterate Teotihuacan dominated or stimulated Maya genius. But the persuasive arguments against Teotihuacan-dominance models that eventually emerged were based on data rather than sentiment.

Beginning in the late 1970s, archaeologists and art historians turned their

gaze to the Preclassic period (c. 2000 B.C. to A.D. 200/425) in a concentrated effort to understand the genesis of Maya civilization. Early pottery found at Cuello, Belize, seemed to suggest that settled village life had developed in the tropical lowlands at a time much earlier than previously thought (e.g., Hammond 1977, 1985). Although subsequent reevaluation of chronometric data failed to support initial claims for the antiquity of settlement (Andrews and Hammond 1990), Cuello has been placed firmly on the map as one of a growing number of Maya sites occupied by 1000 B.C. In the northern Maya lowlands, significant Middle Preclassic occupations were discovered at Komchen and the nearby Mirador Group (e.g., Andrews 1981: 315–320; Andrews et al. 1984). David Freidel's (1977, 1978, 1979; Freidel and Schele 1988a) research at Cerros provided critical evidence that the roots of Maya kingship—and hence, of state-level political organization—could be traced back well into the Late Preclassic period. That is, the transition from chiefdom to state in the Maya lowlands seemed to be the seamless result of continuous local processes.

Complementing Freidel's iconographic argument, new discoveries at El Mirador revealed that the largest monumental constructions ever built in the Maya region date to the Late Preclassic period (e.g., Dahlin 1984; Demarest and Fowler 1984; Hansen 1984; Matheny 1980). Subsequent research at Nakbe, located in the El Mirador Basin, indicated that truly monumental construction occurred c. 600 to 400 B.C., near the end of the Middle Preclassic period (e.g., Hansen 1991, 1993, 1994). It now seems likely that El Mirador, Nakbe, and Calakmul were complex polities hundreds of years *before* the emergence of Teotihuacan as a power in central Mexico. Iconography suggesting divine kingship, the erection of carved stelae, massive monumental construction, dramatic alterations of the landscape, large nucleated populations, and perhaps the emergence of truly urban places all support the notion that local processes led to the advent of the state in the central Maya lowlands long before significant contact with Teotihuacan. It may even be that early cities such as Zapotec Monte Albán² and Maya Nakbe and El Mirador were models for urbanism in the Basin of Mexico.

Debating Early Classic Interaction

By the mid-1980s, therefore, it was clear that the origin of state-level political organization in the Maya region—which, even by conservative estimates, occurred no later than the advent of the Early Classic period—could not have been a result of Teotihuacan influence. For the most part (but see Chapters 2 and 9), central Mexican-style artifacts, architecture, and symbolism found

at Maya sites date to a much later time, particularly the late fourth through sixth centuries A.D. (Figure 1.2).

The recognition that the emergence of states in the Maya lowlands cannot be attributed to central Mexican influence in no way minimizes the importance of interaction with Teotihuacan. Models that proposed Teotihuacan as the Mesoamerican *Urstaat* clearly are wrong. But the two cultures interacted, and evidence for that interaction is abundant. Moreover, iconographic motifs referring to a Teotihuacan-inspired ideology endured at Late Classic Maya sites long after the collapse of the great city (e.g., Fash and Fash 2000:450–456; Stone 1989; Stuart 2000a:490; Taube 2000a). There is no doubt that Teotihuacan impacted the consciousness of Late Classic Maya elites in ways that melded “the formidable power and memory of that foreign city with their own political symbolism and ideology” (Stuart 2000a:466). These Late Classic elites, then, were conscious actors who selectively adopted foreign imagery and ideas.

The nature and consequences of interaction with Teotihuacan are still very much a subject of debate. David Stuart (2000a:465–466) divides different perspectives into two broad camps: “internalist” and “externalist” models. Externalists, including those who advocated Teotihuacan as the cause of the development of “secondary” states in the Maya area, posit “an overt and disruptive Teotihuacan presence in the Maya lowlands during the late 4th century C.E., associated with military incursions if not political domination” (Stuart 2000a:465). In contrast, internalists propose “that Teotihuacan styles and material remains in the Maya area might better be seen as a local appropriation of prestigious or legitimating symbolism and its associated militaristic ideology. . . . In this latter view, the evidence of Teotihuacan influence in the Maya area says very little about what actual power relations might have existed between the Mexican highlands and the Maya lowlands” (Stuart 2000a:465).

It should be stressed that neither camp denies that interaction took place. Instead, the principal differences between the two perspectives may be described in terms of (1) the degree of impact that Teotihuacan had on the Maya; (2) the duration of political, social, and economic changes stimulated by interaction; and (3) the extent to which the Maya should be considered passive recipients or active participants in that interaction.

Externalist Perspectives

Most externalist narratives evolved out of research conducted both at Teotihuacan and within the Maya area during the late 1950s and 1960s. Many

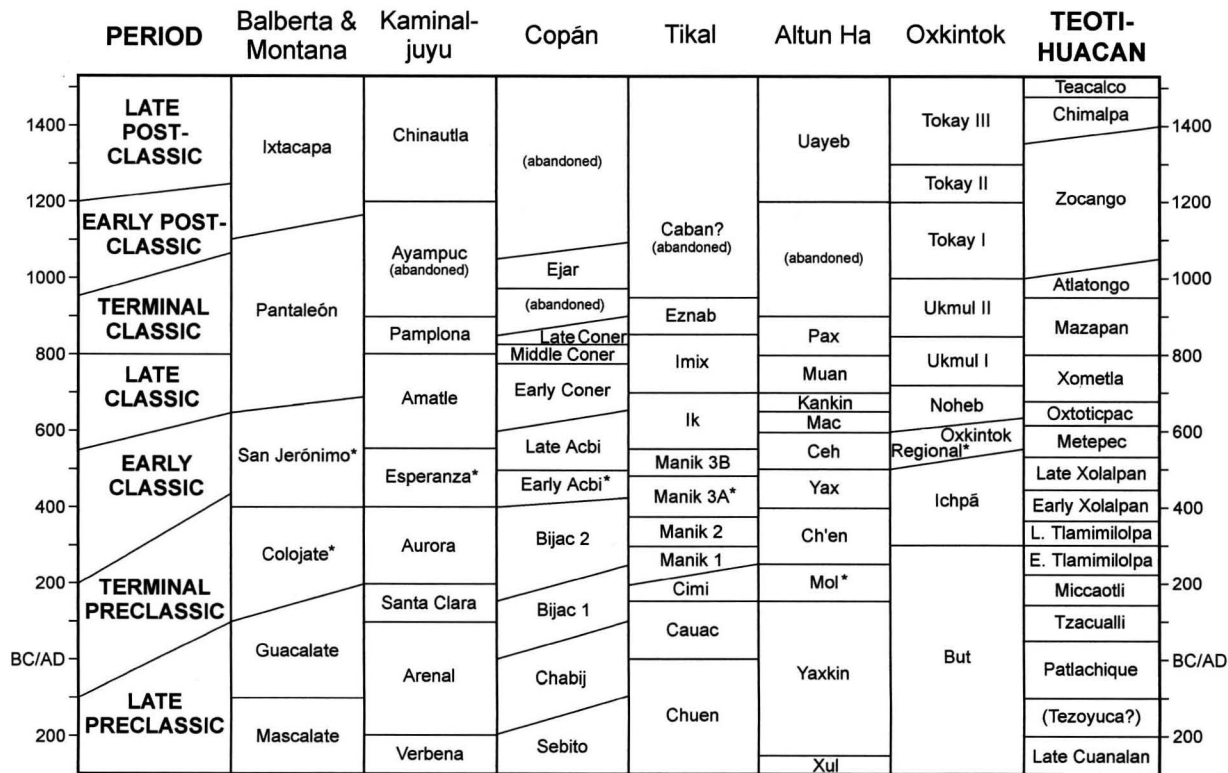


FIGURE 1.2. Ceramic chronologies of sites discussed in this volume; complexes marked with an asterisk contain Teotihuacan-style ceramics (derived from Cassandra R. Bill, personal communication 2000; Bove et al. 2000; Cowgill 1997:Figure 1; Culbert 1993:Table 1; T. Kam Manahan, personal communication 2000; Parsons et al. 1996:Figure 1; Pendergast 1982; Popenoe de Hatch 1997:figura 5; Varela 1998:38-44; Viel 1999:figura 1).

scholars proposed that Teotihuacan became interested in the Maya area, particularly the Pacific Coast and Guatemalan highlands, because of its rich resources, including cacao, obsidian, rubber, jadeite, and quetzal feathers (e.g., Brown 1977a, 1977b; Cheek 1977a, 1977b; Hellmuth 1975, 1978; Michels 1977; Parsons 1967-1969; Sanders 1977; Santley 1983, 1989).³ These economic perspectives posit a process wherein occasional contacts with visiting merchants, similar to the Aztec *pochteca*, gradually led to a permanent presence of Teotihuacan colonists. Why such an incursion of colonists was favored—or even tolerated—by local elites is rarely addressed. Externalist perspectives, therefore, tend to view the Maya as passive recipients of Teotihuacan “influence” and not as actors engaged in interaction for their own benefit. In some narratives, colonization eventually led to conquest and consolidation as a province within a centralized Teotihuacan “empire” (e.g., Ohi 1994b; Sanders and Price 1968), incorporation in a more loosely organized “empire” (Bernal 1966), or the formation of an independent Teotihuacan-centric state (e.g., Sanders 1977). In a different model, local political independence was seen as necessary for the maintenance of stable economic relations (e.g., Brown 1977a, 1977b).

But commerce was not the only factor considered by externalists as motivating interaction. Stephan Borhegyi (1956) suggested that the spread of central Mexican influence to the Maya region was due to the universal appeal of a new Teotihuacan-sponsored religion focused on gods of natural forces instead of the deified ancestors of rulers. In his original formulation, Borhegyi (1951:171; 1956) implied that the mechanism by which these ideas gradually spread was diffusion, but his later writings (Borhegyi 1965, 1971) heavily favor invasions by small groups of powerful central Mexicans. As Charles Cheek (1977a:160) points out, Borhegyi (1965) at first did not postulate why these invasions took place. In a later article, however, he speculated not only that new economic riches and tribute possibilities must have been a motivating factor, but also that

a simultaneous and perhaps originally peaceful propagation of a “Teotihuacan faith” combined with a missionizing zeal may well have been the initial vision of one single person, that of a “pacifist New World Alexander,” the culture hero Quetzalcoatl, the legendary high priest of the God Tlaloc-Quetzalcoatl-Ehecatl. (Borhegyi 1971:84)

Thus, religious proselytizing may have been an important secondary motive that spurred central Mexican invasions of the Maya region.

In an influential contribution, the great Mexican archaeologist Ignacio Bernal (1966) proposed that Teotihuacan was, indeed, the center of an empire. Nonetheless, he pointed out that an empire need not be monolithic and occupy the territory over which it extends “like a wave covering all” (Bernal 1966:107). Instead, Bernal proposed that the Teotihuacan empire was dispersed, with troops and colonists occupying certain key locations. Intermediate territories were either independent or indirectly governed, but even those areas with resident Teotihuacanos were subject to “very superficial” control.

Bernal, therefore, speculated that although most sites were not occupied, “Teotihuacan established military bases in those regions where the local population, always more numerous, absorbed . . . the elements of Teotihuacan culture” (Bernal 1966:106). Within the Maya area, Bernal (1966:104–105) saw the strongest evidence for these imperial outposts in the Guatemalan highlands and upper Grijalva region (particularly Kaminaljuyu and Mirador, Chiapas; see Chapter 12), and evidence for indirect or occasional “contact” and “encounters” at Copán and other sites in Honduras.⁴ Bernal’s (1966:106) bridging argument linking the widespread distribution of objects from Teotihuacan with some form of political domination—and hence, empire—is the disputable assertion that Mesoamerican merchants and pilgrims did not stray far from those areas under the control of their home cities.

The pioneering Maya epigrapher Tatiana Proskouriakoff also contributed greatly to externalist models. In a masterly combination of epigraphic and iconographic analyses, she concluded that the death of the Tikal king “Great Paw” (whose name is now read as Chak Tok Ich’aak) on the Maya date 8.17.1.4.12 11 Eb’ 15 Mak (January 16, A.D. 378) was related to the arrival of conquering strangers bearing central Mexican weapons (Proskouriakoff 1993:4–10). As we shall see, this argument has recently received significant support (Stuart 2000a). Clemency Coggins (1975, 1979), whose astute analyses of Early Classic tombs at Tikal led to the identification of the individuals buried within them, further postulated that “Curl Nose” (now called Yaax Nu’n Ahyiin), the successor to “Great Paw,” was a foreigner from Teotihuacan-dominated Kaminaljuyu. Although she saw aspects of Tikal-Teotihuacan interaction as being mediated by Kaminaljuyu, Coggins suggested that delegations from Teotihuacan visited Tikal. A central Mexican-style vessel from Problematical Deposit 50 may even contain the cremated remains of an emissary or merchant from Teotihuacan (Coggins 1979:263; Green and Moholy-Nagy 1966; see also Chapters 6 and 13).

A good deal of the evidence marshaled by both Proskouriakoff (1993) and Coggins derives from Tikal Stela 31 and Uaxactun Stela 5 (Chapter 8). In

particular, figures on these monuments are dressed as warriors from central Mexico (Figures 8.3b and 8.4a,c). Richard E. W. Adams (1986, 1990, 1999) argued that Teotihuacan advisors or warriors helped a growing Tikal expand at the expense of its neighbors. He wrote that tripod cylinders (a common pottery form in the Gulf Coast region and at Teotihuacan) that appear as mortuary offerings in Tombs 19 and 23 of Río Azul, as well as the unusual stature of two interred individuals, indicate that the dead men were “important nobles from central Mexico” (Adams 1986:439). Adams’ externalist interpretation is unique because he also considered the benefit of interaction from the perspective of Tikal. In his view, “[t]he reasons for Tikal’s successful transition into the Classic period may have derived in part from an astute alliance, perhaps military as well as commercial, with Teotihuacán” (Adams 1986:434).

Internalist Perspectives

A common criticism of the culture historical approach is the old adage that “pots are not people.” Neither are architectural or artistic styles. The art historian George Kubler (1973) provided the first significant volley against externalist models that argued for the colonization of Kaminaljuyu by Teotihuacanos. The presence of *talud-tablero* architecture in the Maya highlands has been interpreted by some scholars as particularly strong evidence for the existence of a Teotihuacan enclave (e.g., Cheek 1977a, 1977b; Sanders 1977). Their argument is not persuasive, but it is true that ceramic vessels are portable—and hence are subject to trade and copying by anyone who comes into contact with them—and architecture is not. Kubler (1973) quite reasonably challenged the notion that *talud-tablero* platforms should be equated with the ethnicity of the people who lived on or were buried within them. Moreover, he noted that the *talud-tablero* architecture of Kaminaljuyu differed in some key respects from that of Teotihuacan itself (see Chapter 4). In any event, we now know that the *talud-tablero* style developed not at Early Classic Teotihuacan, but within the Tlaxcala-Puebla region during the Pre-classic period (e.g., Gendrop 1984; Giddens 1995). Given its great antiquity and appearance at Tikal long before any clear sign of interaction with Teotihuacan (Chapter 7), it is hard to know how or from where the *talud-tablero* was introduced to the Maya region.

The most influential scholar who saw the Maya as active manipulators of foreign symbols was the late Linda Schele. An unpublished but widely cited lecture presented at the symposium organized for *The Blood of Kings* exhibit proposed that central Mexican iconographic elements seen in late

Early Classic art were appropriated by Maya elites and transformed for use within the essentially Maya contexts of bloodletting, sacrifice, and astrologically synchronized warfare (Schele 1986). Her argument, therefore, presented a lowland Maya-centric view rather than a Teotihuacan-oriented perspective rooted in the monopolistic control of certain resources. Not only did she invert the traditional notion that interaction is best explained by understanding the motivations of the dynamic “core” (frequently thought to be Teotihuacan) rather than those of the passive “periphery” (to which the Maya had been banished), but she also gave priority to ideology over economy. This argument appealed to many art historians and archaeologists who were not enamored of the notion that political ideology and cosmology should be dismissed as epiphenomenal. But it contradicted notions of techno-environmental infrastructure and economic determinism championed by North American scholars who worked in the Basin of Mexico.

Schele’s perspective was developed in *The Forest of Kings* (Schele and Freidel 1990), in which she and David Freidel built upon Peter Mathews’ (1985) reevaluation of the 11 Eb’ 15 Mak event discussed by Proskouriakoff (1993:4–10). Schele and Freidel argued that Tikal waged a new kind of war against neighboring Uaxactun on that date. The innovation of conquest was symbolized in art through the use of elements—including depictions of a foreign rain god (frequently equated with the Aztec Tlaloc), the Mexican year sign, owls, and the atlatl (spear thrower)—derived from central Mexico. Karl Taube (1992c) studied imagery from the Feathered Serpent Pyramid at Teotihuacan and concluded that the War Serpent of the Maya and a particular headdress are derived from this figure.⁵ An important aspect of Teotihuacan-Maya interaction, therefore, was the propagation and transformation of a warrior cult throughout southern Mesoamerica.

Soon other arguments were put forward suggesting why Teotihuacan symbols were appropriated by Maya elite. Andrea Stone (1989), in a perceptive study of Late Classic Piedras Negras, proposed that Maya rulers adopted foreign imagery in order to create social distance from their subjects. This “disconnection of the elite” has many ethnographic parallels. Arthur Demarest and Antonia Foias (1993), in what can be described only as a *tour de force*, argued that interaction with Teotihuacan was stimulated by the need of Maya rulers to procure exotic goods and information from a world much broader than their own domains. The display of such items, participation in cults originating in foreign lands (but perhaps adapted to fit local ideological norms), and use of esoteric symbols all would “tend to enhance power, wealth, and status, by implying contact or even (largely symbolic) political

alliance with foreign realms” (Demarest and Foias 1993:172). Demarest and Foias rejected the notion of a Teotihuacan horizon by reemphasizing the fact that Teotihuacan goods and symbols are not the only ones found at Early Classic sites—a theme of many chapters in this volume—and by noting that the impact of interaction was seen not during a short and intense period, but over many centuries. They proposed instead that interaction should be viewed as complex, shifting, and dominated by no single site or culture. The theoretical perspective offered by Demarest and Foias is particularly sophisticated in that they moved beyond the simple externalist-internalist dichotomy. Although they saw internal factors as stimulating interaction between the Maya and their neighbors, they did not deny that such contacts could be transformative. Nevertheless, Demarest and Foias decisively rejected models relying on invasion, colonization, foreign domination, and the passive role played by the Maya in such processes.

Alternative Perspectives

Stuart (2000a) cautions that we should not adopt an “either-or” model of Teotihuacan-Maya interaction. In particular, he suggests that externalist models may best explain late Early Classic processes—the subject of this volume—while internalist models are best suited to Late Classic developments. In addition to a temporal dimension, a central point of our book is that interaction may have been manifested at different sites in distinct ways. The art historian Janet C. Berlo recognized this years ago. She proposed that central Mexican imagery on censers from Pacific and highland Guatemala pertain to a warrior cult that originated at Teotihuacan (Berlo 1983). To Berlo, the propagation of the cult served the needs of a resident colony of soldiers and merchants. But she conceded that at sites like Tikal, “where Teotihuacanos met sophisticated cultures on an equal footing, Teotihuacan artistic and cultural influence [was] absorbed into already living traditions” (Berlo 1984:215). Thus, we should not propose internalist or externalist models without specifying time and place.

Although I have adopted Stuart’s framework in the previous discussion, alternative views—particularly ones that posit important results of interaction with Teotihuacan, yet also argue that the Maya were both conscious actors and the equals of their Teotihuacan counterparts—should also be considered. A critical aspect of Early Classic interaction that is not covered by the externalist-internalist dichotomy is the extent to which Teotihuacan was influenced by the Maya (see Chapter 11). That is, an interaction model of the “peer polity” (Renfrew 1986) sort might explain Early Classic elaboration

in both the Maya area and central Mexico. Moreover, the degree to which other cultures, particularly those of the Gulf Coast and Oaxaca, impacted or were influenced by the Maya has received far too little attention. An accurate depiction of the lattice of Early Classic interaction will emerge only when the fundamental reciprocity of exchange is acknowledged and when the roles of all participants are known.

The Pendulum of Interpretation

The dichotomy of externalist-internalist models also obscures several aspects of thought on interaction between Teotihuacan and the Maya. First, different perspectives have not coalesced through coincident dialogue; rather, they represent a gradual shift in opinion. Externalist narratives were predominant during the years immediately following research at Teotihuacan, Kaminaljuyu, and Tikal. Most of the readers of our book—like its editor—were born after the three momentous projects conducted at Teotihuacan were completed and after the great discoveries of the Tikal Project had been made. Just as some scholars of the 1960s and 1970s saw aspects of investigations conducted twenty years earlier as worthy of criticism, it is fitting that contemporary scholars should reevaluate theoretical constructs that emerged from research conducted forty years ago. The internalist paradigms that began to crystallize in the 1980s reflect a swing in the pendulum of thought, and it may even be that the pendulum has already reached its opposite apogee (e.g., Chapter 12; Stuart 2000a).

Second, the externalist-internalist dichotomy fails to reveal an important fact: the motion of the pendulum, for the most part, reflects a *latent* change in perspective. Relatively few internalists have openly refuted Teotihuacan-influence narratives. As work at Cerros began to be published in the late 1970s, Freidel (1978, 1979) emphasized that kingship coalesced simultaneously throughout the entire Maya lowlands and did not first occur in regions either particularly rich or lacking in specific resources.⁶ He did not stress the chronological implication that the emergence of Maya states occurred without the influence of Teotihuacan. That Schele's (1986) presentation is still widely cited suggests that relatively few published works have followed it. The full impact of discoveries at El Mirador and Nakbe—that urbanism and the state may have developed in the El Mirador Basin at a time contemporary with similar developments in Oaxaca—only now are being explored. Although “this effectively demolished the idea that the lowland Maya evolved large, complex societies in response to the rise of the pristine state in Teotihuacan” (Fash and Fash 2000:439), it is an observation that

very few have articulated in print. With the exception of Demarest and Foias (1993), no one has *explicitly* challenged all aspects of Teotihuacan-dominance models. In 1996, when I began to plan this project, I was surprised by how many scholars had shifted to what Stuart now calls internalist positions, yet this important swing of the pendulum seemed to be largely subconscious. The priority of local processes and the realization that the Maya were conscious actors in Early Classic interaction form a metanarrative that permeates current thinking. Nonetheless, this metanarrative does not constitute a unified—or even well-defined—theoretical perspective.

Other than sentimental reasons, alluded to above, what caused the reversal of the pendulum from externalist to internalist positions? To a great degree, it was stimulated by broader developments in archaeological thought.

The Word *Influence* and Culture-Historical Approaches to Interaction

In a study of Postclassic interaction, Michael Smith and Cynthia Heath-Smith (1980) critically examine the Mixteca-Puebla concept. They particularly oppose use of the term *influence* because it is an outmoded notion derived from culture history. To them, the depiction of “waves of influence” emanating outward from a productive, dominant core to a stagnant, passive periphery does not adequately explain the complex nature of Mesoamerican interaction. Externalists of the 1960s and 1970s applied these same diffusionist concepts to Teotihuacan-Maya interaction of the Early Classic period. In retrospect, this seems surprising given the low regard in which many archaeologists of the period held culture history.

Interaction, as Demarest and Foias (1993) argue, is multidirectional and involves more participants than a single core and an inert periphery. The implication is that we should seek to explain interaction from both internal and external perspectives. Our models should include all sites and regions in an interaction network and consider agency-based approaches. Interaction is a two-way street, even when one participant is much more powerful than the other. In such cases, resistance often is an important factor in the dialectic of cultural interaction. Indeed, it may even be that cultural innovation occurs most rapidly in boundary or frontier zones where two or more cultures interact (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995).

Migration as an Explanatory Concept and Notions of Ethnicity

Several of the strongest Teotihuacan-centric models posit the existence of enclaves or colonies at certain Maya sites (e.g., Cheek 1977a, 1977b; Michels

1977; Sanders 1977; Santley 1983). The presence at these sites of central Mexican artifacts and locally produced goods with forms or motifs borrowed from Teotihuacan, therefore, was interpreted by some scholars as the result of migration rather than exchange. Migration studies are now reappearing in the forefront of North American archaeological research after a long absence (e.g., Anthony 1990, 1997; Cameron 1995; Snow 1995, 1996). As one leading scholar of this renaissance notes: "Migration was once a lazy person's explanation for culture change, used by archaeologists who could not or chose not to deploy more demanding models and theories" (Anthony 2000:554). The reason that migration was rejected as an explanatory paradigm by most New Archaeologists is that its theoretical foundations, inherited from culture history, were seen to be inadequate (Adams 1968; Adams et al. 1978).

That colonialist Teotihuacan narratives of the 1960s through early 1980s were put forward by members of the Basin of Mexico and Valley of Guatemala teams—all New Archaeologists—is particularly strange. These scholars struggled to force the culture-historical concept of "site-unit intrusion" into an explanatory, processual model. They were only partially successful in creating bridging arguments linking the presence of imported artifacts or copies to physical migration. For example, the *talud-tablero* was interpreted as the strongest evidence for colonization by a superior Teotihuacan force, in part because it was assumed that the Maya would not build such structures unless coerced (Cheek 1977a, 1977b).

Joseph W. Ball (1983) has sought a more rigorous way to distinguish between the archaeological correlates of migration and diffusion. His chapter in *Highland-Lowland Interaction in Mesoamerica: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (Miller 1983), the last major collection devoted to Maya-Teotihuacan interaction, is still current. His discussion ties ceramic "identities" (imported pottery) and "homologies" (locally produced copies of foreign pottery) to distinct interaction processes. Ball argues effectively that homologies indicate strong interaction, including the possibility of migration, between two regions. Unfortunately, for reasons explained by Stone (1989) and Demarest and Foias (1993), homologies may also be items commissioned by imitative native elites. Thus their presence does not necessarily demonstrate the arrival of foreign settlers. Nevertheless, Ball's perceptive discussion is valuable, and aspects of his bridging arguments are adopted by authors in this volume.

What sort of contextual evidence for either homologies or identities would support an actual migration by a population segment from Teotihuacan?

That is, how may scholars identify central Mexican ethnicity in the archaeological record? Ethnicity, like other forms of identity, is constructed, negotiated, fluid, and situational. It is similar in some respects to Ian Hodder's (1990) notion of style. Ethnicity may or may not have biological aspects. Mortuary customs often are assumed to be one of the most conservative realms of human behavior, but John M. O'Shea (1981) and others have documented that they can be highly variable. Moreover, it should be expected that the burials of elites—who participate in much broader nets of social interaction than commoners—will exhibit a particularly wide range of variability. That is, local elites may emulate the burial practices of their foreign counterparts. In addition, interpretation is complicated by the fact that when a population segment has migrated, its burial patterns are subject to change. "Cemeteries are cultural texts produced by the living for the dead as the living. Matters of social concern are communicated here, so in a changing world they will also be a locus of change" (Burmeister 2000:560).

One archaeological approach to identifying ethnicity (and hence, cases of migration) is based on in-group versus between-group displays of identity. Stefan Burmeister (2000) argues that the internal domain (aspects of the behavior of a migrating group that are generally hidden from members of the host society) is more likely to reflect ethnicity than the public or external domain. Heinrich Härke (2000) sees this suggestion as new, but it has been applied to questions of ethnicity and Teotihuacan enclaves for many years. Michael W. Spence (1992, 1996b) had the distinction of private and public domains of social behavior in mind when he excavated the Oaxaca Barrio at Teotihuacan. The local production of highly conservative, Oaxaca-style utilitarian ceramics and urns, as well as the presence of a jamb containing Zapotec hieroglyphs in the entrance to a tomb—items that normally would not be seen by ethnic Teotihuacanos—in a group that outwardly resembled a typical Teotihuacan apartment compound were factors that led to the identification of the enclave during the early 1960s. Similarly, because local-style utilitarian pottery continued to be produced and used at Kaminaljuyu throughout the Classic period, Alfred V. Kidder et al. (1946) proposed that the "warlike adventurers" from Teotihuacan who established themselves at Kaminaljuyu must have married native women. Kidder et al. (1946), therefore, based their argument on the observation that certain items pertaining to the internal domain of Kaminaljuyu households did *not* change with the arrival of foreigners. Sanders (1977) adopted this position and pointed to the lack of objects related to Teotihuacan ritual at Kaminaljuyu as evidence for marriage with local women. This is an interesting argument, but the lack of

expression of Teotihuacan ethnicity in the internal domain can also be explained by the absence from Kaminaljuyu of both Teotihuacan women *and* men (Chapter 4).

Although models that consider migration as a process with particular archaeological correlates are being developed, they represent a recent reversal of a long-standing bias. It is not surprising, therefore, that Teotihuacan-centric models proposing the existence of far-flung colonies were viewed with skepticism in the 1980s. Moreover, colonialist models adopted a rather old-fashioned and apparently biologically rooted notion of ethnicity. For example, the effects of separation from the homeland on the identity of colonists was not addressed. Migration often *entails* a change in identity. Elite Teotihuacan-born men who married local women, stopped practicing Teotihuacan household rituals, and raised children of mixed heritage surely would have been deeply transformed by the process of migration. It is not at all clear that their children and grandchildren would have considered themselves to be Teotihuacanos, and if they did, that their identity would have resembled that expressed in the ancestral highland city. Above all, then, colonialist models proposed for Teotihuacan-Maya interaction failed to consider migration as a *process* with latent results and long-term effects.

The Primacy of Data over Theory

In a characteristically humorous manner, George L. Cowgill (1999a) discusses what he calls “Godzilla theory”—theory that lets no data stand in its way—and the issue of Teotihuacan-Maya interaction. As a student in the mid-1980s, I once heard him describe a particular application of a statistical test to poor data as an example of “trying to pull a plough with a Mercedes.” His point was that it was not only overkill—like Godzilla theory—but also an inappropriate tool that would fail to get the work done. Such overly elaborate theoretical constructs have often been applied to data regarding Early Classic interaction between the Maya and Teotihuacan. They tend to tip the balance of data and theory rather heavily in the latter direction. Moreover, some narratives are far too speculative and particularistic to have general explanatory value. Thus, I call them “narratives” and “scenarios” rather than “hypotheses.”

Maya archaeology of the 1960s and 1970s has been chided for remaining data-driven and for being a bit parochial and isolationist (see Marcus 1983a). In contrast, Anglophone central Mexican scholarship of the same period often consisted of much theorization supported by few data. There are, of course, exceptions, and work in the Valley of Oaxaca provides a bril-

liant counterexample (e.g., Flannery and Marcus 1983). Nevertheless, during the 1970s the dialectic between data and theory that is central to scientific research stalled in some corners of Mesoamerican archaeology. New data were used to illustrate strongly held beliefs, but seldom led to the revision of theoretical perspectives. All students of Mesoamerican archaeology will recognize the feeling "I knew what Professor Fulano was going to say even before I read his latest article." As central Mexican-centric positions regarding Teotihuacan-Maya interaction crystallized, they ceased to develop in any meaningful way. Internalist perspectives emerged, in part, as a dynamic reaction against the stasis of externalism.

Over the course of the past thirty years, Mayanists have continued to study Early Classic interaction. Many (particularly since the dramatic epigraphic revolution began to expand and enlarge our field in the 1980s) have become "theory producers." Exciting research conducted during this time has led to the accumulation of a great deal of data. Several of the contributors to our volume adopt positions that give primacy to these new data over old theories. No author proposes or advocates a universal model for understanding the causes and effects of ancient interaction. Our approach, therefore, may seem both particularistic and atheoretical. But given the faults of "Godzilla theory," we have chosen to postpone "high-level" theoretical discussion until the significance of our new data is more clearly understood. Only by setting the horse before the cart can we begin again to develop new models of Teotihuacan-Maya interaction.

Contributions to This Volume

Our volume grew out of a session held in Chicago at the Sixty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in March 1999. All contributions save one (Stuart 1999) appear here in expanded form. Chapter 6 was prepared especially for the volume.

The chapters that constitute our book are arranged in two general ways. First, the treatment is geographical. Chapters 2 through 5 focus on the Pacific Coast and the Maya highlands, together forming what is often called the Southern Maya Area. Chapters 6 through 8 discuss Tikal in the central Maya lowlands, and Chapter 9 considers Altun Ha in the lowlands of Belize. Chapter 10 takes us farther afield to Oxkintok, an important site in the northern Maya lowlands with a substantial Early Classic occupation. This generally south-to-north progression mirrors the second organizational aspect of the volume. Sites and regions where evidence for interregional interaction are strongest are considered first, and sites where the effects of that inter-

action are less evident are discussed last. Thus, we propose that strong interaction models are appropriate for central Escuintla; weaker ones should be applied to Kaminaljuyu, Copán, and Tikal; and the weakest of all should be considered for Altun Ha and Oxkintok. Chapter 11 reverses the question of Teotihuacan-Maya interaction by focusing on Teotihuacan. The last two chapters are broader in nature and develop contrasting historical and theoretical perspectives on Early Classic interaction.

Figure 1.2 presents ceramic chronologies for the sites discussed in the text. The intention is to provide a comparative tool to be used by readers of the volume. Unfortunately, the construction of the table entailed many decisions that have broader ramifications. In some cases, I had to choose between multiple chronologies for the same site. This was particularly true for Kaminaljuyu and Teotihuacan, but Copán and Oxkintok also have alternate (or even revisionist) ceramic chronologies. For the most part, I have chosen chronologies that the individual authors of this volume either have proposed or advocate. The ceramic phases and dates presented for Copán incorporate both the best published schema and the unpublished results of a decade of chronological refinement. A small injustice is done to the Teotihuacan chronology proposed by Cowgill (1996, 1997). He cogently suggests that dividing lines of the conventional sort emphasize the least-secure aspects of ceramic chronology: the transitions between one phase and the next. Such transitions may be vague, and phases that overlap may still be useful (Cowgill 1996). Nonetheless, the ceramic phases of Teotihuacan have “fine-scale” resolution compared to those of many Maya sites. Given both the size of Figure 1.2 and the less precise nature of the other ceramic chronologies, the use of horizontal phase-division lines for Teotihuacan seems only a minor misrepresentation.

In Chapter 2, Frederick J. Bove and Sonia Medrano Busto discuss the important and exciting results of two major projects conducted in Escuintla, Guatemala. Data suggesting interaction with central Mexico and the Gulf Coast are particularly strong for this portion of Pacific Guatemala. The authors have constructed what I believe is the best evidentiary argument for a long-term process of economic interaction leading to colonization ever put forward for southeastern Mesoamerica. An important aspect of their argument is that interaction began during the Terminal Preclassic–Early Classic transition, by A.D. 200 to 250 if not somewhat earlier. A “pulse” of interaction this early has been noted before only at Altun Ha (Chapter 9). Bove and Medrano’s dramatic evidence from Balberta—consisting of cached vessels with effigy cacao beans and related finds of central Mexican Thin Orange ware and green obsidian from Pachuca, Hidalgo (the principal source of

prismatic blades used at Early Classic Teotihuacan)—may suggest the commemoration of a trade agreement. Their data also reveal links to the Gulf Coast region of Veracruz. Gulf Coast fine-paste ceramics and obsidian from Zaragoza, Puebla (the principal source used in the Gulf Coast region during the Classic period), were identified. Connections between the Maya area and Veracruz are often overlooked, but are particularly important at Kaminaljuyu, Tikal, and sites in the northern Maya lowlands.

At a somewhat later time, the nature of interaction changed in ways that suggest the establishment of a central Mexican enclave. A new site, Montana, replaced Balberta as the regional capital at about A.D. 400. At that time, Teotihuacan-style drinking cups, imitations of Thin Orange ware, “Tlaloc” tripod supports, *candeleros*, warrior “portrait” figurines, and even an elaborate censer were used at the site. These data are important for three reasons. First, all the objects are locally produced homologies and tend to support a strong interaction model. Second, specific artifact classes found at the site are associated with rituals that reflect the state-sponsored ideology of Teotihuacan. Third, the artifacts were found overwhelmingly in domestic contexts rather than in dedicatory caches indicative of public activities. That is, they represent behavior associated with the internal or private domain of the household. Together, the artifacts and their contexts strongly argue for migration, colonization, and the concomitant transformation of the religious, domestic, and economic fabric of central Escuintla. Nevertheless, neither central Mexican-style architecture nor evidence of Teotihuacan site planning were discovered, perhaps because these would have impinged too much upon the public or external realm. This suggests to me that the immigrants may not have completely dominated and overwhelmed their host community. Again, I note that many artifacts also point to the Gulf Coast, and it may be that central Mexican immigrants at Montana arrived via the process of “leapfrogging” (Lee 1966) through southern Veracruz. That is, the proximal source of central Mexican cultural traits in central Escuintla may have been an established colony in the Gulf Coast region.

The next two chapters, by the editor, focus on Kaminaljuyu, the highland Maya site where evidence for interaction between the Maya and Teotihuacan was first discovered. In Chapter 3, I summarize the contextual information related to central Mexican-style ceramics and architecture at the site, and note that the last three decades of intensive and extensive investigations have failed to uncover additional signs of interaction with Teotihuacan. I also emphasize chronometric data related to the finds, and stress that the temporal placement of the Esperanza ceramic complex and *talud-tablero*

architecture is not especially clear. The implication is that we cannot yet determine if Teotihuacan-Kaminaljuyu interaction occurred before, during, or after similar processes expressed at Tikal and Copán. It may be, as Coggins (1979) suggests, that Kaminaljuyu was responsible for mediating contact with Tikal. Alternatively, Tikal or some site in Veracruz may have served as an intermediary between central Mexico and the Maya highlands.⁷ Temporal differences in the patterns of appearance of central Mexican-style artifacts and *talud-tablero* architecture are also discussed for the three sites. At Kaminaljuyu, both central Mexican ceramic imports and copies appeared before *talud-tablero* architecture. The opposite pattern has been noted at Tikal. At Copán, however, central Mexican-style architecture and ceramics co-occur. The reasons for these disparate patterns of adoption are not known, but they may indicate either very different interactive processes or the essential randomness of cultural emulation.

In Chapter 4, I examine various scenarios that have been proposed to explain the presence of central Mexican identities and homologies in the elite burials of Esperanza-phase Kaminaljuyu, as well as the use of *talud-tablero* architecture in mortuary structures and platforms that may have supported residences. In particular, I question narratives that posit colonization and conquest of the site. My approach is to consider the data for interaction with Teotihuacan (as well as with other central Mexican groups and Gulf Coast cultures) on differing levels of scale. In general, evidence of interaction is seen most strongly at intermediate scales and is much less evident at either micro or macro scales. For example, isotopic analyses of tooth enamel fail to point to a Teotihuacan origin for the individuals buried in Mounds A and B, and no aspects of site or group planning reflect central Mexican norms. That evidence for interaction is most clear at intermediate scales suggests that central Mexican elements were combined in ways and in contexts that are decidedly non-Teotihuacan in both overall plan and inner detail. This is inconsistent with the existence of an enclave. Emulation of foreign cultural traits for reasons of status reinforcement provides a partial answer for the presence of Teotihuacan-style artifacts, but it does not adequately explain why portable objects of central Mexican affinity are found in tombs rather than in contexts suggesting more frequent public manipulation. Instead, the semantic domain of foreign-style artifacts at Kaminaljuyu seems to imply participation in an elite warfare cult of foreign origin. Interaction had little or no impact on the internal domestic realm of both native rulers and commoners, and for unknown reasons was expressed most elaborately in elite mortuary rituals.

Robert J. Sharer, in Chapter 5, presents important new archaeological and epigraphic data regarding K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo', the founder of the Copán dynasty. Images of the Founder dating to the Late Classic (i.e., several centuries after his death) depict him wearing a costume containing elements borrowed from Teotihuacan that pertain to warfare. Structures built during the fifth century A.D., including a single example with a *talud* and *tablero*, reveal familiarity with architectural styles from central Mexico, the Maya highlands, and the central Maya lowlands. Tombs thought to be those of K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo' and his wife contain pottery imported from these areas as well as locally produced copies of foreign ceramics. Early hieroglyphic texts imply that the Founder was not a local, but "arrived" at Copán. Isotopic analyses of what are thought to be his remains support a foreign origin, but point away from Teotihuacan and toward the Petén. K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo', then, was a successful warrior from the Maya lowlands who skillfully employed Teotihuacan imagery in an attempt to solidify his position in the new royal center he built at Copán. His son, in contrast, chose to de-emphasize the Founder's real or claimed central Mexican connections, and instead highlighted ties to the central Maya lowlands.

David Stuart's (1999) paper presented at our symposium (as well as a longer version published in a different volume [Stuart 2000a]) is particularly relevant to Chapter 5 and the three that follow it. Because it is so widely cited throughout our volume, a brief summary here is appropriate. In a brilliant series of decipherments and inferences, Stuart reexamines the "war" between Tikal and Uaxactun postulated by Mathews (1985) and described by Schele and Freidel (1990). He concludes that Proskouriakoff's (1993:4-10) initial interpretation of the events surrounding 8.17.1.4.12 11 Eb' 15 Mak is in close agreement with the epigraphic record. His externalist argument focuses on four individuals: Chak Tok Ich'aak, Siyaj K'ahk' ("Smoking Frog"), Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin, and an enigmatic figure nicknamed "Spear-Thrower Owl."

According to Stuart's reconstruction, "Spear-Thrower Owl," a foreigner whose name glyph closely resembles the common Teotihuacan "heraldic" emblem called the *lechuza y armas* (von Winning 1987), was inaugurated as a ruler of an unidentified but named place in A.D. 374. Less than four years later and a week after passing through the site of El Perú, Siyaj K'ahk' "arrived" in the Tikal-Uaxactun area on the pivotal day 11 Eb' 15 Mak. The reigning ruler of Tikal, Chak Tok Ich'aak, died on that day, perhaps in a battle with Siyaj K'ahk' (Proskouriakoff 1993:8). It should be stressed, however, that no mention of a battle or description of the king's demise has been found in the texts. Less than a year later, the young son of "Spear-Thrower

Owl” was inaugurated as king of Tikal in an event that somehow was overseen by Siyaj K’ahk’. The death of “Spear-Thrower Owl” is mentioned as occurring in A.D. 439, during the reign of his grandson Siyaj Chan K’awiil at Tikal. It also is important that at distant Copán, an individual named Siyaj K’ahk’ is associated with K’inich Yaax K’uk’ Mo’ in a text that may dedicate the tomb of the Copán Founder (Chapter 5).

Stuart speculates that the *lechuza y armas* (owl and weapons) emblem so common at Teotihuacan is the name of a great king of that city whose long reign corresponds with most of the Early Xolalpan phase. If he is correct, it is the first time that the name of an individual ruler has been identified at Teotihuacan. The implication, therefore, is that Siyaj K’ahk’ was a war chief (perhaps Maya, perhaps not) who came from the “west,” conquered Tikal in A.D. 378, and imposed a Teotihuacan-centric rule by installing the boy-king Yaax Nu’n Ahyiin. Nonetheless, contextual evidence at Teotihuacan for the *lechuza y armas* emblem does not suggest that it is a name—at least at that site (von Winning 1987, 1:90). Thus the degree to which “Spear-Thrower Owl” is reified by the texts of Tikal remains unclear. He may have been the biological father of Yaax Nu’n Ahyiin, as the texts indicate, or he may have been an abstraction to which fatherhood was ascribed in order to strengthen a new king’s claim to leadership. Moreover, as Borowicz (Chapter 8) points out, at least two cases cited as examples of the “Spear-Thrower Owl” name at Tikal contain neither an owl nor an atlatl, and are derived from a completely different Teotihuacan emblem (see also Paulinyi 2001:4).

Schele and Freidel (1990:156–157, 449–450) argued that “Spear-Thrower Owl” is a central Mexican-derived war title. Both the “Spear-Thrower Owl” compound and Siyaj K’ahk’s name appear together with the *kalo’mte’* title. Given that Yaax Nu’n Ahyiin was not of the established royal line, it may have been necessary to create an illustrious past—by retroactively and opaquely assigning the high title *kalo’mte’* to his father, a war captain of Tikal—in order to justify his own right to rule. Thus, it is conceivable that “Spear-Thrower Owl” (along with *ochk’in k’awiil* and *kalo’mte’*) was one of the titles held by Siyaj K’ahk’. It is also possible that both Siyaj K’ahk’ and “Spear-Thrower Owl” were alternative names or portions of the full name of the same individual. That Yaax Nu’n Ahyiin’s son bore the name Siyaj is consistent with the conjecture that Siyaj K’ahk’ was his grandfather.

Nevertheless, it is much more likely that “Spear-Thrower Owl” and Siyaj K’ahk’ were distinct individuals and *kalo’mte’ob* of different sites, as Stuart argues. According to his interpretation, the site from which Siyaj K’ahk’ came is not named. Stuart’s (2000a:478) cautious reading of glyphs A7–

B8 of the Tikal marker can be summarized as: HUL-ye SIYAJ-K'AHK' KAL-ma-TE', or "he arrived, Siyaj K'ahk' [the] *kalo'mte'*." An important question is how the next and last two glyphs in these columns fit with the previous phrase. One reading of glyphs A9–B9 is: AJ-yo'-OTOOT'-NAL' MUT-CHAN-na-CH'E'N, which may be glossed as: "[he-]of-[the]-house Mut[u'l's]-upper cave/temple" (Marc Zender, personal communication 2001). Stuart (2000a) argues that the toponym at B9 is the object of the sentence, and hence the place of Siyaj K'ahk's arrival: Tikal. Alternatively, and more grammatically consistent, it may be that the place of "arrival" is not explicitly named. That is, the sentence may not have an object. If this is the case, B8–B9 form a title, and the entire phrase should be read: "he arrived, Siyaj K'ahk' [the] *kalo'mte'* of-[the]-house Mut-Chan-Ch'e'n." A similar but poorly preserved passage on Uaxactun Stela 5 might be glossed: "he arrived, Siyaj K'ahk' [of] Mutu'l's-'-'." In other words, Siyaj K'ahk' may be a lord of Mutu'l (Tikal), and not a "stranger" from a distant land. This reading supports Juan Pedro Laporte and Vilma Fialko's (1990) proposition that Siyaj K'ahk' was a lord from a Tikal lineage or great house rivaling that of Chak Tok Ich'aak. In this light, "arrival" may not mean the first appearance of a stranger, but may entail the *return* of Siyaj K'ahk' from a journey to a foreign place. We also cannot rule out the possibility that such a pilgrimage was spiritual rather than corporeal. Finally, "arrival" may have a more metaphorical meaning. In any of these alternative interpretations, the events of A.D. 378–379 signal the ascendancy of one *local* dynastic line over another.

A different passage in the Tikal marker discusses the accession of "Spear-Thrower Owl" (Stuart 2000a:483) on 8.16.17.9.0 11 Ajaw 3 Wayeb (glyphs E1–E5). It refers to him as a *kalo'mte'* and the fourth king of a place that possibly should be read as Ho' Noh Witz (Marc Zender, personal communication 2001). If the place/polity where "Spear-Thrower Owl" ruled was called a "place of reeds," an argument might be made that it was Teotihuacan. But even so, Ho' Noh Witz could equally be Kaminaljuyu (consistent with Coggin's [1979] position) or some other Maya site closer to Tikal. At present, it seems safest to consider Ho' Noh Witz as just another toponym/polity name that we have yet to identify archaeologically.⁸ Alternatively, if "Spear-Thrower Owl" was more invented than real, Ho' Noh Witz might be an imaginary location.

An intriguing—and to me the most likely—scenario is raised by Peter D. Harrison (1999), who argues that *kalo'mte'* and *ajaw* were titles originally held by distinct individuals. He concludes that Siyaj K'ahk' became *kalo'mte'* of Tikal in A.D. 378, and that Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin became *ajaw* of the polity

in A.D. 379. After the death of Siyaj K'ahk' Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin received the more exalted title of *kalo'mte'*. Siyaj Chan K'awiil, in his turn, became *ajaw* in A.D. 411, while his living father was still *kalo'mte'*. Thus, rulership at Tikal may have been divided between two hierarchically ranked individuals, with the highest title passing to the *ajaw* after the death of the *kalo'mte'*. Such systems of divided rulership are known from the Maya highlands (e.g., Braswell 2001b). I suggest that Chak Tok Ich'aak died a natural death without an heir apparent at Tikal. The nearest kinsman able to inherit the title of *ajaw* of Tikal was Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin, the child of a close female relative of Chak Tok Ich'aak (Martin and Grube 2000). I speculate that this woman was sent years before to Ho' Noh Witz, a Maya site of less importance than Tikal, to marry "Spear-Thrower Owl." We know that royal Maya women often "married down" in this fashion (Marcus 1992b). Siyaj K'ahk', who probably came from Tikal and may have been another kinsman of the deceased ruler, was immediately given the title of *kalo'mte'* and served as both regent and "protector of the realm" well into Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin's adulthood.⁹ This may have been necessary in order to guard the affairs of Tikal from interference by "Spear-Thrower Owl" and other relatives of Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin from Ho' Noh Witz. Upon Siyaj K'ahk's death, Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin adopted the title of *kalo'mte'*, which came to have real meaning and power because of its previous holder. In order to ensure that the accession of Siyaj Chan K'awiil occurred without incident, Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin installed his son as *ajaw* in A.D. 411, nine years before his own death.¹⁰ In this scenario, "Spear-Thrower Owl," a less exalted ruler of a relatively minor Maya site, may have been called *kalo'mte'* by his son's propagandists in order to legitimate the weakest link in Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin's heritage. An example of this kind of equivocation is found at Pusilha. There, a Late Classic king who inherited his position from his mother assigned the *kalo'mte'* title to his less-than-illustrious paternal grandfather. The latter came from a minor Maya center, which, like Ho' Noh Witz, has not yet been identified as an archaeological site (Christian Prager, personal communication 2001).

In sum, Stuart's (2000a) interpretation of these difficult inscriptions is compelling, but alternative scenarios are consistent with the texts as we now understand them. Specifically, there is no epigraphic evidence that "Spear-Thrower Owl" was a ruler of Teotihuacan or that Siyaj K'ahk' came from anywhere other than Tikal. Like all significant and exciting research, Stuart's (2000a) discoveries answer some questions but raise even more. Was Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin foreign born or from Tikal? Does the appearance of Teotihuacan "influence" at Tikal during his reign have anything to do with the cir-

cumstances of his accession? If Teotihuacan actually did impose a foreign ruler (or even a locally born puppet) on Tikal in A.D. 379, what were the long-term effects of Teotihuacan-centric rule? Burial 10 has been identified as the interment of Yaax Nu'n Ahiin, and oxygen isotope assay of his teeth will soon let us know if he was locally born and raised, was born and grew up in the highlands of Mexico, or spent time in both regions (Lori E. Wright, personal communication 2000). Unfortunately, such analysis may not resolve the question of the power behind the throne. Even if oxygen isotope assay supports a local origin for Yaax Nu'n Ahiin, it still may be that he was a pawn imposed upon Tikal by some outside power. Chapters 6 through 8 examine the more complicated question of the impact of Teotihuacan on Tikal—whatever the origin of Yaax Nu'n Ahiin is found to be.¹¹

In Chapter 6, María Josefa Iglesias Ponce de León focuses on the economic ramifications of Teotihuacan-Tikal interaction through the study of central Mexican identities and homologies recovered from two kinds of contexts: burials and “problematical deposits.” The latter are enormous concentrations of virtually every sort of artifact known from Tikal. They incorporate domestic refuse from elite households, human burials, ceramic offerings, jade, shell ornaments, and carved monuments. Because they contain a bit (or even a lot) of everything from garbage to precious stones, their interpretation is difficult. Many of the most spectacular of these enigmatic features date to the Manik 3A phase, which is thought to have begun with the installation of Yaax Nu'n Ahiin. They contain some of the best contextual evidence for evaluating relations with central Mexico.

Iglesias concludes that the economic impact of Teotihuacan on Tikal has been profoundly overstated. Compared to the great quantity of locally produced objects, the number of imports from central Mexico is minimal. Moreover, the problematical deposits, which derive in part from domestic refuse, show that Teotihuacan had limited or no effect on the internal domain of elite households. A very small number of miniature vessels that resemble *candeleros* have been found, as well as two figurine heads that are somewhat similar to examples from Teotihuacan. But evidence that the state-sponsored religion of Teotihuacan was practiced at Tikal is negligible. Moreover, the appearance of identities and homologies is limited to a very short period of time. By the end of the fifth century A.D., trade with central Mexico had all but ceased and local copies were no longer produced in significant numbers. Iglesias does not rule out the possibility that, in A.D. 379, a foreign king was imposed on Tikal in the manner that Stuart (2000a) describes. But she does not see such a takeover as having a significant effect on local culture. She

notes that many kings (and even more queens) of Spain were foreigners. Foreign royalty were quickly *absorbed* into the cultural fabric of the country they ruled. The original identity of a king, therefore, is much less important than the ethnicity forced upon him.

In Chapter 7, Juan Pedro Laporte looks at architectural evidence from Tikal for interaction with central Mexico. He notes that the oldest examples of structures containing *tableros* date to the Terminal Preclassic Manik 1 phase, or the third century A.D. This is considerably earlier than a time when ceramics produced in Teotihuacan were brought to Tikal. During the next several centuries, specific elements of the *talud-tablero* form were used at Tikal in ways that suggest the development of a local style. Given that *talud-tablero* architecture was widespread before any clear evidence for connections with Teotihuacan, Laporte argues that it is a Mesoamerican form that developed in many areas and that its propagation should not be attributed to any single site. Instead, he sees *talud-tablero* architecture as evidence for the cosmopolitan nature of Tikal, a city that by A.D. 250 was already participating in a far-flung lattice of interaction.

The second half of his chapter turns to Group 6C-XVI, a complex of structures (some in *talud-tablero* style) built during the third through sixth centuries. Laporte argues that, contrary to one interpretation, it is not a local version of the Teotihuacan apartment compound. He stresses, in fact, that there is little reason to suspect that Group 6C-XVI was a residential group. Instead, he suggests that it served a function related to the ballgame. One object recovered during excavations is the so-called Tikal marker, which closely resembles examples from Kaminaljuyu and the La Ventilla A compound of Teotihuacan. The last is stylistically linked to the Gulf Coast. Laporte argues that we should interpret these sculptures as indicating complex and multi-directional interaction, rather than the overpowering "influence" of one site on another. He ends by returning to Teotihuacan in order to look for evidence of interaction with the Maya region, and notes that the Ciudadela is built according to the "E-group" plan developed in the central Maya lowlands during the Preclassic period. This argument recently has been accepted and discussed by two scholars of Teotihuacan archaeology. Important corollaries of Laporte's position are that interaction between central Mexico and Tikal began long before (and continued long after) the events of A.D. 378, and that we should not underestimate the effects of the Maya on the development of Teotihuacan.

In Chapter 8, James Borowicz examines the iconographic content and style of Early Classic stelae at Tikal. He argues that shifts in royal icono-

graphic programs reflect important changes in the nature of rulership. He notes that until the reign of Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin, Early Classic rulers were depicted in ceremonial, ritual, and military contexts that strongly echo earlier Preclassic traditions from the Pacific Coast of Guatemala, Kaminaljuyu, and even Monte Albán. Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin, in contrast, was shown as a Teotihuacan-style warrior. Borowicz suggests that by emphasizing both his martial attributes and powerful foreign connections, the king and founder of a new dynastic line was able to justify his rule and create social distance from potential rivals of the old order. Following Laporte and Fialko (1990), he speculates further that Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin and his supporters were rivals of the previous dynasty, and that they manipulated both the ballgame and associated Teotihuacan military symbols in a quest for power. Borowicz, then, implies that the events of A.D. 378–379 represent an internal struggle—perhaps aided by foreign allies or perhaps not—rather than the imposition of a ruler from distant Teotihuacan. His position is consistent with the facts that Chak Tok Ich'aak (the last ruler of the *ancien régime*) was accorded full burial honors and that Tikal does not seem to have suffered the physical indignities of a military defeat.¹²

Borowicz next turns to the reign of Siyaj Chan K'awiil, the son of Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin. Instead of continuing his father's iconographic program, Siyaj Chan K'awiil consciously returned to the program of earlier Tikal rulers. The portraits on the sides of Stela 31, which are famous for their Teotihuacan costumes, are rendered in Maya proportions and in a Maya style (Figure 8.4a,c). The front of Stela 31, Borowicz argues, is dominated by clear references to earlier rulers and their monuments, and only two small motifs that derive from Teotihuacan are shown. It seems, then, that Siyaj Chan K'awiil used foreign imagery only to identify his father, but very deliberately chose to associate himself with older Maya traditions.

This program was continued by the next ruler, K'an Ak, who commissioned the recently discovered Stela 40. This spectacular monument (Figure 8.5) is a clear imitation of Stela 31, but the side portraits are replaced by images of Siyaj Chan K'awiil dressed as a Maya king. At a later point in his reign, K'an Ak developed a third iconographic program that, although wholly Maya, portrayed the ruler engaged in rituals associated with calendrical cycles. This change in iconographic content from the ruler-as-warrior to the king-as-priest seems to suggest a transformation in the nature of rulership at Tikal.

In Chapter 9, David Pendergast focuses on the beginning of the Early Classic period at Altun Ha, Belize. He discusses an interment offering con-

sisting of Teotihuacanoid (but not from Teotihuacan) vessels and a large number of green obsidian artifacts from the Pachuca source. In many respects, the spectacular offering resembles a Miccaotli/Early Tlamimilolpa cache that (except for the ceramics) would not stick out as odd at Teotihuacan itself. Isotopic assay, however, reveals that the deceased was not from Teotihuacan and probably was of local origin. Pendergast reanalyzes the contextual implications of the cache and concludes—for some of the same reasons put forward by Ball (1983) in his discussion of ceramic identities and their lowland contexts—that it represents ties between Teotihuacanos and the individual buried in the tomb, and is not a reflection of community-to-community relations. Pendergast next asks what the impact of these early relations with Teotihuacan were on the development of Altun Ha, and he argues that since there is no evidence for later interaction, the cache is best interpreted as a single event with no long-term consequences.

In Chapter 10, Carmen Varela Torrecilla and I discuss developmental processes in the northern Maya lowlands. Our contribution focuses on Oxkintok, one of the few Puuc sites with a substantial Early Classic occupation. We view the sixth and early seventh centuries, a period of great cultural elaboration at Oxkintok, as a time of extensive interaction and innovation. Proto-Puuc architecture of the sixth century utilizes the *tablero* form, and the ceramic complex of the Oxkintok Regional phase contains tripod cylinders, but these forms are adapted and transformed in innovative ways. *Tableros* are combined with Maya apron moldings, and pottery vessels contain an iconographic program quite different from that of Teotihuacan. Although we see interaction with Teotihuacan and the Gulf Coast as important, we emphasize that stronger economic ties were forged with the Maya highlands and central lowlands. We interpret interaction with all these regions not in terms of hegemony or dominance, but as an indication of the emergence of political complexity in the Puuc zone. As power became more centralized, the elite of Oxkintok sought wider interaction networks so that they could obtain more prestige items. Varela and I, therefore, consider participation in pan-Mesoamerican networks as linked to the emergence of states in the northern lowlands. We do not consider the Puuc region to be unique in this regard, and we suspect that many of the great polities of the Late Classic developed in similar social and economic contexts.

Karl A. Taube takes an entirely different perspective in Chapter 11 and looks at evidence for Teotihuacan-Maya interaction found in the great highland city. He focuses on the mural iconography and ceramic artifacts of Tetitla, an important apartment compound located 600 m west of the Street

of the Dead. The Tetitla murals not only depict Maya supernaturals such as the Bearded Dragon (who sometimes appears as the Vision Serpent), the Pawahtun (an old creator god often shown in a shell), and the Tonsured Maize God, but also contain phonetic Mayan texts. In addition, the eclectic murals also show influence from other areas, particularly the Gulf Coast. Moreover, censers, plano-relief vessels, and other ceramic forms from Tetitla contain iconographic elements borrowed from Maya art.

Taube interprets these murals and artifacts as indicating that Tetitla was a kind of “International House” associated with upper-class merchants or diplomats. He notes that Maya-made objects found at Teotihuacan are limited to goods of the highest quality, suggesting that interaction was conducted at the elite palace level. Taube concludes that Teotihuacan, which often has been portrayed as a monolithic culture, borrowed freely from other societies, and that some of the most “typically Teotihuacan” works of art are among the most eclectic in the city. Finally, he demonstrates that just as the Maya were fascinated by elite goods and esoteric ideas from central Mexico, the uppermost stratum of Teotihuacan society was captivated by Maya notions of kingship and royal ancestor worship.

In Chapter 12, George Cowgill presents an important counterpoint to themes developed in several chapters of this volume. He begins with a discussion of new data from Teotihuacan. He describes the transition between the Early and Late Tlamimilolpa phases—now thought by Evelyn C. Rattray to be even earlier than shown in Figure 1.2—as one of the most important in the history of Teotihuacan. Importantly, many of the ceramic traits associated with Teotihuacan “influence” in the Maya area do not appear at the central Mexican city before this transition. Cowgill also presents other data suggesting that the Feathered Serpent Pyramid (which dates to a time before the Late Tlamimilolpa phase) should not be compared with structures in the Maya region, or even with other buildings at Teotihuacan. Moreover, he stresses that we know practically nothing about high-level elite burials at Teotihuacan during the Late Tlamimilolpa and subsequent phases: the interval of greatest relevance for comparison with the Maya region.

Cowgill then turns to other portions of Mesoamerica and focuses on the region between the Basin of Mexico, the Valley of Oaxaca, and the Maya area. His very useful summary stresses that evidence of Teotihuacan “influence” has been found throughout the Isthmian region. Thus, we should not use discontinuity as an argument against an important Teotihuacan presence in the Maya area.

In his last section, Cowgill presents a scenario that he sees as the most

likely explanation for the appearance of central Mexican traits in the Maya region during the late Early Classic period. His perspective is an example of Marcus' multistage model (Chapter 13), and may also represent a new reversal in the direction of the pendulum of thought. He entertains the possibility that, for a fleeting moment, Teotihuacan may have established a far-flung and unstable empire that included important Maya cities like Kaminaljuyu, Tikal, and Copán. His position shares much with previous scenarios (most notably Bernal [1966]), but seeks support from recent and impressive archaeological finds (from central Escuintla) and new hieroglyphic decipherments (discussed above). One important distinction between Cowgill's account and earlier strong externalist narratives is that he does not see any particular long-term effects of Teotihuacan's brief intervention in Maya political affairs. Nor does Cowgill consider that the contraction of Teotihuacan ushered in a decline in the Maya region. On the contrary, he suggests that it may have presented new opportunities for exchange among the flourishing new polities of the Epiclassic/Late Classic period.

Readers may question how convincing the evidence is for Teotihuacan winning "a stunning series of victories" outside the Basin of Mexico, and whether or not intervention in the Maya region represented "the farthest southeastern extent of military successes that already had a long history behind them." Certainly no physical remains indicating a military conflict with Teotihuacan have been found in the Maya area, although evidence of inter-necine warfare abounds (e.g., Demarest 1997). In fact, a central point to Stuart's (2000a) new interpretation of the 11 Eb' 15 Mak event is that there is *no* mention in the inscriptions of a battle.

As has been the case for several decades, the principal sources of data regarding interaction between the Maya and Teotihuacan are imported and foreign-inspired ceramics, a borrowed architectural form, central Mexican obsidian, and the incorporation of foreign motifs and elements of style into existing artistic programs. We may now add to this brief list the use of a foreign-looking name at Tikal and several accounts describing the "arrival" from unknown places of two elite individuals: K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo' of Copán and Siyaj K'ahk' of Tikal. Both have Maya names, and the first seems to come from the Petén (Chapter 5). Cowgill sees this body of evidence, new information from Montana (Chapter 2), and additional data from non-Maya Chiapas as sufficiently strong to posit that interaction was "backed by force." Many of the contributors to this volume do not agree. We all share the hope that our readers will one day resolve this friendly difference of opinion.

In the final chapter, Joyce Marcus returns to comprehensive models of

interaction. She notes that no single model seems to account for all Maya sites and stresses that the nature of interaction also varied over time (as do our interpretations of Teotihuacan-Maya relations). Instead, she proposes four general models: single-event interaction, multistage interaction, simple dyadic interaction, and numerous partners or interactions mediated by multiple sites. The first is applicable to Altun Ha. The fourth and most complex of Marcus' models seems to be the most accurate and complete one for understanding Early Classic interaction at all the other sites discussed in this volume, although multistage interaction may explain some events in central Escuintla, Copán, and Tikal.

Most previous narratives of the sort that Stuart (2000a) calls externalist positions can be considered simple dyadic scenarios. There is a growing body of evidence that the Maya interacted with multiple partners as early as the Middle Preclassic period. Marcus emphasizes that many other important trade partners of the Early Classic Maya—including inhabitants of central and southern Veracruz, Tabasco, Oaxaca, Puebla, and Tlaxcala—have frequently been overlooked by scholars focused on Teotihuacan connections. In particular, many sites for which simple dyadic models have been developed, including Kaminaljuyu and Tikal, evince strong ties to the Gulf Coast. Narratives for these sites that attempt to explain local developments only in terms of Teotihuacan are incomplete.

Marcus argues that it is simplistic—and also wrong—to consider influence as unilateral. That is, an adequate model must account for and explain Maya impact on Teotihuacan of the sort that is documented by Taube. Moreover, local or internal processes must be taken into account, even in models that attribute significant importance to foreign interaction. The most important aspect of her view, one shared by all the authors of this volume, is that the Maya were conscious actors who manipulated foreign interaction and selectively adapted, modified, and transformed aspects of imported culture to suit their own needs. Just like their colonial and modern counterparts, the Maya of A.D. 350–550 should not be envisioned as the passive victims of foreign interference.

Characterizing Early Classic Interaction

The authors of this volume, with the notable exceptions of Cowgill, Bove, and Medrano, adopt perspectives on Teotihuacan-Maya interaction that lean heavily toward internalism.¹³ Indeed, many chapters reject Teotihuacan-“influence” or -“dominance” models proposed in the 1960s to early 1980s. But our purpose and results, I hope, reflect a more complex view than is sug-

gested by the externalist-internalist dichotomy. Our varying perspectives can be summarized by several salient points.

Material and Temporal Patterns of Early Classic Interaction

Interaction between the Maya and Teotihuacan has left a large and disconcerting range of material correlates. At some Maya sites, interaction (be it direct or indirect) is manifested in *talud-tablero* architecture. Green obsidian from the Pachuca source is found at other locations. Still others have imported ceramics or other goods from central Mexico. Some sites evince interaction in stylistic or iconographic conventions. For the most part, there does not appear to be an ordered hierarchy of material traits that reflects the intensity or nature of interaction. That is, we cannot say that any particular material category, including the *talud-tablero*, indicates stronger or more lasting interaction than any other. As Cowgill points out (Chapter 12), we know little about what the different patterns of material traits may mean. In many cases, the random nature of the central Mexican traits adopted by the Maya seems to signify nothing more than the arbitrariness of elite emulation.

Nevertheless, we consider items used within the household realm, particularly those related to the practice of a Teotihuacan-centric religion (*candeleros*, censers, warrior "portrait" figurines, and perhaps *copas*, "cream pitchers," and *floreros*), to be better indicators of migration than are status-endowing elite items subject to exchange. With the apparent exception of Montana, the distribution of these items within the Maya region is extremely limited.

Two temporal patterns seem to be particularly important. First, over the course of the Classic period, greater numbers of Maya sites came to reflect some degree of interaction with or awareness of central Mexico. This pattern survived the fall of Teotihuacan itself; iconographic references to the city are more widespread in the Maya region during the Late Classic than they are in the Early Classic. Second, the ratio of imports to locally produced copies of central Mexican objects decreases over time. Thus, at second- and early third-century Altun Ha and Balberta, evidence of interaction with Teotihuacan is limited to the presence of actual imports from central Mexico. At fourth- and fifth-century Kaminaljuyu, Tikal, and Copán, there are many more copies of central Mexican goods than imports. Finally, there do not appear to be any actual imports from highland Mexico at fifth- and sixth-century Montana or sixth-century Oxkintok.

Following Ball (1983), we interpret this rise in the ratio of homologies (copies) to identities (imports) as indicating that interaction between the

northwestern and southeastern halves of Mesoamerica generally was more frequent and intense at the end of the Early Classic than it was during the Terminal Preclassic/Early Classic transition. In fact, we suspect that this trend continued during later periods. But this does not necessarily imply political or economic domination in the late Early Classic, let alone the existence of foreign colonies; such a colony seems extremely unlikely at Oxkintok, the latest of all the sites discussed in this volume. On the contrary, in many cases an increase in the frequency of homologies seems to indicate intensified elite emulation. To reiterate, the essential tool used to distinguish sites with a possible colony (such as Montana) from sites that almost certainly lacked a colonial presence (such as Oxkintok) is the frequent appearance of homologies in humble internal contexts.

Variation in the Nature and Effects of Interaction

Just as the material correlates of Teotihuacan interaction varied over time and place within the Maya region, so too did the nature and effects of that interaction.

At Altun Ha, a unique event—perhaps indicating the recognition of the death of one ruler by another—seems to have signaled the beginning and the end of Teotihuacan interaction. At Balberta, and perhaps at Nohmul and Becan, the public nature of caches containing goods from central or Gulf Coast Mexico more likely bespeaks the limited interaction of communities. Evidence for a central Mexican affiliation at Montana is abundant, particularly in the household domain. This is the strongest case for an actual central Mexican presence, but there is some ambiguity as to whether foreign colonists at the site came directly from Teotihuacan or from some intermediate site in the southern Gulf Coast area. At Kaminaljuyu, the nature of interaction is less clear, but probably involved multiple actions of inter-elite gift giving, the emulation of central Mexican culture by Maya elites, and perhaps both the adoption of a foreign religious cult and a low but important level of economic exchange. At Copán and Tikal, evidence for direct ties to Teotihuacan, either of a military, trade, or religious nature, is both less tangible and more evanescent. Finally, evidence at Oxkintok points to multiple trade connections with many areas, and perhaps only the most indirect of ties with Teotihuacan itself.

For reasons outlined above and in Chapters 12 and 13, we reject the possibility that the earliest states in the Maya region somehow were stimulated by Teotihuacan. Nevertheless, the late development of state-level organization in Pacific Guatemala may have been sparked by a Teotihuacan pres-

ence. Similarly, the emergence of states in the Puuc region at the very end of the Early Classic period may have been engendered (in the true sense of the word) by increased exchange with various regions of Mesoamerica, including central Mexico. At Tikal and Copán, the Early Classic effects of interaction appear to be transitory and are limited to a period of less than a century. Most important, they are closely tied to dynastic change. This may signal the imposition of foreign rulers or new native lines sponsored by Teotihuacan, or—as advocated by most of the authors of this volume—may indicate an attempt to legitimize the precarious claims of Maya sovereigns establishing new dynasties.

The Early "Pulse" of Interaction

Contact between central Mexico and the Classic Maya spanned several centuries. Within this longer period we have identified two important "pulses" of interaction. An early pulse, corresponding to the Terminal Preclassic/Early Classic transition, is seen clearly in Pacific Guatemala and at Altun Ha, and possibly at Kaminaljuyu and Tikal. At the last site, the adoption of and experimentation with certain aspects of the *talud-tablero* style suggest interaction not with Teotihuacanos, but with nearer neighbors from the Gulf Coast. Early cylindrical tripods from Kaminaljuyu also might reflect relations with that region. In central Escuintla and northern Belize, however, trade goods unambiguously demonstrate interaction with central Mexico, perhaps with Teotihuacan itself. Objects imported from central Mexico have been found in caches or offerings at both Balberta and Altun Ha. Nonetheless, these items could have reached southeastern Mesoamerica indirectly via the Gulf Coast. Interaction during this early pulse is best depicted as occurring between equal (or near equal) partners. There is no evidence for asymmetrical relations, let alone for economic or political hegemony. As mentioned, the Balberta caches suggest community-to-community relations, perhaps in the form of trade agreements, celebrated in the public arena. In contrast, the offering at Altun Ha appears to imply affiliations between individuals. It is the sole example in our volume that seems to fit the single-event model. The long-term impact of this early pulse was negligible in the Maya lowlands and is somewhat ambiguous in Pacific Guatemala.

The Late "Pulse" of Interaction

An important contribution of recent work in the Maya region and at Teotihuacan is the clarification of chronological evidence for interaction. It now

appears that the strongest data for direct Maya-Teotihuacan contacts are limited to the late fourth and early fifth centuries, contemporary with the Early Xolalpan phase of Teotihuacan (Figure 1.2). Evelyn C. Rattray (1989:111) has noted that the odd round structures of the Merchants' Barrio, built in a style reminiscent of the Gulf Coast, also date to this phase. Thus, at Teotihuacan itself, we expect to find most evidence for intense relations with the Gulf Coast and Maya regions in Early Xolalpan contexts. It now seems likely, for example, that the Tetitla murals discussed by Taube (Chapter 11) date either to the end of the Early Xolalpan phase or to the beginning of the ensuing Late Xolalpan phase. Dating the murals of Teotihuacan has proven to be a thorny problem, and Taube's work represents an important breakthrough.

Although Maya sites undoubtedly maintained contacts with Teotihuacan and other regions northwest of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec throughout the first half of the Early Classic period, interaction changed in several important respects during the late fourth and early fifth centuries. First, both imports and copies of central Mexican objects appeared in greater numbers and at more sites than in earlier periods. Second, most of these items are locally produced homologies, suggesting either elite emulation or—in at least one case—colonization. Third, ideological constructs, apparently absent during the early pulse, accompanied imported goods. *Candeleros*, warrior "portrait" figurines, and the elaborate "theater" censers found in central Escuintla reveal the practice of the Teotihuacan state-sponsored religion within domestic contexts. Many ceramic homologies also evince close ties with central Mexico. It seems likely, as Bove and Medrano argue, that a foreign colony was established during this period at Montana. Such a colony, however, may not have included many women from Teotihuacan (Chapter 12). At Tlailotlacan, the Zapotec barrio of Teotihuacan, locally made copies of common Oaxacan utilitarian wares are found. Such mundane and quotidian homologies are missing from the San Jerónimo complex, suggesting that potters of local origin made most of the everyday ceramics consumed at Montana.

In contrast, the elite of Kaminaljuyu probably adopted and transformed certain aspects of a Teotihuacan belief system, but there is no compelling evidence for the existence of an enclave. At Kaminaljuyu, the ideological impact of central Mexican interaction was limited to prominent elite males, who appear to have taken part in a pan-Mesoamerican warfare cult manifested most strongly in mortuary behavior. Participation in these rites, however, had little or no impact on either domestic rituals or household economy.

The late pulse seen at Oxkintok corresponds with the end of the Late

Xolalpan and the Metepec phases, or the last gasps of Teotihuacan as a major highland power. In this case, the impact of relations is so diffuse and rarefied that interaction with Teotihuacan seems more abstract than real. The physical manifestations of interaction are limited to the borrowing of stylistic elements that were reconfigured and transformed within local contexts. The purpose of interaction, to gain access to foreign esoteric goods and symbols associated with elite status, was primarily material. Exchange with central Mexico did not diminish after the decline of Teotihuacan. Instead, such trade seems to have increased at Oxkintok during the Late and Terminal Classic.

The "Arrival of Strangers"

An important aspect of the late pulse of interaction at both Copán and Tikal was the emergence of new dynastic lines that either had or claimed affiliation with Teotihuacan. Stuart's (1999, 2000a) important contribution raises many questions concerning the nature of this impact. Chief among these are: (1) Were the principal actors Maya or foreigners from Teotihuacan? and (2) Does the Teotihuacan-derived military symbolism seen in depictions of K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo' and Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin indicate an alliance that enabled these men to rule, or does it reflect an attempt by dynastic founders and their successors to legitimate their reigns?¹⁴

Isotopic analysis has answered the first question for Copán, but has not yet been applied to Tikal. Nonetheless, several authors are inclined to favor a local—or at least Maya—origin for Yaax Nu'n Ahyiin. We also suspect that the Teotihuacan-derived imagery of Copán and Tikal reflects an ideological alignment more than a true military alliance. That is, the kings of both polities used a vigorous, new, elite mythology to legitimate their tenuous grasps on power. Because they were not members of existing dynasties, they could not call upon royal ancestor veneration, as had been the practice since kingship emerged in Preclassic times. I speculate—and it is no more than a conjecture—that Siyaj K'ahk', K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo', and at least one of the principal figures in the Kaminaljuyu tombs may have made pilgrimages to Teotihuacan in order to strengthen their claims to a powerful foreign ideology. If one was not of the royal line, a trip to the metaphorical "Place of Reeds" might have been needed to cement one's rule. In contrast, the sons of the (new) dynastic founders at both Copán and Tikal quickly reverted to royal ancestor veneration as the principal tool of legitimization. By the middle of the fifth century, ties—either real or fabricated—to Teotihuacan were not as important as more traditional customs and alliances.

Multiple Contacts

Many of the authors see evidence for interaction between the Maya and multiple regions of Mesoamerica. At Kaminaljuyu and Tikal, there are some indications of exchange with Monte Albán. Particularly strong ties are seen between Maya sites and the Gulf Coast of Veracruz. In Pacific Guatemala, ceramics and Zaragoza obsidian indicate contact with that region. It may even be that the warrior “portrait” figurines of Montana, because of their large size, were inspired by figurines from southern Veracruz. At Kaminaljuyu, the iconographic content and style of a few ceramic vessels and a mosaic plaque, as well as the proportions of *talud-tablero* architecture, suggest contact with the Gulf Coast. Similar evidence for interaction with the Gulf Coast is found at Tikal, including the later appearance of the *atadura* (cinch) form of the *talud-tablero*, and the ceramics of the Altun Ha cache may come from the Gulf Coast region. Moreover, it is not clear that the tripod cylinder form was introduced to southern Mesoamerica from Teotihuacan. Tripod cylinders have been found in small quantities in Preclassic contexts at Kaminaljuyu, and the ceramic form appeared in the Gulf Coast region centuries before such vessels were produced in Teotihuacan (Rattray 1977). In some cases, it may even be that contact with Teotihuacan was mediated by inhabitants of the Gulf Coast who had forged exchange ties with Maya elites during the Late and Terminal Preclassic periods.

The Cosmopolitan Nature of Maya Cities

We are not surprised that the apparent strength of economic and ideological ties between central Mexico and the Maya region is related to the size and complexity of the sites involved. We do not see this as either a cause or a result of Teotihuacan intervention, but instead consider it to be a reflection of the cosmopolitan nature of local communities. Although not immense cities, Montana, Kaminaljuyu, and Copán were the largest and most complex population centers in their regions during the late Early Classic period. Tikal, in fact, already was a substantial city and power in the central lowlands. We consider it only natural that foreign trade—and perhaps even merchants, emissaries, or priests—would be drawn to these vibrant centers. We suspect that the largest and most dynamic Maya cities were multiethnic and international, as was Teotihuacan. We are surprised, in fact, at how difficult it has been to identify foreigners in the archaeological record of sites like Tikal. But the identification of such individuals, even those of high status, should not be construed on its own as indicating foreign dominance.

The Lattice of Interaction

Finally, we follow Demarest and Foias (1993) in understanding Teotihuacan and each of our sites or regions as nodes in a complex, multidirectional lattice of interaction. Teotihuacan was the largest and most powerful city of Early Classic Mesoamerica, and it is not surprising that the web of connections reflected its size and grandeur. Distance, too, played a role in the lattice, and closely spaced sites were more likely to be directly and strongly linked than more distant ones. Taube's contribution demonstrates the multidirectional flow of ideas and goods throughout the lattice. Because Teotihuacan was the single largest and most complex node, it should be expected that more evidence for interaction with foreign places would be found there than at the other sites. Foreign enclaves (containing people from the Gulf Coast and the Valley of Oaxaca) have long been proposed for the central Mexican city, and a Maya "presence" or "influence" of some sort now seems likely at Tetitla.

Our understanding of Early Classic interaction and its effects on local processes conforms in several ways to the "peer polity" model (Renfrew 1986), although the distances involved are greater and the intensity of interaction is somewhat less. Both external *and* internal factors played a role in local, regional, and pan-Mesoamerican processes. In some areas, such as central Escuintla, Teotihuacan appears to have had a momentous impact on political and economic development. In most parts of the Maya world, however, the results of relations with Teotihuacan are seen most strongly in the ideational domain of the elite and much less so in the broader political and economic realms. In some cases, such as Altun Ha, the long-term effects of such interaction were negligible.

We recognize that, as in Charlemagne's court, some peers were more important than others. As one of Mesoamerica's greatest cities, Teotihuacan surely was one of its most influential. But it is important to remember that the interaction lattice was an innovation neither of the Early Classic period nor of Teotihuacan. Agricultural, ceramic, and lithic technologies spread throughout Mesoamerica in a similar lattice at the beginning of the Early Preclassic period. Later in the Early Preclassic and during the Middle Preclassic, material goods, particular iconographic motifs, and aspects of a shared ideology circulated from west Mexico to El Salvador. The roots of Mesoamerican kingship evolved in a variety of locations during the late Middle Preclassic, and the first states and cities also appeared at that time. By the end of the Late Preclassic period, a number of new cities—including Teotihuacan, Tikal, and

Kaminaljuyu—emerged as important nodes in the shifting lattice of interaction. Of course, interregional and long-distance interaction continued after the decline of Teotihuacan and the abandonment of the cities of the central and southern Maya lowlands.

To a great degree our definition of Mesoamerica as a culture area *implies* the long duration and importance of such a network. But it does not negate the significance of regional and local processes as sources of innovation, as some externalists would have it. Both central Mexico and the Maya area were regions of great experimentation, innovation, growth, and complexity during the Early Classic period. Interaction between the Maya and Teotihuacan reflects a mutual fascination no less strong than contemporary readers feel for each society. Neither simple core-periphery scenarios nor the most isolationist internalist models adequately describes the complex and reciprocal nature of Mesoamerican interaction. As we begin to move from the site-specific data and interpretations presented in this volume toward more general and predictive theoretical constructs, we should seek explanatory frameworks that emphasize local innovation yet underscore the complexity of interaction.

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Notes

1. The Carnegie scholars who excavated Kaminaljuyu, however, preferred to emphasize the chronological implications of their finds (Kidder et al. 1946). A critical breakthrough of the project was the establishment, for the first time, of Classic-period ceramic cross-ties between the Maya region and central Mexico (see Chapter 3).

2. A few years before these discoveries in the Maya lowlands, research conducted in the Valley of Oaxaca revealed that both urbanism and the Zapotec state emerged at Monte Albán during the fifth through third centuries B.C. (e.g., Blanton 1978; Flannery and Marcus 1983; Marcus and Flannery 1996). There, too, such developments could not have been stimulated by polities in the Basin of Mexico. Mesoamerica, then, witnessed the rise of the state in several areas long before a period of intense interaction with Teotihuacan.

3. Despite the fact that Kidder et al. (1946) argued for a Teotihuacan presence at Kaminaljuyu, I do not classify them as externalists because they were not concerned with colonization as a process. That is, they did not take a stance on the ultimate effects of Teotihuacan on the evolution of Maya culture. Indeed, they used the fact that Teotihuacan-style artifacts were found at Kaminaljuyu to argue that the Classic Maya and Teotihuacan were contemporaries, and hence, one could not have evolved from the other. These brilliant culture historians were externalists only in that they concluded that a common "root" for Middle American culture was to be found in the Preclassic period.

4. Although Bernal (1966) recognized Teotihuacan "influence" at Tikal and along the Pacific Coast, his discussion of these areas is both brief and ambiguous. In particular, it is not clear if he believed that there was a physical presence of Teotihuacanos at Tikal.

5. At Teotihuacan, the "Tlaloc" imagery on the Feathered Serpent Pyramid is a headdress resting on the tail of the serpent. In the Maya region, the only known example of this exact configuration is at Uxmal.

6. Freidel (1979), in fact, focused his discussion on the rejection of several models for the origin and evolution of lowland Maya civilization that he saw as based on the culture area concept. These models do not explicitly consider the role of Teotihuacan on the development of Maya culture and in fact are more concerned with cultural ecology (Rathje 1971, 1972, 1973; Sanders 1973) or population pressure and competition (Ball 1976; Webster 1977). Because they consider environmental factors limited to the Maya region, it is tempting to classify them as early internalist scenarios. But they do not truly satisfy Stuart's (2000a:465) definition of internalism. Moreover, the more ecologically focused models share with externalist scenarios the view that the Maya were passive: in this case, manipulated by their environment rather than by bellicose or entrepreneurial central Mexicans. It may be best to consider all these models as members of a third school of thought, one that is neither internalist nor externalist, and hence, of little relevance to this volume.

7. Montana also may be a candidate, but ceramic data supporting late Early Classic ties between Kaminaljuyu and that site are slim at best.

8. That "Spear-Thrower Owl's" name glyph is not lowland Maya in appearance may indicate: (a) nothing other than the unique characteristics of the individual; (b) that it is derived from a non-Mayan language; (c) that it is derived from a Mayan language very different from Southern Classic Mayan; or (d) that it is a pictorial "neologism" of a Mayan or non-Mayan name from a place that lacked hieroglyphic writ-

ing but claimed some connection with central Mexico. Given that there are no Early Classic texts in the Guatemalan highlands and that the elites of Kaminaljuyu tried to identify themselves with central Mexico, it seems to me that Kaminaljuyu—or some other powerful highland or Pacific Maya site—is at least as strong a candidate for Ho' Noh Witz as Teotihuacan.

9. That is, Siyaj K'ahk' was the paramount ruler of Tikal, but not its *ajaw*. For this reason, he is not included in the list of numbered *ajawob* of Tikal.

10. I am not wedded to this specific chronology. In particular, I am not sure that Yaax Nu'n Ahiyin lived beyond A.D. 404. Moreover, I am uncertain that the *kalo 'mte'* title is in any sense superior to the *ajaw* title. In truth, we know little about the meaning of the so-called directional world tree titles. The *k'alomte'* title, for example, may indicate only that its holder is a forebear of a living *ajaw* or designated heir. Thus, "Spear-Thrower Owl" may have been *kalo 'mte'* because his son was heir apparent to Chak Tok Ich'aak, and Siyaj K'ahk' may have held the title because of a connection to Yaax Nu'n Ahiyin's mother. In turn, Yaax Nu'n Ahiyin may have claimed the title (in addition to *ajaw*) upon naming Siyaj Chan K'awiil as his own heir.

11. The remains of Siyaj K'ahk' have never been identified, nor is it certain that he was interred at Tikal. One candidate for his burial place is Problematical Deposit 22. This was found in front of Str. 5D-26, on the centerline and at the heart of the North Acropolis (Coe 1990, 2:324-327, Figures 9 and 85; see also Chapter 6). The deposit is in line both with Burial 48 (where Siyaj Chan K'awiil was laid to rest) and Burial 22 (another royal burial of the Manik 3 phase; see note 11). Although the rich deposit apparently did not contain "masses of undecorated pottery of purely Teotihuacan style" (Coggins 1975:182), it did include a fragment from a Tlaloc effigy jar (Culbert 1993:Figure 1241), a locally made cylindrical tripod with "coffee-bean" appliqués (Culbert 1993:Figure 124a), a *candelero*, and fifty-seven green obsidian artifacts (Coe 1990, 2:325). Most important, it also contained Stela 32, showing the central Mexican storm god (or possibly a human imitator) wearing a tasseled headdress and what may be the "profile-bird-with-shield-and-spear" emblem (see Chapter 8). The remains within Problematical Deposit 22 are partially cremated and appear to come from an elderly male (Coe 1990, 2:325). Teeth from this individual should be subject to isotopic analysis to determine his place of origin.

12. Coggins (1975:137-146) argues that Chak Tok Ich'aak's tomb is Burial 22 (Coe 1990, 2:307-311), located in what then was the focal point of the North Acropolis. In contrast, Laporte and Fialko (1990) speculate that Burial 22 was the interment of Siyaj K'ahk', whom they suggest was the immediate successor to Chak Tok Ich'aak.

13. Bove and Medrano note that sociopolitical elaboration in the Pacific Coast began long before interaction with Teotihuacan. Moreover, they see the inhabitants of central Escuintla as active participants in determining their own economic and political destiny. Bove and Medrano's position, then, considers both internal and external factors as relevant to regional development.

14. Only two probable portraits of K'inich Yaax K'uk' Mo' that may date to his lifetime are known: Stela 35 and the Motmot marker. It is important to stress that neither portrays him in the guise of a Teotihuacan warrior. His connections to central Mexico, whether real or invented, appear to have been much more important to the Late Classic rulers of Copán than to the Founder or his son.