

## THE CLASSIC STAGE IN MESOAMERICA

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### INTRODUCTION: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are two general kinds of uses to which the concept of developmental stages can be put. The first might be called descriptive and the second analytical. A statement from a recent paper by Willey and Phillips indicates this distinction in a clear way:

As a final evaluation of our historical-developmental scheme for New World prehistory, we sum up by saying that it has serious classificatory defects. Its adherence to the broad outlines of historical reality gives it a certain value as a recapitulation of American archaeology, but the scheme does not provide a short and simple answer to New World culture history and process. (Willey and Phillips, 1955:794).

It is clear from this statement that Willey and Phillips distinguished between the two uses though they apparently intended their formulation to serve both of them. Rowe also makes this distinction in his review of "Andean Culture History". While he recognizes the possible utility of the book as an introductory manual and as a source of descriptive information, he has little good to say about its usefulness as a conceptual framework for future work in the Andes (Rowe, 1950). In the face of the mass of unconnected facts which New World archaeologists have accumulated, any kind of effective narrative or ordering device is welcome. There seems to be some agreement, even among the most critical of American archaeologists, that the formulation of Bennett and Bird and the more recent one by Willey and Phillips were at least partially successful in this respect. It is not the purpose of this paper to review the descriptive aspects of the work of Willey and Phillips, but full attention will be directed toward what may be called the analytical uses of their concept of a Classic Stage in Mesoamerica.

There are a few comments which should be made on the nature of developmental stage concepts as descriptive devices before considering their nature as analytical devices. When they are used descriptively, there is, of course, the constant danger that they will become confused with chronological periods. This danger has been pointed out again and again in discussions of American archaeology but there is some doubt as to whether these warnings have been effective. The first attempts at developmental stages in various areas of the New World have often had a striking resemblance to the chronological periods of the best known sub-area of the larger region to which the developmental stages are applied. The case may be that for purely descriptive purposes the distinction is of lesser importance. At any rate, when developmental stages are applied across such a broad area as that covered by Willey and Phillips, this danger of confusion seems to be greatly reduced.

The recent use of stage concepts as an analytical device had been largely if not entirely related to the formulations set forth by Julian Steward under the name of multilineal evolution. It is not the purpose of this paper to review all of his statements on the subject. His view presented in "Anthropology Today" is certainly clear and explicit (Steward, 1953). The objective of studies along the lines suggested by Steward is clearly the determination and analysis of cross-cultural, developmental parallels (Steward, 1953:319-320). To this end he suggests the comparison of cultures of the same type in various parts of the world (Steward, 1953:323). At first his insistence on using the word "typology" to designate something very similar to what others have called a system of developmental stages seems like mere quibbling. A more careful consideration indicates that it is not. These "types" are to contain cultures which show certain definitely specifiable developmental analogies. Thus, if one's typology is adequate, one can sort cultures regardless of whether their relation to absolute time is known. This condition is the same one which must be made concerning pottery typologies. If a sherd typology is any good, it should be possible to sort the sherds without inquiring which level they came from. Steward may be right in saying that the name "stage" has too many connotations of equation in time and of irreversibility to be useful for his purposes. In spite of these dangers the term "stage" will be used in the remainder of this paper, but with the cautions demanded by Steward always kept in mind.

If the utility of the concept of a Classic Stage is to be evaluated in terms of the analysis of cultural regularities, then it must be given some specific and completely unequivocal definition, which will allow one to decide immediately whether or not any particular culture is Classic on the basis of its own internal configurations alone. Willey and Phillips do not supply such a concise definition but they do give a sufficient number of suggestions so that one may be abstracted from their material. Such a trial definition of the Classic Stage might be stated as follows: "Within a rapidly expanding Neolithic economy, which is accumulating large surpluses, there will be a period lacking true cities, true states, and extensive militarism, in which conditions will be particularly favorable to the development of elaborate, coherent, and all-embracing art styles."

In theory, the method for checking the value of such a stage concept is relatively simple. One has only to plot the distribution in time and space of the climactic artistic developments, and compare this distribution with that of the positive or negative features of community organization which are also regarded as diagnostic of the Classic Stage. In practice such a check cannot yet be made. Since archaeologists have started thinking along these lines there has been an increasing effort made to accumulate information to support inferences concerning ancient patterns of community organization, mainly in the form of settlement pattern studies. Wherever these studies have been attempted, the results have been most rewarding. They give promise of ultimately solving many other problems besides the ones being considered here (Willey, Bullard and Glass, 1955; Shook and Proskouriakoff, 1956). At present

there are not enough good studies of the development of settlement patterns through time to enable us to plot significant distributions. Therefore, this direct method of evaluating the idea of a Classic Stage can not be applied as yet.

The definition of the Classic given above directly relates artistic development to certain features of socio-economic development. In a limited way such a relationship is obvious in that a certain minimum of economic surplus is necessary for any kind of elaborate artistic development requiring an extensive expenditure of time. A number of studies have suggested that style behaves according to rules of its own, provided that a certain level of economic surplus and cultural continuity are maintained. Meyer Schapiro has recently provided an excellent listing of such patterns of regularity possibly observable within art styles, viewed as independent phenomena (Schapiro, 1953). A favorite theory is that an art style once established must go through a fixed series of stages and that climactic artistic developments are possible only in certain stages of this irreversible cycle. Such notions are related to the idea of patterns, growth, saturation, and exhaustion proposed by Kroeber (Kroeber, 1944). Now it is clear that if art develops according to its own rules, independent of other elements of culture, then the one to one relationship between artistic development and patterns of community organization suggested by the definition of a Classic Stage cannot be true. On the other hand, if the definition of a Classic Stage does offer a useful model of cultural development then regularities do not occur in art styles entirely independent of social conditions. Since there is considerable evidence suggesting that both kinds of regularities occur, it would seem that more elaborate conceptualizations, taking into account both kinds of regularities will be needed if studies of multilineal evolution are to be very rewarding.

If the regularities suggested in the definition of a Classic Stage cannot be directly checked on the basis of present information, neither can those which have been suggested by the art historians. Proskouriakoff's study of Maya sculpture might furnish one section of such a check, but until there are similar studies on all phases and styles of Mesoamerican art, no general analysis can be made (Proskouriakoff, 1950).

Since both these paths of research are closed, an attempt will be made to plot the distribution of Classic Stage cultures on the basis of more restricted criteria. These criteria will be the presence of a well-developed and widely-applied art style and the construction of major ceremonial centers. The second criterion is introduced chiefly to keep the discussion within Mesoamerica. Because of the circumstances under which this paper has been written, no culture subsequent to the spread of cultural influences from the city of Tula, or subsequent to the spread of plumbate pottery and metal, will be given detailed consideration. This part of the working definition is purely arbitrary. Once this distribution of Classic Stage cultures in time and space has

been delimited, it will be examined for any internal peculiarities which might throw some light on the problems discussed above. Unfortunately, the first step in such an analysis must be the aligning of the regional sequences.

#### ALIGNING THE SEQUENCES

Since much of the reasoning in this paper is dependent on the particular chronological arrangement which I have followed, and since this arrangement is not accepted by all workers in the field, it is necessary to present the evidence which causes me to regard this formulation as a reasonable one. It cannot be made too clear that this alignment is not done on the basis of placing similar developmental stages side by side. It is my firm belief that such arrangements can only becloud the issue. This chronological scheme is the result of using the Maya long count dates as a firm anchor at one end and attaching the other Mesoamerican sequences to the Maya sequence by means of trade goods and pottery similarities. The complete avoidance in this paper of native historical traditions (and the speculations which have been based on them) stems from the conviction that, in an area where trade pottery is common, the preliminary sequential alignment can best be accomplished by the tried and true methods of dirt archaeology. In the past the use of such traditions has not exercised an altogether wholesome effect on archaeological thinking (Nicholson, 1955: 600).

The Spinden correlation of the Maya calendar has been accepted because of its better fit with all available C<sub>14</sub> dates. The chart prepared by Mr. Michael Coe (see Coe's paper in this issue, fig. 1) has been used as the lower limit of the chart presented here (fig. 1), and I see no particular reasons to make any changes in his work. Though the Spinden correlation seems the most likely, both on the basis of C<sub>14</sub> and on the basis of the date of the arrival of Mexican-type copper bells in southern Arizona, the question is by no means settled. The chart here presented is not dependent on any particular correlation or on absolute time other than that involved in the Maya long count calendar. Any of the other suggested correlations may be substituted merely by changing the BC and AD dates in the left hand column.

Within the period of about a thousand years with which we will be concerned, there appear to have been two major periods of extensive trade involving almost the whole of Mesoamerica. Separating these two periods when extensive external connections seem to have been the norm, there was a period of from three to four hundred years when long-distance trade appears to have been the exception rather than the rule. Though the two periods of long-distance trade must have had considerable depth in time, the supposed midpoints of these periods as they occur in the various regional sequences have been given the value of horizons and the regional sequences have been lined up accordingly. This procedure seems justified since we are in many cases dealing with materials which were manufactured at a single center or in a localized region rather than with patterns of

decoration which could have been utilized in one area long after they had ceased to be fashionable in another.

These two horizon lines structure the chronological ordering used in this paper. One of them cuts those segments of regional sequences which we choose to regard as representing Classic Stage developments, either in the middle of their time span or earlier. The later horizon line marks the time beyond which all Mesoamerican developments, no matter what their nature, are usually regarded as Post-Classic. The earlier of the two horizon lines is based on the spread of traits most closely associated with the great center of Teotihuacan. These traits can be placed within the Teotihuacan sequence with some precision. In the older terminology of Vaillant they were regarded as the characteristics of the periods designated as II-III. In the more recent and more exact terminology of Armillas they first appear in the period designated as Xolalpan and extend to the end of the period known as Tlamimilolpa. There is some question as to whether these two periods are sufficiently distinct to deserve two names or whether they should be lumped and called Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa or perhaps just Teotihuacan III (Armillas, 1950:68-69). For brevity the designation X-T Horizon will be used for the remainder of this paper. The traits involved include: tripod cylindrical vessels with slab feet and shield-shaped lids; a particular kind of painting on dry stucco applied after firing; Floreros; Candeleros; and Thin Orange ware. This last seems to fulfil all the requirements of a good trade ware. Its manufacture appears to have been strictly localized, though the area cannot as yet be specified (Linné, 1942:176-177; Kidder, Jennings and Shook, 1946). Although the people of Teotihuacan were evidently not its manufacturers, they were apparently largely responsible for its distribution since it is usually closely associated with the other traits. The second horizon is associated with the spread of Tohil plumbate, Fine Orange ware, and with the first appearance of metals in Mesoamerica. (The single occurrence of metal at Cuiculco and the other possibility mentioned by Sorenson are exceptions (Sorenson, 1954). Surprisingly there seems to be more difficulty in using the second horizon than the first.

We will now proceed to an examination of the relevant local sequences and attempt to align them on the basis of two horizons.

The Peten and adjoining areas of Classic Maya culture: The standard dating for Tzakol, Early Classic Maya, in terms of the Maya calendar is 8.12.0.0.0 - 9.8.0.0.0 and that for Tepeu 9.8.0.0.0 - 10.3.0.0.0 (Smith, 1950:86-87). The division between the two phases of Classic Maya culture is not arbitrary. There was a period of artistic inactivity lasting from 9.5.0.0.0 - 9.8.0.0.0 which seems to separate the two major phases of Mayan art convincingly (Proskouriakoff, 1950:4). This span of slightly over 600 years can be related to the two crucial horizons in a fairly exact way. In general, the first third of Tzakol would seem to be free of influences referable to the X-T Horizon. Kidder and Thompson have discussed this point extensively, and there is no need to repeat what they have said (Kidder, Jennings and Shook, 1946; Thompson, 1939:94). X-T Horizon influences come in during the second third of Tzakol and last to

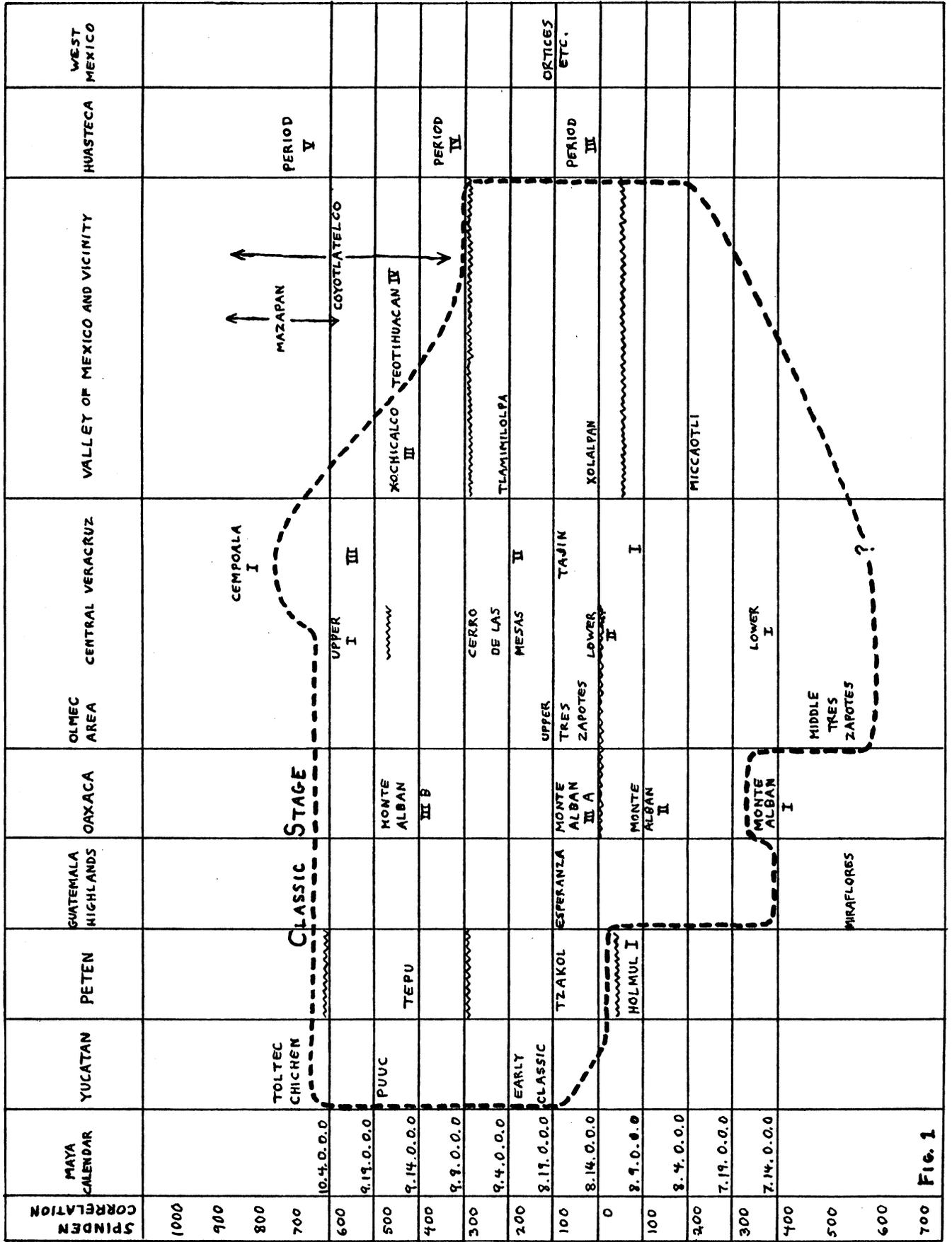


Fig. 1

the end of Tzakol, or perhaps only to the beginning of the period of cultural disturbance already mentioned. In the Holmul sequence at least one pot from Holmul II times suggests that X-T influences may have already been felt in the area (Merwin and Vaillant, 1932: plate 20a). By Holmul III times such influences are very strong, though no pots from Holmul are definitely known to be trade items. The traits continue through Holmul IV but are absent in Holmul V (Tepeu). Perhaps, 8.17.0.0.0 - 9.8.0.0.0 or 9.5.0.0.0 would be the best estimate for the duration of X-T traits in the Peten. Elements of the second horizon are conspicuous by their rarity in the Peten. It is safe to regard this as an indication that cultural activity had largely ceased at the major centers of the Peten before the Plumbate Horizon.

Yucatan: The Mayan calendar can be used to date most of the significant occurrences in this region. The Plumbate Horizon reaches Yucatan in full force at Chichen Itza, either in association with the arrival of strong Mexican influences at that site or somewhat later. The Mexican entrada has been given a date of roughly 10.4.0.0.0 to 10.5.0.0.0 on the basis of several lines of converging evidence (Proskouriakoff, 1950:170).

The Guatemala Highlands: The series of traits which have been designated as X-T are much more in evidence in the Guatemala Highlands than in the Peten. The Esperanza materials from the site of Kaminaljuyu are the most famous examples (Kidder, Jennings and Shook, 1946), but the material called Lato from the Motagua Valley (Smith and Kidder, 1943:172), the Balam phase at Zacualpa (Wauchope, 1948), and the Atzam phase at Zaculeu (Woodbury and Trik, 1953) all show the same influences as clearly though not as spectacularly. The Mayan calendar cannot be directly applied to Highland Guatemala in most cases, but the use of pottery cross-ties substantiates the conclusions already reached for the Peten. With one exception the Highland occurrences of X-T traits are associated with ceramics having features which in the Peten are regarded as diagnostic of Tzakol. The one exception is in Tomb I at Zaculeu. Here a typical Tepeu cylindrical vessel was found associated with a number of the features characteristic of Teotihuacan III (Woodbury and Trik, 1953:87). This is contrary to all the other ceramic associations at Zaculeu and to the rest of the evidence from the Guatemala Highlands. Perhaps the most logical explanation is that offered in a discussion of the use of vaulted tombs with entrance passages and stairway in the Motagua Valley. The available evidence suggests that some tombs of this type were used repeatedly over a considerable span of time (Smith and Kidder, 1943:172). Unlike the sites of the Peten, many of the sites of the Guatemala Highlands show continuous occupation from Late Classic (Tepeu related) phases to Post Classic phases. This appears most clearly at Zaculeu and Zacualpa, but the Motagua Valley and Nebaj have produced less extensive evidence of similar transitions (Woodbury and Trik, 1953; Smith and Kidder, 1951; Wauchope, 1948; Smith and Kidder, 1943). This evidence makes it appear that there was no particularly long gap between the end of Late Classic (Tepeu related) cultures and the appearance of Tohil Plumbate and metal.

Oaxaca: The Monte Alban sequence can easily be tied to the spread of traits. The beginning of the transition from Monte Alban II to Monte

Alban IIIa is defined as the point at which Teotihuacan influences start appearing at the site of Monte Alban (Bernal, 1949:3-4). The pottery of Monte Alban II has unmistakable resemblances to that of Holmul I. (Merwin and Vaillant, 1932, Plates 18-19; Caso, 1935, Plates 45-46, 52; Caso, 1938, fig. 39, 40, 142). Since Holmul I is thought to fit the boundary between Tzakol and Chicanel rather than falling within Tzakol, it might be suggested that X-T traits appear somewhat earlier at Monte Alban than in the several areas of Guatemala. This is not an unreasonable assumption if as we believe, these traits were moving from west to east. It is particularly difficult to obtain usable information concerning the nature and dating of the transition from Classic to Post-Classic in Oaxaca.

The "Olmec" area: There is at present more dispute concerning the chronological position of Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta than on any other similar problem in Mesoamerica. The wide range of opinion seems to be bounded on the one hand by MacNeish's equation of Upper Tres Zapotes with Teotihuacan I (MacNeish 1954:621,623), and on the other by Armillas' position, which allows Middle Tres Zapotes to overlap largely with Tzakol but slightly with Tepeu (Armillas, 1955, personal communication). MacNeish's position seems scarcely tenable. Drucker's discussion of the meaning of the transition from Middle Tres Zapotes to Upper Tres Zapotes is lucid and worth quoting in full:

When we turn to the list of new Upper phase traits we are on more fruitful ground for drawing comparisons. A considerable number of these elements occur at Teotihuacan, particularly in the later horizons. The list of these "Teotihuacan" features in Upper Tres Zapotes includes: Mold-made figurines, figurines with jointed arms, vertigal modeled lugs, "candeleros", mold-made spindle whorls, hollow slab legs with T-shaped openings, scutate pot lids with modeled ornaments (one only from Tres Zapotes). ....The sudden appearance of this host of traits at Tres Zapotes points beyond all question to a new source of cultural stimulus, to importations of patterns and techniques. That these elements must have diffused from Teotihuacan to Tres Zapotes and not the other way around, is demonstrated by the complete lack of antecedents for them in the earlier Tres Zapotes horizons. It should be noted, too, that while certain of these traits are widely distributed, their occurrence in an integrated corpus at Teotihuacan points to that culture as their source (Drucker, 1943a:121).

MacNeish's correlation would mean that these traits were occurring at Tres Zapotes fully two periods earlier than they appear at what is obviously their source. If Drucker's statement completely refutes the unreasonably early placement of Middle and Upper Tres Zapotes, it is, on the other hand, difficult to reconcile with the placement suggested by Drucker himself, which would begin Middle Tres Zapotes in Holmul times and extend it for the duration of Tzakol (Drucker, 1943a:121), and even more difficult to reconcile with the slightly later dating suggested by Armillas. The chief implication of the Drucker-Armillas placement of Middle Tres Zapotes is that the X-T horizon traits are received in

Southern Vera Cruz fully two or three hundred years later than they appear in the Guatemalan Highlands and the Peten. Their appearance in this area in fact would very closely coincide with their disappearance in most other parts of Mesoamerica, provided we accept the late placement of Middle Tres Zapotes. The explanation given for this particular gap in the original spread of X-T traits, which extended from the Panuco River on the north to the Honduras border on the south and east, is that Vera Cruz and Tabasco were marginal at this particular time. Yet this "marginal culture", Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta, nearly succeeded in cornering the supply of the finest jade carvings ever produced in Mesoamerica. Considering the esteem with which jade was regarded in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica this would seem to have been a peculiar kind of marginality.

Drucker's argument that the traits which appear in Upper Tres Zapotes are of Teotihuacan IV rather than Teotihuacan III derivation is worthy of serious consideration. We will return to the whole problem of Teotihuacan IV when we discuss the sequences of the Central Plateau. For the present we may note that the specific traits which Drucker designates as late in the Teotihuacan sequence (Drucker, 1943a:149) occur at Xolalpan, which Armillas regards as the type site for the early part of the Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa period, as well as at Tlamimilolpa, which is regarded as typical of the latter part of that period (Linne, 1934:123, fig. 339, c-2).

I find it hard to believe that southern Veracruz and Tabasco could have lagged two or three hundred years behind the rest of Mesoamerica in accepting these traits which were so forcefully diffused throughout the general area. In fact, it would seem more reasonable for them to appear earlier in Southern Veracruz than in the Peten because of the geographical proximity of the former to Teotihuacan. It is chiefly in the spirit of compromise that I have assigned the same 8.17.0.0.0 date to the appearance of these traits at Tres Zapotes that was assigned to their appearance in the Peten. The earlier limits of Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta are still undefined. There is good reason to believe that it was a long period (Drucker, 1952:150). The placement of the spectacular art style within the period is probably still an unanswerable question. Save for the intrusive Soncautla complex, there is nothing at Tres Zapotes which must be regarded as Postclassic. If the placement made in this paper is relatively close to the correct one, Upper Tres Zapotes might equate with the latter two thirds of Tzakol and to part of Tepeu as well. It is impossible to determine from Drucker's writings the extension of the X-T traits within Upper Tres Zapotes.

Central Veracruz: The site of Cerro de las Mesas makes an excellent bridge from the "Olmec" region on the one hand to the region dominated by the culture known as Tajin or Classic Veracruz on the other. Drucker's equation of Cerro de las Mesas Lower I with Middle Tres Zapotes seems to be justified (Drucker, 1943b:82). The comments made above concerning the appearance of the X-T traits at Tres Zapotes are applicable to the similar manifestations in Lower II of Cerro de las Mesas (Drucker, 1943b:82-83).

The large mass of material assignable to Lower II and the fact that much of the mound-building activity seems to have taken place at this time suggests that this was the most significant period of the site (Drucker, 1943b:77, tables 5,7). An alignment of Lower II with the later part of Tzakol and the earlier part of Tepeu seems to be called for under these circumstances. The dated stelae at Cerro de las Mesas cannot be related to the ceramic sequence with any degree of certainty (Drucker, 1943b:85). In view of the previous remarks it would be tempting to assign them to Lower II. If Stelae 6 and 8 can be regarded as relating to the Mayan calendar, then their dates should be read as 9.1.12.14.10.1 and 9.4.18.16.8.9, respectively (Proskouriakoff, 1950:173; Sterling, 1943, plates 23, 24). Miss Proskouriakoff does not comment directly on the probability of such a dating, but the trend of her discussion suggests that while these monuments cannot be considered as typical examples of Early Classic Mayan art, they show several specific characteristics which would be expectable on monuments occurring within the Peten during this time range (Proskouriakoff, 1950:174). Two other stelae have traits suggestive of Late Classic rather than Early Classic Mayan art (Sterling, 1943, plate 21b, 25; Proskouriakoff, 1950). Though these are undated, their existence is compatible with the suggestion already made that Lower II was in part contemporaneous with Tepeu.

The smiling head figurines, which may ultimately prove to have some value as an horizon marker in Veracruz, seem to be confined to the later part of Lower II, Cerro de las Mesas (Drucker, 1943b; tables 8,9; Hedlin Zenil and Peterson, 1954).

The positioning of Cerro de las Mesas Upper I, in any more precise terms than that it follows Lower II, is extremely difficult. This phase would usually be treated as Postclassic and by rights could be disregarded here. Since it seems to relate to the problem of the termination of occupation at Tajin, a site usually treated as Classic, it is best to briefly review the evidence. On the one hand the remains are clearly related to Mazapan by the figurine types (Drucker, 1943b, plate 39; compare with Vaillant 1950, plate 25, row IV). The complicated polychrome of this period at Cerro de las Mesas is identical to the "Polichroma laca" of the post-Teotihuacan period at the site of Cholula (Noguera, 1954:272). The significance of the single occurrence of Tohil Plumbate at Cerro de las Mesas is not clear. Drucker's description of the circumstances of this find suggests that it may well form part of the scanty Upper II occupation rather than belonging in Upper I (Drucker, 1943b:7-8). The lack of Fine Orange ware, Isla de Sacrificios Type B, and the lack of metal in Cerro de las Mesas Upper I appears to indicate that the Upper I phase did not persist to the peak of the second horizon. Isla de Sacrificios Type B seems to have had its peak of popularity in the Veracruz sequence during Campoala I-II (García Payón, 1950a:416). More far-reaching cross-ties can be pointed to for Isla de Sacrificios Type B. The major occurrences of Type B and Fine Orange X at the site of Isla de Sacrificios appear to have been contemporaneous. Orange X is the dominant luxury ware during the period of maximum development at Toltec Chichen Itza, which falls on our second horizon. Brainerd in his discussion of these complex relationships indicates that Drucker has far

underestimated the age of Isla de Sacrificios (Brainerd, 1953:473). As a summary of this rather tangled digression it may be suggested that at least the earlier part of Upper I at Cerro de las Mesas was contemporary with Tepeu and that a date of 10.5.0.0.0 or 10.6.0.0.0 should have seen the end of Upper I. The scanty Upper II material at Cerro de las Mesas need not concern us. It is quite obviously fully postclassic according to any standard definition.

The long ceramic sequence at the site of Tajin has only recently been studied in a systematic way. Its partial association with the art style known variously as Tajin, Totonac, or Classic Veracruz makes it of special interest in connection with the purposes of this paper. Du Solier, on the basis of his work at the site, suggests that the beginnings of the sequence might well equate with the end of Teotihuacan II (Miccaotli) and presents evidence from the ceramics of the site to prove his point (Du Solier, 1945:190). Viewed in a wider perspective this position seems reasonable and even slightly conservative. It is clear on the basis of evidence both from Teotihuacan itself and from Kaminaljuyu, that the Classic Veracruz art style must have reached a developed form early in the Xolalpan period (Teotihuacan III) (Kidder, Jennings and Shook, 1946, fig. 156; Linné, 1934, fig. 117). In the upper part of the deposits, but apparently still well within the period of maximum prosperity of the site, there are numerous flat, mold-made figurines which strongly suggest Mazapan influences (Du Solier, 1945, Stratigraphic Tables, Lamina A. Type 2; compare with Linné, 1934, fig. 112). The appearance of Isla de Sacrificios Type B only in the uppermost levels suggests the period at which occupation ended at the site. Chiefly on the basis of this ceramic evidence the alignment suggested by Espejo allows for a minimum overlap between the Tajin sequence and Cempoala I (Du Solier, 1945, Stratigraphic Tables, García Payón, 1950a:416; 1947:330-332. Espejo, 1953).

Huasteca: The sequence developed by Ekholm for the Huasteca is easily tied to the two major horizons. Period III gives clear evidence of X-T traits (Ekholm, 1944, fig. 7), while Period V has definite affinities with the Mazapan culture and thus can be placed on the Plumbate Horizon (Ekholm, 1944:352). The Period IV between the two can be regarded as roughly contemporaneous with Tepeu.

Western Mexico: A series of somewhat similar cultures sharing elaborate hand-made figurines occur in western Mexico. The Apatzingan of Michoacan, the Ortices of Colima, and the Tuxacuesco of Jalisco are typical. On the basis of a single Thin Orange pot from a grave in Colima, presumably Ortices, this general range of cultures has been assigned to a position equivalent to Teotihuacan III (Kelly, 1947:187). The cultures which follow the previously mentioned cultures in the same areas have general similarities to Mazapan, so it can be seen that there is considerable leeway in these sequences.

The Valley of Mexico and vicinity: This crucial area has been left to the last so that the information from the other areas can be brought to bear on the problem. Placing the beginning of Xolalpan at 8.12.0.0.0 seems reasonable if sufficient time is to be allowed for the spread of traits from

Teotihuacan to the Peten. Indeed this alignment might be regarded as on the conservative side. This would mean that all of Miccaotli is earlier than any part of Tzakol. The date of the ending of the Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa period in terms of the Mayan calendar is a more interesting and difficult problem. The range of possibilities would seem to lie between the date 9.8.0.0.0, the end of Tzakol, and 10.3.0.0.0, the end of Tepeu. The former date would give Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa a duration of roughly three hundred years, while the latter would extend the period to over six hundred years. Amount of ceramic change cannot be used as a sure guide for estimating elapsed time but neither can it be completely ignored. Armillas does not feel that the change which occurred in this period was great:

Es posible que no se encuentren elementos suficientes para justificar su (Tlamimilolpa) separacion como fase aparte Xolalpan (Armillas, 1950:69).

A second line of evidence is the nature of the trade sherds which were recovered from the Tlamimilolpa palace itself, the type site for the latter part of the period. Among these sherds are fragments of four Classic Maya vessels of the Tzakol period. Their position in the ruin indicates that they were associated with the earliest occupation at this particular site, but they are definitely associated with the incised (rather than engraved) tripods which Armillas regards as late at Teotihuacan (Linné, 1942:178, fig. 328-329, 331; Armillas, 1950:69). There seems to be no doubt concerning the identification of the sherds made by Vaillant, whose statement relates these pieces directly to the Holmul sequence, with which he was particularly familiar. This evidence indicates that the Tlamimilolpa part of Teotihuacan III was well under way before the end of Tzakol. The third line of reasoning is purely inductive, but is perhaps suggestive. As has already been pointed out, the manner in which Teotihuacan traits disappear from the Peten and Guatemala Highlands assemblages immediately after the Tzakol-Tepeu transition is rather dramatic. Several reasons might be advanced for this fact, but a particularly economical one would be that the inspiration for these traits was cut off at its source, i.e. that Teotihuacan had been destroyed. The period between 9.8.0.0.0 and 10.3.0.0.0 seems to have been marked by the progressive breakdown of long-distance contacts and such tendencies may have been given an impetus by the sacking of a center which had for a considerable period of time exercised a profound influence over much of Mesoamerica. Since waves of cultural influence and population movements have largely followed a northwest to southeast direction in Mesoamerica during Classic and Postclassic times, it is reasonable to assume that waves of anarchy may have followed the same trend. Such a reconstruction of events is by no means an original concept on my part. Escalon Ramos offered almost the identical outline in his discussion of the archaeology of Xochicalco (Escalon Ramos, 1953:367).

The termination of urban occupation at Teotihuacan and the ending of the Classic period in this part of the Valley of Mexico at 9.8.0.0.0 would not create any unseemly gaps in the sequence. At the ruin of Atetelco

within the urbanized area of Teotihuacan the remains of a palace of Tlamimilolpa date were buried under a deposit of refuse two meters deep containing Coyotlatelco pottery. Intrusive into this midden were burials with pure Mazapan style pottery (Armillas, 1950:56,58). Much of the occupation at the site of Xochicalco in Morelos appears to date from this general time. This site shows ceramic ties with Azcapotzalco and, though Noguera's discussions of the pottery of this site are somewhat difficult to follow from a chronological point of view, the following statement by him indicates that the site was probably abandoned before the full development of Mazapan culture and consequently prior to the Plumbate Horizon.

"Toda la ceramica fragmentada que se encuentra en la superficie de Xochicalco corresponde a los ultimos periodos prehispanicos como ya lo hemos anotado al referirnos a los tipos de Mazapa, Coyotlatelco, Tlahuica, Matlatzinca y probablemente Azteca," (Noguera, 1945:83).

The period Teotihuacan IV, which has often proved useful to people who insist on balancing their chronological arrangements neatly or who wish to have a source from which to derive Teotihuacan influences at an unusually late period, apparently has reality only at the site of Azcapotzalco. Even if the 9.8.0.0.0 date for the fall of Teotihuacan is too early, considerable time must be taken from the span which in the Peten is allotted to Tepeu in order to accommodate the manifestations just mentioned. The date of 9.8.0.0.0 will be used for the remainder of this paper, not because of overwhelming evidence that it is the correct one, but chiefly to determine the broader implications of this slightly novel arrangement.

#### THE DESIGNATION AND DESCRIPTION OF CLASSIC STAGE CULTURES IN MESOAMERICA

The Peten and adjoining areas of Classic Maya culture: The designation of the Classic stage of Maya culture is the simplest problem with which this paper deals. The abandonment of all major centers in the Peten at the end of the Tepeu period leaves no doubt concerning where the upper boundary of the Classic should fall. The break between Chicanel and Tzakol has up to now appeared to be equally abrupt. There are very few excavated remains which might be regarded as transitional between the house mounds of the Chicanel period and the vaulted architecture of Classic Maya (Smith, 1950:17-18). The primitive, though typically Maya temple structure of Building B, group II, at Holmul appears to be as early as the earliest Tzakol pottery (Holmul II) at the site, and the interior vault of the stone-faced pyramid which supports it contained the pre-Tzakol pottery of the site (Holmul I) (Merwin and Vaillant, 1932). The famous E VII sub of Uaxactun which is either very late Chicanel or, more likely, very early Tzakol (Ricketson and Ricketson, 1937:68) carried no superstructure and therefore throws no light on the development of vaulted architecture. Within the Peten the lack of prototypes for the

fully developed stela complex of Tzakol is even more striking. In the Peten the earliest forms of Maya art are by no means primitive. On the basis of our present evidence, Classic Maya culture appears suddenly in a full-blown form. Such a sharp break between Chicanel and Tzakol may be validated by further excavation, but the small amount of work done on Chicanel sites suggests that the apparent break may be the result of archaeological ignorance.

Once established in its area of maximum development, Classic Maya culture underwent six hundred years of steady development. The region stands out as a sharply delimited culture area with extensive interchange of ideas within its boundaries, but much less with outside areas. This is made very clear in Butler's discussion of the connections of Piedras Negras pottery (Butler, 1935:23). Sculptural art underwent a remarkably homogeneous development throughout the Classic Maya area. Though each site may have its own recognizable sub-style, the changes which mark the several periods of Maya art seem to have occurred almost contemporaneously everywhere in the area (Proskouriakoff, 1950). The work of Proskouriakoff has greatly increased our understanding of this development. The nature of the architectural development during the 600 years of Classic Maya culture can be clearly traced at the one site of Uaxactun (Smith, 1950). There appear to be sufficient comparative data from other sites to make a study of this problem on a pan-Peten basis rewarding. Butler's discussion of the ceramics of Piedras Negras indicates that a much stronger regionalism is observable in Maya pottery than in the more thoroughly sacred arts of architecture and sculpture (Butler, 1935:20).

The area of Classic Maya culture, along with Yucatan and Highland Guatemala, stands in sharp contrast to Mexico in the manner in which figurines disappeared almost completely during the transition from Formative to Classic. There was, however, a considerable resurgence in the use of figurines in various parts of the Classic Maya area during Tepeu times. At this period figurines were typically mold-made (Butler, 1935:49-52). The details of Maya ceramic chronology are not particularly germane to this study though it might be mentioned that the more naturalistic renderings of objects on Tepeu polychrome specimens parallels similar tendencies in Late period Maya sculpture. It is also worth noting that the regional differentiation in Maya ceramics became progressively more pronounced as time passed. Both the amount of raw data available on Classic Maya culture and the amount of comparative work already done is staggering. Besides three major books on the subject (Morley, 1946; Brainerd, 1954; Thompson, 1954), there is considerable specific and comparative work on such items as ball courts (Satterthwaite, 1944), sweat houses (Satterthwaite, 1952), settlement patterns (Willey, Bullard and Glass, 1955; Ricketson and Ricketson, 1937:15-24), and the plans of the major ceremonial centers. It is clear that no serious analysis of the Classic stage of Mesoamerica can afford to ignore this material. It is equally clear that in a paper of this length any attempt to cite all such material, let alone evaluate it would produce a complete imbalance. Since there is no solution to this problem, the whole area must be abandoned with only a few further comments which

might be relevant to the orientation of this paper. The problem of what Proskouriakoff has called the Decadent Phase of Maya art, 9.19.0.0.0 to 10.3.0.0.0, is especially interesting (Proskouriakoff, 1950:150-153). Here the Classic Maya style begins to show those characteristics which are often associated with the final phases of a cyclical development in art or with pattern exhaustion. They date from very close to the time at which the whole structure of Classic Maya culture collapsed. Are the artistic characteristics noted to be construed only as signs that the art style was coming to the end of its cycle of development, or are they to be related to the accelerating dissolution of all of Maya civilization during this period? The answer to this question would be most important to the solution of the problems outlined in the introduction to this paper, but unfortunately the evidence at hand will permit no easy answer. It has been observed that the most remarkable examples of Maya art date from a relatively short period of time, 9.13.0.0.0 to 9.19.0.0.0, and were largely produced in rather restricted regions near the boundaries of the Classic Maya area, namely Copan and Quirigua at the eastern edge, and the Usumacinta region and Palenque at the western edge.

Yucatan: During the period of time which is called Tzakol in the Peten, Yucatan seems to have been culturally marginal to the Peten and its development seems to have shown a noticeable time lag when compared to the Peten. There is one example of what is evidently a very early Classic Maya style sculpture in Yucatan (Proskouriakoff, 1950:6-7), but in general, where they can be dated, particular features in Yucatan are demonstrably later than corresponding features in the Peten. It is not clear whether those X-T traits which reached the Peten with only moderate intensity can be observed in the ceramics of Yucatan. The unique stucco reliefs of the site of Acanceh show certain stylistic affinities to the murals of Teotihuacan and, should they prove to be of the proper date, might be regarded as examples of Teotihuacan influences (Seler, 1911).

Proskouriakoff regards the date of about 9.13.0.0.0 as the time beyond which most of Yucatan diverges strongly from a Classic Maya tradition. Certain sites maintain a Classic Maya tradition beyond this point but in most areas strongly marked regional styles such as Puuc and Chenes take on their characteristic form (Proskouriakoff, 1950:150). In summary, these styles contrast with Classic Maya in an even greater emphasis on architectural decoration and in the reduction of sculpture from a primary art to an element of architectural decoration. They are certainly of a sufficiently high degree of sophistication so that their assignment to the Classic stage need not be questioned. The Toltec invasion of Yucatan is marked by the introduction of a completely new artistic tradition; the Classic stage must end here by definition.

The Guatemala Highlands and Chiapas: It is difficult to determine the point at which a true Classic Stage culture appears in the Guatemala Highlands proper. The elaboration of various elements as early as Miraflores has been noted in the accompanying paper by Mr. Coe, but the

clinging factor of the fully developed and widely applied art style seems to be lacking. The time period corresponding to Tzakol in the Peten is marked here chiefly by the strength of influences from the Mexican site of Teotihuacan. The richness of the individual tombs at Kaminaljuyu is remarkable, as is the extent of the trade relations indicated by these mortuary offerings (Kidder, Jennings and Shook, 1946). Evidence from other Guatemala Highland sites reflects the same picture (Kidder, Jennings and Shook, 1946). The fact that evidence concerning this period is largely confined to the contents of large, rich tombs may have over-influenced our picture of the culture, but it was at any rate not an era of major building activity at many of the sites. (Woodbury and Trik, 1953:262; Smith and Kidder, 1943; 1951). The general lack of monumental stone sculpture or vaulted stone architecture, except for tombs, places the Highland in an unfavorable light when compared to the Peten, where the major artistic expression appeared in these forms (Wauchope, 1948:12; Woodbury and Trik, 1953:162). Beyond this there is for this period a lack of any truly unifying art style except perhaps the one imported from Teotihuacan. The period under consideration is Classic more because of the richness of its mortuary cult and the extensive ties with other, more definitely Classic Stage cultures indicated by the mortuary remains, than because of any particularly strong and coherent indigenous art style.

The period in the Guatemala Highlands which corresponds to Tepeu in the Peten saw an increase in building and in forms of cultural activity other than the mortuary complex (Woodbury and Trik, 1953:35; Wauchope, 1948:12; Shook and Proskouriakoff, 1956), but architectural achievements were still meager when compared to Lowland Maya. Jade and polychrome pottery in the finest Tepeu tradition are the most noticeable artistic features of this period, but these seem to have been manufactured at a few localized centers and in many cases were imported from outside of the Highlands (Smith and Kidder, 1943:36,72; Woodbury and Trik, 1953; Wauchope, 1948). Thus at many of the sites their presence is more an indication of affluence than of high, local, artistic development.

The appearance of Tohil Plumbate can be used as an effective if arbitrary demarcation for the end of the Classic in this area, but at some of the sites the evidence for a marked change in cultural patterns does not come until later.

The Pacific slope of Guatemala gives information of a much more scattered nature, but of much more interest from the point of view of this paper. Both El Baul and Santa Margarita contain carved stone stelae bearing what appear to be Seventh Cycle dates. The style of these monuments could well have served as a prototype for Early Classic Maya style (Proskouriakoff, 1950:174-175). In the light of what has been said about the sudden and mysterious appearance of the stela complex and the Early Classic art style in the Peten, further knowledge which might validate this possibility would be of the greatest importance. The final classification of the culture which produced these objects should probably wait for fuller information, but on the basis of what is already known a placement in the Classic Stage does not seem unreasonable. Other, presumably later, sculptural remains at El Baul and at the site of Santa

Lucia Cotzumalhuapa suggest a development out of this early style parallel to, but more or less independent of, the Classic Maya style of the Peten (Proskouriakoff, 1950:174-175).

More is known about the archaeology of Classic period Chiapas than can be included in this paper. For our purposes the site of Izapa is the most important. It is undated but its excellent monumental stone sculptures show similarities on the one hand to the early material from Santa Margarita and El Baul and on the other to La Venta-Middle Tres Zapotes (Sterling, 1943; Proskouriakoff, 1950:176).

Oaxaca: Monte Alban is the type site for Classic Stage culture in this area. One difficulty in the discussion of Classic Zapotec culture lies in the rather spotty publication of archaeological material from this site. While there is a most detailed and useful report on the ceramics of Monte Alban IIIa there is nothing comparable for any of the other periods (Bernal, 1949). The situation with regard to sculptural art and architecture is even worse. It might be possible to assemble a usable series of illustrations of these features as they occur in the several phases, provided that all the preliminary reports which have appeared on the site were carefully assembled and analyzed. Such a study could not be made during the preparation of this paper, but sufficient material is available on the nature of Monte Alban II to allow for certain observations. The question is, not whether Monte Alban II should be regarded as Classic, but whether the Classic Stage should be extended back to Monte Alban I. Monte Alban I had a form of writing, a calendar, and a fairly well developed style of stone carving (Caso, 1938:38). Since this "Danzantes" art style seems not to have been applied to media other than relief sculpture, it perhaps cannot be called fully developed. The associated ceramics are not much more elaborate than would be expected in a Formative stage (Caso, 1938: figs. 31-34). Monte Alban I is just such a culture as one would expect to find on the boundary between the Formative and Classic Stage, provided that no intervening stage is employed.

Monte Alban II had well developed architecture and it was during this phase that the ceremonial center of Monte Alban began to take its elaborate form (Caso, 1938:10-14, 38). The beginnings of vaulted architecture are to be noted. The ceramics are well represented, especially in tomb 77 (Bernal, 1949:6; Caso, 1935, figs. 44-48). The famous Zapotecan funerary urns have their prototypes in this period, and these are stylistically interesting in the light of Bernal's comments on the Maya affinities of Monte Alban culture up to Monte Alban IIIa (Bernal, 1949:3). The mask headdress of the largest urn of tomb 77 is almost identical to those of Early Classic Maya art (Compare Caso, 1935: figs. 42-44 with Proskouriakoff, 1950: fig. 17). The modeling of the face is also distinct from that on Monte Alban III urns.

The development from Monte Alban II to Monte Alban III involved the introduction of a large number of specifically X-T traits. Bernal has presented a most thorough analysis of the ceramic features involved (Bernal, 1949). The urns reach their most characteristic and elaborate form, and a

clear change from a Mayoid to a Teotihuacan stylistic affiliation can be noted in many of their features. The new forms of headdresses show strong similarities to headdresses on Teotihuacan III figurines, and the treatment of the faces on many of the typical Monte Alban III urns strongly resembles the faces of Tlamimilolpa masks (Compare Linné, 1942, plates 3-5 with Linné, 1938, plates 8,16,18). A certain amount of architectural sculpture and extensive and well preserved wall paintings from the tombs show a fairly homogeneous art style which relates to the urns on the one hand and the mural art of Teotihuacan on the other (Caso, 1938; Armillas, 1950, laminas XIIIa, XIV). This is the peak period of architectural expansion at the site. Suggestions of Teotihuacan influence on the architecture, though perhaps not as strong as at Kaminaljuyu, are present; at least there appears to be no smooth development from the architecture of Monticulo J to that of Monte Alban III.

The partially documented collection of the typical funerary urns presented by Linné (Linné, 1938) gives some idea of the distribution of Monte Alban III culture within Oaxaca, and typical burials of this culture have been found as far to the north as Tehuacan in Puebla (Noguera, 1950).

The transition from the Classic to the Postclassic in this area seems to have involved the decline of the center of Monte Alban in all respects save as a cemetery, but a great deal of study will be necessary before a more complete description of this transition can be given.

The Valley of Mexico and vicinity: The Classic Stage in this area is usually regarded as synonymous with the flowering of the great site of Teotihuacan. Palerm notes the unanimity of those who have written on cultural stages or developmental sequences in Pre-Columbian Mexico in designating the fall of Teotihuacan as the end of the Classic Stage in the Valley of Mexico (Palerm, 1955a:226-227).

Miccaotli (Teotihuacan II) may be cited as a refutation of those who would trim the Classic Stage to a neat horizontal band of time. Unless the chronological orderings of the previous section are in complete error, the pre-8.12.0.0.0 date of Miccaotli must stand. While there are various arguments which might be advanced to place both Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta and Monte Alban II into a Pre-Classic or Formative stage, such arguments will not hold for Miccaotli. All of the major religious architecture of the site was accomplished before the beginning of Xolalpan and the basic layout of the site must have been achieved long before. The construction of the pyramids of the Sun and the Moon marks the end of the period previous to Miccaotli (Armillas, 1950:68), while the famous sculptured facade of the Temple of Quetzalcoatl and the pyramid which is superimposed on it were constructed before the beginning of Xolalpan (Armillas, 1950:50-51, 68). Within this period, there was elaborate sculpture, both architectural and free, as well as mural painting. In short, the arts of Teotihuacan had reached the complex stage of development required by the most rigid definition of the Classic. The statue of the Water Goddess which is probably of this period already had those monumental and sculptural qualities which were to dominate Mexican art up through Aztec times (Vaillant, 1950, plate 24a).

The development of the site of Teotihuacan after Miccaotli was almost entirely a matter of the expansion of urban occupation outward from the ceremonial center. The size of the densely settled area around the city reached at least three square miles. The "palaces" which formed the bulk of this urban development seem, unlike the Maya "palaces", to have been built for the purpose of human occupation. The rooms were relatively spacious and the courtyards around which they were arranged were provided with effective drainage systems. Linné noted the peculiar lack of evidence of fire in any of the rooms, which must mean that, if these were in fact ordinary houses, the cooking facilities must have been centralized or have been out of doors (Linné, 1942:114-115). Some of the "palaces" were decorated with elaborate murals. Several of these structures have been excavated and there are some good plans which clearly indicate their character (Linné, 1934, fig. 9-16; Armillas, 1950:54; Linné, 1942, plate 1). The largest "palace" so far excavated is that of Tlamimilolpa. Here Linné uncovered 170 rooms without reaching an outer wall at any point.

The large population which seems to be indicated by these remains has led to much speculation on the matter of food supply. Most studies of this nature have reached the conclusion that intensive irrigation must have been practiced in the Valley of Teotihuacan in order to support such a population. (Palerm, 1955b; Millon, 1954). As yet, in spite of the strong inferential arguments for its presence, no direct evidence for irrigation during the Classic occupation of Teotihuacan has been uncovered.

Though some tendency towards secularism is observable in the transition from Miccaotli to Xolalpan, if only in the emphasis on what appears to be domestic architecture, the arts of Xolalpan and Tlamimilolpa are by no means decadent. The extensive and impressive murals have already been mentioned. The stone masks formed another noteworthy class of Teotihuacan manufactures. The ceramics associated with Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa were discussed above in another context.

Both Linné and Armillas have given attention to the problem of the distribution of the pure Teotihuacan culture and it would take a major research project to expand on their findings (Linné, 1942; Armillas, 1950). The pyramid of Cholula is almost certainly the largest construction of Pre-Columbian America. Noguera's stratigraphic work at this site has demonstrated that at least a part of this construction was done by carriers of a pure Teotihuacan culture (Noguera, 1954:185-198). Its original construction seems to have been the result of the eastward expansion of an offshoot of Teotihuacan culture. This is suggested both by ceramic traits and by architecture. The site continued to be a center of the greatest importance after the collapse of Teotihuacan. It was a commercial center so situated as to receive trade wares from a number of areas, and it seems to have been one of the centers for the distribution of the magnificent "Policroma laca" ware which was very widely traded. Cholula is thus a site of the greatest importance for cross-dating regional sequences (García Payón, 1950a). The question of the dating of the beginning of post-Teotihuacan occupation at the site and of the first appearance of "Policroma

laca" ware is of considerable significance. The question cannot be regarded as settled; but the trend of the chronological arguments in this paper, especially that dealing with Cerro de las Mesas Upper I, indicates the possibility that "Policroma laca" ware may have originated earlier than others of the wares, such as Plumbate and Fine Orange X, which are regarded as Postclassic indicators.

The fall of Teotihuacan at the end of the Tlamimilolpa phase led to a general though temporary cultural regression within the Valley of Mexico. If the dating of close to 9.8.0.0.0 is correct, this is the earliest beginning of a Postclassic stage in the Mesoamerican area. The major period of building at the site of Xochicalco, in Morelos may well fall within the immediately Post-Teotihuacan period. The ceramic ties have already been discussed. The site is famous both for its spectacular location and for the architecture of its principal temple, which is a very successful blend of Mexican and Tepeu sculptural styles. The site deserves Classic status on the basis of this one monument. The ball court is of considerable interest in that it shows close ties to the Classic Maya ball courts of Copan and Piedras Negras on the one hand and to those of Tula on the other (Noguera, 1945:13-18).

The Valley of Mexico and adjoining highland areas thus presented a peculiar cultural picture in the period after 9.8.0.0.0. There were a number of contemporaneous communities at relatively small distances from one another, some of which must be classified as belonging to the Classic Stage and others which it seems best to assign to the Postclassic Stage.

The Olmec area: The highly developed art style of Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta which occurs both on monumental sculpture and in jade carving, as well as the large and extremely complex ceremonial center of La Venta, leave little doubt that, according to the criteria of this paper, this is a fully Classic Stage culture (Drucker, 1952; Sterling, 1943; 1955). Until the development of Olmec culture is better understood the point at which it attained a Classic status can not be specified. The clay figurines found at Gualupita, in a clearly definable archaeological context, are proof that at least one aspect of the style reached a characteristic form at a very early date (Vaillant and Vaillant, 1934:124-126). It is possible that the art might have first developed in clay figurines and that the more complex application on monuments and jade carvings is later. The three major sites already discovered give a sample sufficient to enable us to form some idea of the range of the style, but as yet there is no evidence concerning its internal chronology. The ceramic stratigraphy of one of these three major sites has not yet been published. Since an adequate discussion of the art style (Drucker, 1952) and a good distributional study of the elements of the culture (Greengo, 1952), have been published, there is no need to enter into those matters here.

The area seems to undergo a decline in cultural intensity during and after the appearance of the X-T traits, if we are to judge from the evidence of Tres Zapotes. This period, and we can include Lower II of Cerro de las Mesas in these comments, is characterized by a number of interesting minor

art styles; in figurines, the smiling faces, the San Marcos style, and the remarkable monumental ceramics of Cerro de las Mesas (Drucker, 1943b); in carved stone, the various objects in the Classic Veracruz style and the vaguely Maya stelae of Cerro de las Mesas. Both a single unifying style and major ceremonial centers seems to be lacking but this is perhaps a function of the sites which have been tested. Stated briefly, the area might be considered as marginal to other areas of cultural development at this later period.

Central Veracruz: Of all the major artistic developments of Mesoamerica our information is scantiest for the one which is at least partially related to the site of Tajin. The evidence for the long duration of the style as a coherent entity has already been presented. Considerable progress has been made in understanding the ceramic history of the site of Tajin but as yet this seems not to have been related to architectural or sculptural developments (Du Solier, 1945). On the basis of present information, it seems justified to extend the Classic Stage of development at this site from a time probably equivalent to Miccaotli to a period contemporary with the flourishing of the Toltec culture at Tula. Certainly the subject matter of some of the Tajin carvings shows strong relations with Tula (Spinden, 1933, fig. 6).

Ceramic influences from Teotihuacan can be noted at Tajin, especially in the form of candeleros and certain cylinder-shaped vessels which appear to be trade wares (Du Solier, 1945:62). The hand-modeled figurines of Tajin also show strong similarities to those of the "retrato" type at Teotihuacan (Du Solier, 1945:62). These traits seem to be minor, however, and Du Solier's discussion of the Tajin ceramics leaves the impression that specific X-T influences were weaker here than in some other parts of Mesoamerica.

Ellen Spinden's description of the architecture and sculpture of the site is still valuable (Spinden, E., 1933), though a certain amount of specific information has been added since (García Payón, 1949; 1950b). Proskouriakoff's brief study appears to be the first attempt to inject chronology into the study of the distinctive art style and her work suggests that progress can be made along these lines (Proskouriakoff, 1953). Since the Classic Veracruz style comes closest to matching Classic Maya art in its coherence, complexity, and long span of development, detailed comparisons between the two styles could be of considerable theoretical interest.

Huasteca: On the basis of available information it has been decided that no period in the Huasteca qualifies as a Classic Stage development. Descriptions of the ceremonial centers of the area leave the impression that the Huasteca examples come off badly in a comparison with those of the areas of Mesoamerica already discussed. There were artistic developments in the Huasteca in sculpture (Ekholm, 1944; Muir, 1920) and in shell carving (Spinden, H., 1937; Beyer, 1934), but both of these styles seem limited to one particular medium. At present, the existence of a major, unifying style within this area is unproved.

West Mexico: The comments applied to the Huasteca seem equally just here. The elaborate hand-made figurine styles of West Mexico have recently found great favor with art students. Some, such as the dogs of Colima, must be regarded as among the most attractive objects produced in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica. As has been mentioned, these styles are probably of a date overlapping with some part of the span of Classic Stage cultures in the rest of Mesoamerica. Here again the style is confined to a single medium and the development of ceremonial centers during this period seems to be feeble (Kelly, 1947:173-174,187; 1945:188,194).

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The first observation which must be made is that the application of the particular criteria for a Classic Stage culture, used in this paper, has not produced the even, horizontal band which is so admired by those who tend to confuse stages with periods. According to the methods and the chronological arrangement I have employed, the Classic Stage plots out in time and space not as a neat strip but rather as something which must be described as a free form. If the odd form which the Classic Stage assumes on the chart serves as an effective warning against the practice of confusing stage concepts with temporal periods, then the painful lucubrations of the chronologically oriented section of this work have not been entirely in vain.

The minimal definition of a Classic Stage which was presented as an abstraction from the Willey-Phillips usage of the term indicates the belief in a causal connection between certain patterns of social organization and artistic developments of a climactic nature. It was stated that while such an assumption seemed likely, it could not be evaluated on the basis of the existing corpus of raw archaeological data. The alternative which was proposed involved the plotting of the climactic artistic developments in space and time in order to see if any other factors might be discerned which might effect the course of stylistic history. Should other such influences appear to be operative, then the simple one-to-one relationship suggested in the minimal definition would require a more elaborate and detailed description, though it would not necessarily be invalidated. We must therefore attempt to reduce the descriptive data of the preceding section to historical terms, in order to be able to inspect it for the presence of any such factors.

This history of artistic development in Mesoamerica can be viewed as the result of the interplay of two very broad art styles. As an analogy to the terminology of historical linguistics, the term macro-art styles might be useful. The names Lowland and Highland have been proposed for these art styles and the patterns of culture associated with them, but these two terms do not seem particularly appropriate. The discussion of Proskouriakoff suggests that the Maya sculpture of the Early Classic Period (Tzakol) may be one branch of a more widely diffused art style. The famous Stela 1 of El Baul with its seventh cycle date and the similarly dated fragmentary stela from Santa Margarita show definite similarities to the Early Period of Classic Maya art (Proskouriakoff, 1950:176-177). The sculptural art of the site of Izapa in southwestern Chiapas has definite relations, on the

one hand to the pieces just mentioned, and on the other to certain manifestations of the Classic "Olmec" or La Venta art style appearing in monumental stone carvings (Sterling, 1943; 1955; Proskouriakoff, 1950:177). The culture of Monte Alban prior to the arrival of the X-T traits at the beginning of the transition from Monte Alban II to Monte Alban III has definite Mayan affiliations. The similarities to Holmul I pottery have already been mentioned. The relationship between the style of "Los Danzantes" and that of La Venta has often been mentioned. Bernal is quite emphatic in regarding Monte Alban I and II as definitely Mayoid, while after these phases the culture at this site assumes a completely Mexican flavor (Bernal, 1949:48). The scattered and inconclusive evidence presently available does suggest that in the seventh cycle the antecedents for such diverse art styles as Coastal Guatemalan, Classic Mayan, La Venta, and "Zapotec" showed definite affinities. The hearth for such a proto-style might have been either the Pacific slope of Guatemala and Chiapas or the Olmec area, but by the eighth cycle the Highlands of Guatemala, the Highlands of Oaxaca, the Peten and even Yucatan were being influenced by the style to a progressively greater degree. The position of the art style known as Classic Veracruz in relation to this hypothetical proto-style is not clear. The persistent emphasis on curvilinear designs aligns it at least partially with the various other so-called Lowland styles mentioned previously. The evidence already cited shows that Classic Veracruz had attained a characteristic form prior to the spread of X-T traits, that is, prior to 8.17.0.0.0.

The history of the second macro-style, which usually goes by the name of Mexican or Highland, seems to be intimately connected with the several expansions from centers in or near the Valley of Mexico. The major manifestation of this art style within the period which we are studying is that at the site of Teotihuacan involving the Miccaotli and Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa phases. The art of Tula and the art of the Aztecs appear to be historical developments within this tradition and the three taken together might well form the basis for the kind of thoroughgoing stylistic analysis best exemplified by Proskouriakoff's magnificent study of Mayan art. The spread of the "Mexican" art style out of Teotihuacan had a shattering effect on the once continuous distribution of the "Mayoid" or "Lowland" style. The full force was felt all along the highlands to the east at least as far as the Honduras border. In southern Veracruz and Tabasco the La Venta style seems not to have survived this stylistic intrusion. Only in the areas where these influences were minor did the Lowland or Mayoid style survive as a coherent entity. These areas were: the Peten, Yucatan, probably to a lesser degree the Pacific slope of Guatemala, the later manifestations of Santa Lucia Cotzumalhuapa, and El Baul (Proskouriakoff, 1950:175-176). The Highlands of Guatemala became artistically marginal to the Peten rather than an area of coherent development, while Monte Alban passed emphatically into the domain of "Mexican" style art. The culture of the site of Tajin in Central Veracruz seems to have resisted the influx of X-T traits better than most other areas and it too seems to have maintained an artistic continuity. The second major spread of a Mexican art style, that which may have originated from the site of Tula and which was associated with the spread of

Fine Orange and Plumbate pottery, effectively submerged those pockets of non-"Mexican" art which survived the spread from Teotihuacan. It is this second spread which brings what is usually known as the Classic Stage in Mesoamerica to an end.

Within those periods of the various regional sequences which we have assigned to the Classic Stage, there are varying degrees of development of art style. Certain periods such as Upper Tres Zapotes or Cerro de las Mesas Lower II were placed in the Classic, not so much because of any conviction that they belong there, but rather because they could not be placed elsewhere. Even in the area of Classic Maya art those works which have most often drawn praise from art students were produced during a rather brief segment of the period called Classic Maya; almost all of them were created between 9.13.0.0.0 and 9.19.0.0.0, the majority dating from 9.16.0.0.0 to 9.19.0.0.0. Only about 120 years are involved in the longer period and only about 60 in the shorter. Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta is certainly the climactic period in the Olmec area, and the arts of Yucatan assume their most characteristic and elaborate form in the period containing Puuc and related sub-styles. The major development of sculpture and religious architecture at Teotihuacan falls within the Miccaotli phase.

Before proceeding to a discussion of art style in terms of history we can make some statements concerning the relation of the truly climactic period of artistic development to the periods of maximal external contact which have proved so valuable in structuring this paper. The briefest inspection will show that they tend not to coincide. Middle Tres Zapotes-La Venta and Miccaotli definitely antedate the X-T expansion, while the Ornate and Dynamic phase of Classic Maya art, Puuc, and probably the most fully developed phase of Classic Veracruz art, are subsequent to it by a considerable interval of time. On this basis we might suggest that an extensive exposure to alien contacts was not favorable to artistic development. Such an assumption might be supported by even more specific observations. Thus Kidder notes at Uaxactun strong evidence indicating a reduction of trade during late Tepeu times (Kidder, 1947:11). Brainerd has reported the same process with reference to the development of Puuc culture. While Puuc culture was developing its characteristic form, the occurrences of Tepeu trade wares became progressively fewer in the Puuc region (See Brainerd, 1940; also comments in amendment for page 62, Andrews, 1943). Shook and Proskouriakoff have commented that the increase of cultural vigor noted in the transition from the Esperanza to the Amatlé phase is accompanied by a decrease in external connections (Shook and Proskouriakoff, 1956). To summarize the foregoing discussion, we might say that the most fully developed and coherent stylistic developments of Mesoamerica are to be found in times of decreasing rather than increasing external contact. Those that reached the most fully developed form occurred in those areas which were more or less sheltered from the full force of foreign contacts. This would hold for Maya art and perhaps to a lesser degree for Classic Veracruz. The statement might be expanded to the form that the areas which have experienced the most elaborate stylistic developments are those which have been able to maintain stylistic continuity over the longest period of

time. In its simplest terms, this hypothesis would relate the excellence of Maya art to the somewhat marginal position of the Peten in relation to the routes of diffusion of the X-T traits. The art historian might explain the apparent relationship between an all-embracing art style and a parochial outlook purely in terms of his own subject matter. In discussing the connection between eclecticism and disorder in artistic development in recent times, an art critic has recently written:

It is perhaps both our virtue and our vice that our taste has become so catholic: our virtue because our aesthetic enjoyments have expanded and our insight into other civilizations deepened; but perhaps our vice in the sense that this all-embracing taste has left us with standards too broad to insist upon a single grand style of our own times and marked our age with a multitude of little styles (Saarinen, 1955).

It is tempting to apply this suggestion to the Mesoamerican picture we have just outlined, but before we accept it as a full explanation for the Classic developments, it would be well to examine what the events we have so far examined only in terms of art history might mean in terms of the more general context of culture history.

The discussion presented above of the disembodied developments and movements of art style does not indicate any faith on my part in the complete autonomy of an art style as a phenomenon, but since such a discussion followed naturally from the criteria used in defining a Classic Stage, its further elaboration seemed justified. The spread of the X-T complex of traits has been used extensively as an ordering device in the preceding discussion of the interaction of styles, but up to this point the question of what this spread meant in more general cultural terms has been deliberately avoided. This problem must now be faced.

As has been noted, the spread of the X-T complex into the Olmec area appears to have completely swamped the indigenous art style. The spread of this complex into the Oaxaca area completely and permanently altered the cultural orientation of the area, changing not only ceramics, but architectural practices and other phases of art style. The appearance of this complex in the Guatemalan Highlands involved not only new luxury pottery types, but a series of architectural practices which are specifically related to those of the site of Teotihuacan. The culture of Teotihuacan was by no means more sophisticated in art or in science than those of the areas on which its influences were imposed. The only field in which it might be considered more advanced is in community organization for it offers us the first clear evidence of urbanization in Mesoamerica. It might be asked whether there are any other historical examples of one culture's being so completely and dramatically imposed upon another without either vast differences in sophistication or the use of military force. The archaeological data from Kaminaljuyu are remarkably analogous to those from Chichen Itza which have long been used as evidence for a Toltec invasion. All that is lacking at the

Guatemalan site is the narrative art style in which invading warriors are represented as defeating the local inhabitants. The similarities include the imposition of a complete complex of luxury wares without any corresponding change in the utility wares and the adoption of an entirely new set of architectural practices. The discussion of Shook and Proskouriakoff indicates that the Esperanza phase represents a regression, both when compared to the Preclassic Arenal or to the Amatle which immediately followed (Shook and Proskouriakoff, 1956;97-98). This suggests that some kinds of adverse influences were operating in the area during Esperanza times, and military conquest might be suggested as one possibility. Whether or not military force was involved, the evidence strongly indicates the imposition of a foreign, or foreign oriented, elite group over the natives of the area (A.V. Kidder, personal communication).

The evidence that the spread of Teotihuacan influences involved military domination of some kind is certainly not conclusive but the possibility merits further consideration. Military conquest could occur without resulting in a unified empire, but neither should the possibility of an empire be completely ignored. At least the spread of X-T traits into Highland Guatemala implies some sort of extensive ideological proselytizing. It can be said in summary that such foreign domination exercised a deleterious effect on the local art style wherever it was strongly felt.

So far we have been considering the development of the Lowland or Mayoid art styles and of the cultures which carried them, their early similarities, their retreat before a series of cultural influences emanating from the site of Teotihuacan, their flowering in certain areas during the period when Mexican influences were relatively weak, and their final collapse in the face of a second and even more widespread series of cultural impulses from the Valley of Mexico. It is also necessary to consider the effects which expanding social organization, military conquest, and extensive urbanization have on the arts of the people who instigated these developments. Mention has been made of the fact that, while the artistic developments in the Valley of Mexico are discontinuous, they appear to have a certain coherence when the three major sections, Teotihuacan, Tula, and Aztec, are put in their proper sequence. This possibility cannot be evaluated until a detailed study has been made. The major problem concerning this artistic development, if the application of the Classic Stage concept to Mesoamerican data is to be evaluated, is whether there is a progressive decline in artistic excellence and technical competence as one passes from the most ancient to the most recent in this series. The progression from Miccaotli to Xolalpan-Tlamimilolpa within Teotihuacan culture tends to support the assumption made in setting up the Classic Stage. An increased secularization seems to be observable accompanied by a definite increase in urbanism. The evidence from Tula and especially from Aztec culture is less comforting. The degree of technical competence and the tremendous expenditure of time involved in Aztec work in mosaic, ground rock crystal, ground obsidian, and metallurgy is remarkable, as is the artistic effectiveness of the products. Some of the Aztec sculptures in the round must be placed among the finest creations

of Mesoamerican art. While the injurious effects of militarism on the arts is quite clear from the Mesoamerican data if we view the works of those who lost the battles, it is less so when we view the achievements of those who won.

The final step in this analysis involves the comparison of the general outline of the Classic Stage of Mesoamerica with that of two other areas which have been favorites of those interested in studying regularities in the birth of civilization. If the developmental sequence of Peru as described by Willey and Phillips is aligned with that of Mesoamerica, a fair degree of correspondence is noted at first glance. The Mesoamerican Classic starts earlier and lasts longer than the Classic of Peru, especially if the Spinden correlation is used in dating the Mesoamerican sequence. A closer inspection reveals a disturbing disharmony. If archaeologists working in Mesoamerica had long ago developed the same healthy respect for the phenomenon of horizon markers which the work of Uhle and Kroeber injected into the field of Peruvian archaeology, the X-T traits which have figured so importantly in the present discussion would have long ago been set up as a major horizon. Since the developmental stages of Peru are in large measure bounded by the important horizons, specifically Chavin and Tiahuanaco, it becomes of some importance to decide with which horizon of Peru the X-T horizon of Mesoamerica might coincide in its functional and developmental significance. There are three true stylistic horizons in Peru from which to choose. The Inca horizon, the terminal member, need not be considered here. If Porter and Willey are correct in their speculations concerning cultural connections, the Chavin horizon should be equated to the first appearances in Mesoamerica of that vague entity which has been called the Macro-Lowland or Macro-Mayoid style in this paper; this correspondence would represent not only an analogy but also an homology (Willey, 1955: 582). This leaves the Tiahuanaco horizon with which to draw comparisons, and some rather striking similarities do in fact appear. In Peru the Tiahuanaco horizon strongly altered the course of artistic development of all cultures on which it impinged. Only on the Northern Coast of Peru was there a reaction to the earlier art style after the wave of cultural influence subsided (Willey, 1953). Unlike the Chavin horizon, the X-T horizon and the Tiahuanaco horizon included a specific manner of applying the art style to certain artifact types and not just a specific art style variously applied. Both horizons also involved specific architectural features. If we were to be completely consistent with the procedure followed above in dealing with Peru, we would have to regard all of the Post-X-T manifestations in Mesoamerica as Post-classic, including the most spectacular part of Classic Maya as well as much of Classic Veracruz. The reason why this is not done is that the X-T horizon did not achieve as complete a penetration of the Mesoamerican co-tradition area as did its Peruvian counterpart in the Andean co-tradition area. A possible explanation for this might be that the Mesoamerican co-tradition area exceeds its South American counterpart both in gross area and in the percentage of that area which could support intensive agriculture. Thus two horizontal developments, the X-T and the Tula-Mazapan (Plumbate), were necessary to achieve the complete penetration which the Tiahuanaco horizon alone accomplished in the Andes.

If the Middle East is now brought into these comparisons some other pertinent observations can be made. If Egypt, the North Coast of Peru and the Peten are placed in one classification, and Mesopotamia, the southern edge of the Peruvian co-tradition area and the Valley of Mexico in another, certain similarities can be noted within each of the two groups. The first group shares a long continuous artistic development within a coherent tradition and a longer survival of theocratic rather than civil or military organization (this is not certain for the North Coast of Peru). The second shares an earlier development of planned cities, militarism, effective civil organization and the successful pursuit of widespread military invasions. The similarities between the Peten and Egypt on the one hand and the Valley of Mexico and Mesopotamia on the other are the most striking, and the possible reasons for these similarities are most easily suggested. During the period under consideration, the movements of peoples in Mesoamerica seem to have been from northwest to southeast, both into the Valley of Mexico from the area of "lower" cultures beyond the boundaries of the co-tradition and from the Valley of Mexico into the rest of Mesoamerica. In this respect the Peten was well insulated partly because it was off the main path of the movements and partly because it was at the end of the civilized area opposite to that from which pressure from barbarians was strongest. In contrast, the Valley of Mexico was particularly exposed in all respects. The area of almost completely worthless land which surrounds the Nile Valley on both sides was at least partially effective in protecting Egyptian civilization from such population movements. Unlike Egypt, Mesopotamia was open to invasion on all sides and the surrounding lands were sufficiently fertile to support dangerously large populations which were only semi-sedentary, or even entirely mobile. The rapidity of social and military developments in the two exposed areas could then be interpreted as a response to the necessity of preserving civilization against less civilized groups. Whatever the reason, the manner in which cultural dominance and leadership in artistic development passed from group to group rather than showing a smooth continuity is strikingly similar in both areas, i.e. the shift from Teotihuacan, to Toltec, to Aztec, as compared to the shift from Sumerian, to Akkadian, to Babylonian, to Assyrian, and finally to Achaemenian just beyond the boundaries of the original area.

If the explanation of these events just offered is not the correct or the complete one, then the "water-works theory of culture" might be invoked. There is good evidence that the effective utilization of the two rivers of Mesopotamia required more extensive irrigation projects than were needed in the Nile Valley where flood plain agriculture was effective. If the importance of irrigation at Teotihuacan, which has so often been suggested, could be proved, then this hypothesis would be worthy of further consideration.

The explanation for the difference in rate of development in Peru is less easily found. Population pressures might have built up faster in the smaller southern Peruvian valleys, necessitating more effective social controls (this idea was largely suggested by Kidder's discussion of the Classic in Smith and Kidder, 1951;77-84). In any case it is

clear on the basis of recent work in Peru that the Classic Nazca culture had large-walled and carefully planned cities (John H. Rowe, personal communication; Francis A. Riddell, personal communication),

The conclusions resulting from this study may be stated as follows:

- 1) The odd-shaped blob on the chronological chart accompanying this paper should be regarded as a warning to those who tend to confuse developmental stages with chronological periods.
- 2) The basic conception behind the formulation of the Classic Stage can not be evaluated at present because of the lack of information concerning settlement patterns for Mesoamerica as a whole.
- 3) The search for other factors which might be effective in the course of stylistic development should not be regarded as a total failure; there are suggestions that there may be such factors and that their workings must be understood if the Classic Stage concept is to be applied in the most rewarding manner.
- 4) The comparison with other areas at supposedly similar stages of development was intended to be suggestive only; the possible presence of other regularities not yet accounted for in the developmental schemes so far advanced is noted.

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