

# Thematic and Compositional Variation In Palenque-Region Incensarios

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Ceramic incensarios were an important component of ritual paraphernalia in the Palenque region. Tubular flanged cylinders—stands or supports for receptacles in which the incense was actually burned—were highly embellished. Our primary concern is with these iconographically rich objects, focusing on variations in thematic presentation and in paste composition. The latter, mineralogical and chemical composition, has significance in that it enables us to differentiate among centers of production, leading to a better understanding of where clay resources were procured and, inferentially, where the incensarios were manufactured. Put simply, our attempt is to determine if incensarios of Palenque style were manufactured at a single or at multiple sites, if Palenque itself was a production center, and what can be inferred about trading or distributional patterns of these specialized objects. By extension we are probing at the socioeconomic and ceremonial structure of the ancient Maya.

The specimens being considered belong to a general incensario tradition present among Lowland and Highland Maya, with affiliations elsewhere in Mesoamerica. Aspects of form and decoration help to delimit a regional style. Our data base is also shaped by Rands' survey of the Palenque region, which extends to the west as far as the site of Tortuguero, 60 kilometers from Palenque, and on the east to the Usumacinta, including the site of Pomona (Fig. 1). This comprises an east-west axis for the region in which Palenque Emblem Glyphs are known to occur in a stylistic context typical of the site. Needless to say, the survey area has been unevenly covered, but it may not be irrelevant to our problem that most of the incensario specimens are from a more restricted zone; by the time one reaches Tortuguero or Chinikihá the few known censers fall outside the Palenque style. We are suggesting that the area characterized by Palenque-style incensarios is somewhat smaller than that of the Palenque realm, as Marcus (1976) would define it on the basis of Emblem Glyphs, although this conclusion remains to be demonstrated. In any case, a slight majority of the incensarios being considered have a Palenque provenience. In addition to the sampling of survey materials, a few museum specimens of generalized Palenque style but unknown provenience are included.<sup>1</sup>

A number of incensario forms are present within this body of material and have been included in our technical analysis (Bishop, Rands and Harbottle 1978). However, it is appropriate for a conference focusing on art, iconography and related matters that special attention be directed to the elaborately decorated flanged cylindrical supports (Figs. 2-8). Before turning to the iconography of these objects, the way in which they were used needs to be examined more closely. It is not universally agreed that these open-ended tubular devices served as incense burning paraphernalia, the lack of an interior platform to hold incense and the absence of

<sup>1</sup> We are grateful to the American Museum of Natural History and the Metropolitan Museum of Art for permission to sample specimens for technological analysis. The assistance of Mrs. Elaine Rowland has provided necessary continuity to the research. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant BNS76-03397. Aspects of the investigation were carried out under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Energy.

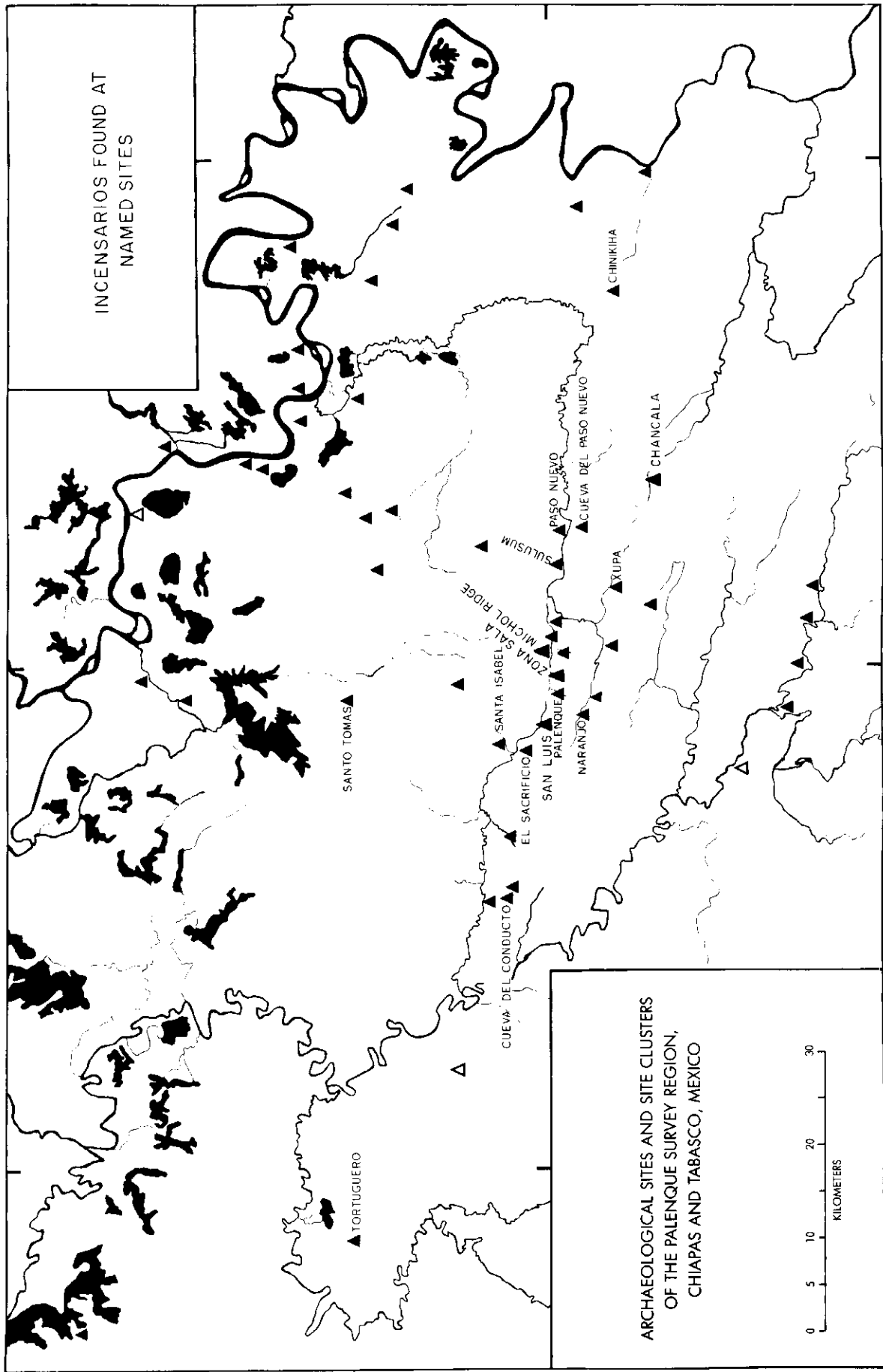


Fig. Sites in the Palenque region from which incensario fragments have been analyzed chemically. Zopo Cave indicated by open triangle.

signs of burning being thought to preclude their use as *braseros* (Ruz Lhuillier 1958b: 140; Acosta 1975: 371-373) or “conventional incense burners” (von Winning 1969: 289). That they did not function as direct receptacles for burning incense is clear. Rather, they are apparently an expression of the wide-ranging class of composite censers which has great time depth in Mesoamerica (Borhegyi 1959; Goldstein 1977), the Palenque area examples providing semi-permanent stands or bases for removable containers. It is in this sense that they are referred to as ‘incensarios.’

Several lines of evidence support this conclusion. Permanent positioning is suggested by the presence of plaster on the back and base of the flanged cylinders, indicating that at least in some cases they were set against a wall and into the floor (Ruz Lhuillier 1958b: 140). More significantly for their identification as composite incensarios, similarities in shape and decoration exist to a well known class of functional Maya censers, flanged pottery objects having an interior chamber that shows fire blackening (Rands and Rands 1959). Goldstein illustrates a conical vessel placed atop the basal part of a composite censer and refers to verbal reports “describing flat and conical dishes found resting on top of flanged cylinders” from the Palenque area (Goldstein 1977: 405, 407, Fig. 3a). From several caves in the region of Palenque, Rands has found fragmentary ceramic remains which consist exclusively of flanged cylinders and deep conical containers, the latter (Fig. 9) corresponding in shape to that illustrated by Goldstein. Consistently, these flaring to outcurved vessels show interior blackening, especially pronounced toward the base. The same pattern of burning occurs on similarly shaped pottery found in association with flanged cylinders at Palenque.

The weight of these repeated associations leaves little doubt that the identification of the flanged tubular objects as incensario stands is correct. This is further indicated by the form of the associated containers. Narrow at the base but expanding rapidly, the latter objects, which lack handles, could not stand unsupported. Their out-curving walls provide a range in diameter so as to fit into the tubular supports, the orifices of which vary in size. Because of this, there would have been no necessity for a particular support and its incense-burning receptacle to be matched in diameter. Indeed, these objects could have been manufactured at different localities and still be used effectively in combination.

Three thematic arrangements (hereafter referred to simply as themes) are pronounced in the incensario stands. At least two of the themes relate to the Jaguar God of the Underworld, GIII of Berlin’s “Palenque Triad” (Berlin 1963). Attributes of this deity, which merge with the night sun god, are discussed elsewhere (Thompson 1950, 1959; Kelley 1965; Coe 1973; Schele 1976). Although the three themes are described, only the first and third are represented in our chemical data base.

Best known of the themes is that characterized by a tier of grotesque heads, modeled in deep relief on the front of the cylinder, the principal head being that of the Underworld Jaguar,



Fig. 2 Flanged incensario support (tier of grotesque heads): theme of Jaguar God of the Underworld. Unknown provenience. The realistic jaguar headdress is atypical of Palenque but specimen projects into ceramic Reference Unit 1 indicating that its manufacture was at or near the site. Height 60 cm. Courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History.



Fig. 3 Incensario support: standing-figure theme. Unknown provenience. Frontal figure with "cruller" attribute of Jaguar God of Number 7 stands on turtle and is flanked by profile figures. Each figure on incensario is armed (shield or spear). Projects into Reference Unit 1 but with low level of group containment, suggesting that in this case the standing-figure incensario was manufactured within the Palenque zone although not at the site. Height 58 cm. Courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History.

the God of Number 7 (Fig. 2). Characteristics of the god include a twisted fillet over the nose, goatee, Tau-shaped incisors, and jaguar ears. It is probable that on the ceramic incensario stands of Palenque the Jaguar God usually appears in the dominant position, second from the bottom of the tier of heads (Ruz Lhuillier 1958b, Pls. 29-33). However, as our sampling of fragmentary materials includes grotesque masks such as those worn in the god's head-dress or below the chin, and because similar masks are present in the second of the incensario themes, associations with this deity are sometimes inferential. Similarly, elaborately decorated side flanges displaying motifs such as crossed bands, serpent wing panels, foliation, knotted bands and pendant ribbons consistently are applied in low relief on incensario stands showing the Jaguar God but are sometimes present in the other incensario themes.

The substitution of a realistic human head for that of the Jaguar God of the Underworld characterizes the second thematic variation. This theme is best known at Palenque from two flanged cylinders cached below the stucco floor underlying Structure XIV (Acosta 1975, Figs. 24, 26; cf. von Winning 1969, Pl. 425). Except for the diagnostic use of either the anthropomorphic jaguar or a realistic human head, the first two themes are close in overall style and composition. Collectively they may be referred to as tier-of-heads variants.

Less well known but more extensively illustrated here, the third theme is characterized by a standing figure, usually in human form (Figs. 3-7). The person may appear on the front of the cylinder, on each of the side flanges, or in both positions. In varying degree, the standard composition has been altered by the displacement of the frontal tier of heads and of the motifs characteristically occupying the side flanges. The frontal figure is often standing on a turtle, and weapons may be shown. Although attributes of the Jaguar God of the Underworld are sometimes present, the standing figure constitutes the most divergent of the three themes.

The flanged incensario supports considered in our sampling are mostly of Late Classic date. A contrast is striking at Palenque between the essential if not complete absence of these objects from the Temple-pyramid of the Inscriptions and their abundance at the Group of the Cross. Expressed in dynastic or funerary terms, the incensarios did not form part of the iconography central to Pacal but were intimately related to that of Chan Bahlum. It is as if, with a new royal administration, a group of ceramic specialists were commissioned to produce a new set of "appropriate" ritual paraphernalia. The short span of time suggested by the Inscriptions and Cross Group death dates 9.12.11.5.18 and 9.13.10.1.5 witnessed a number of important changes,



Fig. 4 Profile view of Fig. 3. Note attachment of broken arm to back of cylinder with another arm projecting forward, indicating that several incensarios were joined. Courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History.



Fig. 5 Incensario support: standing figure theme. Unknown provenience. Compares in iconography and chemical composition to Fig. 3. Height 55 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Michael C. Rockefeller Memorial Collection of Primitive Art.

including the elaboration of the inner sanctuary and related developments in figural sculpture within temples at Palenque. The rise to prominence of the incensario cult, in which the Jaguar God of the Underworld played a central role, is seemingly another expression of this time of intensive ceremonial innovation and redirection. To be sure, the newly found popularity of the incensarios cannot be seen in isolation. The development of effigy cylindrical incensario supports into “deity images” or “idols” with Underworld Jaguar iconography seems to have taken place at approximately the same time at Tikal; Coggins (1975: 278-281) places this after 9.12.0.0.0 and Ferree (1972: 24-25, 101-102) refers to an early facet of “trial” and “ferment.” The flanged cylinders of Tikal are smaller and less embellished than those of Palenque (cf. Ferree 1972: 132-140, 188, Figs. 14-19; Ruz Lhuillier 1958b, Figs. 10-12); the latter appear almost full blown with little known in the way of developmental forms. Iconography of the Jaguar God of the Underworld is pronounced in the shields carried by the nine stucco figures on the walls of the Inscriptions tomb (Ruz Lhuillier 1973, Figs. 172-178); it remained to transfer this iconography into the vocabulary of the flanged incensario supports.

The realistic human-head theme is much less frequently expressed on the incensario stands than that of the Underworld Jaguar and may have been introduced somewhat later. At least partial contemporaneity of the two forms is indicated by their association in Zopo Cave, some 40 kilometers to the west (Blom and Large 1926-27, Figs. 122-124), as well as in more generalized contexts at Palenque. A number of laterally flanged stone carvings with human heads and glyph-



Fig. 6 Fragmentary incensario support: standing figure theme, Xupá. Frontal figure stands on turtle carapace. Projects into Reference Unit 2, attributable to Palenque or its close vicinity.



Fig. 7 Incensario support: standing figure theme. Paso Nuevo Cave. Projects into Reference Unit 1.

ic texts are known from Palenque; on the one hand these resemble the ceramic incensario supports and on the other the top of stelae (Ruz Lhuillier 1958a, Fig. 9; 1958b, Fig. 23a; Rands 1969; Easby and Scott 1970, Fig. 175). Interesting as these are for the investigation of a tradition which cuts across distinct media, our present concern takes us back to the ceramic incensarios. Whether giving prominence to anthropomorphic jaguar or realistic human heads, the tier-of-heads variants seem to have had their principal occurrence in the Murciélagos Ceramic Complex with the jaguar variant, at least, extending into Balunté (Rands 1974).

The standing-figure incensarios appear to be later. A Balunté to post-Balunté date is suggested, individual specimens differing in their approximation to the style of the tier-of-heads incensario supports. We know of only a single example from Palenque. Most of the sampled specimens come from caves at Xupá and other locations to the east of Palenque; verbal reports point to the Bascán Valley to the south as another center for these marginally Classic objects. Now broken, arms are extended forward in the museum specimens, apparently having been attached to the back of another incensario in a decidedly non-Palenque like arrangement (Figs. 3-5). Resemblances exist to full-figure relief carvings, sometimes having Xipe Totec aspects, on stone censers from the cave of Balankanche near Chichén Itzá (Andrews 1970: 33-34, 57, Figs. 22-23, 52): the presence of shields, atlats, and a posture in which one arm is raised and the other akimbo are especially to be noted. The Balankanche materials are assigned a Modified Florescent (Early Postclassic) date by Andrews (p.8) and a Terminal Classic date by Ball (1977:148). On a more generalized level, there is a suggestion of the "idol" like aspects of the full-figure incensarios of Mayapan (Thompson 1957; Tozzer 1941). Yet in basic shape and function, as in various features of style and iconography, standing-figure incensarios of the Palenque region are rooted in the Classic tradition. A transitional phase, a redirection from Classic toward Postclassic modes of portrayal, is

indicated for this group of incensario supports.

The temporal placement and archaeological provenience of the standing-figure incensario supports would normally be taken as evidence that these objects were not made at Palenque. An hypothesis that many of the tier-of-heads incensarios were manufactured at Palenque would appear more plausible, in view of their heavy although by no means exclusive representation at the site, sophisticated handling of iconography, and petrographic similarities. Recognizing the need for wider sampling, Rands (1969b: 51) has suggested that “the distribution of the incensarios from their center of manufacture could reflect socio-religious integration on the level of the priestly hierarchy, an important component of the theocratic state.” Subsequent petrographic analysis showed close similarities among a wider range of incensario supports, including the standing-figure variants. Problems raised at the beginning of the present paper may be rephrased in terms of the incensario supports: how many manufacturing centers can be recognized and how do they relate to iconographic or stylistic data? According to the “Provenience Postulate,” differences between distinct sources of raw materials are sufficient to be recognized in a ceramic specimen’s chemical fingerprint. Thus neutron activation analysis carried out at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, although not fully resolving these problems, provides an added dimension of evidence. From this enhanced perspective, a new generation of questions can be asked.

Discussion of the methodological steps involving neutron activation and statistical processing of the resulting data for 15 chemical elements will be abbreviated. A more complete treatment is given elsewhere (Bishop, Rands and Harbottle 1978). It should be recognized, however, that the questions we were asking could not be answered simply by analyzing the ceramic pastes of the incensarios. It was necessary to have chemical information for the pottery of the Palenque region as a whole, against which the incen-



Fig. 8 Incensario (tier of grotesque heads?): theme of Jaguar God of the Underworld. Unknown provenience. Projects into Reference Unit 1. Courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History.



Fig. 9 Conical receptacle for burning incense; a composite incensario results when fitted into top of tubular support. Paso Nuevo Cave. Split membership probabilities between Reference Units 4 and 6, indicating a generalized Plains orientation.

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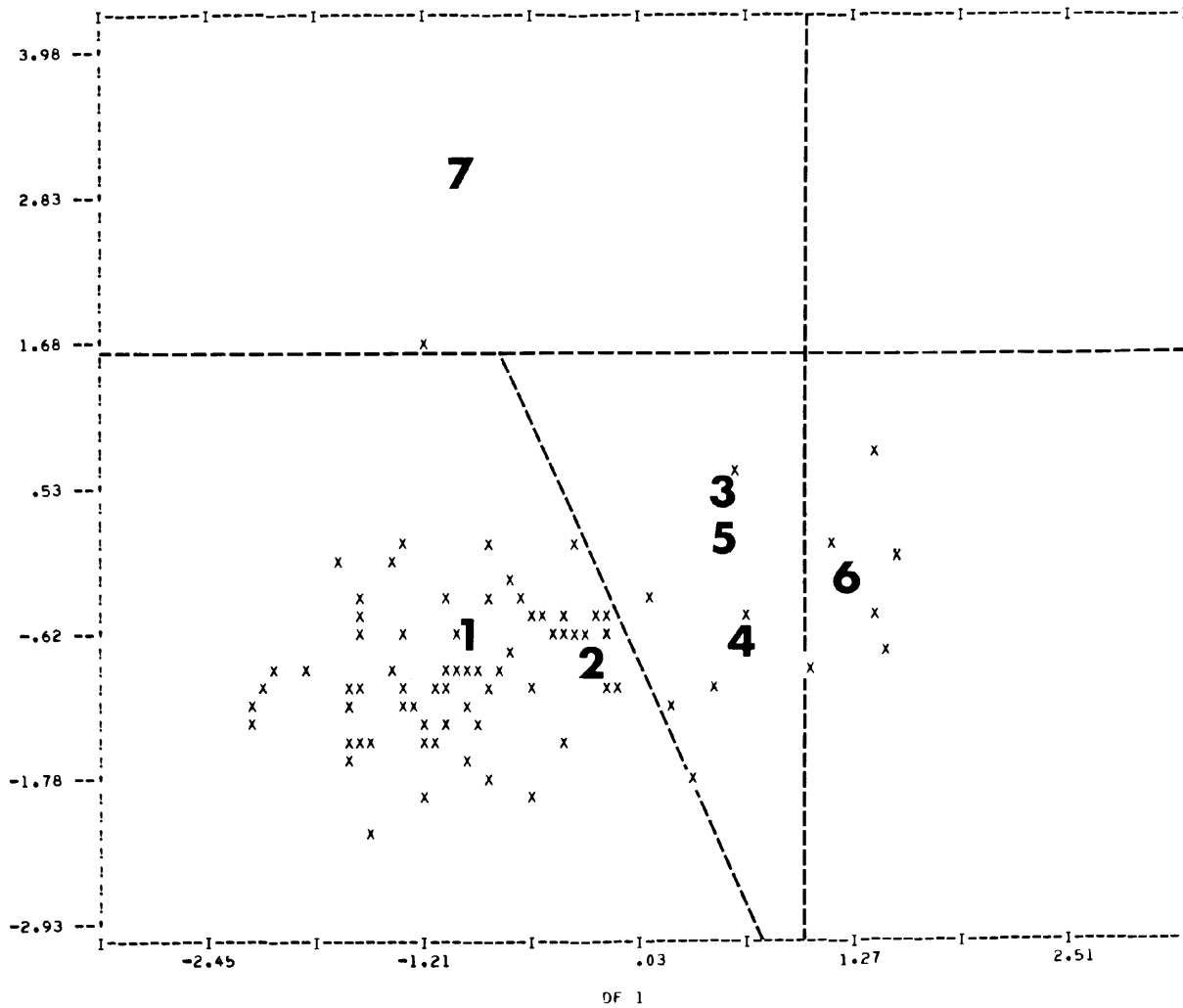


Fig. 10 Seven ceramic reference units recognized in Palenque region on basis of neutron activation analysis. Sherds shown relative to the first two discriminant functions. Individual specimens plotted, their group membership being indicated by numerals 1-7. Broken lines added to emphasize relative isolation of Units 1 and 2 (Palenque), 6 Chacamax Plains) and 7 (Xupá orientation).

sario data could be projected. More precisely, it was necessary to compare the incensarios, which are tempered with quartz sand, with other sand-tempered ceramics from the region. Chemical profiles for statistically-derived groups of pottery from the region and some understanding of the general place of manufacture of each group were required. In particular, we needed to know chemical characteristics and group membership of pottery manufactured at Palenque or in its immediate locality.

A requisite step in accomplishing this was already being taken, i.e. the independent chemical analysis of ceramics other than incensarios. According to the archaeological “criterion of abundance,” a pottery class would tend to have its most frequent occurrence, over an extended period of time, at its general place of manufacture rather than in more distant localities. By use of this principle and by comparing information derived from geological survey and mineralogical studies of the pottery, possible zones of manufacture were inferred.

The two-dimensional diagram in Figure 10 plots the distribution of chemically-analyzed specimens in discriminant space. The specimens are not incensarios but rather the potsherds with which they are compared. The numbers, 1-7, represent seven groups or reference units based on chemical composition but having strong mineralogical correlates (cf. Bishop, Rands and Harbottle 1978, Figs. 4, 5 for petrographic correlations). Broken lines have been added to the



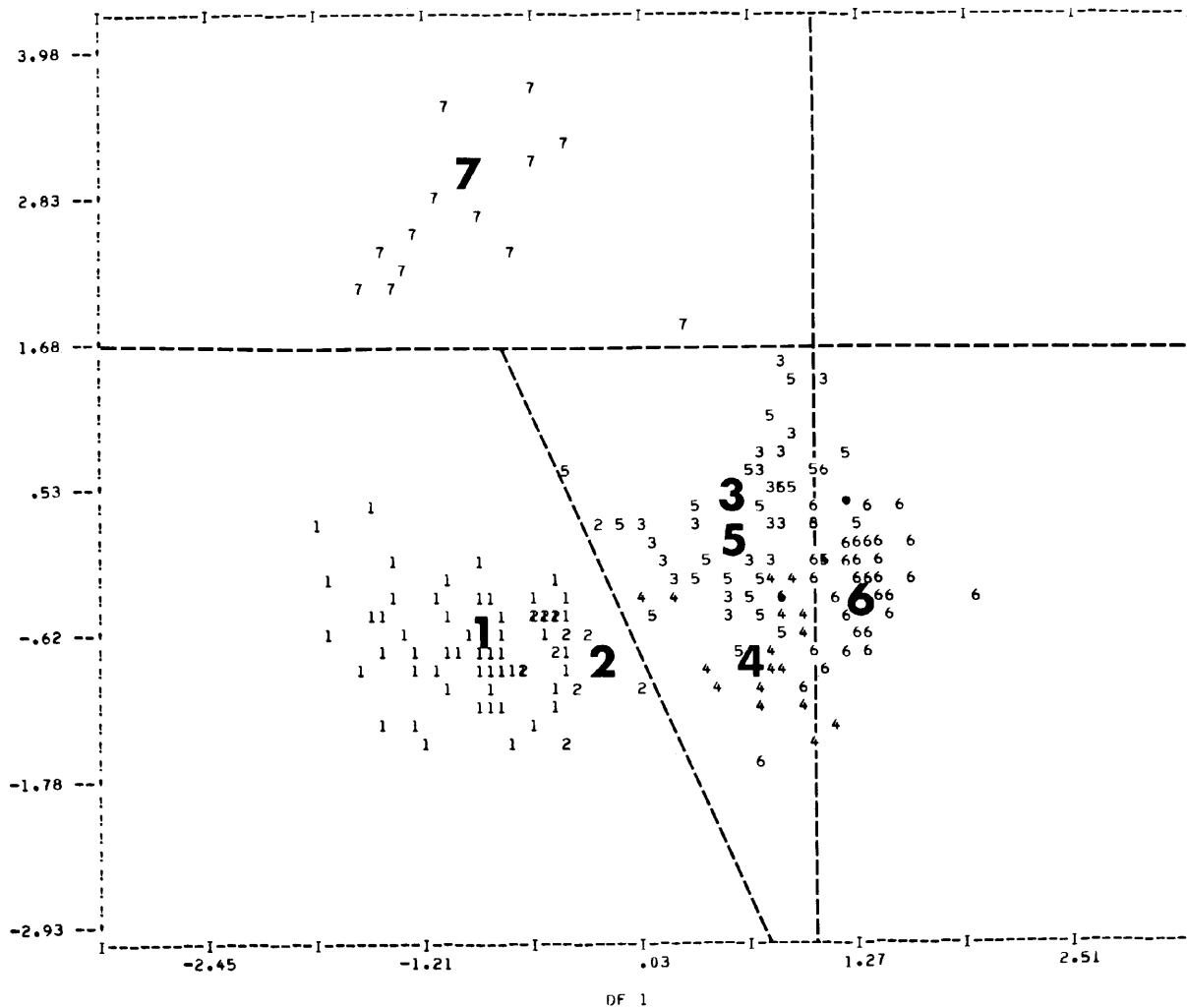


Fig. 11 Projection of incensario chemical profiles onto the first two discriminant axes defined for the seven reference units. A strong orientation toward Palenque Units 1 and 2 is evident (cf. Fig. 10).

computer printouts as an aid in visualizing the distribution of the groups, some of which are poorly separated on the first two discriminant functions. (Although accounting for less of the total variance, the other four functions help separate the groups, which overlap in Figure 10, in the six-dimensional discriminant space.)

As indicated in Figure 10, ceramics having a manufacturing locus in the Sierras tend to load low on the X-axis; major production centers for this red-brown pottery were apparently located at or near the sites of Palenque (Reference Units 1 and 2) and Xupá (Unit 7). In contrast, sherds appearing high on the X-axis relate to the Chiapas Plains and have lighter buff to brown pastes. Units 3, 4 and 5 apparently have a Plains orientation, mainly to the north and west of Palenque, and the evidence is strong for a production center of Unit 6 in the Chacamax Plains, farther to the east. Not represented in this diagram, additional sand tempered pottery fails to achieve membership in any of the reference groups and, as in the case of Units 3-7, must be considered to have been manufactured at localities other than Palenque. Central to our conclusions is the correct identification of that pottery indigenous to the site of Palenque or its close vicinity.

A subsequent step was to project the 79 chemically-analyzed incensarios against the reference-unit ceramics. Results of this projection on the first two discriminant functions are seen in Figure 11; coordinates are held constant so the mapping is in a discriminant space identical to that seen in the preceding diagram (Fig. 10). This graphically illustrates the concentration of the incensarios in only two of the seven reference groups, approximately 85 percent projecting into

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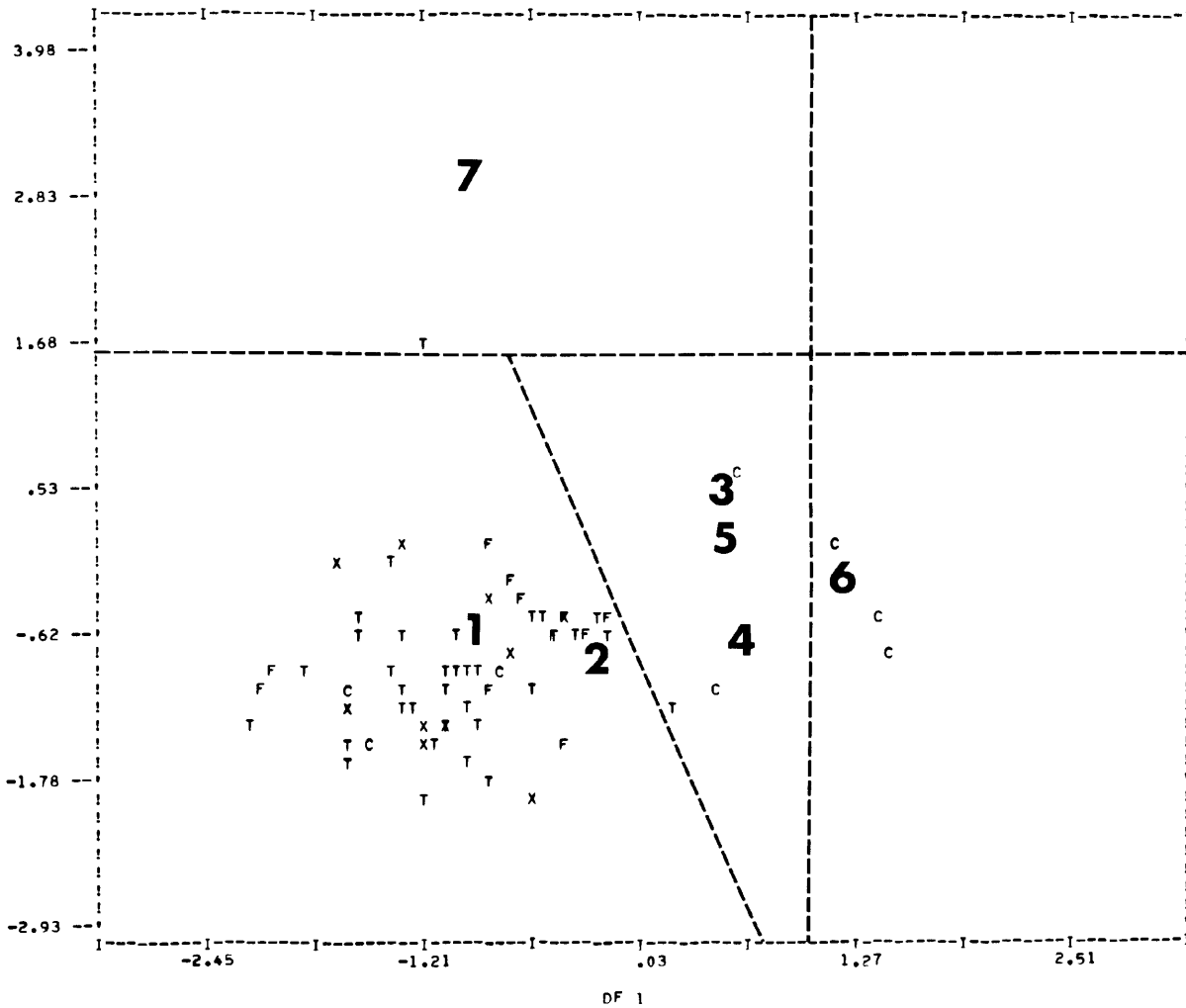


Fig. 12 Incensarios and other pottery of Xupá provenience shown relative to first two discriminant axes defined for the seven reference units. S, cylindrical supports; P, other incensario forms; X, non-incensario pottery. Intrusive nature of incensario supports, which project only to Palenque Reference Units 1 and 2, contrasts with Unit 7 orientation of most of the analyzed non-censer pottery.

Units 1 and 2, which represent slightly divergent chemical patterns for pottery made at or near Palenque. Conditional probabilities of projected membership were further evaluated, with resulting slight modifications in acceptable group membership (Bishop, Rands and Harbottle, 1978). Granted adequate sampling, it follows that although incensarios were manufactured elsewhere, the immediate Palenque zone was an especially important locus of their production. Incensarios of Palenque manufacture were distributed into and beyond the zones in which the various reference-unit ceramics seem to have been made. (Illustrating this tendency, Figure 12 indicates the intrusive nature of incensarios of Palenque origin to Xupá, 15 kilometers to the southeast.)

It is necessary to distinguish between different form classes comprising the chemically-analyzed incensarios, and this is done in Figure 13, each specimen occupying the same position as in the diagram for the undifferentiated censors (Fig. 11). Although most of the form classes have a strongly patterned projection into Units 1 and 2, this holds for only three of the eight conical receptacles. Our primary concern is with the flanged cylindrical supports, and a Palenque focus is especially clear for these artistically elaborated objects. Of the 46 supports, 93 percent project into the Palenque reference Units 1 and 2. All but one of the 11 standing-figure incensarios project into the Palenque units, although sometimes at a lower level of probability than is characteristic of the tier-of-heads supports. This holds true especially for the museum

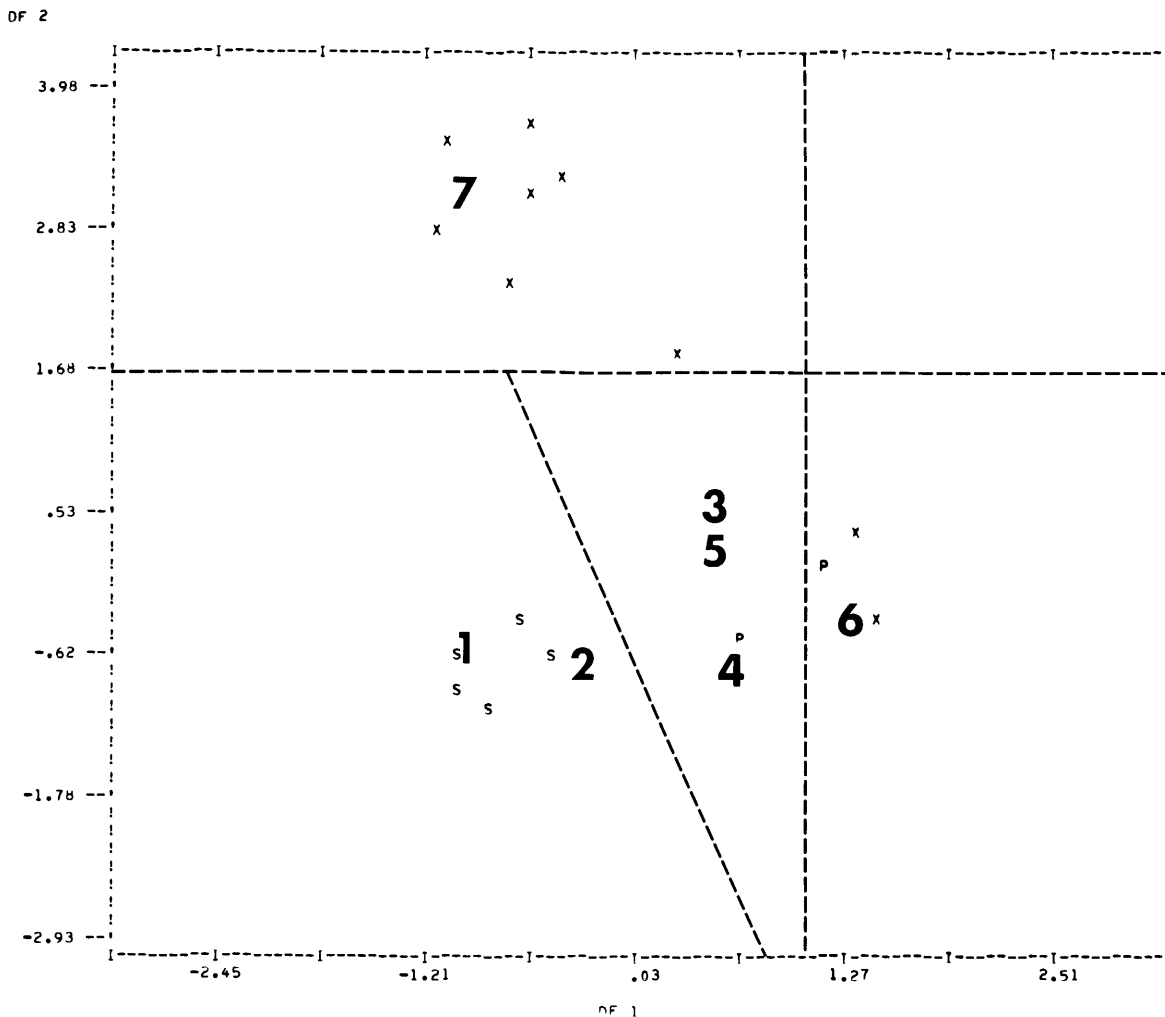


Fig. 13 Projection of incensarios, according to form class or theme, onto first two discriminant axes defined for the seven reference until. F, standing-figure supports; T, other incensario supports, probably mostly tier-of-heads; C, conical receptacles; X, miscellaneous incensario form classes. (Although included in Fig. 11, one form class, pedestal incensarios, is not shown here.) Note peripheral distribution, low on X-axis, of incensarios (F) shown in Figs. 3, 5; these have non-acceptable projection to Unit 1 but were probably manufactured in Sierras not far from Palenque.

pieces of unknown provenience (Figs. 3-5). The lowered probabilities may indicate a slightly different source of some of the clay, either in geographic location or vertically within a given clay bed.<sup>2</sup> In any case we are left with an acceptable projection of 73 percent of the standing-figure incensarios into Units 1 and 2, compared to 89 percent of the tier-of-heads variants. Even at the 73 percent projection, the standing-figure incensarios present an apparent anomaly to the non-Palenque origin which would have been inferred because of unusual features in their style, iconography, and distribution in time and space.

Taking stock is called for when independent lines of evidence point toward different conclusions. A possible flaw lies in the use of time-space systematics at the general period of the Classic Maya collapse. We see no evidence that the iconography of the standing figure, with its associated weapons and turtles, evolved locally at Palenque. Yet if these figural concepts were introduced as the result of non-Classic or marginally-Classic intrusion in the Palenque region, or

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps similarities of lithic source material in widely separated exposures of the same geological formation led to weathered clay products that were sufficiently alike to explain the observed minor variations, although subsequently, after having passed through independent transportation-and-depositional cycles with resulting mixtures of different sediments, the geographically separated materials should be subject to effective chemical and statistical discrimination.

if they developed at local satellite sites, it is not clear why Palenque would have served as a major production center for incensarios carrying this theme. However, we doubt that the problem lies primarily with poor sampling or faulty periodization, although until the relevant data base is published these possibilities must be borne in mind.

On the other hand, a source of error may lie in the interpretations derived from neutron activation analysis and data reduction. Methodologies are sophisticated but faulty working assumptions and inappropriate application of statistical techniques would result in misleading conclusions. We are impressed, however, with the strength of the chemical and petrographic configurations and refer again to the much more complete explication of our procedures that is presented elsewhere (Bishop, Rands and Harbottle 1978).

We look, then, for a way of reconciling the inferences derived from archaeological and chemical data. The existence of social constraints on the manufacture and distribution of incensarios is an apparent requisite, although it is difficult to determine just how the constraints would have operated. If sufficiently strong in Classic times, when Palenque played a dominant role in regional ceremonialism, the constraints may have continued to function when non-Classic alternatives such as the standing-figure iconography began to appear in the weakening but still coherent Classic system.

As suggested previously, the incensario stands were apparently produced by specialists. The demands for a new iconographic expression deemed appropriate to Chan-Bahlum may have been instrumental in the creation and consolidation of this group of artisans at Palenque. Moreover, exceptional technological control is indicated, e.g. welding layers of clay to form massive walls and effigies in high relief so that the objects would not have collapsed in the drying or firing processes. After a due apprenticeship, such techniques could have been readily mastered, along with the appropriate iconography. Aside from the evidence of paste composition there is no obvious, compelling reason why these artisans should have been restricted to Palenque rather than also being resident in and meeting the local needs of a number of secondary centers. A cargo-like system (Vogt 1969; Coe 1965), which regularly brought in people from surrounding communities to spend a period of time at Palenque before returning to their homes, would seem especially prone to serve as a leveling influence; if craftsmen as well as office holders participated in such a system, the tendency for specialized skills to be disseminated to outlying localities would be intensified.

To best accommodate the chemical data we turn in another direction, to a different set of hypothetical social constraints and sanctions. The incensario stands may have served critical idol-like or altar-like functions (Borhegyi 1959, p. 55), as is suggested by their repeated occurrence at outlying temple-pyramids and caves. It may have been advantageous to the maintenance of centralized regional authority for their production to have been the prerogative of craftsmen based permanently at Palenque. This would be in contrast to the receptacles, which were fashioned from a much wider range of clays and could have been brought by individual priests or worshippers for incense-burning rituals. Making removable parts of the composite incensario, potters from outlying sites could not only contribute to goods for local ritual but their products may have entered the larger ceremonial system through pilgrimage to Palenque, 'tribute,' or trade. In this connection we cite the presence of conical censers of unmistakable Plains manufacture, in depositional association with incensario supports immediately adjacent to the Temples of the Cross and Foliated Cross. We suggest that ritual items moved both into and away from Palenque, linking the center with satellite communities in a more cohesive regional unit, but that in this distributional system sanctions for the production of culturally essential items were often vested in specialists at Palenque.

Clearly, we do not know how closely this approximates the realities of Late Classic society in the Palenque region. We are groping for a plausible reconstruction of ceremonial exchange which articulates with the chemical and petrographic findings. Perhaps makers of

incensario paraphernalia at Palenque were already catering to the wants of special markets. Separate associations of specialist potters who lived and worked at Palenque may have had lineage or other affiliations to outlying sites and so have supplied the needs of their particular clientele, a system in which nuances of iconography could serve to reinforce group identity on both centralized and local levels.<sup>3</sup> Our trial formulations probe at a central construct, that the sanctioned manufacture of incensario supports at Palenque was sufficiently entrenched to have been maintained for a time in the face of increasing sociocultural diversity within the region. We feel that a tradition which had adaptive value must have been present, providing the basis for the otherwise anomalous Palenque-oriented production of so many of the standing-figure incensarios.

<sup>3</sup> Compare and contrast Vogt (1969:362-365) on the ritual exchange of saints among Tzotzil communities as a practice promoting sociocultural integration—partial ethnographic analogy which cannot adequately be discussed without adding new dimensions to the present paper. Burning incense at caves and other cross shrines, as part of ceremonial circuits that symbolically validate the landholding rights and solidarity of social units on a series of different structural levels, offers additional Highland Maya parallels to the general thesis advanced here (Vogt 1969; LaFarge 1947:109-119).

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