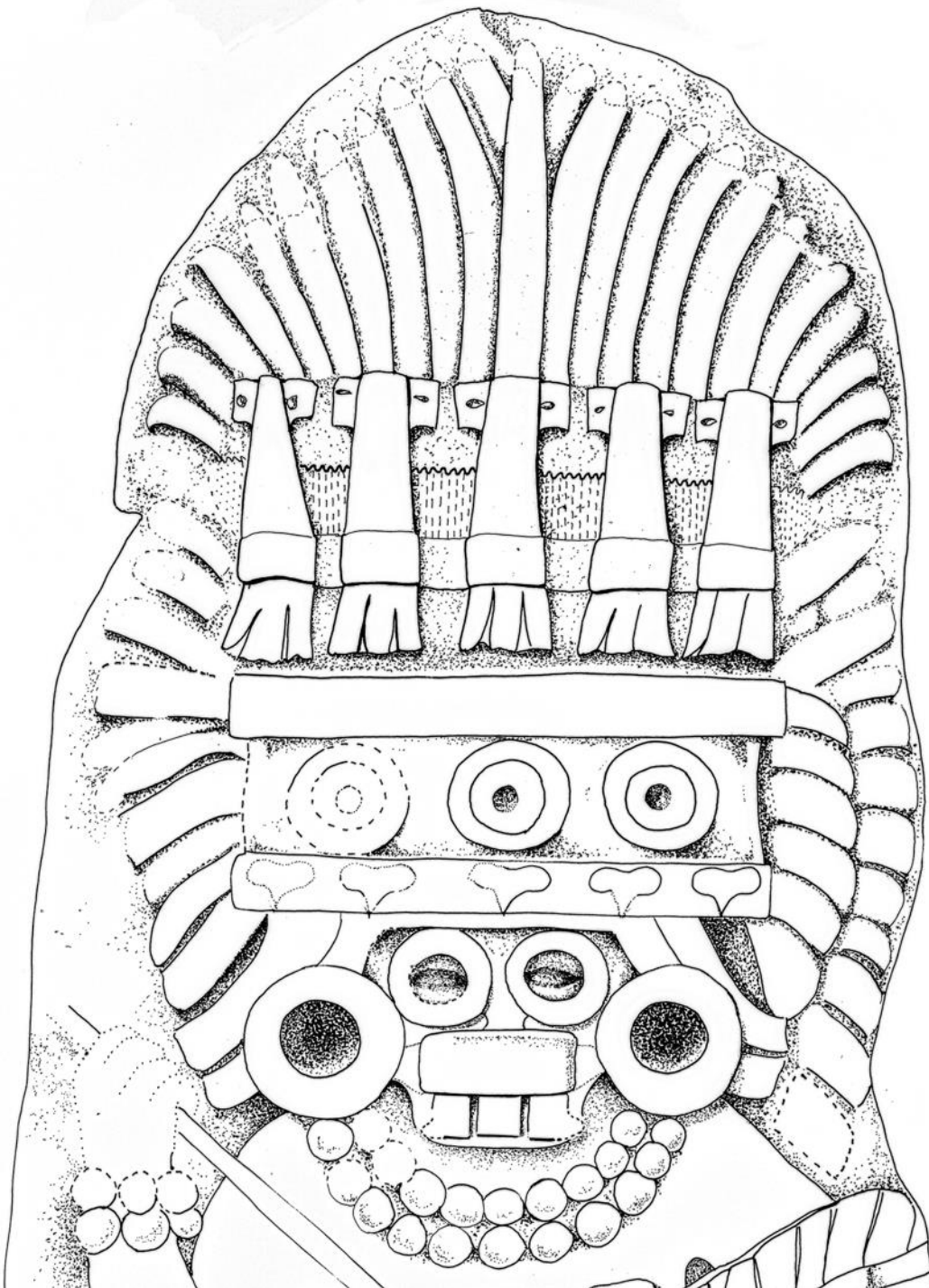


39 SIMPOSIO DE INVESTIGACIONES ARQUEOLÓGICAS EN GUATEMALA, MUNAE

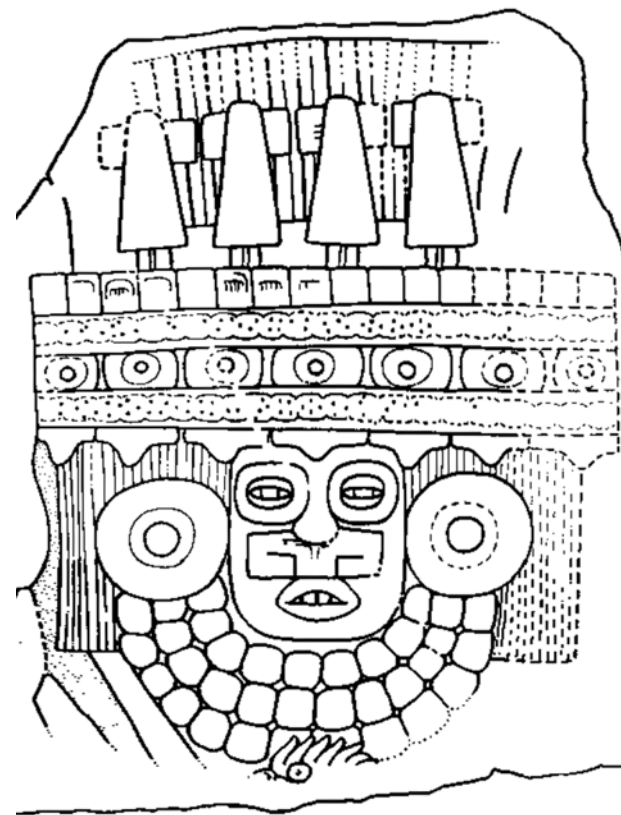
Iconography of Tlaloc (Rain God) As Military Power on Yaxha Stela 11

Nicholas M. Hellmuth, FLAAR Mesoamérica

July 24, 2026, MUNAE



**Frontal Portrait of
Military Tlaloc on
Yaxha Stela 11,
Tikal Stela 18,
Tikal Stela 31,
Tikal Stela 32
compared and
contrasted
with Tlaloc Variants
at Teotihuacan**



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Since each presentation at a Symposium should be limited to the time allowed, most of the documentation in these Appendices are provided in separate FLAAR Reports. But the *References Cited* are in the present PDF.

Appendix A

How many Stelae at Maya Sites are “Frontal”?

Appendix B

In addition to Tasseled Headdress, there was another Teotihuacan military “helmet” that was very common

Appendix C

Was the Tlaloc Warlord of Yaxha Stela 11 moved to face the royal burial area where a Teotihuacan Vassel was buried?

Appendix D

Is Yaxha also a word for the Mayan rubber tree, *Castilla elastica*?

APPENDIX E

The first significantly improved map of Yaxha is by FLAAR

Appendix F

How to Get to the Yaxha area of Parque Nacional Yaxha, Nakum, and Naranjo, PNYNN, Peten, Guatemala

References Cited

on Tlaloc and on Yaxha, plus additional Suggested Reading

Introduction to **Yaxha Stela 11, The largest Tlaloc Military Royal Deity Image in the Maya Corpus**

While I was at Tikal for all 12 months of 1965 as a student intern, I noticed the Tlaloc symbolism on Tikal Stela 31 and Stela 32. In 1966, George Kubler (of Yale) gave a seminar at Harvard on iconography of the art of Teotihuacan and his 1967 publication at Dumbarton Oaks lists the participants that included Arthur Miller, Clemency Coggins, Nicholas Hellmuth and others (footnote in Kubler 1967). Kubler also cites “Nicholas Hellmuth prepared a detailed report assessing the presumed Teotihuacán "presence" at Kaminaljuyu and Tikal respectively” (Footnote 21). So...1966 to 2026 is over half a century of my interest in Teotihuacan symbolism and Maya flaunting of Teotihuacan symbols. The corpus of art of Teotihuacan is so large that there is still a lot more to achieve, but the present documentation of the military features of the Tlaloc on Yaxha Stela 11 is a helpful starter.

Then, while doing my 1969 MA thesis on Teotihuacan motifs in Maya art in the Late Classic (after Teotihuacan itself had collapsed), I noticed the giant Tlaloc warrior on Yaxha Stela 11. But the stela was missing its bottom part. So, for my PhD I initiated a project to excavate and find the bottom part of Yaxha Stela 11 and to remap the site of Yaxha to see if any “streets and avenues” of the style of the Teotihuacan city layout could be found at Yaxha (and yes, we found both the base of the stelae and two areas with “streets and avenues” at Yaxha). 95% of the rest of Yaxha was typical Peten Maya site layout: acropolises, plazas, etc. but there was one area near the south and west of the palace acropolis and one other area that had parallel “vias” (whether Teotihuacan influence or not remains to be documented but the “street areas” do exist at Yaxha and are rare elsewhere at other Maya sites except the remarkable urban grid layout of Nixtun Ch’ich’, Peten, documented by Prudence Rice and colleagues as Preclassic—long before “Teotihuacan” influence arrived???).

What is needed for Yaxha Stela 11 is a new line drawing that shows details on the shield. The drawings by Ian Graham, Hasso von Winning, Linda Schele and Nikolai Grube are helpful but most were freehand. The FLAAR drawing is 95% complete and with more detail than all the others put together. But by making the photos available, we need to move forward to finding an illustrator who can do a final drawing (at Yaxha, since some details need to be checked from the actual stela at PNYNN).

Yaxha Stela 11 is the largest stone sculpture of the entire Maya areas that features a frontal Tlaloc warlord. Yet in 80% of books and peer reviewed journal articles on Tlaloc or Teotihuacan influence, this stela is not pictured whatsoever, probably because Stela 11 has no hieroglyphic text to provide details. So a main goal of the present FLAAR Reports is to rescue Yaxha Stela 11 and put it back on the map.



The level of Plaza B is at the upper left. You can see that it's about one meter "down the steps" from where the Maya erected Stela 11.

The top 75% of Stela 11 was probably knocked off the base by a gigantic tree falling down over the stairway. We had to gently move it a bit further away so we could search for the base. There is no way to tell where this stela was erected initially in the Early Classic. I estimate it was then moved up the stairs and turned to face the upper stairway of the east side of the East Acropolis. I estimate that the Supreme Tlaloc Warlord was buried under an Early Classic building of the East Acropolis that was later covered by Late Classic expansion of the East Acropolis. Would be amazing for a new project to dedicate themselves to find an Early Classic "Teotihuacan personage" burial and thereby have cylindrical tripods to study for decades.



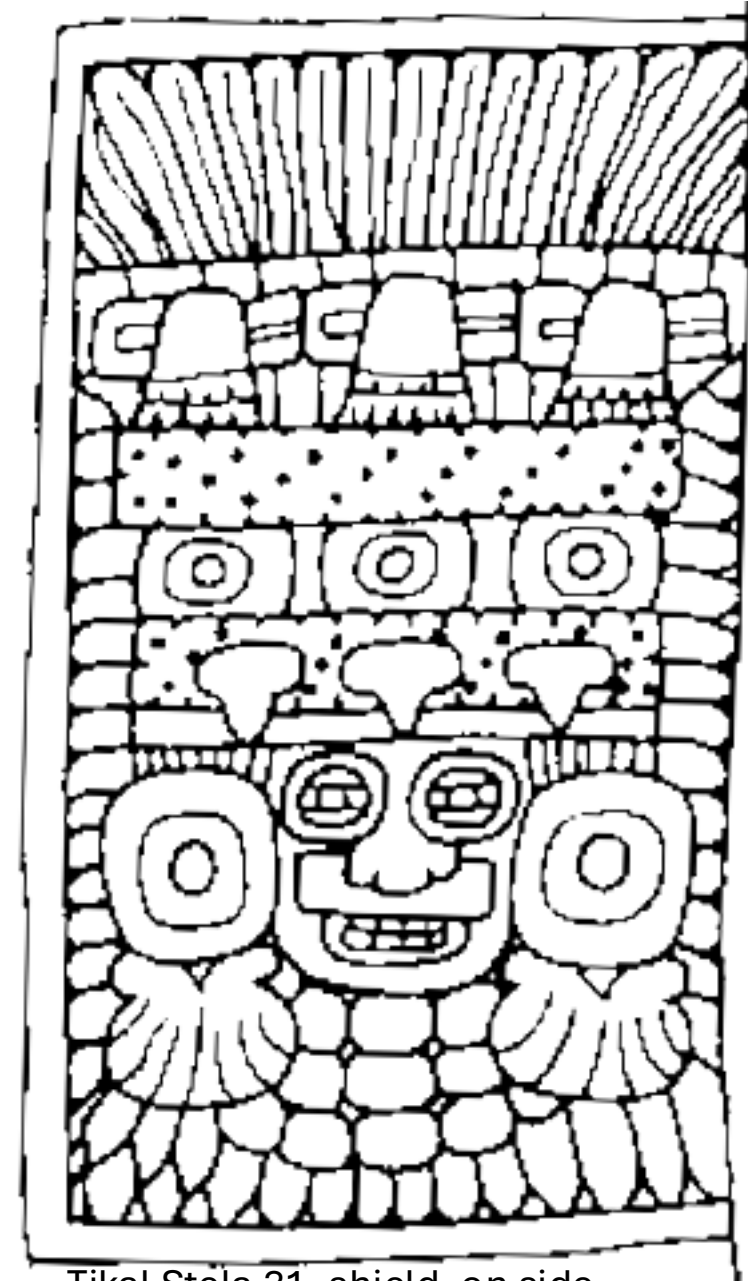
This is the level of the plaza below the stairway.

Yaxha Stela 11 was not noticed or published by Teobert Maler. Tozzer visited Nakum but did not publish on nearby Yaxha. So it was not until either Frans Blom or Sylvanus Morley spent more time at Yaxha that the main upper 75% of the stela was found and published.

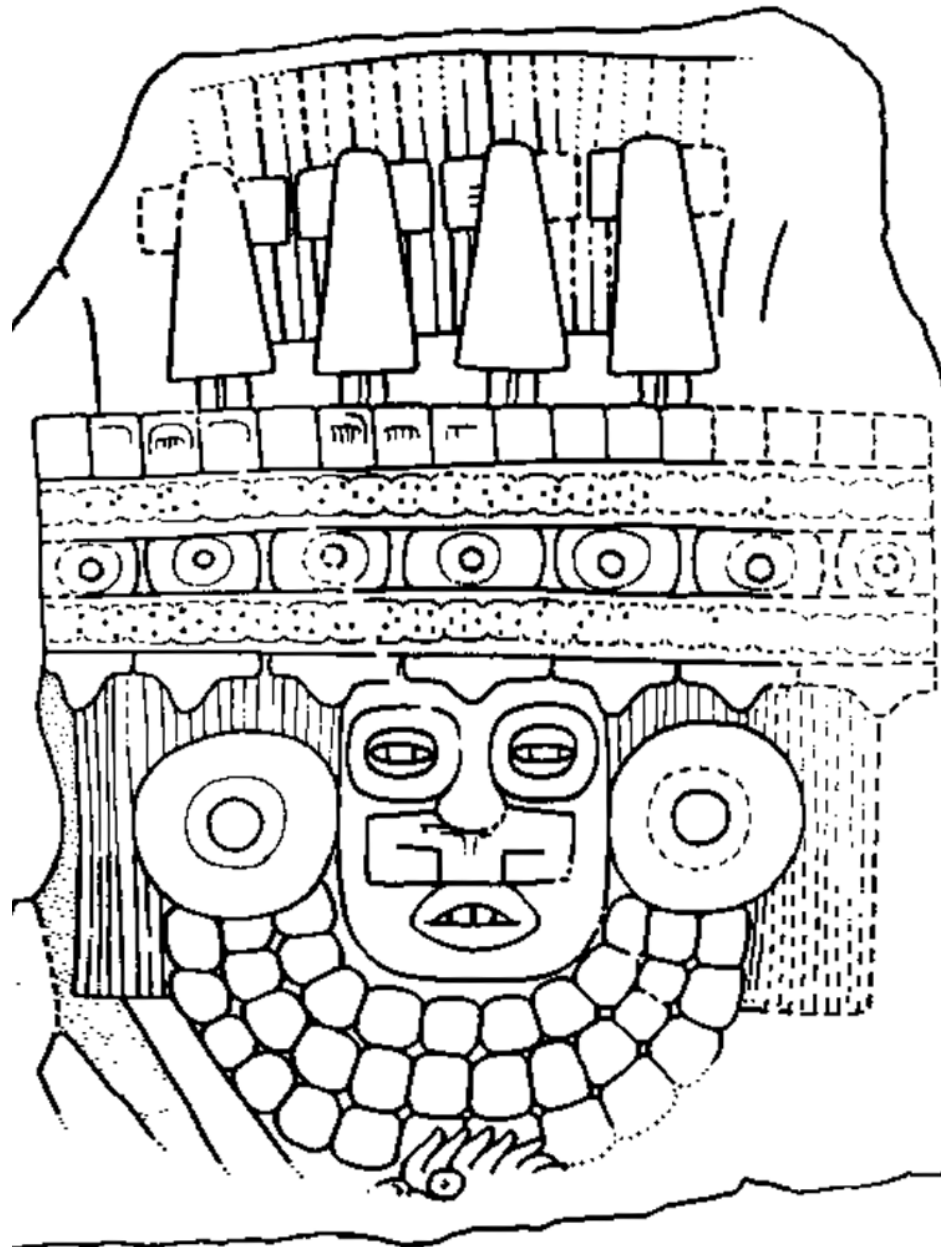
No archaeologist searched for the bottom part of Stela 11, so that was a focus of one of our early years of work at Yaxha. And we found the base, set into a platform on a wide stairway leading up the south side of the East Acropolis. Curious, the stela was facing the stairs in front of it—Yaxha Stela 11 was not facing the plaza—and was installed over a meter above.

Photo by Nicholas Hellmuth, circa 1970 or 1971. The base of the stela was in situ, the upper part had been broken off centuries ago by trees being blown over in torrential rain storms with high winds. The base was completely hidden by rubble falling down from the stairs and the acropolis.

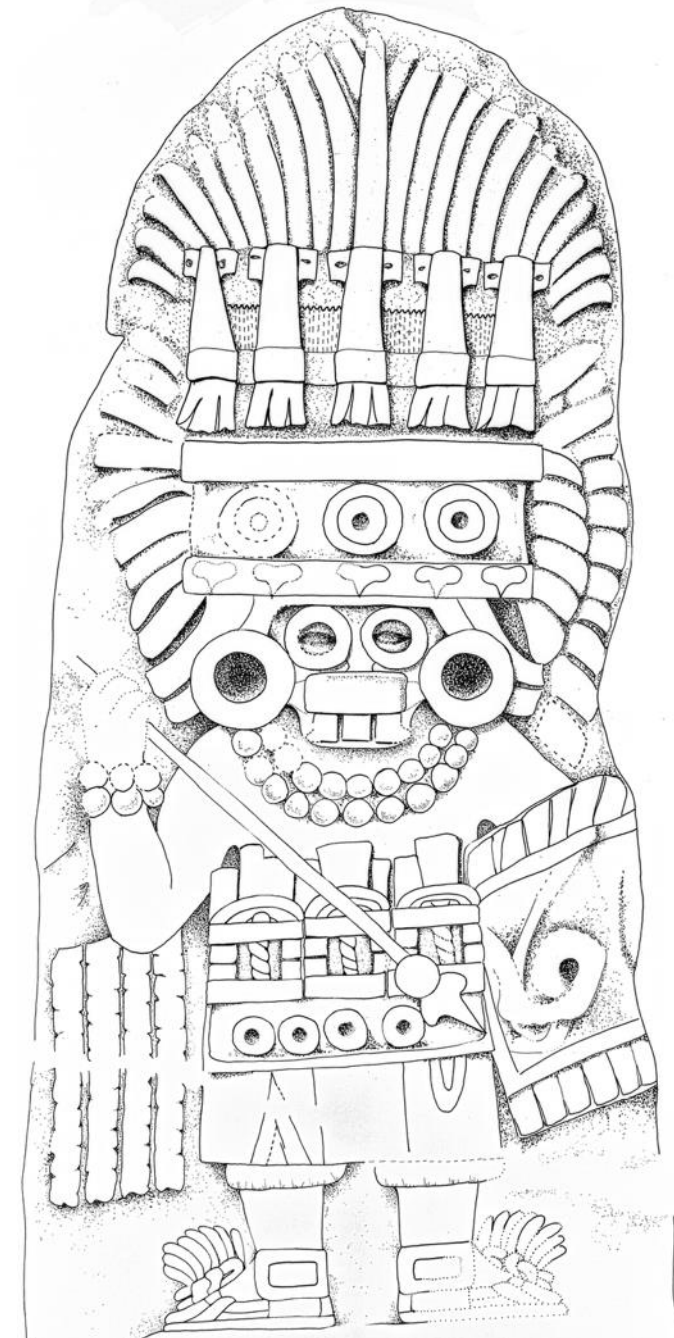
Lots of reports show Tikal Stela 32 even though it also has no hieroglyphs. Was Tikal Stela 32 the model for Yaxha Stela 11? Also notable: Yaxha Stela 11 was still displayed for half a millennium—all the Teotihuacan influenced portraits at Tikal were buried as offerings inside pyramids.



Tikal Stela 31, shield, on side.



Tikal Stela 32, drawing by Coe in Jones and Satterthwaite

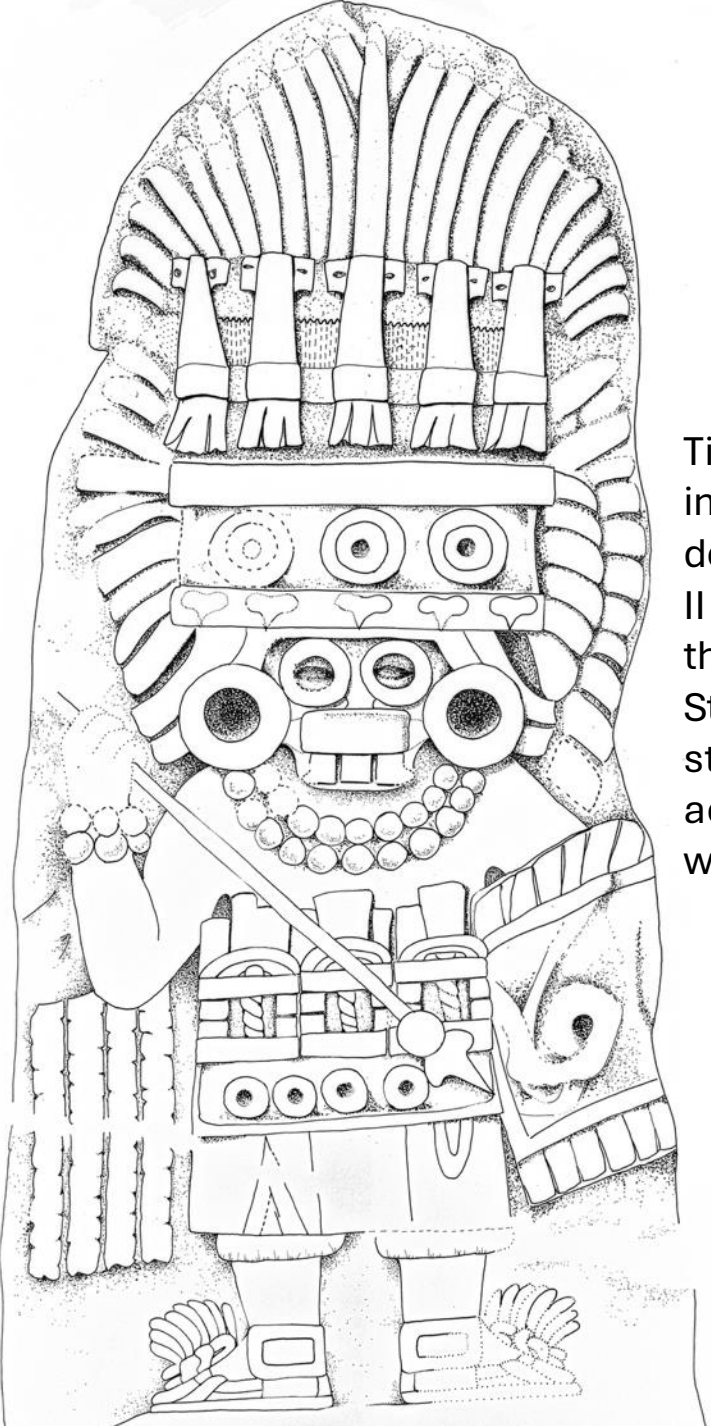


Yaxha Stela 11, M. Delp and FLAAR.

**Was the Tlaloc Warlord of
Yaxha Stela 11
moved to face the royal
burial area where this
Teotihuacan Vassel was
buried?**

Tikal Stela 31 was enshrined inside a pyramid potentially dedicated to Sihyaj Chan K'awil II (O'Neil 2009: 125). This raises the question of whether Yaxha Stela 11 was reset up the stairway facing straight into the acropolis fill because this warlord is buried there?

Helpful FLAAR drawing by M. Delp with iconographic details improved during discussions with Hellmuth and based on Hellmuth photographs with cross-lighting.



The “Entrada” of Teotihuacan-inspired military first “entering” El Peru-Waka’ and Sufricaya, then Tikal, Uaxactun, Yaxha and other nearby Early Classic Maya sites is well documented. Over 90% of the articles, books, web pages and lectures on this military take-over of the central Peten show Tikal Stela 31.

Yet Yaxha Stela 11, just a few dozen kilometers from Tikal, has a Tlaloc 400% larger than the shield on the side of Tikal Stela 31.

And the Yaxha Stela 11 shows a full frontal, fully militarized portrait of a victorious Tlaloc. No local deity is presented in frontal pose of this magnitude. Over 90% of traditional Maya rulers and warlords show themselves in profile. Yes, there are frontal poses of rulers, but they are rare.

This Yaxha stela has not one single solitary hieroglyph. Same issue with the similar frontal Tlaloc on Tikal Stela 32—no hieroglyphs—because the portrait by itself “told the story” so the patrons felt there was no need for hieroglyphs.

The military ruler who commissioned this portrait, or the local subjected Maya ruler who wanted to butter up the Teotihuacan related powers, realized that no hieroglyphs were needed. It is the size and the pose that sends the message to everyone.

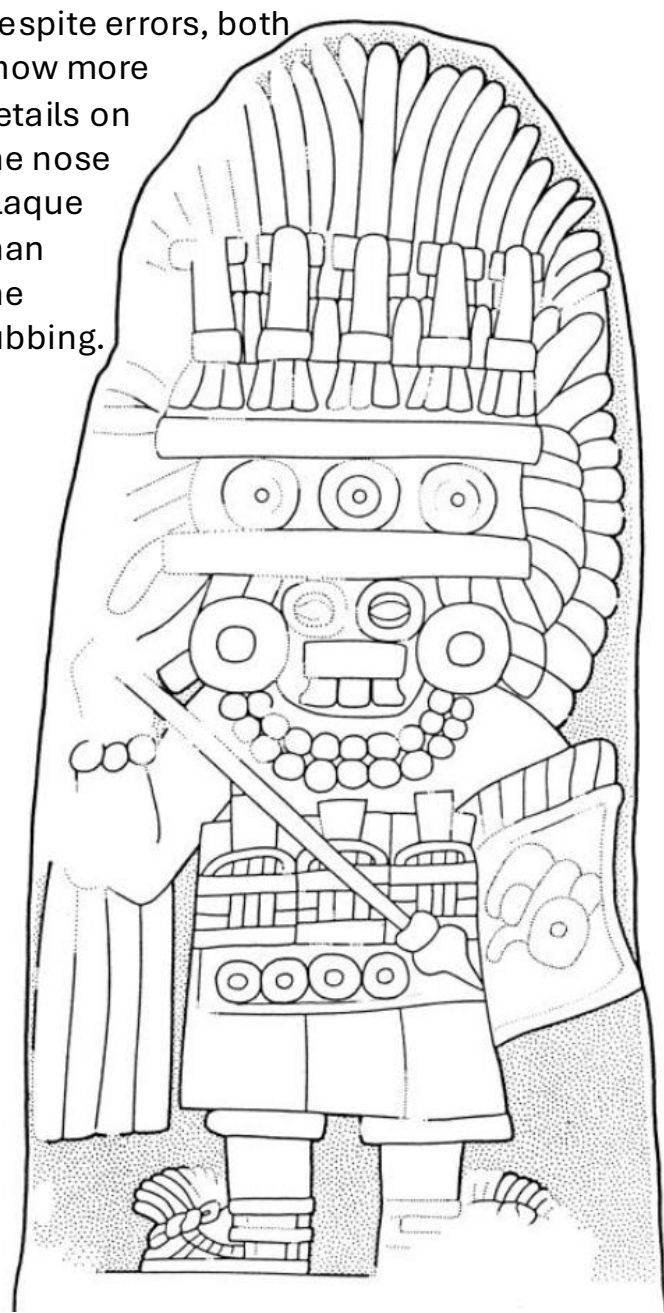
But the lack of hieroglyphs understandably means that epigraphers rarely include a large-scale illustration of Yaxha Stela 11 in their reports.

Also missing in most studies of La Entrada are Tres Islas Stela 1 and Stela 3 (Nielsen 2003, Volume II).

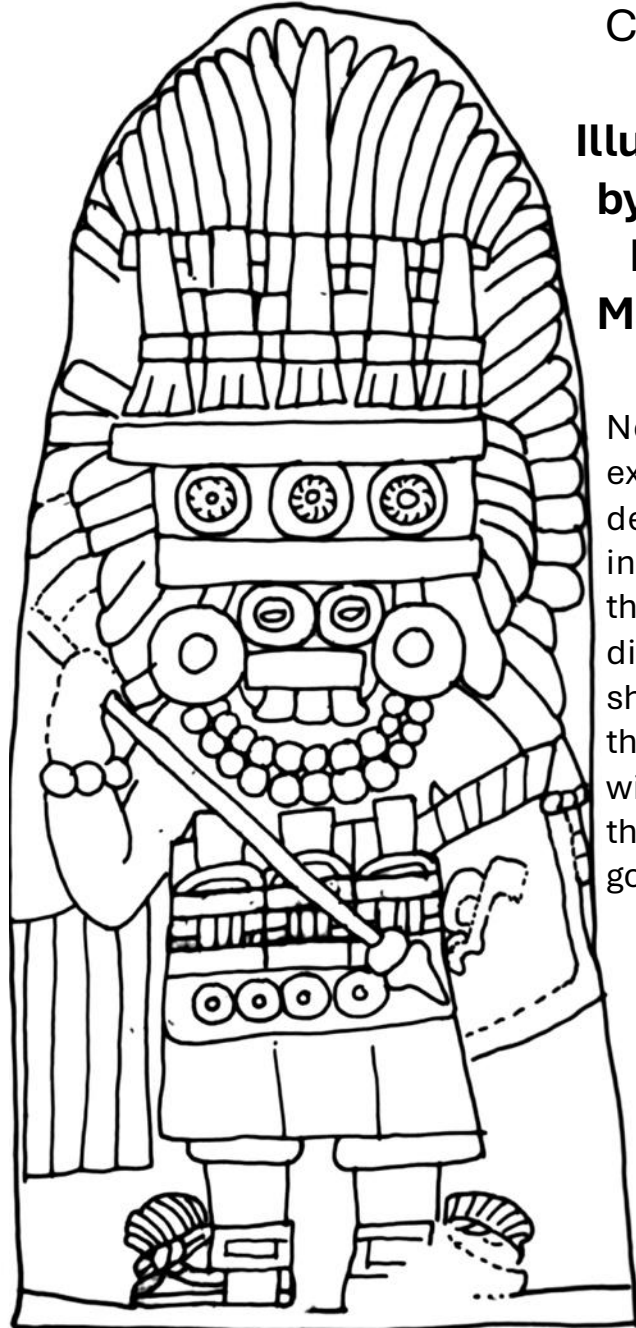
The designation Tlaloc is used in this iconography research report as a generic word. Tlaloc the Rain God is a concept from past decades and obviously needs to be restudied. Aztec and other Post Classic google-eyed deities can help understand the Teotihuacan Tlaloc—but it is obviously best to re-study the Teotihuacan Tlaloc based on 3rd to 5th century examples. After the fall of Teotihuacan Tlaloc portraits continued to be popular across the Maya areas (Hellmuth 1969) but the cults of Tlaloc would most likely have changed over these centuries.

So best not to assume that all Tlaloc personages are rain gods.

Despite errors, both show more details on the nose plaque than the rubbing.



Freehand, tasseled headdress has weird details; same erroneous shield design. But is still helpful.

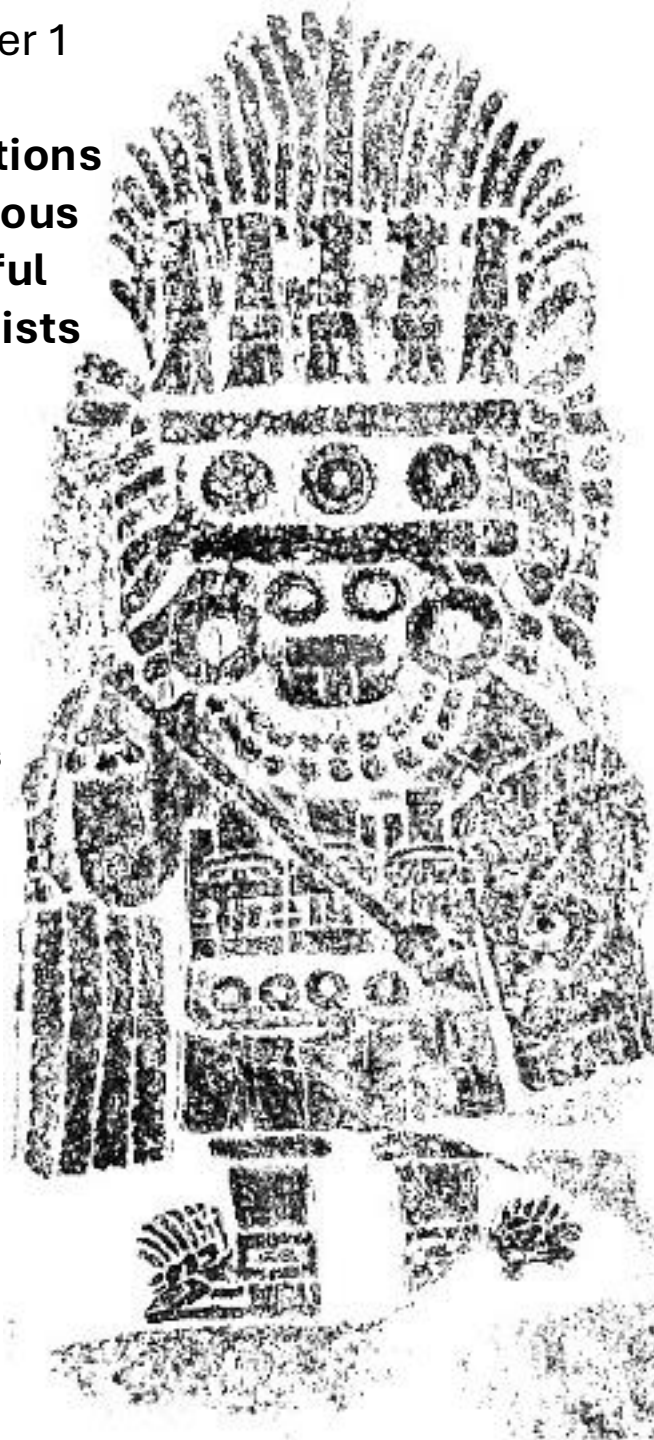


Obviously freehand, out of proportion everywhere.

Chapter 1

Illustrations by various helpful Mayanists

Non-existent details inside the disks; shows the eyes within the goggles.



This precise rubbing by Merle Greene Robertson documents that illustrations are accurate only when “done from the actual stela...” Proportions on freehand drawings are not accurate.

Nose/mouth plaque details not rescued by the rubbing. But...the details of the shield are better than any line drawing.

Position of the circles across the thigh is more precise than any drawing.

Sandle has an obvious “tablero” but not precise “talud”.

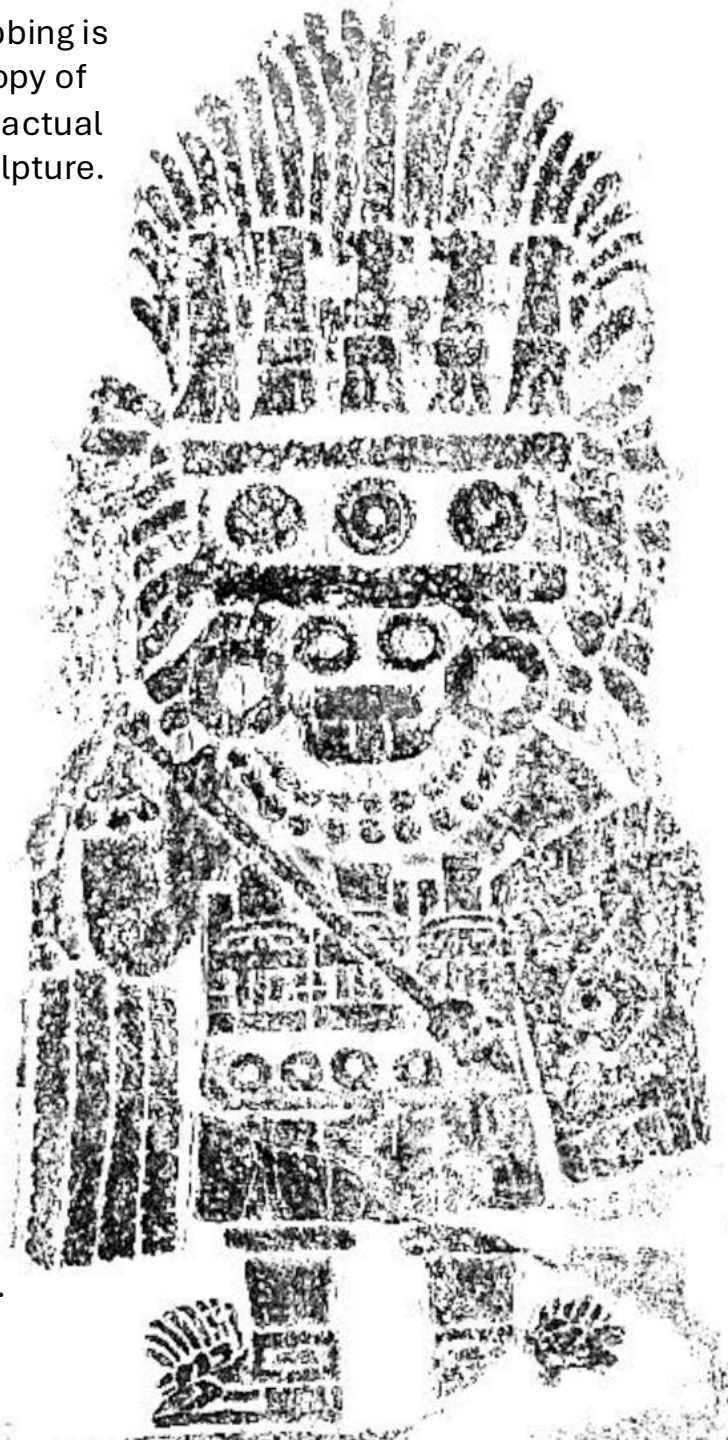
Every part is distorted because it's a free hand drawing.



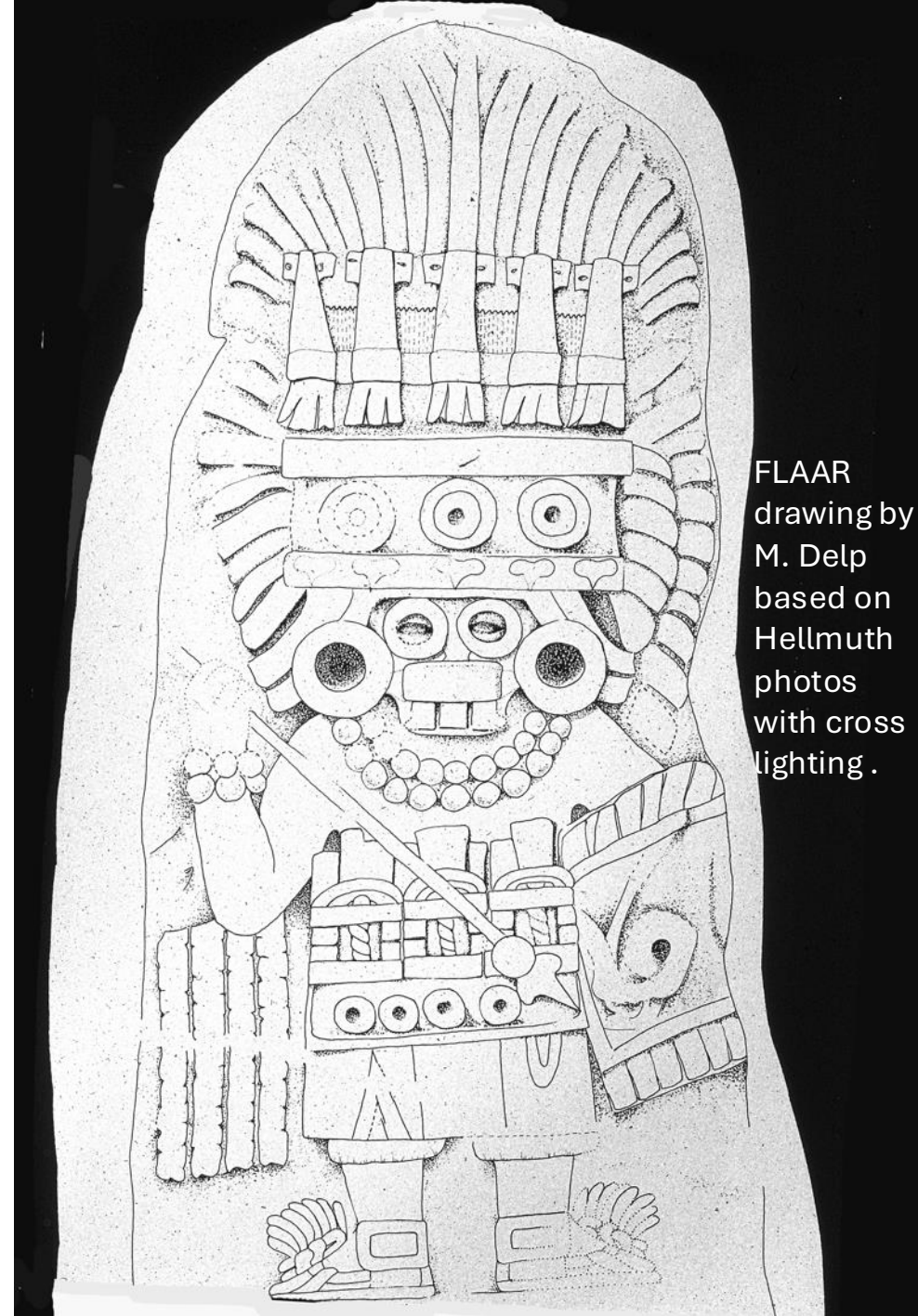
This shield is better than other drawings.

Von Winning '92.

Rubbing is a copy of the actual sculpture.



FLAAR drawing by M. Delp based on Hellmuth photos with cross lighting.



If you compare the drawing by M. Delp with the nice line drawing of Linda Schele you will notice that:

- Schele put scroll like designs in the three circles across the headdress. These are correctly not present in all other line drawings, so no drawing should have these reconstructed designs.
- FLAAR discovered five dart like designs across the bottom row. These are missing on all other drawings
- FLAAR put detail on the skirt. These are missing on two of the other drawings
- FLAAR put a rope-like concept in the middle of the items across the waist. Schele's drawing came closer than the others that lacked detail.
- FLAAR put feathers across the bottom of the shield; these on the bottom are totally missing from two drawings.
- FLAAR put more detail on the side tie loop on the sandal.

In general, the drawing by Delp+FLAAR is a good start and clean; each feature has details. If you compare these with the other drawings one wonders what they used to do the drawing and why there was so little detail (and no depth, no shading). All these different drawings are helpful and Linda Schele was a pleasant person, but if you are an iconographer and need details, it may help to have someone else's drawing so you can study the more realistic details of Yaxha Stela 11.

The “shark tooth” like designs of course could mimic the spear point (the Teotihuacans used atlatls with short spears; the spear hold by Yaxha Stela 11 Tlaloc is healthy sized; would be worth studying if it is still “atlatl sized.”). The size and shape of the spear point looks acceptable for the ones hurled by an atlatl.

Nielsen shows the Hellmuth/Delp, Schele and Grube illustrations (2003, Vol. 2, Figs. A3a-c).

Chapter 2

When was Yaxha Stela 11 Discovered and studied by Early Explorers?

Teobert Maler, 1904, evidently did not see Yaxha Stela 11—only stelae 1 through 10. I named "Maler Group" after his decades of research.

Sylvanus Morley, 1915 (Aquino and Segura 2008: 1126 citing Morley 1938: 455). Yaxha Stela 11 is pictured in Plate 161,b.

Frans Blom, 1920's. We named a causeway Calzada Blom for his work at Yaxha (causeway, calzada, sacbe all mean the same).

CIW mapping 1932 by William Lincoln. We named a causeway Lincoln Sacbe for his work at Yaxha.

Ian Graham, late 1960's (need to check his diaries to find in what year he did the sketch of Yaxha Stela 11; and, did he map Yaxha?)

Merle Greene Robertson, rubbings (need to check her diaries to find in what year she did the rubbing of Yaxha Stela 11). She did rubbings of other Yaxha stelae during her visit to the FLAAR project in the early 1970's.

1970-1974 FLAAR Project, several months each year for five years. During the rainy season it was too wet to accomplish field work.

1980's 1990's, lots of capable Guatemalan archaeologists had their own projects at Yaxha, including adding improvements to the map.

Today there is a Guatemalan archaeological project that has discovered things no earlier archaeologist knew about.

Merle Greene Robertson visited Yaxha, and did nice rubbings

Merle Greene Robertson was a friend and colleague to many Mayanists. She and her husband were hospitable at their Palenque home. She did a great service for Mayan studies in archaeology, epigraphy (the study of hieroglyphic writing) and iconography (the study of the symbolism and meaning of the designs in art). Merle visited Yaxha and was our guest there. I estimate she had also already been to Yaxha before the FLAAR project began.

Ian Graham visited Yaxha, and I estimate he also produced drawings

Since I had been an undergraduate at Harvard, and since there were a lot of stelae at Yaxha, Ian Graham came to visit the FLAAR Yaxha mapping project. He was very helpful. His ability to do precise line drawings of stelae is known and appreciated worldwide. When in Guatemala City, Ian stayed in a hotel just two blocks from the FLAAR office/residence in Zona 1 in the 1970's. So he came to visit several times.

In years after that, as I led tour groups to remote areas, I often came across Ian and one of his attractive young female assistants hiking on the same trail. I do not know when Ian did a line drawing of Yaxha Stela 11 (late 1960's). Since the focus of the FLAAR research at Yaxha was to understand the nature of "Teotihuacan" presence here, we did a lot of night photography with a Honda electric generator of Stela 11. Since the scene on Yaxha Stela 11 was rather simple and basic, our illustrators could do a good job. We did not do drawings of the other stelae since Ian was better at those, and Merle had decades of prior experience of doing rubbings. Our illustrators had never drawn a Maya stela before, so comparing them with other illustrators (who spent decades doing drawings), our illustrator did pretty well with Stela 11.

Other Illustrators of Yaxha Stela 11

Hasso Von Winning had snapshots from FLAAR but was unlikely at Yaxha to study Stela 11 in-person. We knew him in-person so we provided photos but in the 1970's there was no digital transferring and we had no database. So he seems to have done his drawing entirely freehand, sadly resulting in distortion of almost every part of the scene.

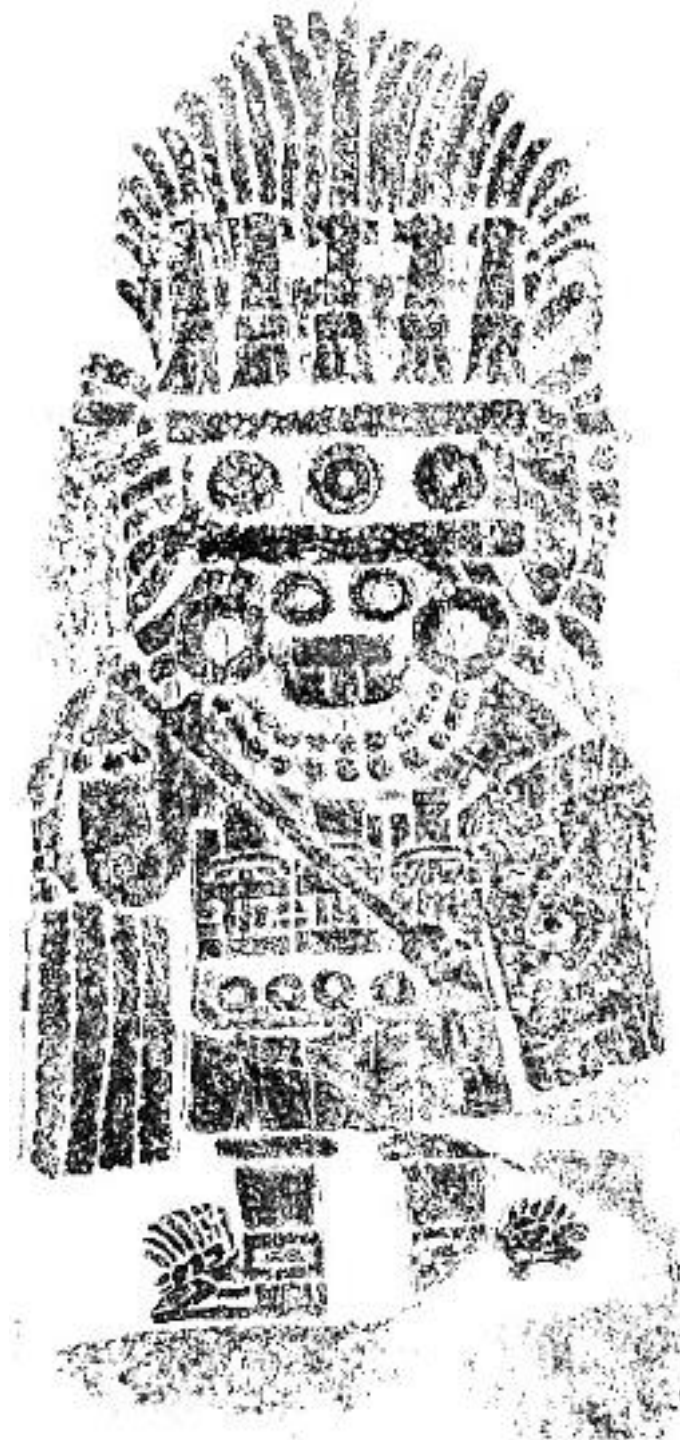
Linda Schele was evidently at Yaxha a few hours and has one photo of the upper half of Stela 11 in the Linda Schele photo database.

Nikolai Grube has been to hundreds of Maya sites and is cited for Yaxha in the 1990's. His drawings of hieroglyphs and other Maya sculptures have assisted scholars and students around the world for decades.

Rubbing by Merle Greene Robertson.
Rubbing ID: D23689.

Page 114 in the PDF on-line (no actual
pagination). This is from a 1995
publication on- line.

You can then “invert” the white-on-
black to the helpful black-on-white.



Only a few of the
row of “spear
points” across the
lower part of the
headdress are
visible in the
rubbing.

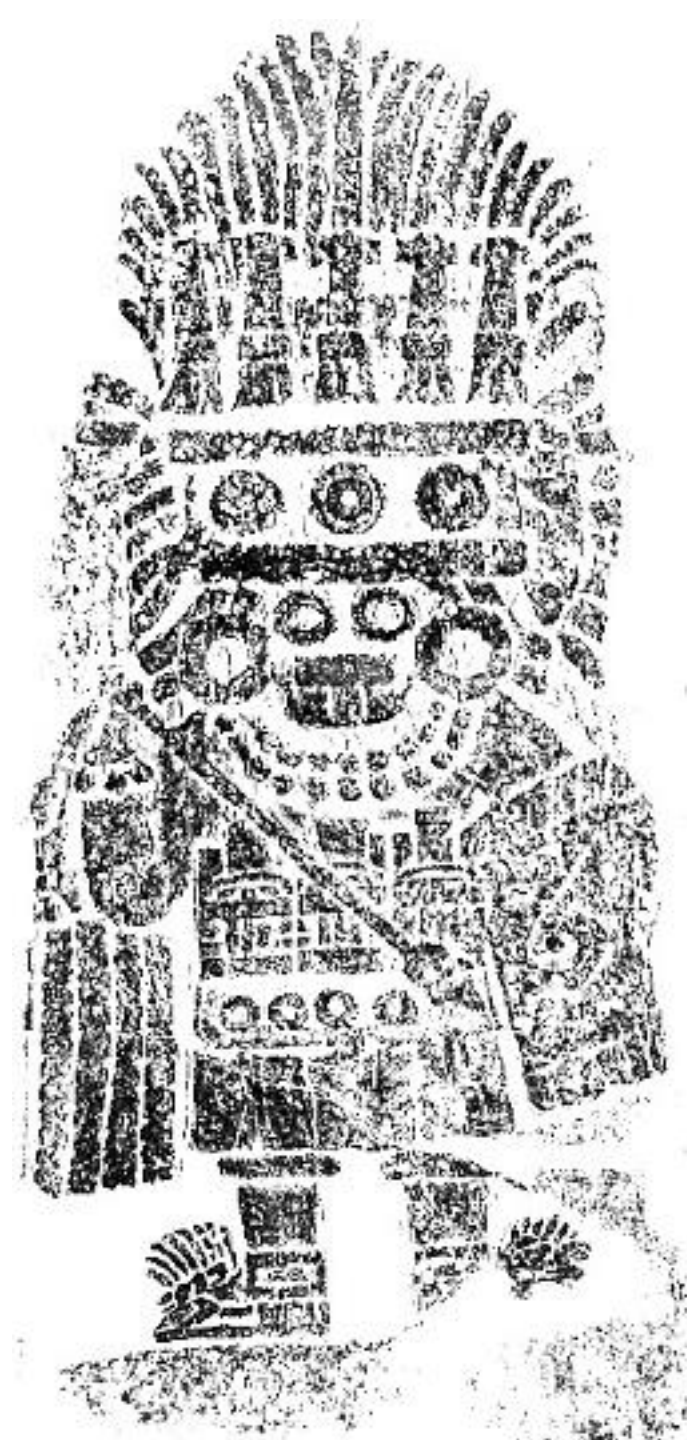
But more details of
the design on the
rectangular shield
are noticeable in
the rubbing.

So, cross-lighting is
essential—and—
do more than one
angle of lighting.
So, take several
different photos,
each with a
different angle of
lighting.

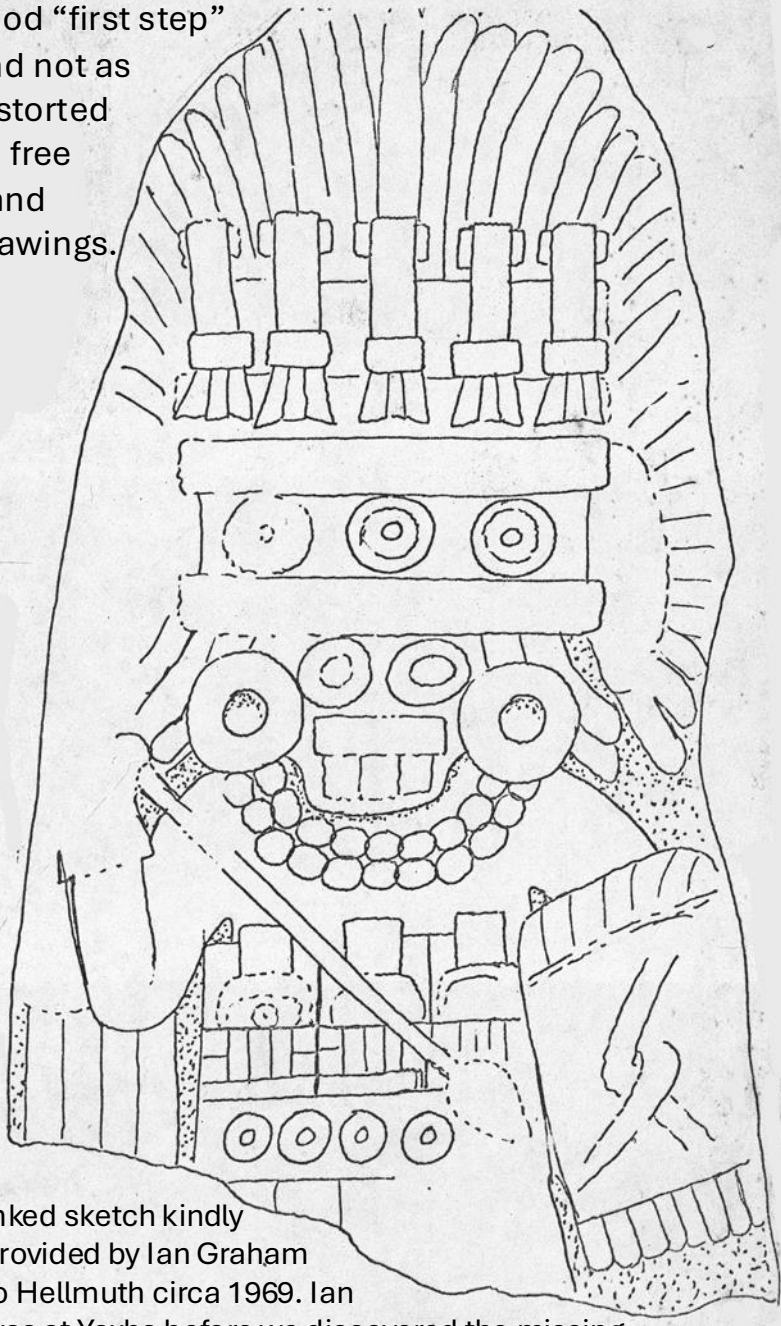
Rubbing by Merle Greene Robertson.
Rubbing ID: D23689.

Page 114 in the PDF on-line (no actual
pagination).

This is from the 1995 publication on-
line.



Ian's drawing is a
good "first step"
and not as
distorted
as free
hand
drawings.

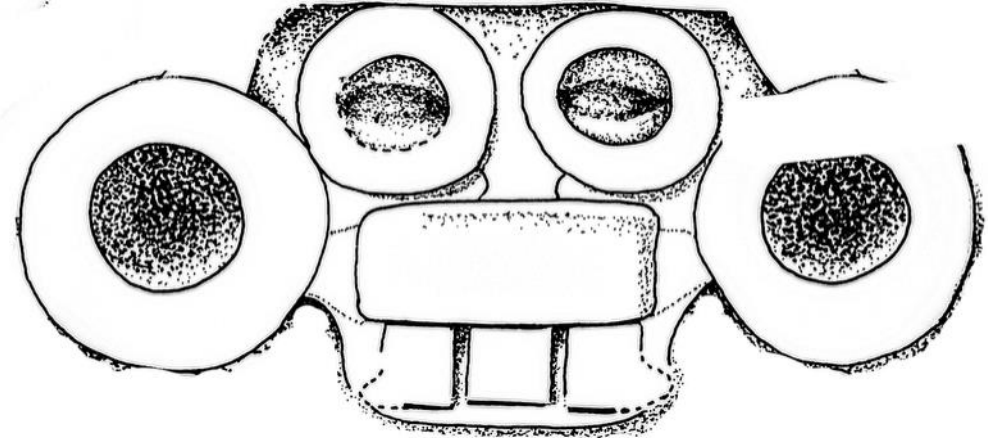
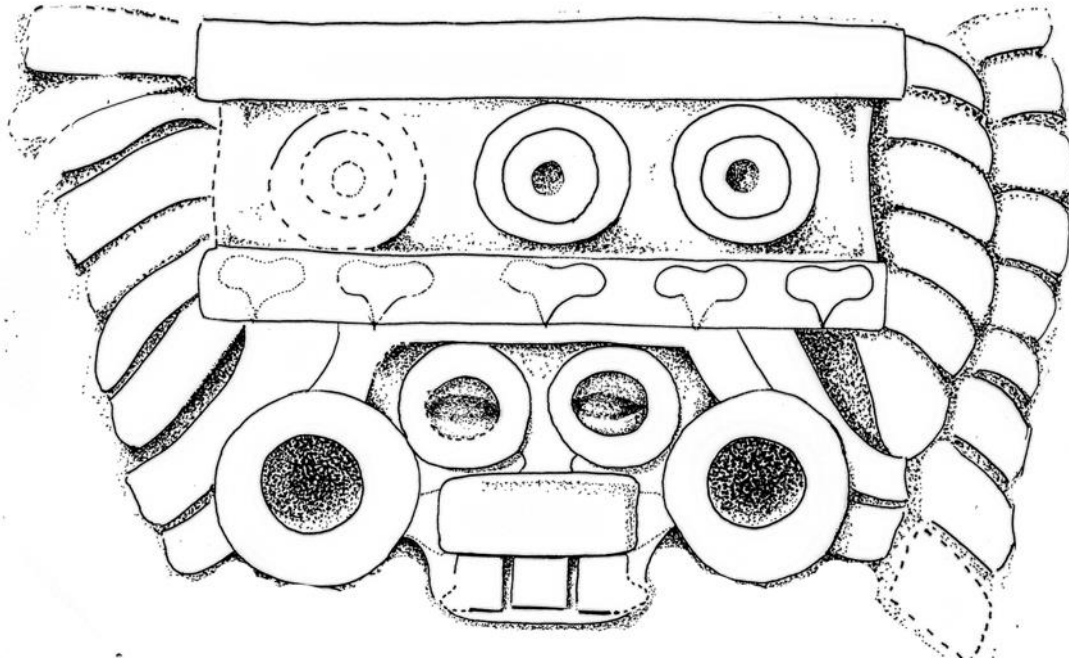


Inked sketch kindly
provided by Ian Graham
to Hellmuth circa 1969. Ian
was at Yaxha before we discovered the missing
part with the lower legs and feet.



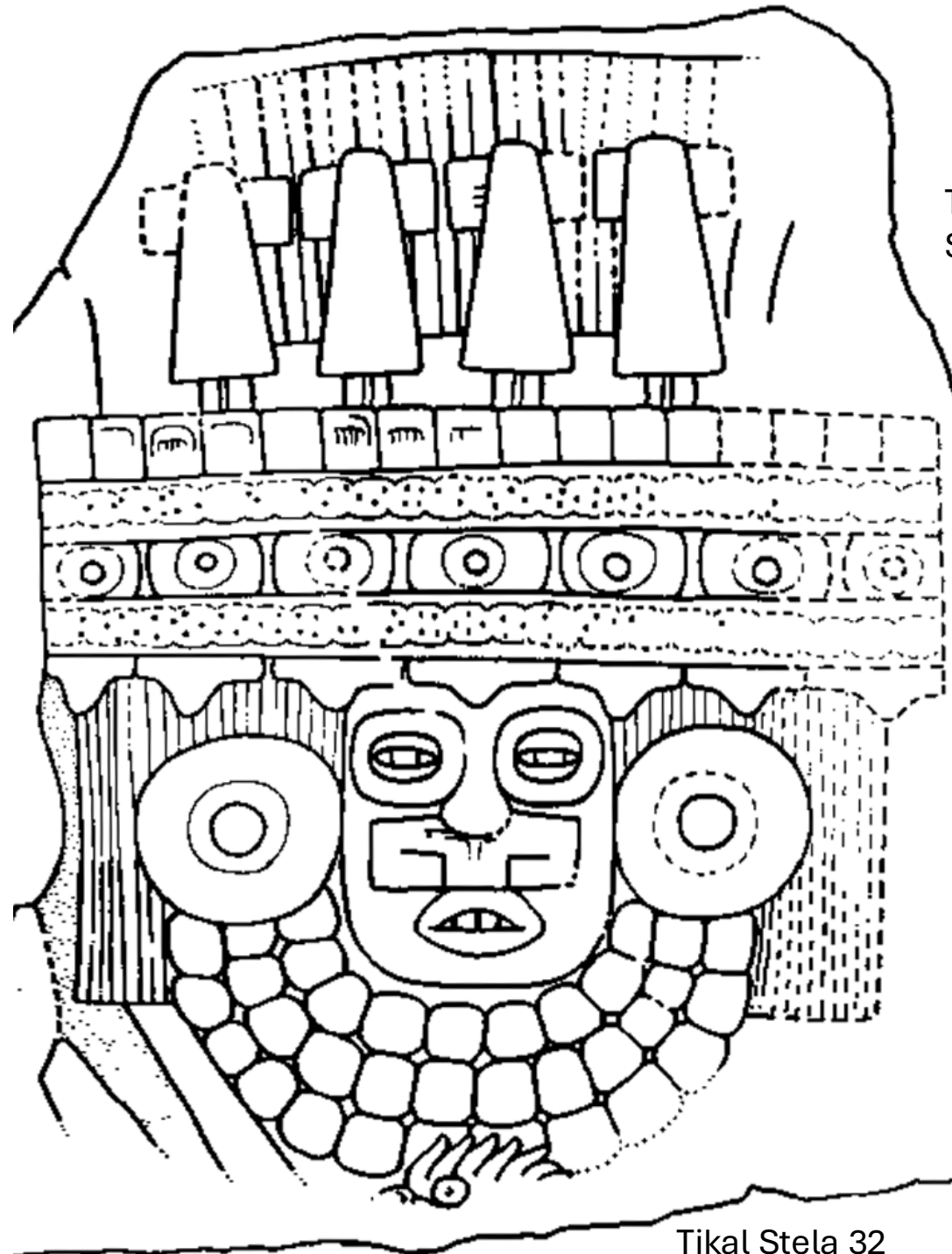
But, you need a portable electric generator to be able to see the small details.

Goggled Eyes and Geometric Nose Plaque (Nose and Mouth Plaque) on Yaxha Stela 11, Comparison and Contrast with Nose Plaques on Tlaloc and his Variants at Teotihuacan



The “goggled eyes” (goggle, not Google) are the logo of Tlaloc of Teotihuacan and throughout Mesoamerica for many centuries. Whether “owl eyes” or “butterfly eyes” deserves a thesis or dissertation. Most Tlalocs in Peten also have giant round earrings. Other Tlalocs elsewhere sometimes have a second earring below the main one. But the goggled eyes are the defining feature of anthropomorphic Tlaloc.

Most but not all “Tlaloc” portraits have a nose plaque. Often it also covers the mouth, but there are many variants. Occasionally the nose and mouth are visible despite the presence of a (small) facial plaque. The plaque shaped like tablero-talud architecture is found primarily on personages that are not military (always exceptions). And the tablero-talud mouth plaque is most common on personages with butterfly headdress and/or butterfly wings. Plus tablero-talud mouth plaques are common on supernatural portraits with strap bags and “scattering” the contents these bags (thought to be incense but why not seeds or something else?). It would help to have a MA thesis or PhD dissertation on nose plaque shape variants of size and shape and context (what else was nearby).



Tasseled headdress on both Stela 31 and Stela 32 of Tikal.

The headdress with a horizontal row of round disks is “a separate part of the overall headdress”.

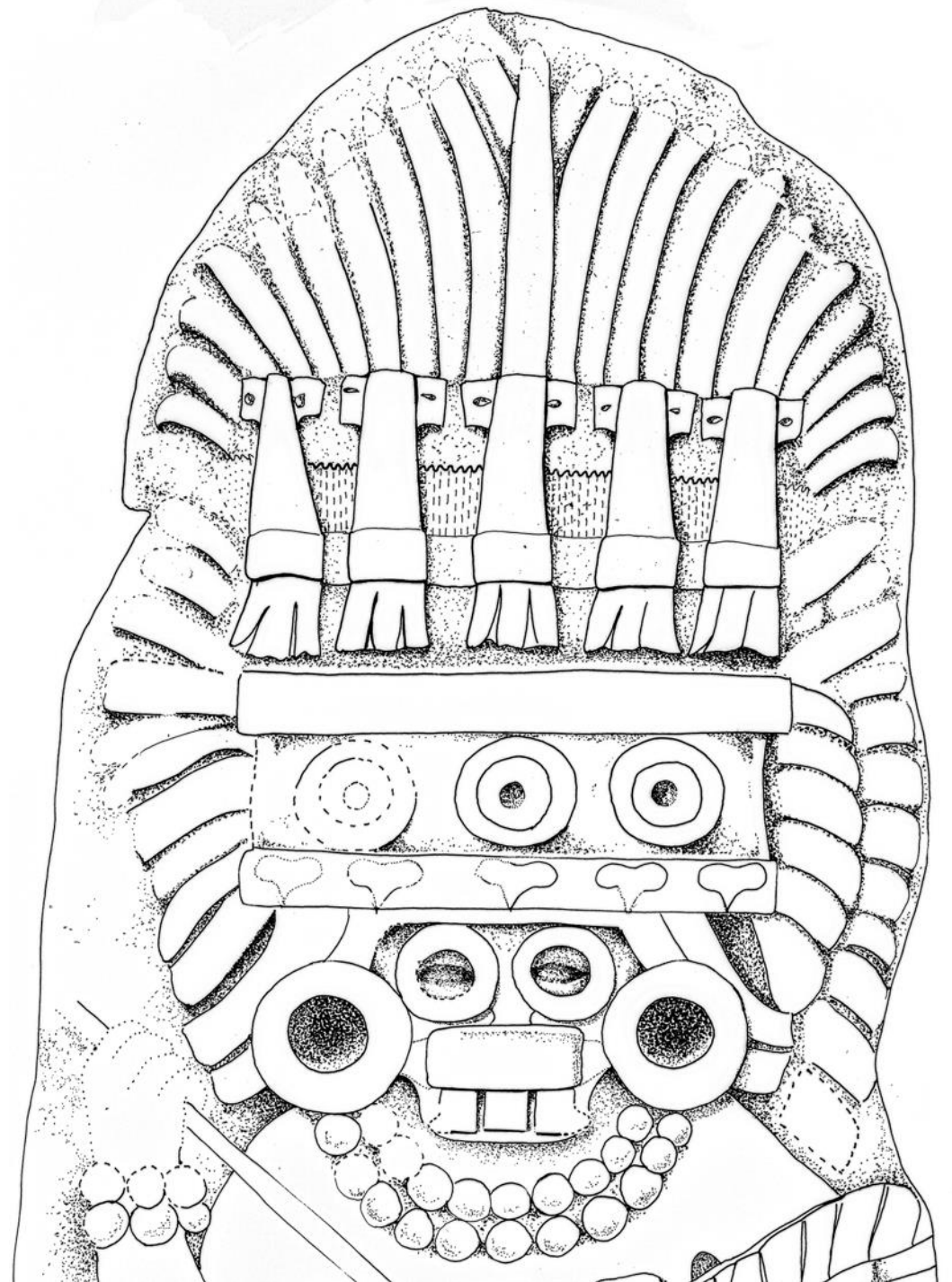
Seven abbreviated, stylized spear points in a horizontal row—but below the band plus shrunk in size and shape.

The complete nose is visible.

The complete mouth is visible.

There is only one giant earring (Tlalocs elsewhere often have two giant round earrings).

Tikal Stela 32

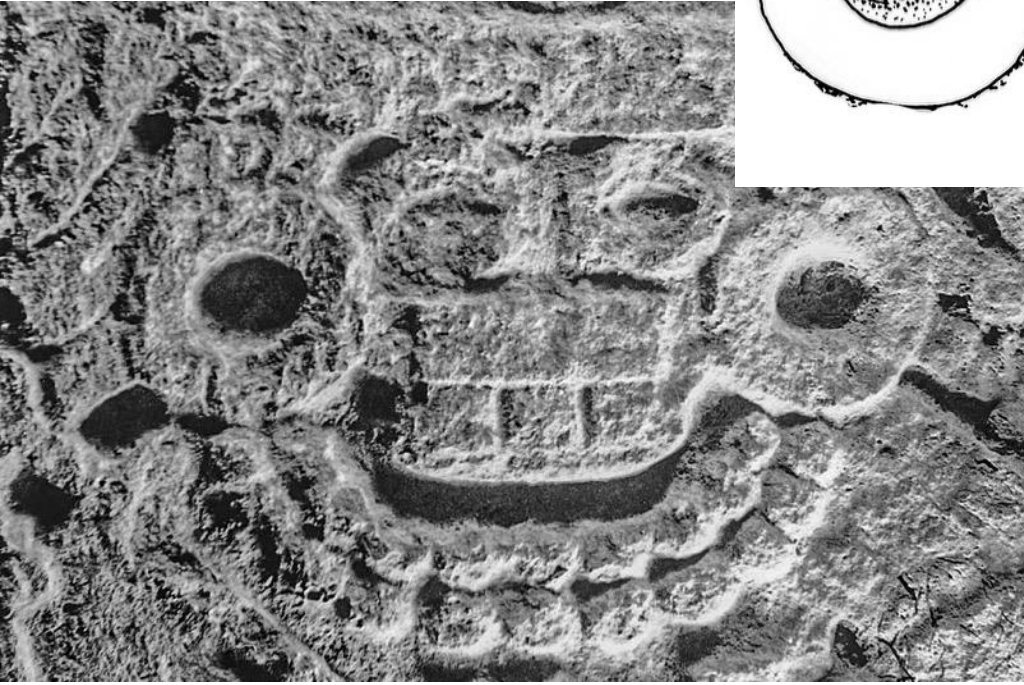
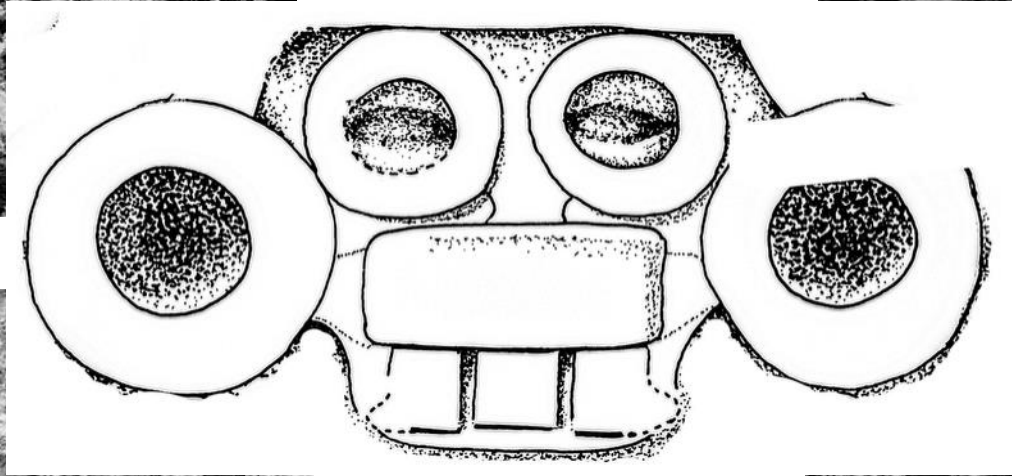
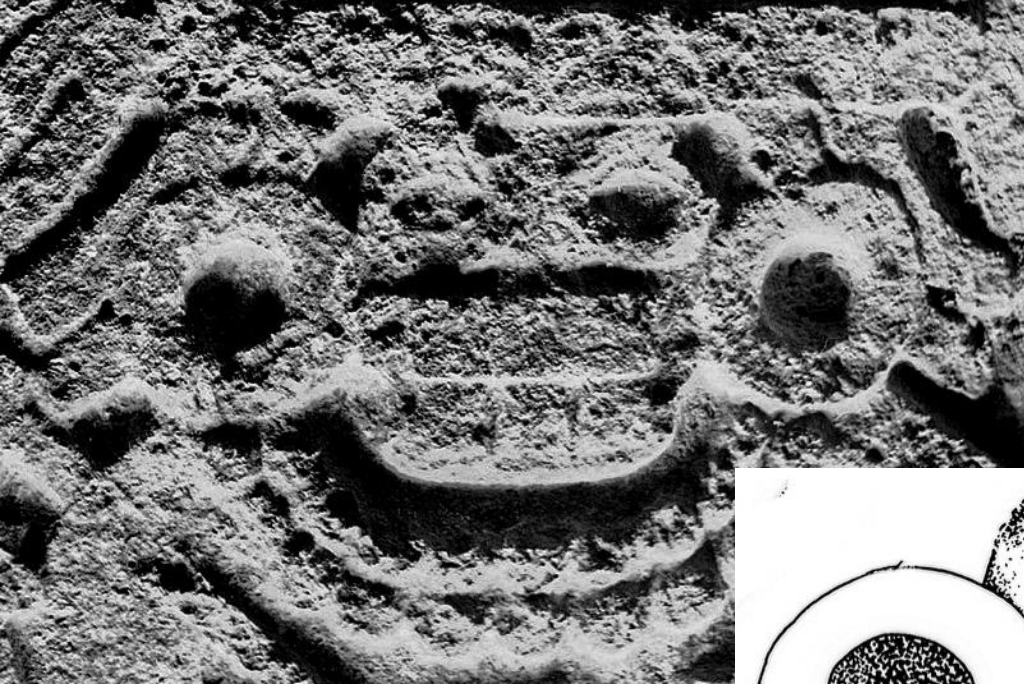


Both this Teotihuacan portrait and Yaxha portrait have:

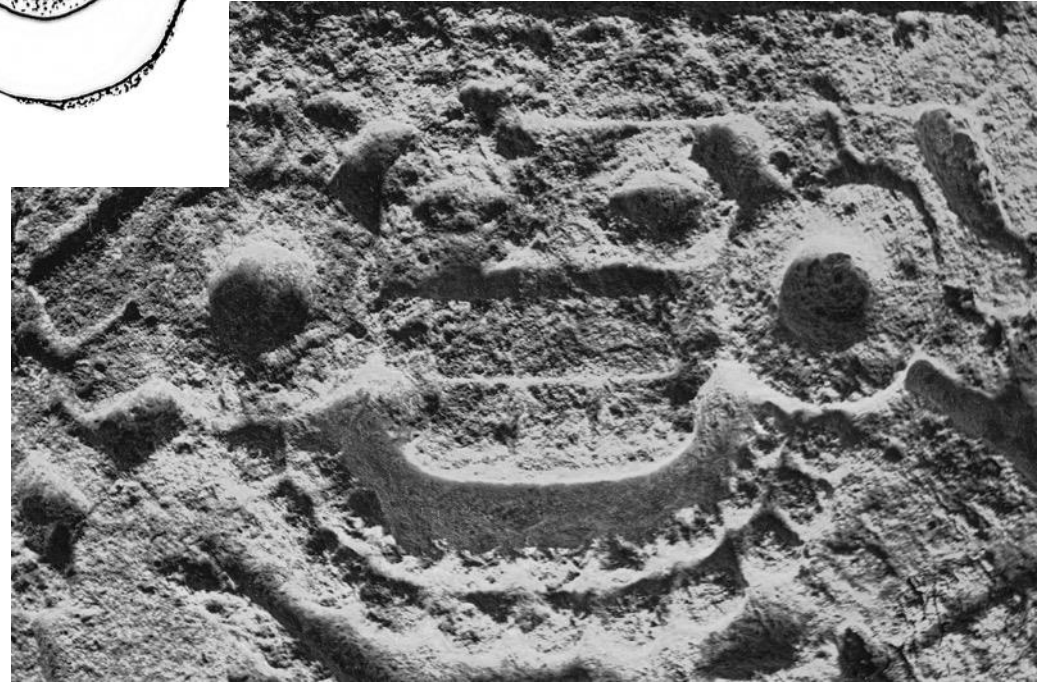
- tasseled headdress across the top
- row of doughnut shaped concentric circles
- goggled eyes and giant round earrings
- necklace of two stands of round/oval beads
- Horizontal nose plaque
- stylized simplified potential “teeth” issuing from the nose plaque

But... the Teotihuacan outfit has no spear points

But... the Yaxha outfit has no visible decoration on the lower horizontal part of the headdress. Let’s now look at close up photos of the face.

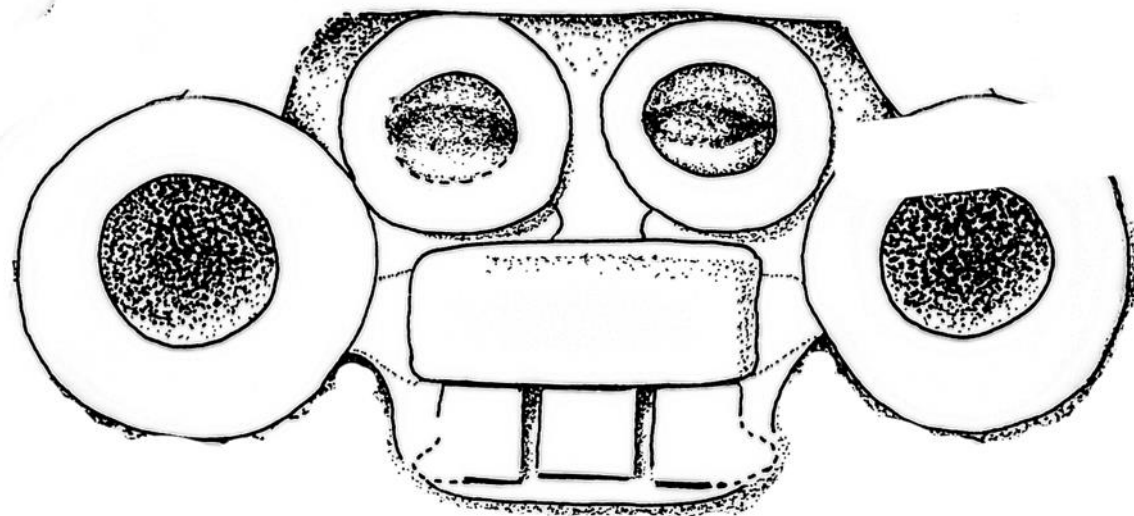


So, the drawing by the FLAAR team correctly shows three separate motifs issuing down from the nose plaque. And the ones at each side have a bit sticking out sideways, so clearly inspired by Teotihuacan prototypes.





In this photo (above at the left) the nose plaque reminds me of a variant of a tablero talud. But every sculpture should always be photographed at different angles of lighting. So, for decades, when time and funding allowed, we would move the light stands to get a slightly different angle of lighting (resulting in the photo at the right). Now you can see that the “tablero” is one rectangular unit, and the lower part is a variant on the “tooth pattern” of many Tlalocs (especially in the Maya area): the center “tooth” is rectangular (with a flat bottom). The side “teeth” are both angled outwards.



A thesis would be helpful: “Origins and Variations of the Tablero Talud in Architecture, as Decoration and as Nose Plaque”.



Super helpful recent discovery at Tikal by Guatemalan archaeologists.



The tablero-talud architecture has rows of disks that are common on architecture in Teotihuacan murals and elsewhere.

This frontal “Teotihuacan” individual has TWO earrings (as found on Tiquisate style incensarios with Teotihuacan influence, and a few other places). Or, the necklace has the same disk as the earring to make it look like both are associated with the ear.

No goggled eyes. No row of disks (only on the architecture, and in the headdress only one giant disk). No tasseled headdress. No spear, shield or atlatl.

That said, this is one of the most remarkable archaeological discoveries showing Maya adaptation (and/or Teotihuacan presence) of Teotihuacan symbolism. This discovery also shows how much more is awaiting with further excavation at all the Maya sites that had Teotihuacan presence. Experienced Guatemalan archaeologists and helpful team resulted in this recent discovery.

Tikal Structure 6D-XV-Sub3, rendering by Heather Hurst, (Román, Paiz, Bass, Garrison, Houston, Hurst, Stuart, Corado, García, Scherer and Piedrasanta 2025: Fig. 5, page 469 and Fig. 9, page 474)

Both the raptor above the headdress and the Tlaloc face have a very similar nose plaque—with three separate “teeth”.

The raptor has “two sets of teeth” of which the bottom is the most “Tlaloc-like” albeit it curls at both ends.

This scene shows that the horizontal nose plaque bar from which issue 3 “teeth” is clearly associated with the military aspect of Tlaloc (documented by the horizontal spear). Would be super helpful to have a rollout of the entire scene.

The headdress features a horizontal row of large disks (with most obscured by the giant “nose plaque/mouth decoration”.

The rest of this scene is filled with iconographic documentation for many other topics.

Most of the painting looks authentic (meaning with no repainting).

Teotihuacan stuccoed and painted cylindrical tripod (supports did not survive the over thousand years). Download on-line from helpful web site of the Brooklyn Museum, pottery cited to the A. Augustus Healy Fund.



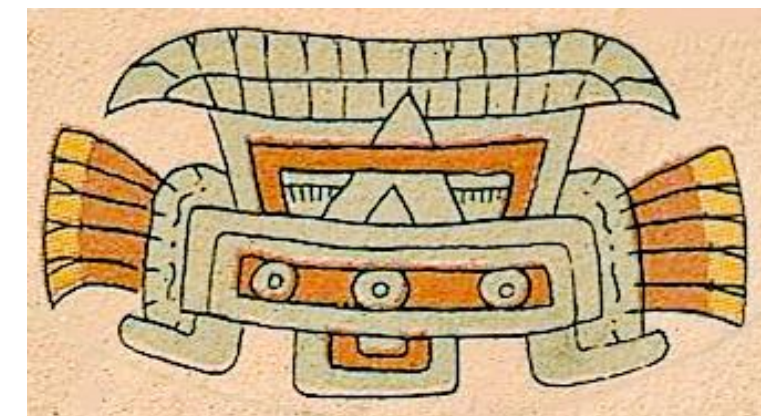
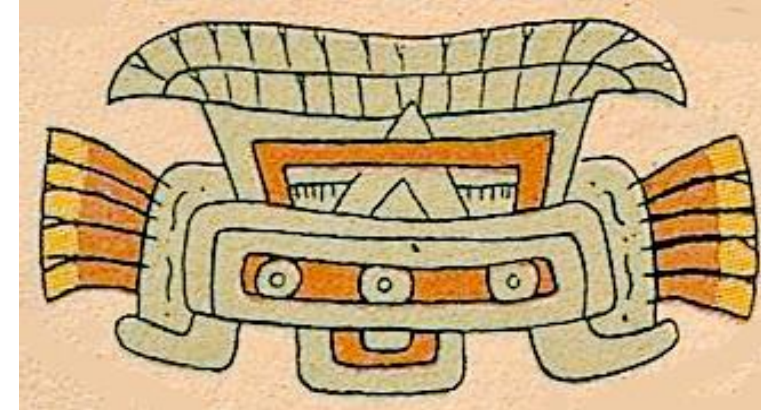


After documenting that most Teotihuacan style nose plaques looked like a tablero talud—but—were not really a unified tablero talud—if you keep looking you will obviously find a complete (unified) tablero talud as a nose plaque. Here are three examples.

This rollout is now in the Dumbarton Oaks database of improved digital quality. The comments by Kerr from his database of the previous century are correct: Mayavase.com Comments: Esquintla style tripod bowl Tlaloc mask with cacao trees. Best spelled Escuintla.

Keep in mind that only the face at the right has a close attempt by the artist to show goggled eyes. The face in the middle has no Tlaloc eye rings. The faces have only an informal attempt to pretend to show goggled eyes (but most of the corners of the frame are square—and no "goggle"). The artist probably knew that the mouth plaque, the row of disks in the headdress (of two of them) and the simple but large round earring were enough to remind the viewer of a Teotihuacan concept.

Often a tablero-talud nose plaque is associated with a butterfly—but here no butterfly is shown whatsoever. But...cacao is clearly associated with a butterfly on the Nottebohm incensario lid (now in the Museo Miraflores).

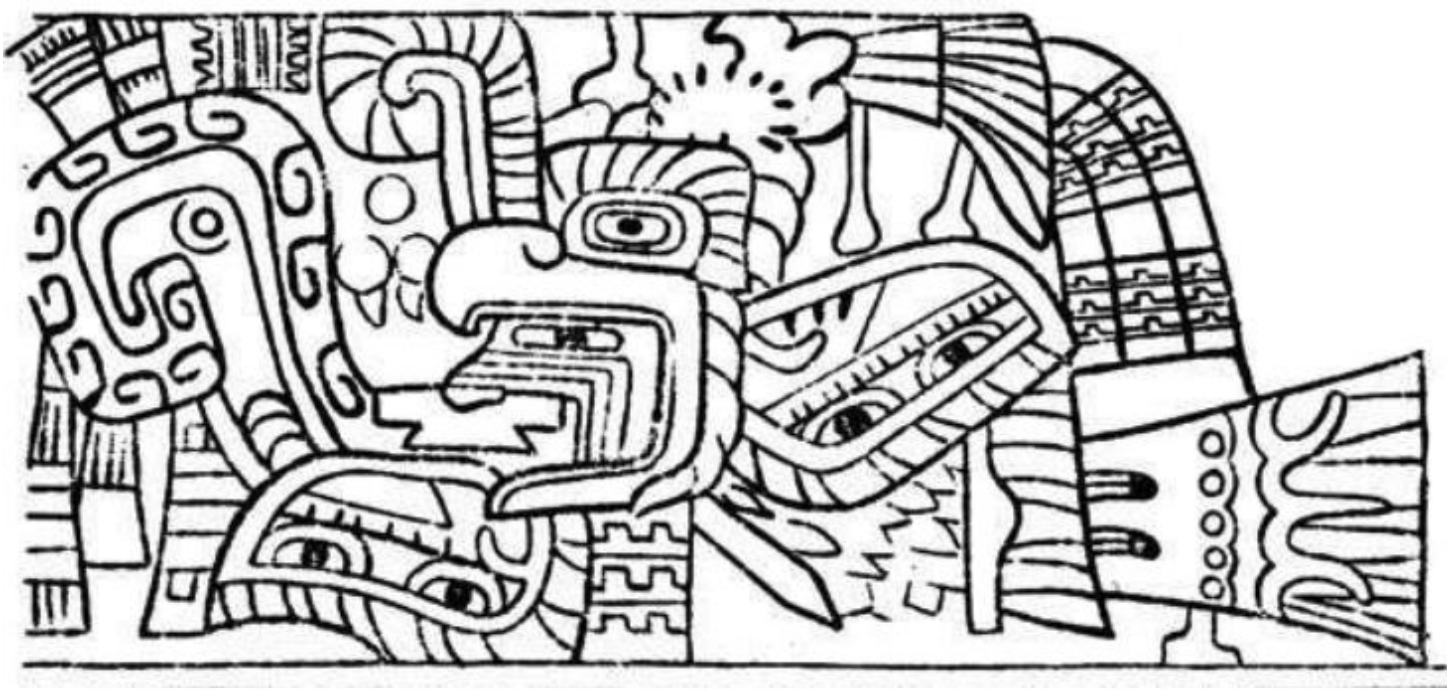


Butterfly in headdress and the deity is holding a complete butterfly. Both butterflies have round disks around their eyes.

The Yearsign is well known as a major symbol of Teotihuacan beliefs. The row of circles (disks) framed in a horizontal frame, is a major feature of Teotihuacan headdresses that has not as often been studied.



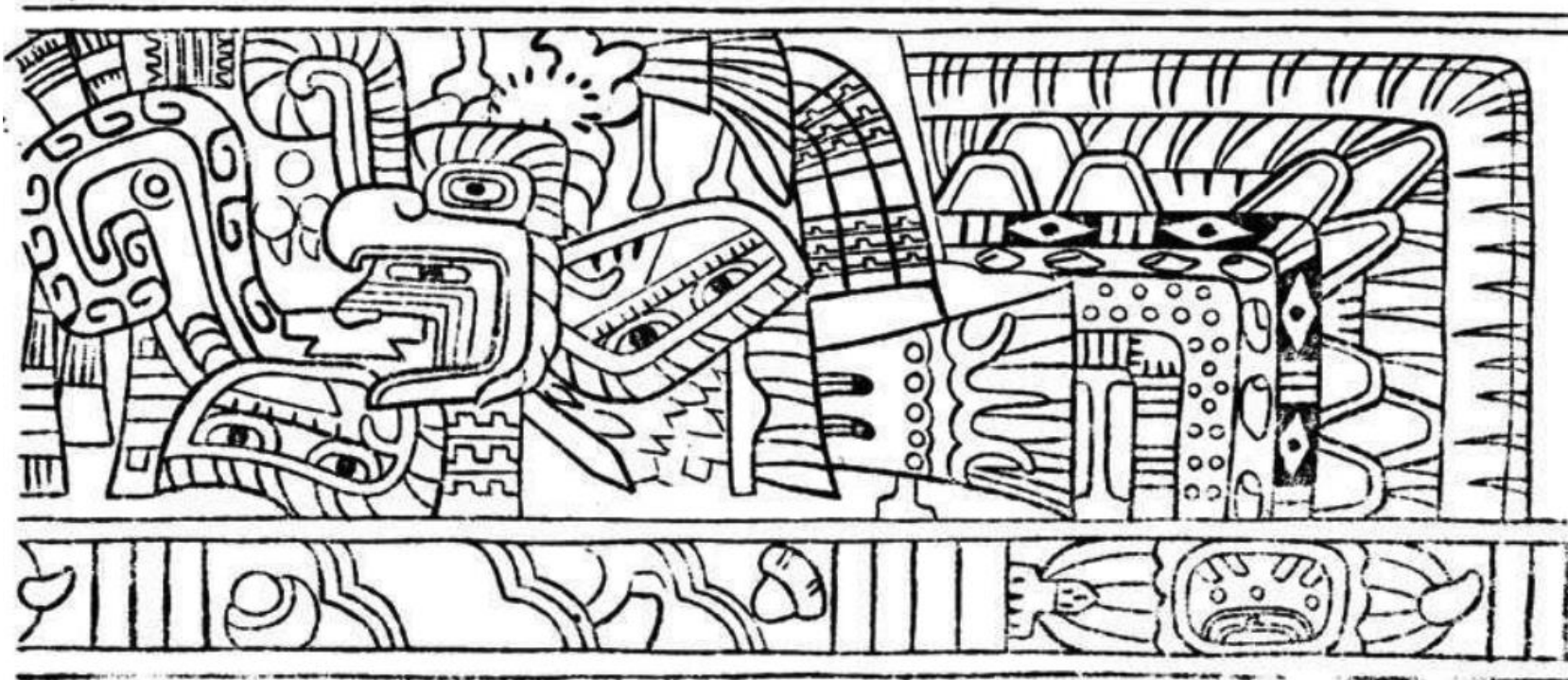
When you put this image into Google Image search, you see again how artificial AI still is in its early stages. It is unable to find this in any book and it tells you it's the Teotihuacan goddess and shows you primarily that mural. This image is in Kidder et al. 1946: Fig. 207



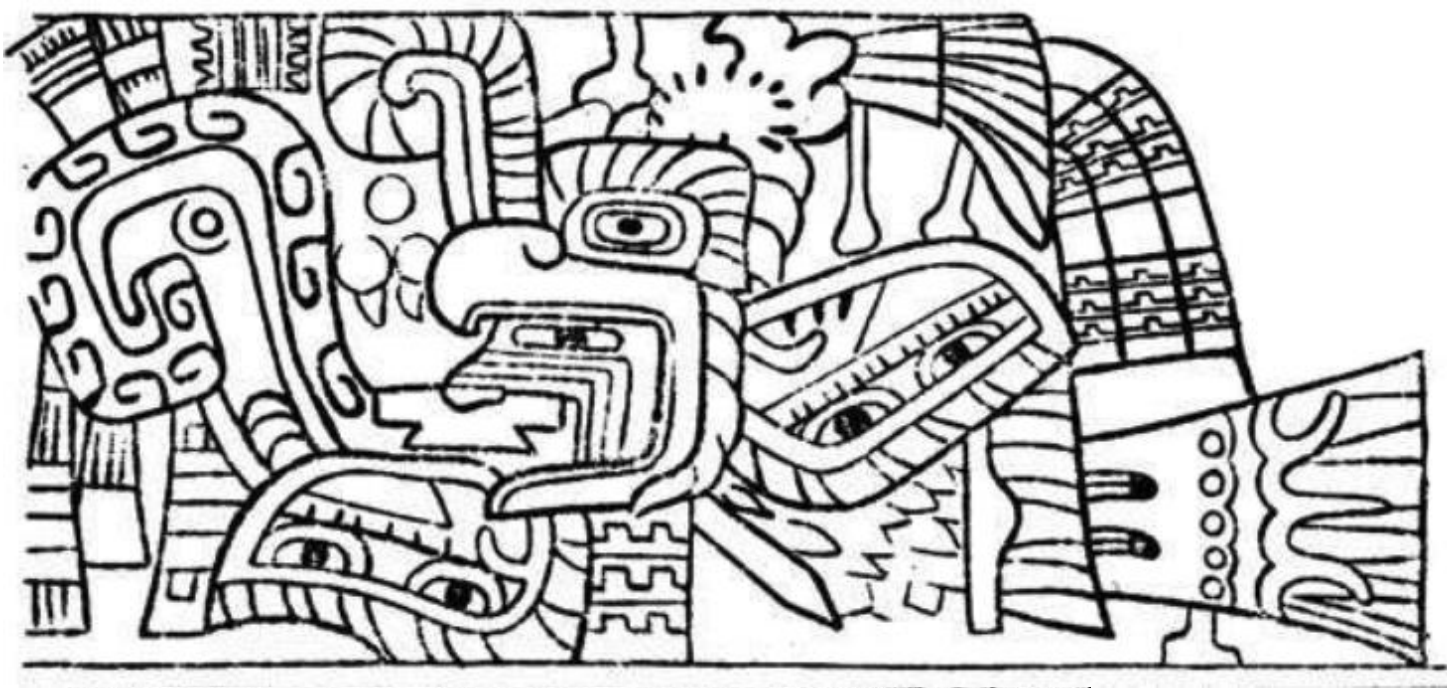
Butterfly Bird God with a clearly unified tablero talud nose plaque (Evans 2010: Fig. 8 in Paulinyu 2014: Fig. 7,a).

- No tasseled headdress
- No shield or spears
- No goggled Tlaloc eyes.

This is why I estimate that the literal “tablero talud nose plaque” is (often) a feature of the supernatural butterfly.



No overt raptor (bird) features in this outfit—but—the beak of the “butterfly” looks more like a bird beak. Has only one set of wings. But the designs are clearly to show you butterfly wings.



Butterfly Bird God with a clearly unified tablero-talud nose plaque (Evans 2010: Fig. 8 in Paulinyi 2014: Fig. 7,a).

- No tasseled headdress
- No shield or spears
- No goggled Tlaloc eyes.

This is why I estimate that the literal “tablero talud nose plaque” is a feature of the supernatural butterfly.

No overt raptor (bird) features in this outfit.

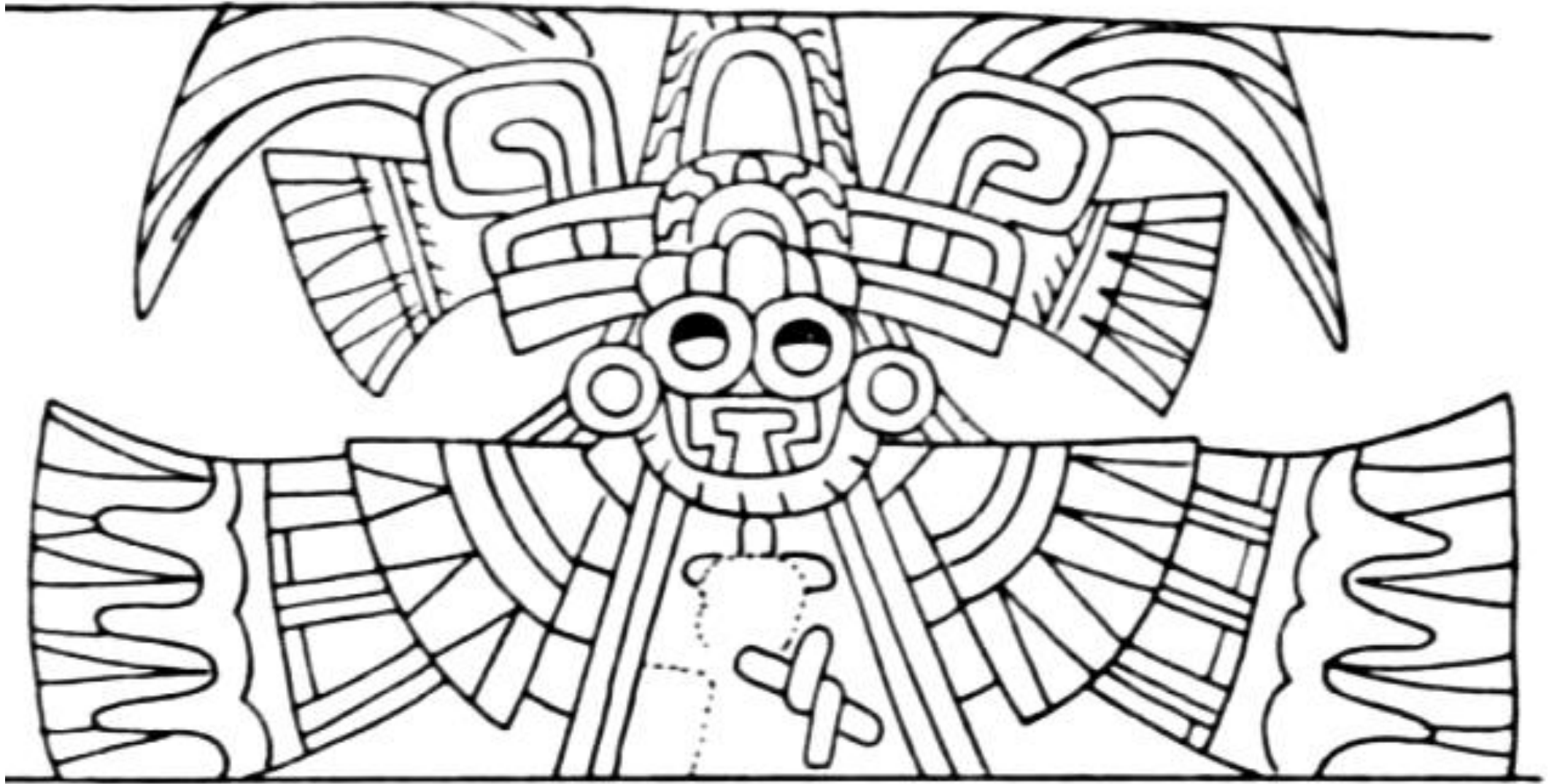


Teotihuacan tablero-talud nose plaque (Paulinyi 2014: Fig. 3a citing Sejourne 1966a: Fig. 38).

This nose plaque is the most obvious and the most acceptable tablero-talud because of its double outline.

This person “sowing” has no military aspects (no shield, no spear, not even a “bundle with flames on top). It is entirely a person flaunting the sacred butterfly. No obvious raptor features (so nothing “dangerous”). But other butterflies in other murals, in scenes on cylindrical tripods and on incensario lids do merge with raptors.

Many mythical persons who are “sowing” are also holding an “incense bag”.



Teotihuacan Butterfly Tlaloc with complete tablero-talud nose plaque. The obvious tablero-talud is so clearly associated with the butterfly Tlaloc but you can also expect butterflies with no nose plaque and butterfly Tlalocs with a different nose plaque. Depends on the message(s) that the patron or artist wants to send. But, no naturalistic butterfly antennae nor proboscis.

(Sejourne 1976: Fig. 18, page 106).

Teotihuacan tablero-talud nose plaque on a stuccoed-and-painted Teotihuacan cylindrical tripod.

The tablero-talud motif hanging from the nose is a single outline. The beautiful tablero-talud motif on the shield is more complete. If this is a shield, it is the only obvious military aspect. His hand is “sowing”.

The headdress and wings are stylized butterfly-like but there is also the beak of a raptor and its eye is more generic—not a goggle (nor on the person’s face either). So not much “Tlaloc” in this message of “sowing” to produce abundant edible food.

Sejourne 1976: Fig. 57, page 146.





The tablero-talud is the diagnostic feature of Teotihuacan inspired architecture: at Teotihuacan, Kaminalhuyu, Tikal, Yaxha (West Group) and across Mesoamerica. Scores of scholarly articles and monographs show tablero-talud architecture, including Chinchilla 2019b. The door of the temple is the location for the face—the tablero-talud platform is the nose plaque—the roof is the tasseled headdress.

Sejourne 1966: Fig. 93.



Sejourne 1966: Fig. 78.



Published in museum exhibit catalogs and also by Gonzalez (2024: Fig. 22,b).

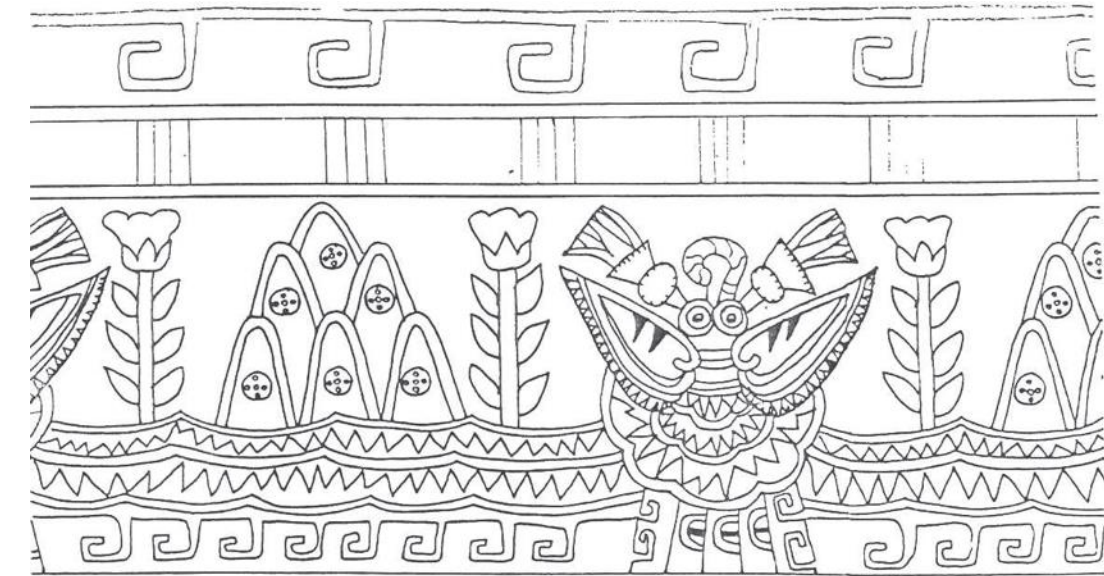


The tablero-talud nose-plaque can clearly be associated with supernatural butterfly personages. Either two earring or the necklace has an erring-like ring.

This is the ceramic back of a mirror, probably from the Costa Sur area. The other side would have been pyrite in mosaic to make a mirror.

Cleveland Museum of Art, James Albert and Mary Gardiner Ford Memorial Fund, 1989.65. The photograph is perfectly cross-lit (I put a black background so you can focus on the scene). Horizontal row of seashells and circle of “starfish”.

There are also dozens of Teotihuacan and Tiquisate-Teotihuacanoid incensario lids that flaunt butterfly symbolism. The butterfly is supposed to be “the remains of a warrior after death”. But surely a butterfly has other meaning in the cults of Teotihuacan across Mesoamerica.

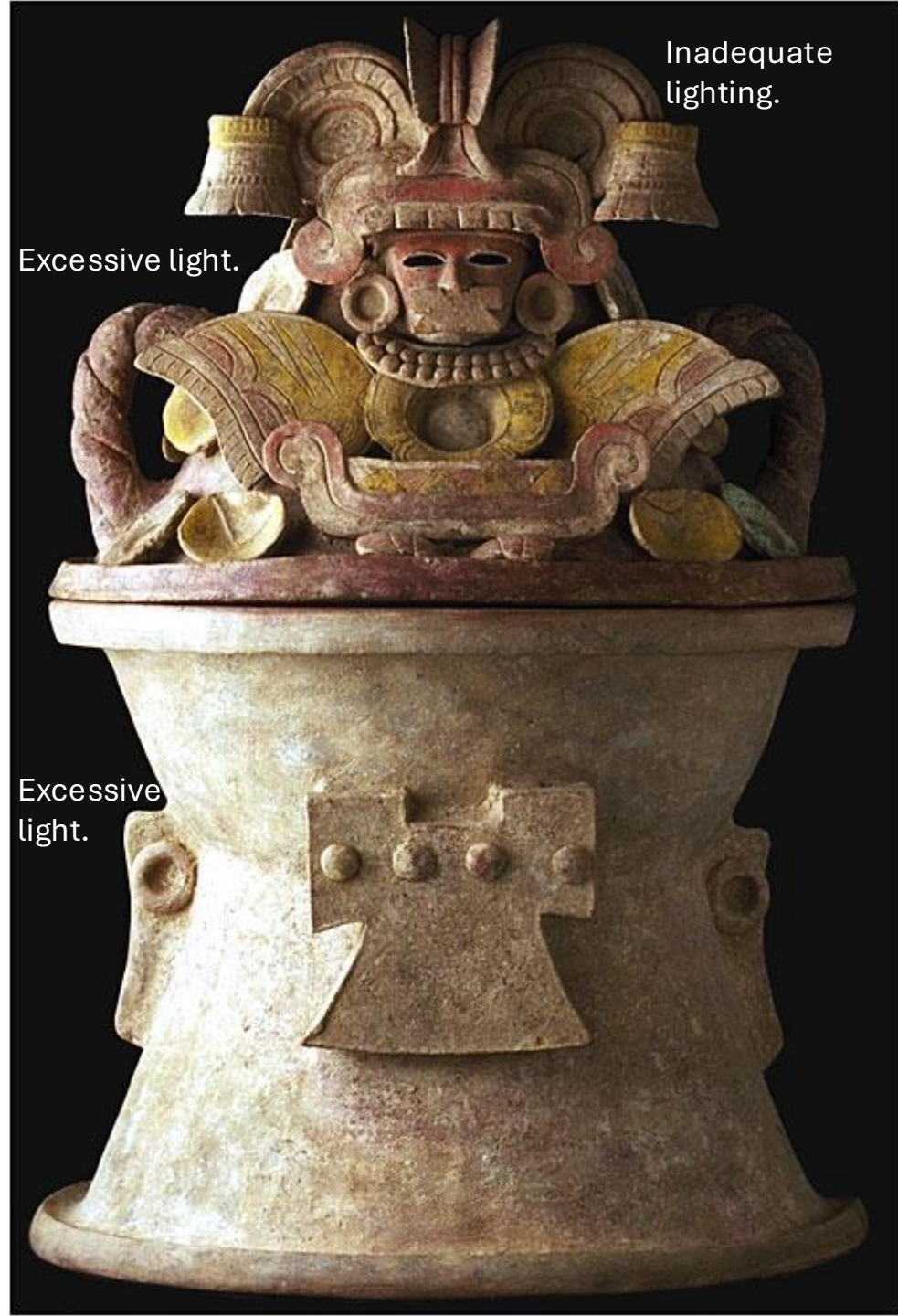


Finally found a rollout, but does not show the cosmological band around the top??? (Gazzola 2024: Fig. 164, page 266, citing Conides 2001: 430 and 587 (sic)).



This band reminds me of the position of a Maya Sky Band (that frequently encircles the top of a scene) but here at Teotihuacan the seashells are more “earthly” than celestial, as are the plants on both sides of this butterfly.

This scene is well known—would help to have a rollout of the entire scene since the stylized plants and other symbols are as interesting as the butterfly.



Inadequate lighting.

Excessive light.

Excessive light.



Rescued in Camera Raw in Adobe Bridge.

Giant (exaggerated as usual) round “Butterfly Eyes” with encircling decoration. Proboscis and two exaggerated butterfly antennae. Has a “Monster Mouth” across the forehead of the stylized male face.

No Tlaloc eyes on the face. Its nose plaque is pure tablero-talud shape—so again, clearly associated with a butterfly. The butterfly wings are clearly pictured. Another tablero-talud is on the hourglass-shaped base.

A row of potential seashells is an additional decoration.

Teotihuacan style incensario lid with hourglass-shaped base. I estimate that this is Tiquisate style but an analysis of the clay would provide documentation.

Helpful download on-line, Gardiner Museum, Textile Museum of Canada.

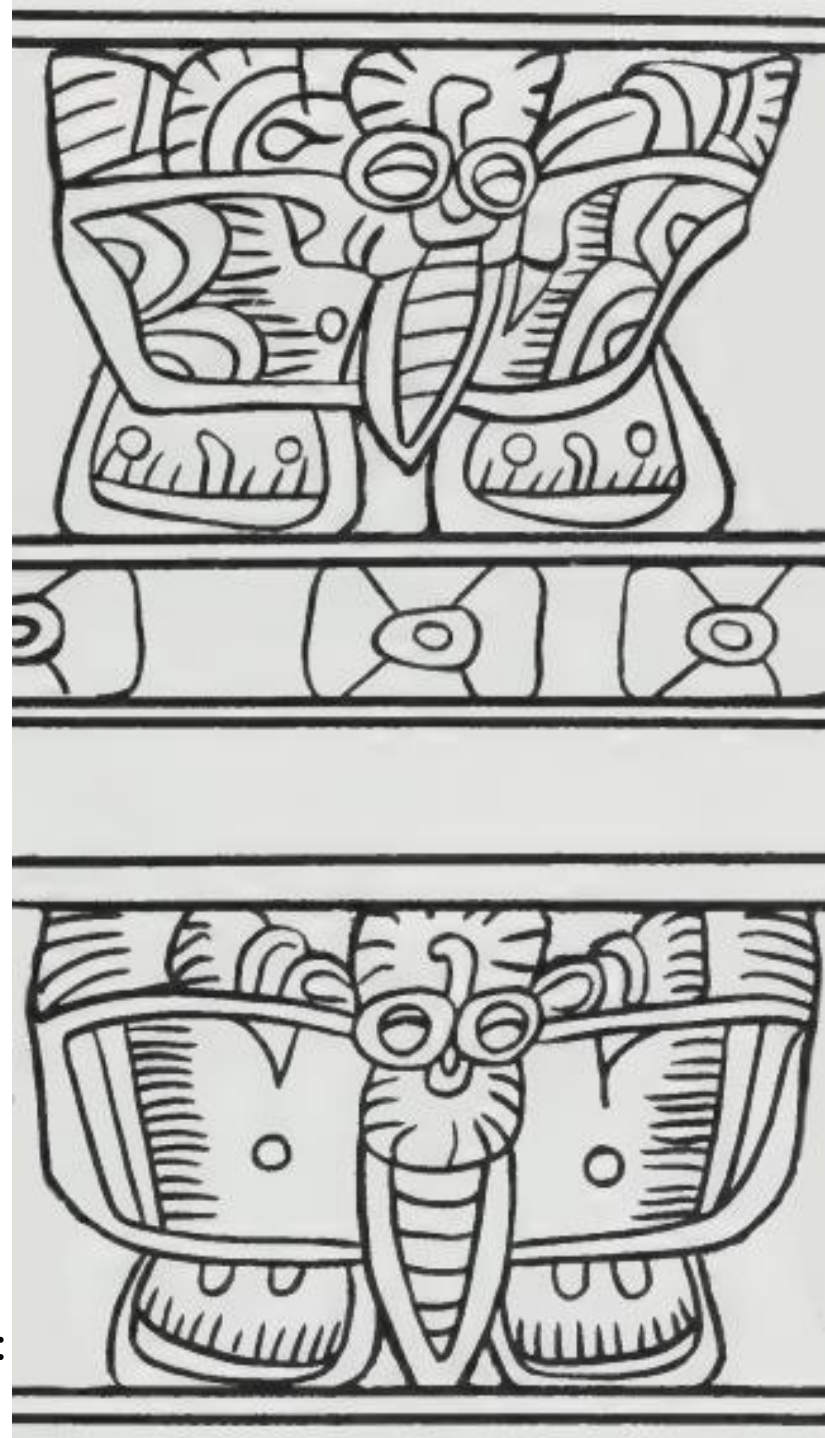


Sejourne 1966: Fig. 39.

This looks like a drawing from the other side of the same cylindrical tripod, or from same atelier.

Is a Goggle-Eyed Butterfly a composite of Butterfly with Tlaloc, or is Tlaloc a composite of a butterfly? Or are they quite separate—just sharing the goggled eyes?

Sejourne 1966a: Fig. 36.



Are Goggled Eyes of Teotihuacan Tlaloc from Owls or other Raptors, or primarily a logo of a Butterfly?

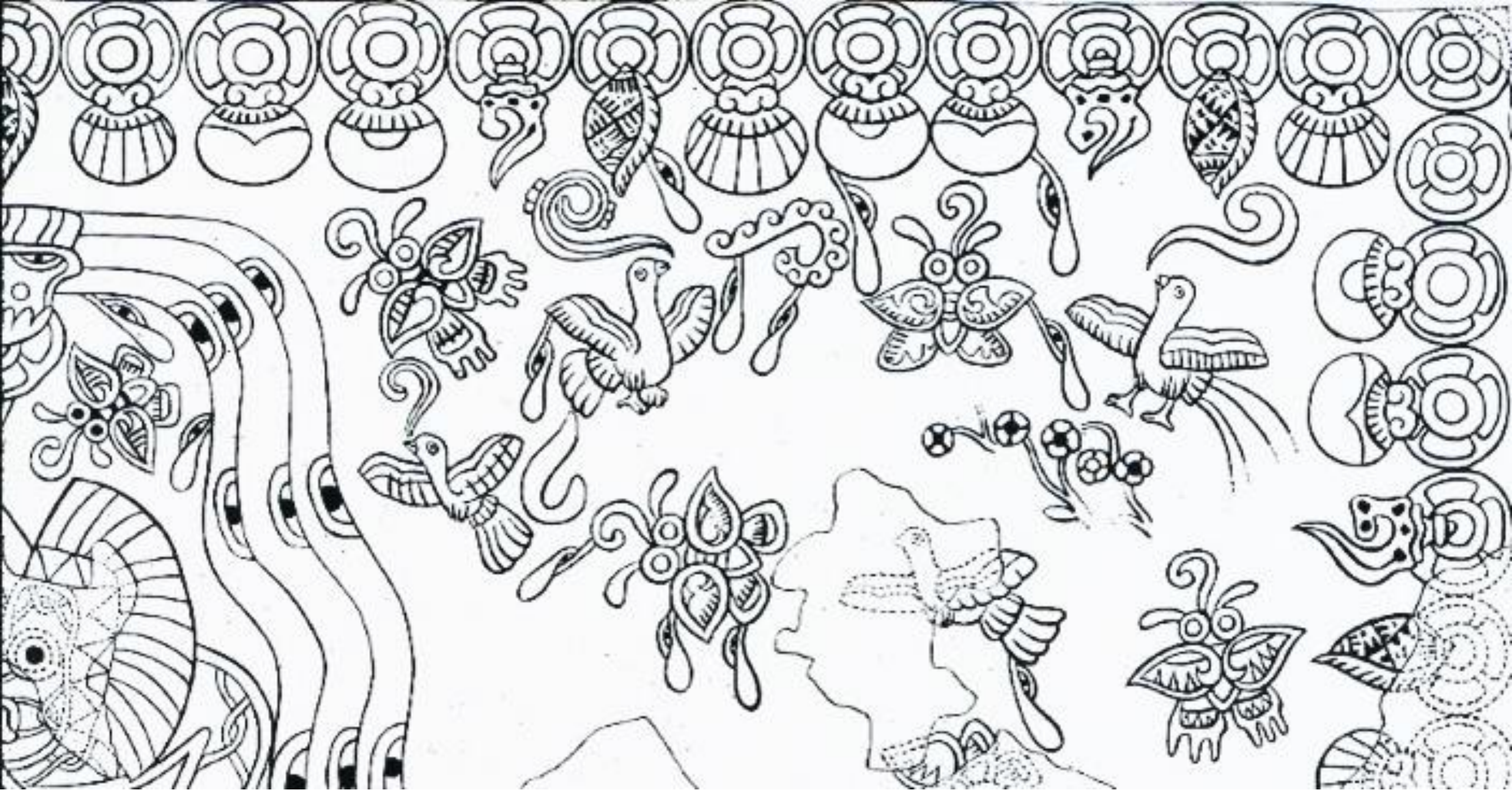


These goggled eyes are “pure Tlaloc” and show a common “composite Butterfly Tlaloc”. Yet the supports feature the sharp beak of a bird (in profile/half-frontal arrangement, so two profiles join to make a frontal view). Generic raptor, but need to see if any owls have such a beak.

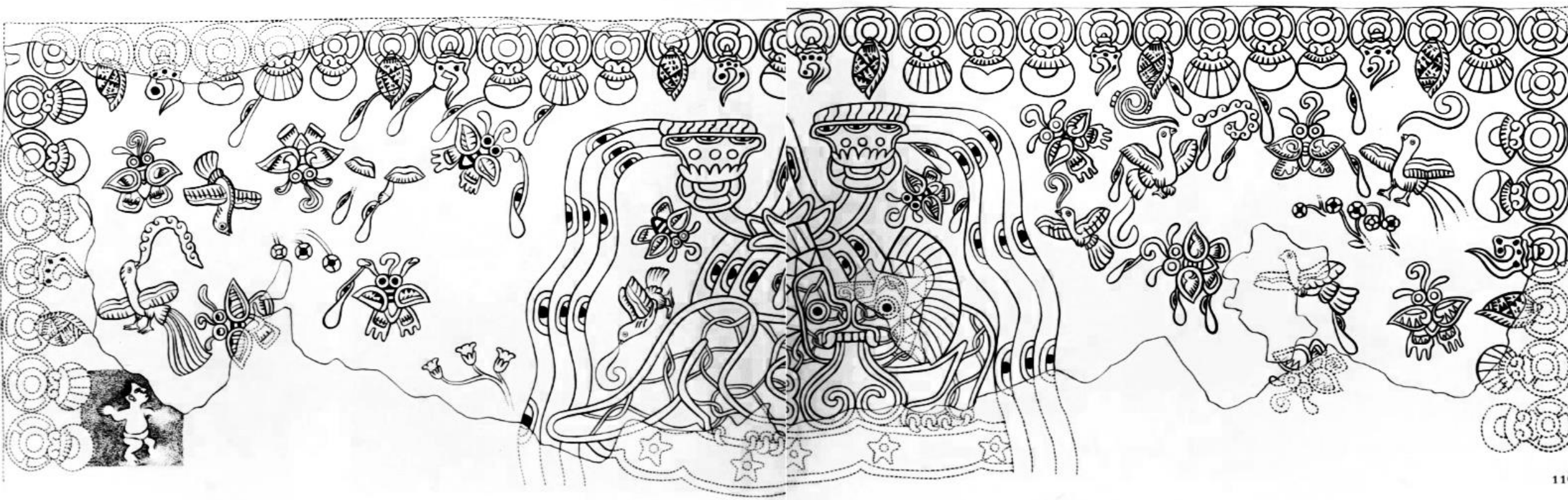


Cropped from Hellmuth digital rollout, so you can see these two mold-impressed panels. They are similar but panel at the left is a few millimeters wider.

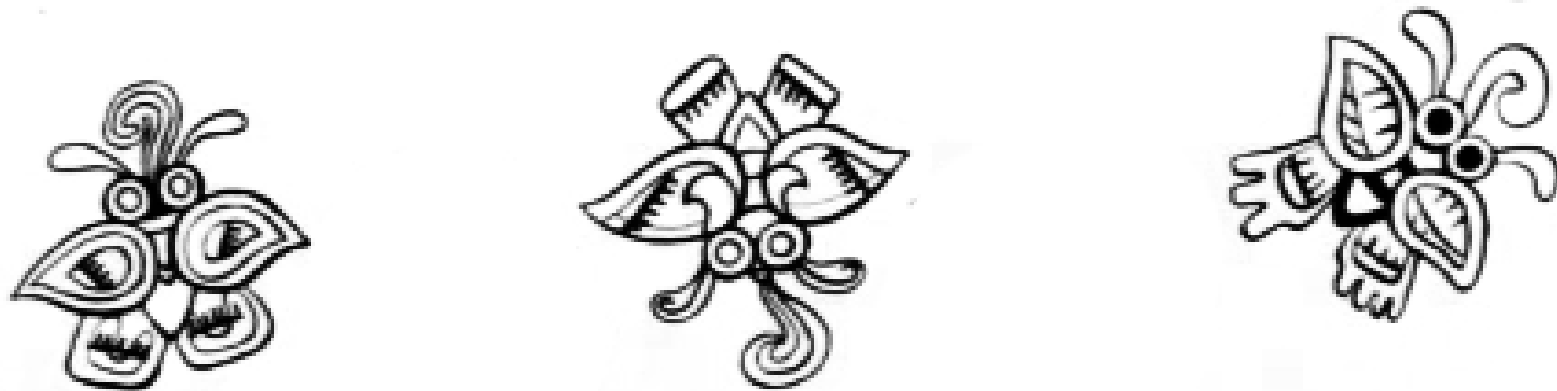




Lots of insects (neither anthropomorphic nor composite with raptor). This scene is in dozens of books and all over the Internet. The nearby birds do not have beak or talons that I would expect of a raptor. Teotihuacan cosmos is deep into marine shells of the far-away sea.



11



This is the complete butterfly scene, published in lots of books and articles about Teotihuacan. Since the original illustrations goes across two pages, when scanned the middle part is uneven. But at least now you can see the nine complete (and one incomplete) butterflies. What's notable is that not all are the same species (the designs on their wings are different). Keeping in mind that lots of different species have very similar wing designs. Miller 1973: Fig. 116 (page 81 and adjacent).

Cropped from above to show that the design on each wing suggests a different species.



Teotihuacan cylindrical tripod (Seler 1996: Fig. 3.2, page 314).
Face is anthropomorphic with “Tlaloc-associated” fanged mouth.



Seler 1998: Fig. 167, page 236.



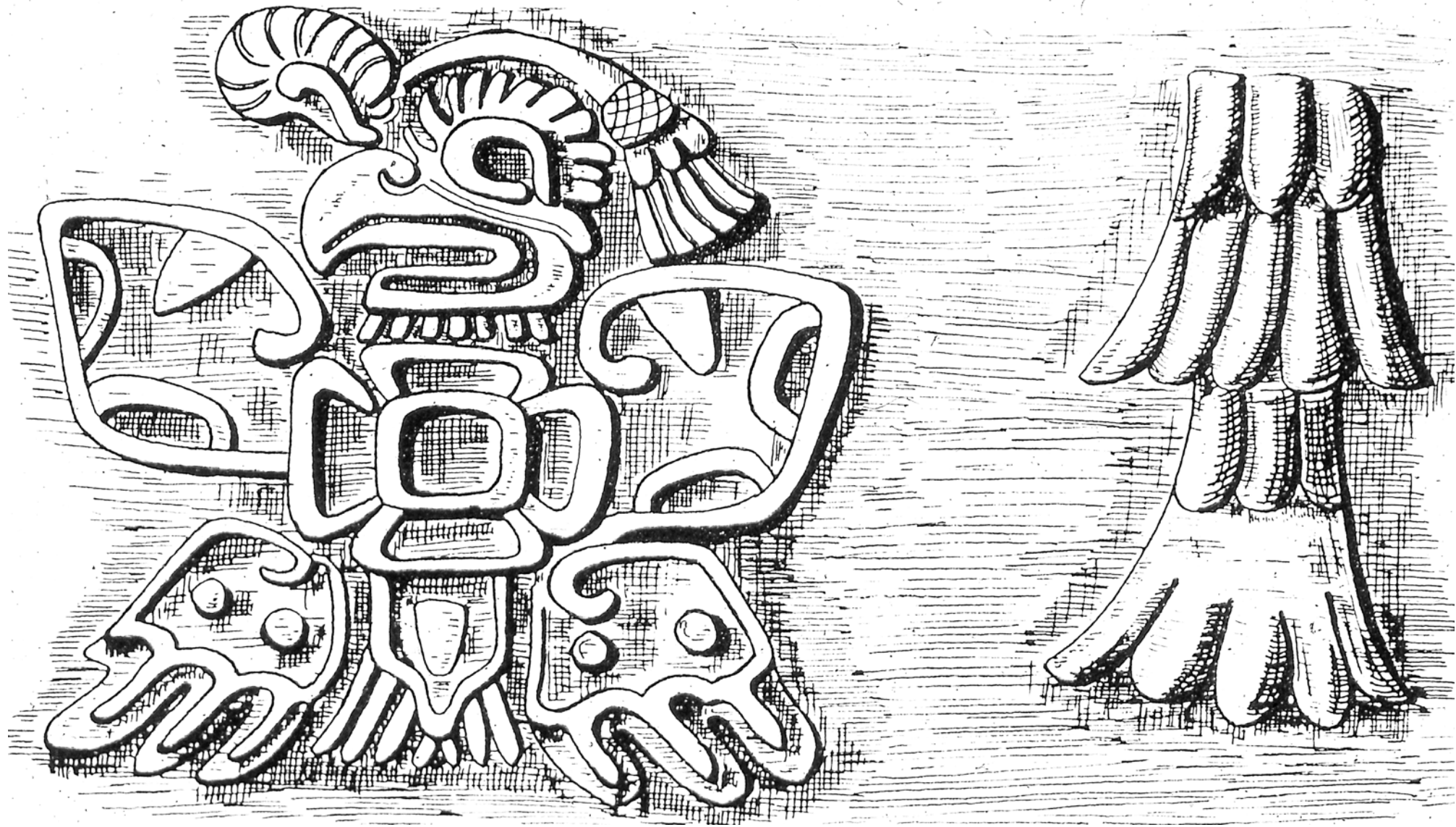
Teotihuacan cylindrical tripod (Sejourne 1969: page 154).



Sejourne 1959: Fig. V.80, page 130.

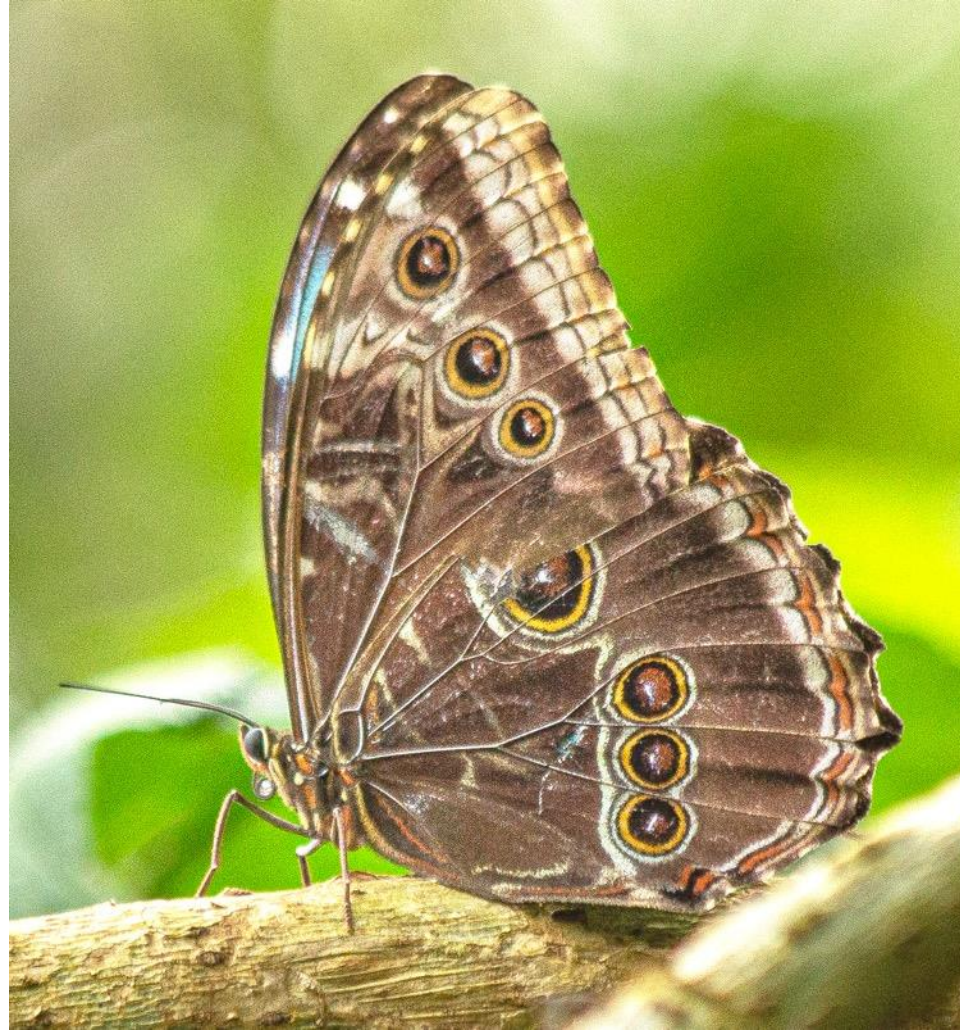


Paulinyi (2023) suggests that the Reptile’s Eye Glyph is the calendar name of the Butterfly Bird God at Teotihuacan.



Teotihuacan composite butterfly raptor, with the tail of a bird. So, raptors and butterflies are often combined. But this raptor has no goggled eye. Has a probable butterfly proboscis and insect antenna.

Santiago Ahuizotla, drawing in Seler Fig. 7a.



Google AI says there are 1,100 species of butterflies and potentially even more moths in Guatemala. AI Overview says there are about 14,500 species of moths and butterflies in Mexico, so the Teotihuacanos would have had access to butterflies and moths of lots of different species. Most people love butterflies but we are not experienced with moths—and generally dismiss them as not as beautiful as butterflies—but...--there are LOTS of gorgeous moths of which MANY have “goggled eye decoration” on their wings. So a PhD dissertation needs to be accomplished on “Butterflies AND Moths in the Art of Teotihuacan and its Areas of Interest” with a lepidopterist as co-author. Need to check iconographic studies of Teotihuacan by Taube and other scholars to see what their thoughts are on the origins of the goggled eyes of Tlaloc.

Many capable archaeologists and iconographers have studied the iconography of owls, raptors, and butterflies in the art of Teotihuacan and Teotihuacan influenced incensarios and cylindrical tripods of Tiquisate style, Escuintla and nearby areas of Costa Sur, Guatemala. But the photo we show here of an OWL BUTTERFLY is unique—a result of 30,000+ photos in museums and archaeological sites of Mesoamerica plus 30+ TERAbytes of digital photos of flora and fauna of Guatemala from decades of field trips.

The eye of the owl.

Even the “beak” of the raptor, is visible in this photo by the FLAAR team in 2013 inside the Sculpture Museum of Copan, Honduras. Butterflies were attracted to our studio lighting.





This butterfly knew that we would not swat it or harm it in any other way. So it landed on the hand of Hellmuth plus on the hand of one of the photo team. We thank the other photo team member who took these photos.



Head below the wings. This is the position that really looks like an OWL Butterfly.

Copan Sculpture Museum,
Honduras.



When you put this photo into Google Images you get LOTS of moths and butterflies who all have evolved to have these giant eyes to scare off predators.

Moth genus *Automeris* is one; moth genus *Pseudoautomeris* is another.

Head at the top. The “owl eyes” are of amazing size.

They are also totally reflective—you can see the lights from our studio lighting.



Butterfly genus *Leucanella* also has same giant eyes of a raptor.

There are probably dozens of these species in the Costa Sur area of Escuintla, Guatemala and lots in far away Teotihuacan area of central Mexico.

The thick curl scrolling out is not found on any owl or raptor that I know of, so even with the antennae being not featured I estimate this scroll is an exaggerated butterfly proboscis. And the two ?-mark designs could be simplified and not naturalistic replacement for the antennae?

This creature has two sets of wings—upper and lower back. That suggests an insect, in other words, a butterfly. Has four legs—not six—and like a mammal.

But this creature clearly has four legs—so is a composite with a stylized quadruped mammal.

This scene on this Tiquisate style cylindrical tripod definitely deserves more research.



Giant cylindrical tripods from Peten are rare: the Berlin blackware tripod and the Deletaille blackware tripod are two giant cylindrical tripods from the Maya Lowlands. But across the Costa Sur area, Tiquisate style cylindrical tripods are frequently very wide and very high. The widest that I have ever seen in over half-a-century of studying Tiquisate style tripods is in the Museo Fundacion La Ruta Maya (with Curly Face around the side).

The scene here is gouged and incised—not mold-impressed. In between each quadruped butterfly composite creature is a complex Yearsign motif.

The applique faces around the lower part deserve further study as does the stylized “baby-face” on the large support.





Each of these scenes on two totally different tripods (one normal size, the other extra large) are gouged and incised—not mold-impressed. But even though each scene is “hand made” they are clearly by the same artist or atelier. Mass production was very common throughout the Costa Sur areas of Tiquisate style.

Since the focus of Mesoamericanists is on the Olmecs, Maya, Teotihuacan, Veracruz cultures, Zapotecs, Mixtecs, Toltecs, Aztecs, etc., iconography of the Costa Sur area has not been featured except for a very few scholars such as Bárbara Arroyo, Sonia Medrano, Frederick Bove, Zoltán Paulinyi and others mentioned in the bibliography. That’s why I dedicated many decades to finding-and-photographing as much of this forgotten art as was possible.



Well-preserved, expertly crafted by an experienced Early Classic artist in Tiquisate style.

Butterfly antennae are exaggerated (as is common) as is the proboscis. Two sets of wings as expected of an insect.

“Body” of the insect reminds me of a Reptile’s Eye glyph but this looks somewhat different. Epigraphers should add this to their database of “Teotihuacan glyphs.”

File name says San Antonio Museum but I can’t find it (yet) on their web site, nor whatsoever in AI of Google Images search.



An incensario that is incomplete (lost many parts a millennium ago) is more authentic than restored incensarios that have extra decoration added by looters to gain more illicit profit. Too many Tiquisate style Teotihuacan-inspired incensarios that have been published seem to have “added decoration” that was unlikely actually on that incensario.

This has authentic butterfly wings, one remaining antenna and a tablero-talud nose plaque on the human face (that the butterfly surrounds).

The remaining eye on the headdress has a Reptile’s Eye glyph inside, so is not the stylized goggled eye as on other butterfly portraits. This is a good documentation of the relationship of a Reptile’s Eye glyph to a Teotihuacan style butterfly.

The handle on each side is a beautiful twisted “rope” (this concept for an incensario handle is not often seen).

Scan probably from 35mm Kodachrome slide of photo taken probably in the previous century.





Teotihuacan style butterfly incensario, Gardiner Museum, Textile Museum of Canada, cropped to focus on the butterfly lid. This even has the same “rope entwined” as handle on both sides. Snag is whether this example in Canada is from Escuintla area or Teotihuacan itself. Clay analysis by Ron Bishop, Dorie Reents-Budet and team would help. Needs close-up photo of each eye with cross-lighting to see if any designs are within the eye.



Tiquisate style, not from Teotihuacan itself. The cross-lighting style of Hellmuth allows you to see the Reptile’s Eye glyph inside the Butterfly Eye.



We sincerely appreciate the access to photograph these important artifacts at Museo VIGUA (Museo de Arte Precolombino y Vidrio Moderno) on several occasions in past decades.

These photos were taken on Jan. 12, 2010, by Nicholas Hellmuth with a medium format digital back (Phase One P25+) on our Hasselblad camera with Zeiss lens.

Phase One makes the absolutely finest quality digital cameras in the world and their Capture One software beats Adobe Photoshop in many aspects. But Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Bridge and Adobe Lightroom have caught up in recent years.



We appreciate the permission from the Nottebohm family and access to photograph this cacao-based incensario lid many years before it was put on exhibit in Museo Miraflores. For several years we lived just two blocks from their home. Plus we also knew the family via events at Museo Popol Vuh, Universidad Francisco Marroquin.

There are dozens of butterflies associated with cacao areas (Sanchez 2019 and lots more publications). So no surprise that this amazing Early Classic Tiquisate style ceramic shows a *Theobroma cacao* pod splitting open and a Teotihuacan personage with bird head conflated with butterfly head and tablero talud nose plaque (very common in the art of Teotihuacan). All of this is happening on top of a cacao pod that is split open.

The "Raptor Butterfly" is probably another reason that owls or other raptors and butterflies may be associated in Teotihuacan cosmology.

Chinchilla shows the same photo (2016: Fig. 2) and provides iconographic discussion and citations.

This Early Classic ceramic treasure was photographed by FLAAR many times, by Hellmuth and also by Eduardo Sacayon.





Teotihuacan style butterfly incensario, Gardiner Museum, Textile Museum of Canada.

All three butterfly spirits are rising out of a scrolling platform.

All three butterflies have tablero-talud nose plaques.

All three have a large circular plaque over their body (four lobes in one—mostly missing in the other).

Each butterfly species is different.

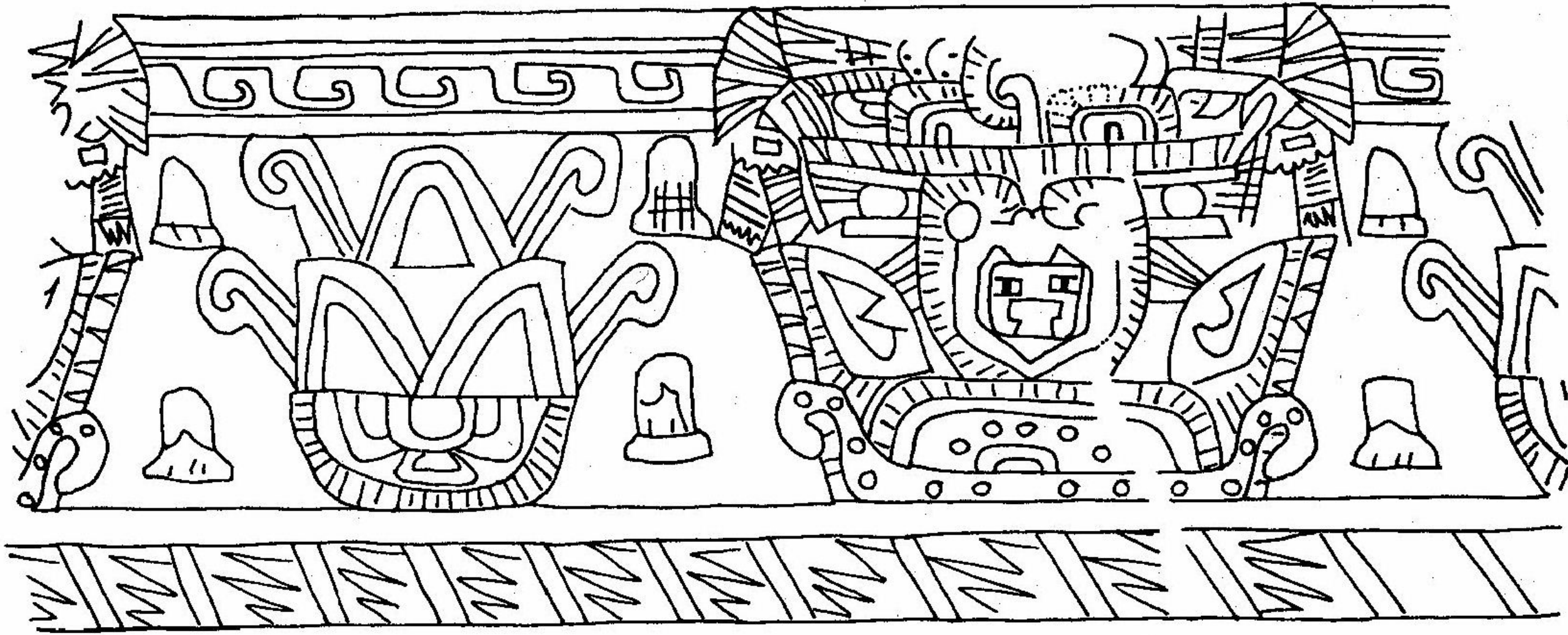
No Tlaloc goggles on the person's face—only as the eyes of the supernatural butterfly.



Tiquisate style, not from Teotihuacan itself.



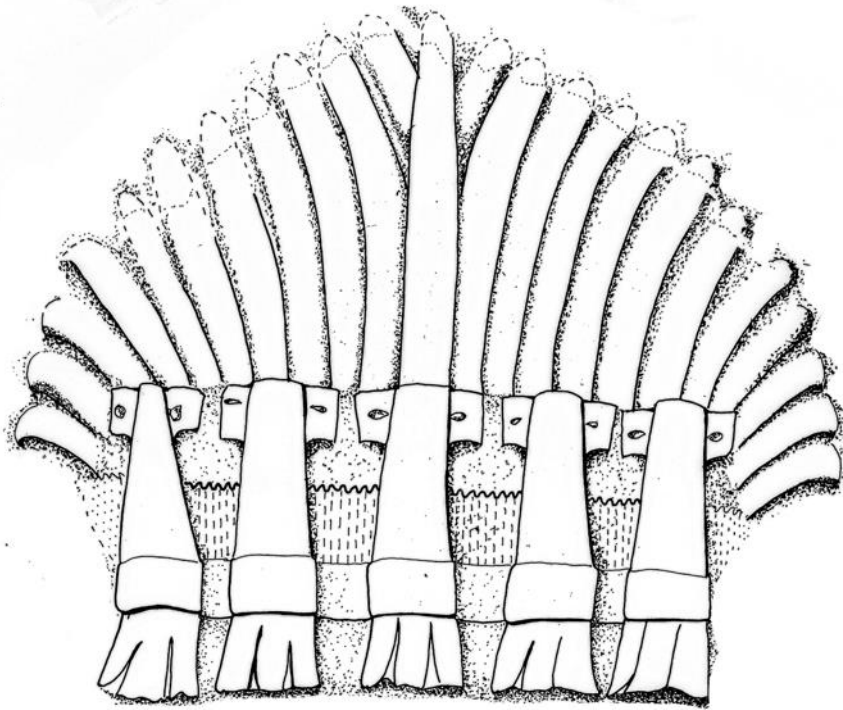
Nottebohm Collection, Museo Miraflores.



“... the god emerging from the Fertile Mountain with spread wings (after Conides 2018: Figure 4.3c).

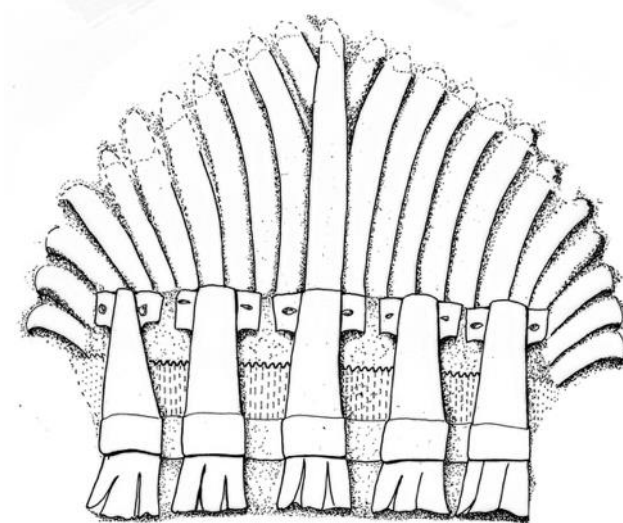
Paulinyi 2023b: Fig. 2,c calls it “the Fertile Mountain” but here it has an abbreviated Teotihuacan “hieroglyph” above it that’s different from the horizontal motif on the three Teotihuacan-inspired incensarios in Tiquisate style. What I am curious about is the horizontal motif with raised scrolls at each end.

Feathers and Tassels create a “Tasseled Headdress” often a logo for Tlaloc and usually for a Military Tlaloc



There are two common headdresses for Teotihuacan and Teotihuacan-inspired headdresses of warriors. This Tasseled Headdress clearly has the most status (as documented by the Linne Bowl that shows the main personage with Tasseled Headdress and all the other “soldiers” with sequined war helmet (even though they are scattering instead of flaunting rectangular shields such as on Piedras Negras Panel 2).

That said (that the Tasseled Headdress is the highest status, a military elite of La Sufricaya (“suburb” of Holmul, Peten) has what appears to be the war helmet (the headdress area is badly eroded but the lower two rows of repeated overlapping ovals definitely suggests a Teotihuacan war helmet). Does this war helmet mean he is not a “general” but rather a coronel or other rank? La Sufricaya Stela 10 is shown by Iglesias 2008: page 137, Fig. 6



Tasseled Headdress, often, but not always, featured by a military Tlaloc.

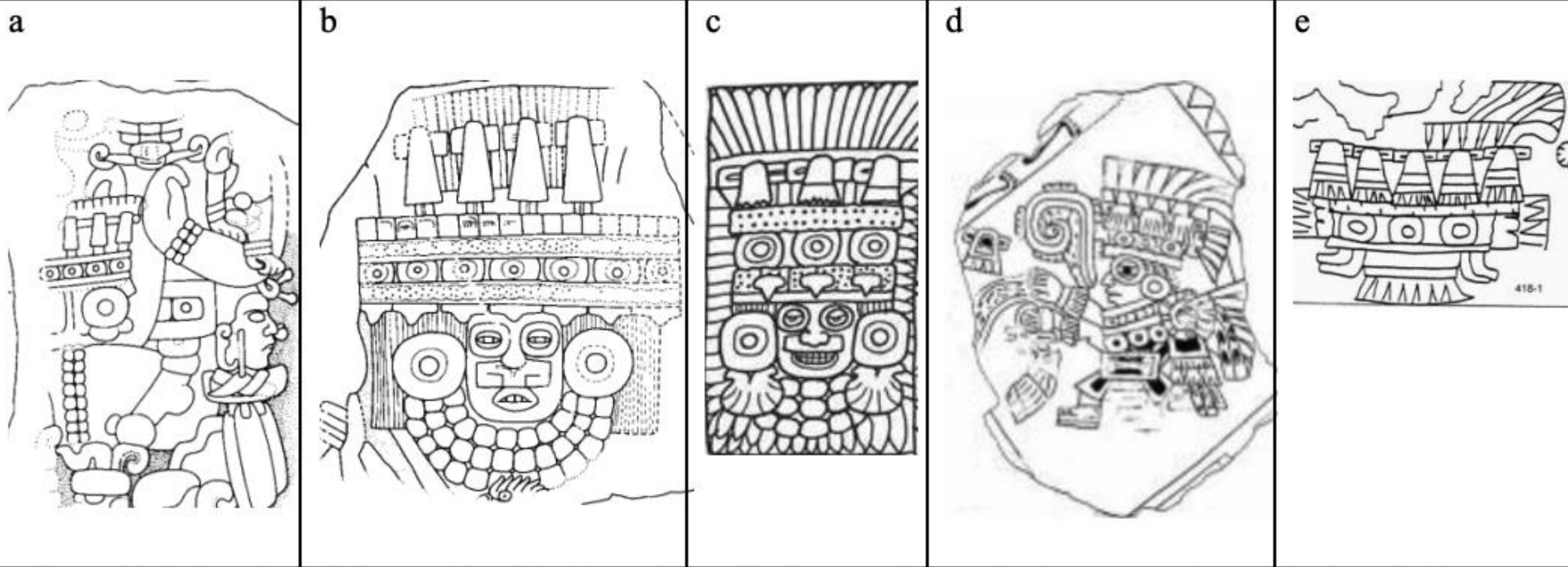
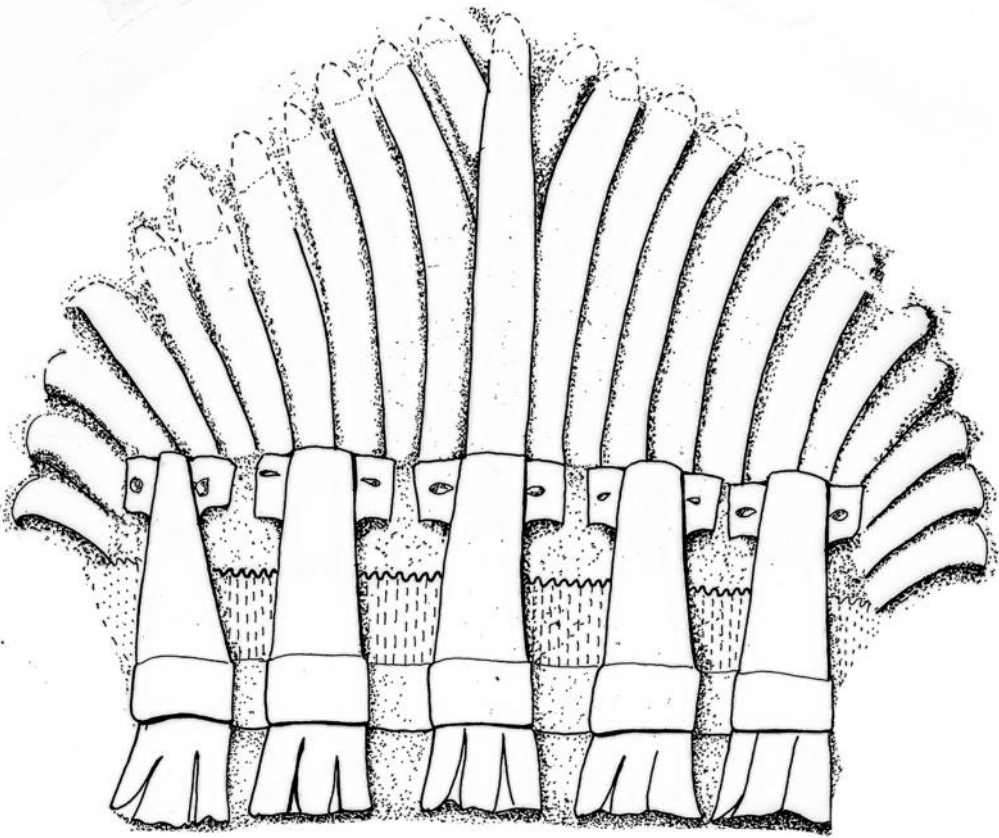


Figura II-9. Detalles de las estelas 18, 32 y 31 de Tikal en a-c (Tomado de Jones y Satterthwaite, 1982: figs.. 26, 55 y 52). En d-e) detalle de la pintura mural de Techinantitla (Tomado de Valdez Bubnova, 2012: 270 y 296).

The Tasseled Headdress is long-known as a feature of Tlalocs in the art of Tikal (Guerrero 2015: Fig. II-9. But Yaxha Stela 11 (as usual) is not pictured. My goal in the presentation for 39th SIAG-MUNAE (July 2026) is to show lots more examples, plus to compare and contrast this Tasseled Headdress with the Teotihuacan war helmet. Since I found so many examples of the war helmet, I have prepared a separate FLAAR Reports on war helmets since the focus of this SIAG-MUNAE lecture is on Yaxha Stela 11—which has Tasseled Headdress.



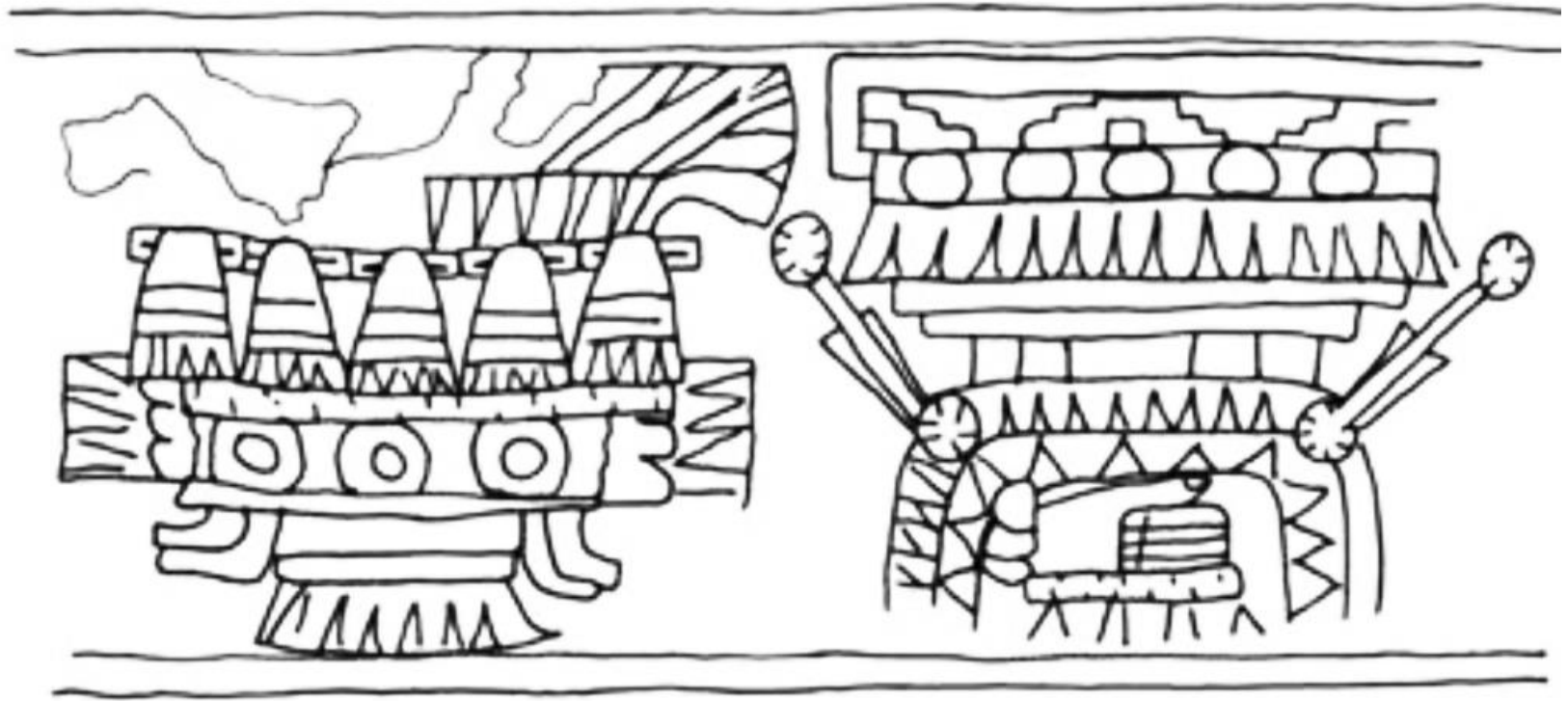
The “tasseled headdress” is literally a separate add-on to show status.



I would informally estimate that this row of motifs is echoing a tablero—talud. But if a specialist in the art of Teotihuacan has another name, I would consider that.

This headdress has only this one row of motifs—suggesting that it’s the most important symbol of a goggle eyed personage.

The mouth piece is rectangular—so not a tablero talud and not bleeding or other more complicated options.



I estimate these are two main “separate” headdress regalia. If there is not space (or if there is no reason to show them both) sometimes the scene literally features just the tassels or just the row of goggles.

The feathers across the top are a third “part” of the headdress. So this headdress has three main segments.

Row of tassels across upper headdress.

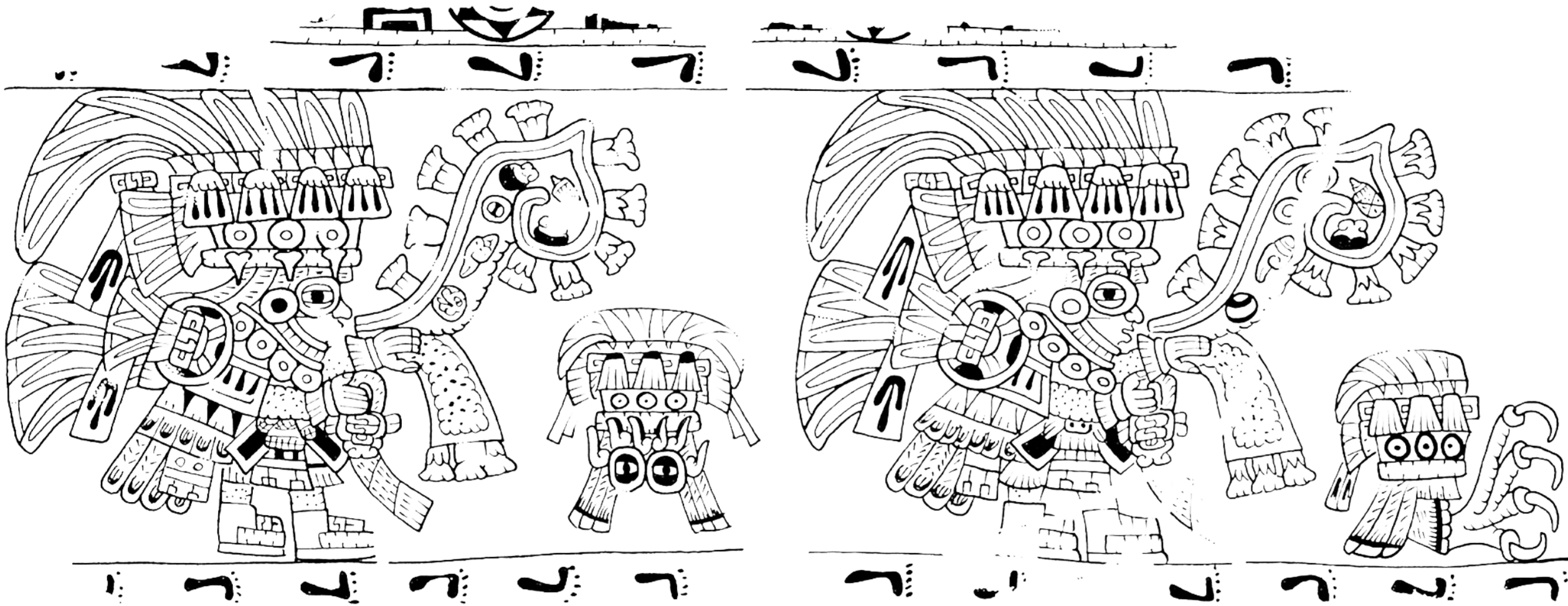
Row of ”goggles” as main lower feature of Tasseled Headdress.

Row of simple circles as lower feature of “headdress” of Teotihuacan temple.

Drawing of a Teotihuacan ceramic at LACMA, in Garcia 2002: Fig. 7 citing Conides and Barbour 2002: Fig. 7.

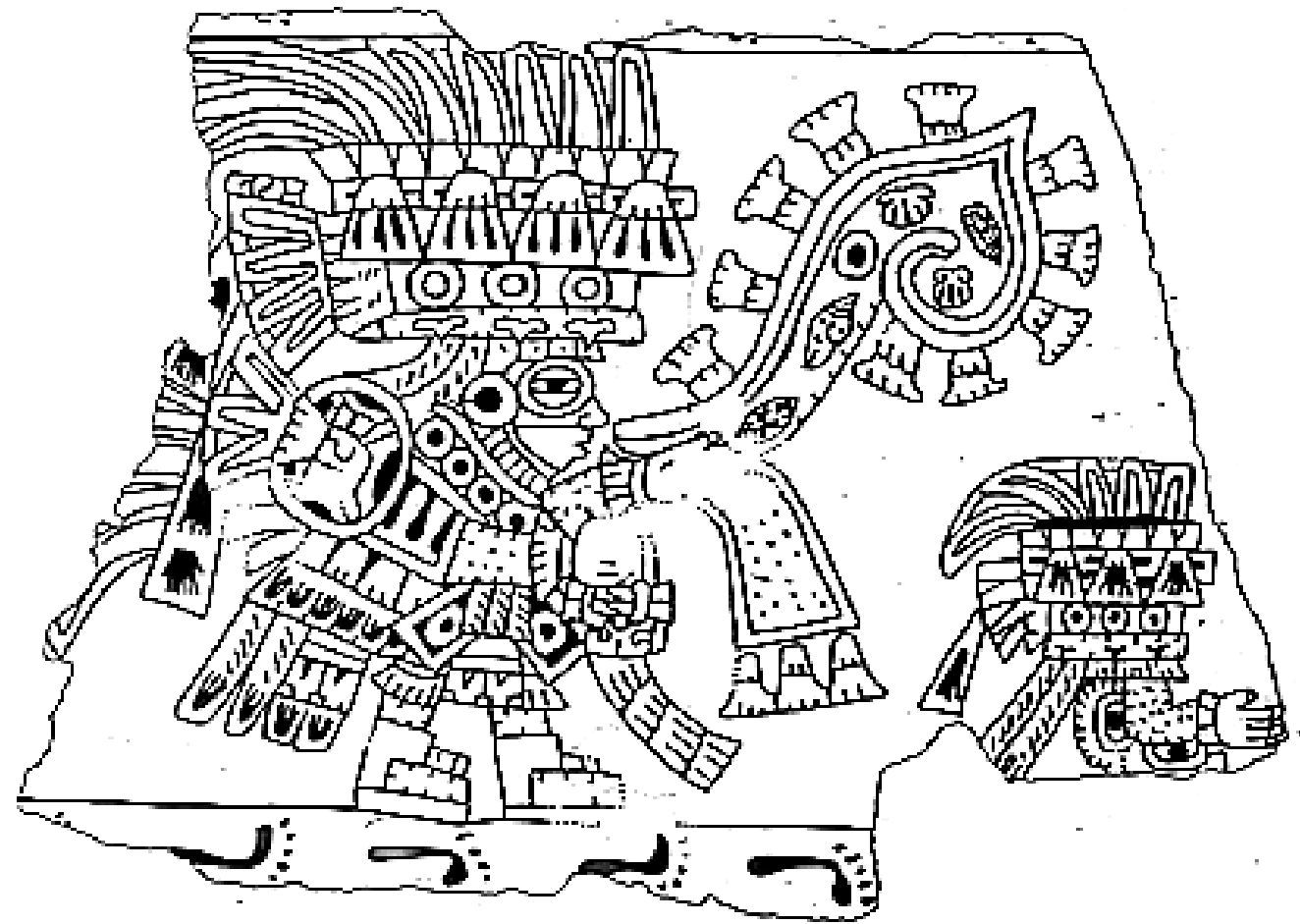
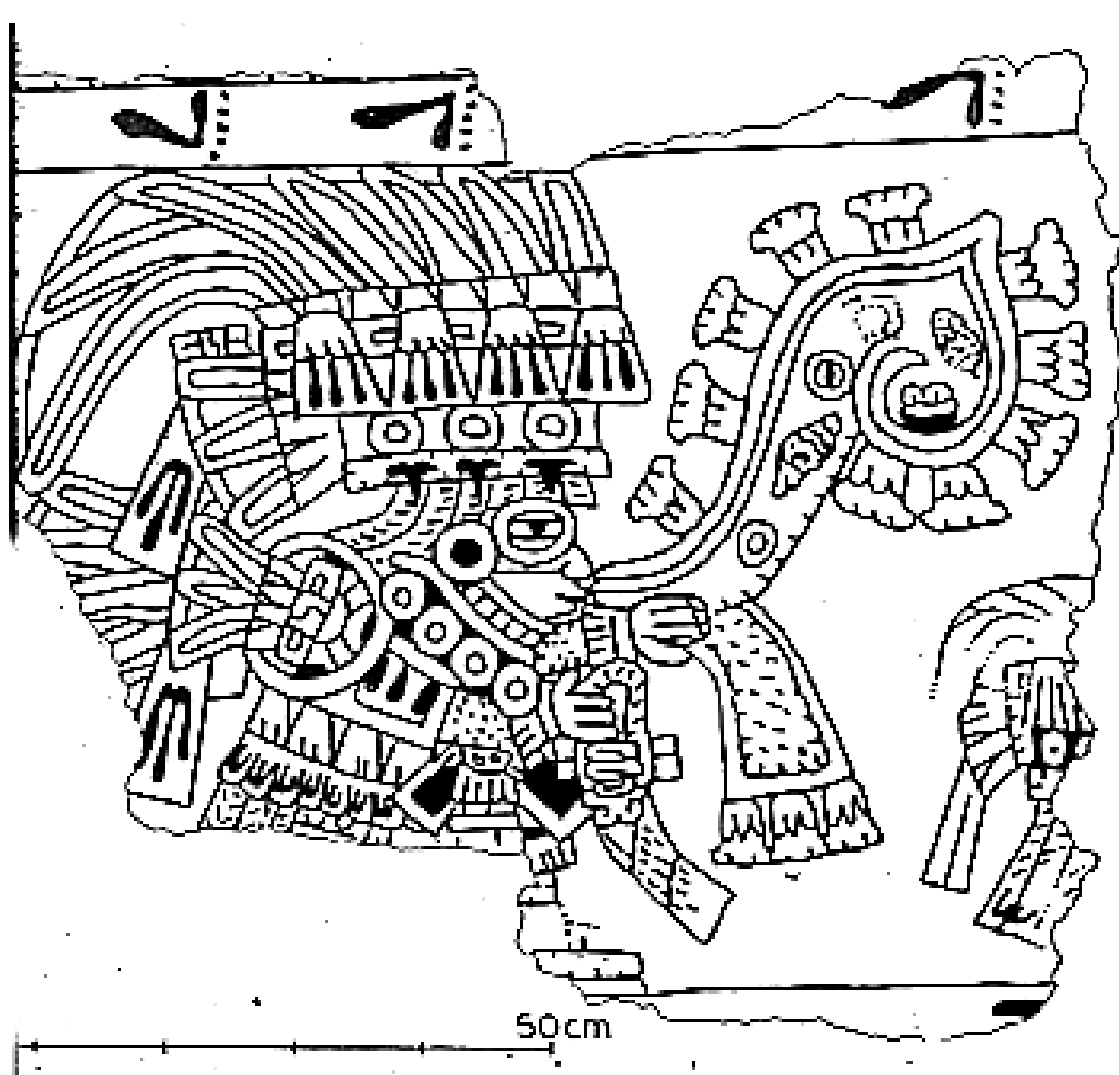
Here the tasseled motif of lots of Teotihuacan headdresses is clearly an abbreviation of a stylized Teotihuacan temple (Paulinyi 2022: Fig. 11,b).





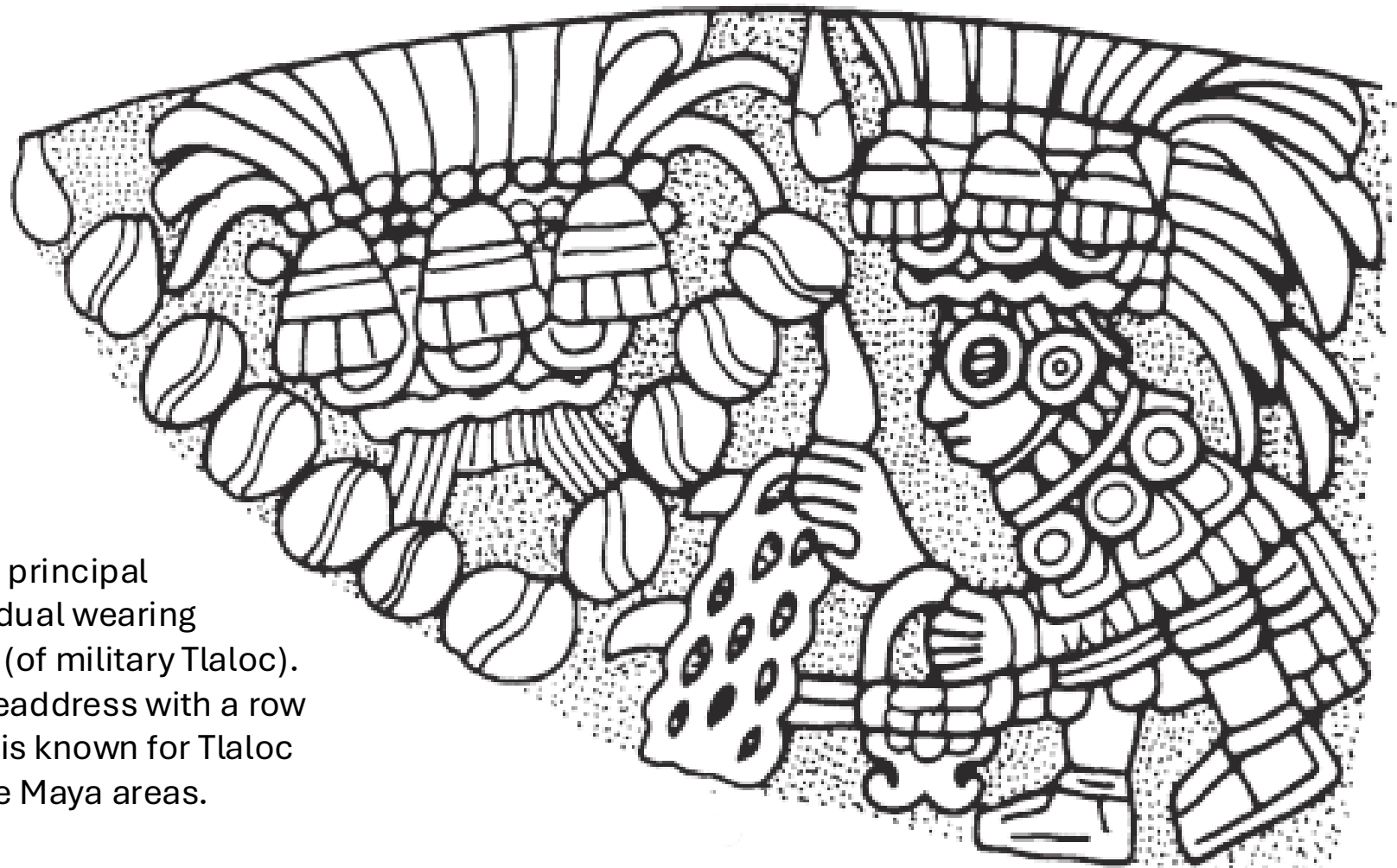
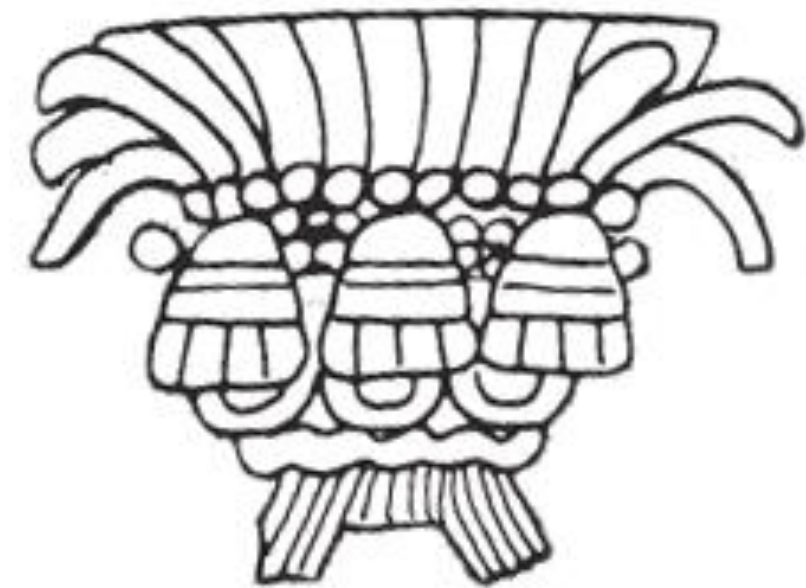
The row of three downward pointing atlatl spearheads are clearly visible on these two Tlalocs of Teotihuacan murals. That row of spearheads is, to me, one of the few military aspects of this scene.

The headdresses have rectangular tableros from which the splatters cascade. On all the drawings of the Yaxha Stela 11, only that of FLAAR shows a tablero shape; all drawings by Graham, Schele and von Winning did not suggest an open tablero. That aspect needs to be checked on the original stela at Yaxha.



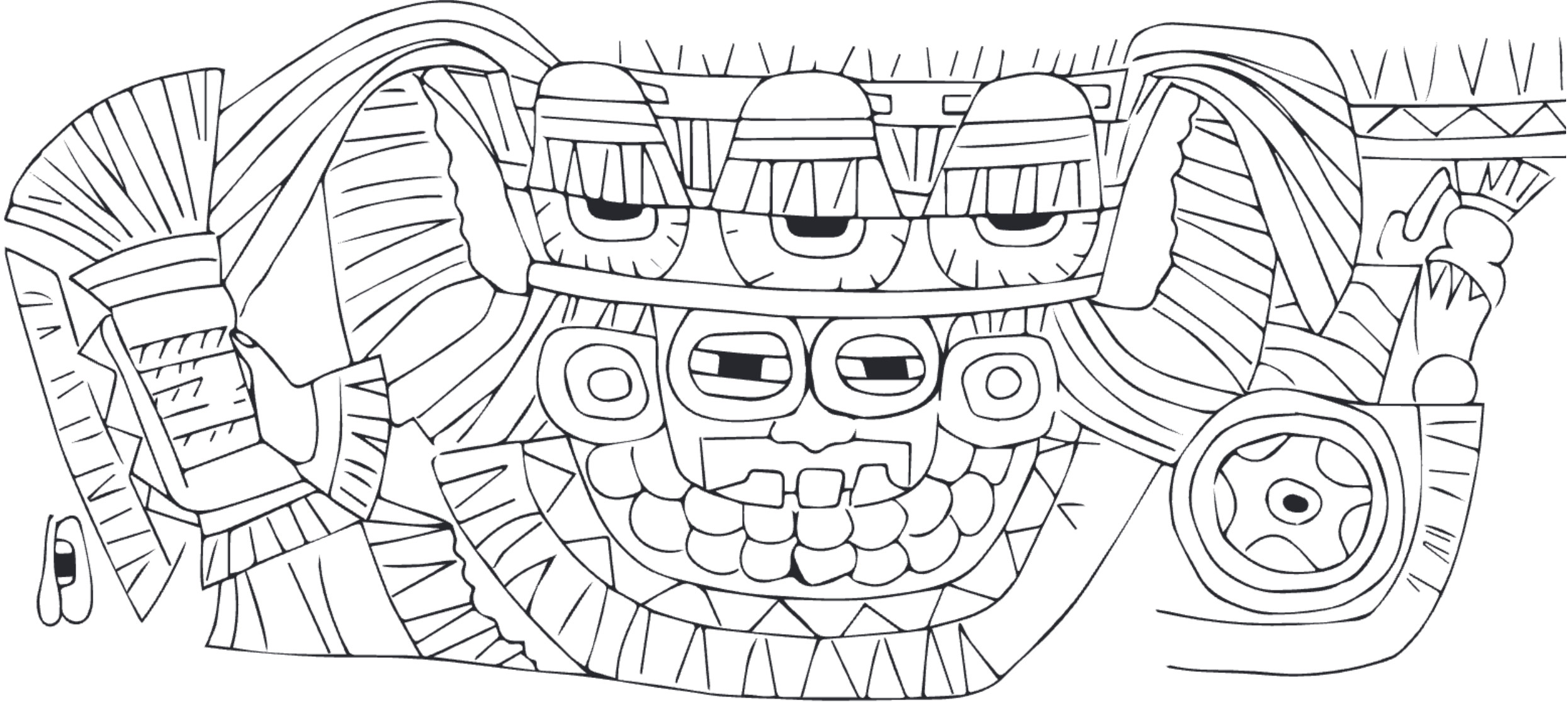
No shield, no spear, no spear thrower (atlatl). This is Tlaloc "sowing" (scattering assumed contents of the strap bag) carrying an "incense bag" (strap bag is more generic). His speech scroll message is seashells (including goggle) with stylized flowers around one edge.

This scene is repeated many times on the murals of the Techinantitla compound of Teotihuacan, and published in dozens of articles and books on art of Teotihuacan.



Key scene of the well-preserved Linne Bowl. The principal personage of all in the scene is clearly the individual wearing goggled eyes (of Tlaloc) and tasseled headdress (of military Tlaloc). The undulating band across the bottom of the headdress with a row of disks above (scrunched due to lack of space) is known for Tlaloc military warlords at Teotihuacan and down to the Maya areas.

But....NO weapons here, NO shield here—nothing military anywhere in this scene. This Tlaloc is carrying an “incense bag” and scattering (scenes very common on Teo-influenced Maya stelae). This raises the reality-check that Tlaloc is MORE than a patron of military power. Tlaloc brings agricultural prosperity (whether the 10 ovals with undulating fissure are cacao beans is a question raising even more curiosity). Is he scattering incense or seeds? So...Tlaloc with tasseled headdress is a patron of multiple aspects: military power and a better life (if the “drops” are rain drops, then understandably, “God of Rain”).



This object in the hand is not large enough to be a shield. An identical object is held in the hands of lots of “Tlaloc” related personages on cylindrical tripods of Tiquisate style. This object needs a study to “unravel, to open up” this object so we can see “what’s inside”. In the meantime, I call it a wrapped bundle.

Tasseled Headdress is scrunched together on the row of circles. Possible shield and feathered end of a spear?

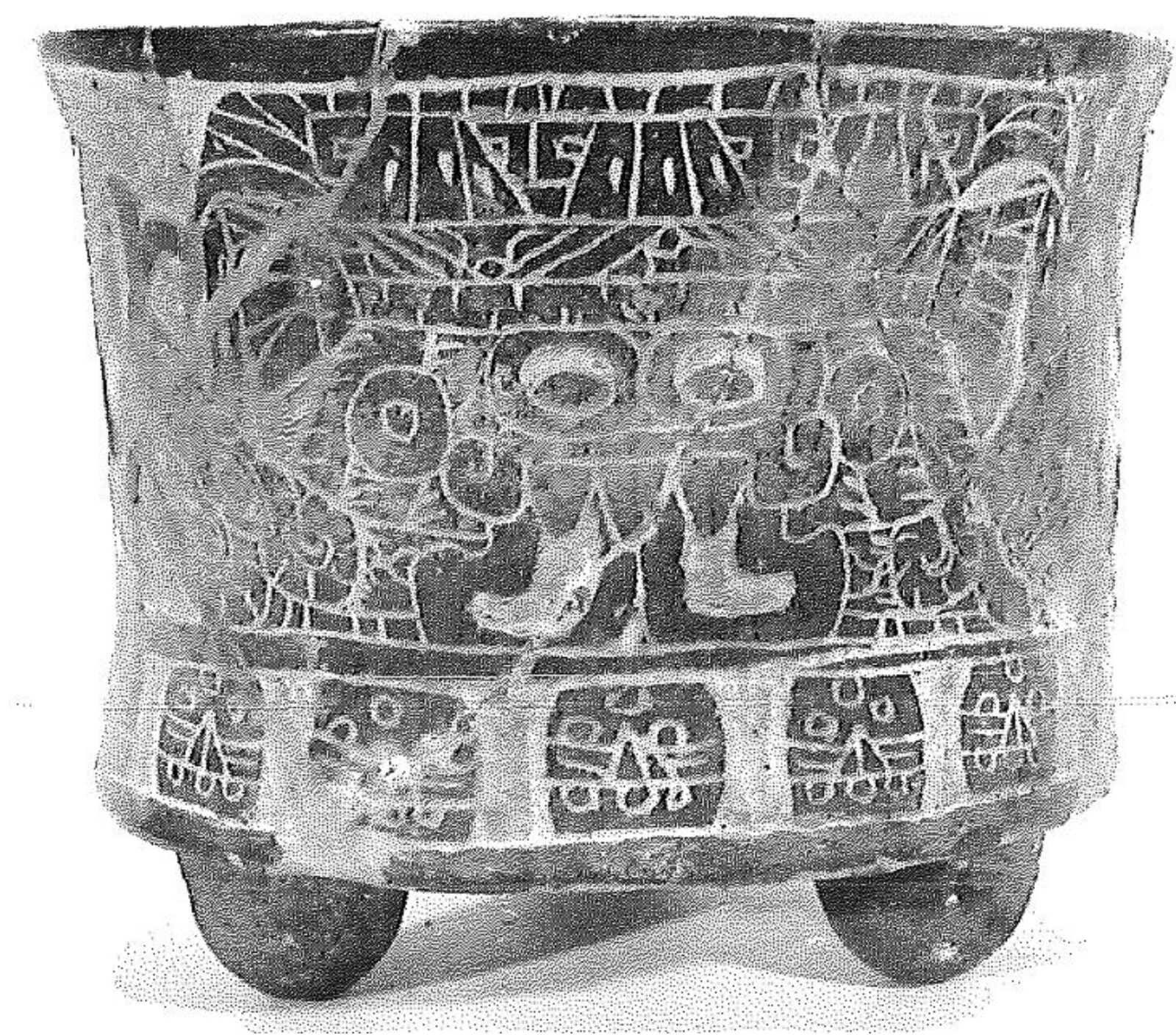
Paulinyi 2025: Fig; 1,b, citing C. Millon 1988a: Figure V.1

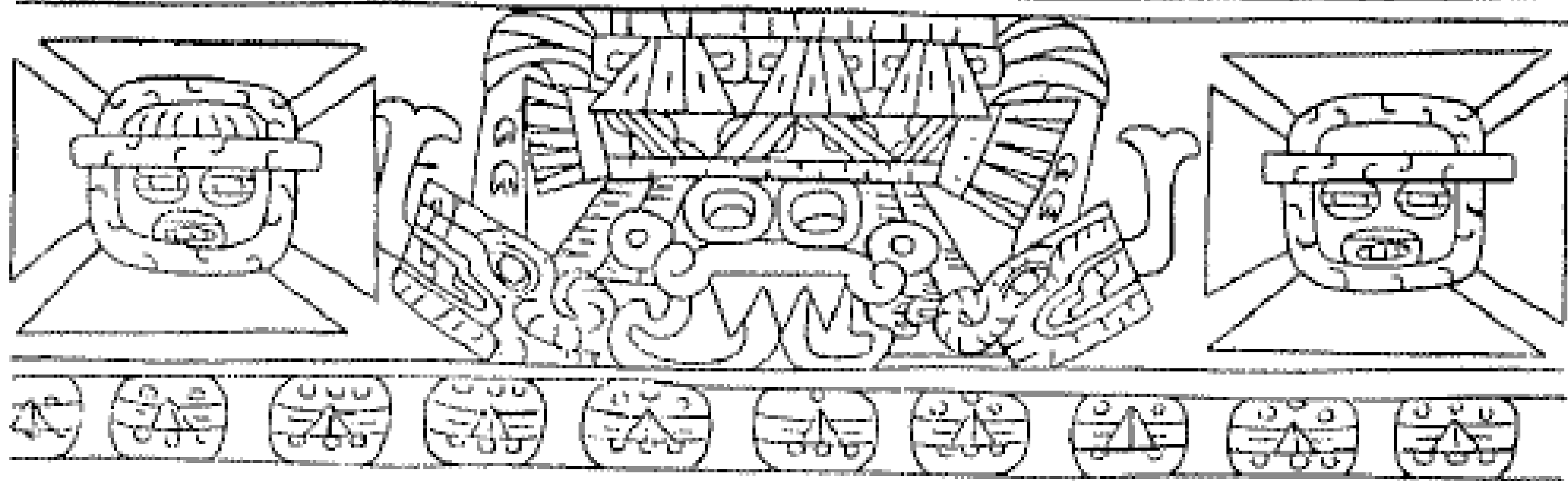
There are “hundreds” of Teotihuacan tasseled headdresses at Teotihuacan itself, but they vary noticeable in size, shape (and thus potentially also vary in meaning).

The rectangular aspect obviously reminds you of a tablero. The usually triangular downflow over the tablero obviously reminds you of a talud. The headdress here, Teotihuacan, Zacuala patios, Burial 2, photo by Levey (Rattray 2001: Fig. 150), has an even more suggestive tablero talud concept. But—a true tablero talud has the talud issuing from the bottom of the tablero—not covering the tablero as in all tasseled military headdresses.

This scene needs a rollout, so you can see the details of the reptile like heads issuing up diagonally. Much to my surprise, I then found that (shown on the next page).

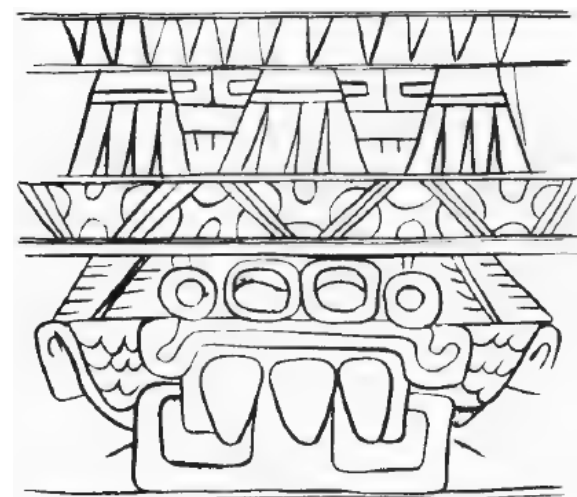
The lower horizontal area has the vertical lines as on tasseled headdresses on military Tlalocs of the Maya Lowlands. But the fanged mouth and scrolled nose plaque are completely different. Another difference is the row of alternating diagonal motifs below the row of tassels (in other words, no row of disks, and no row of spear points). So, Tlaloc plays many many different roles—there are many chapters in his “bible”.



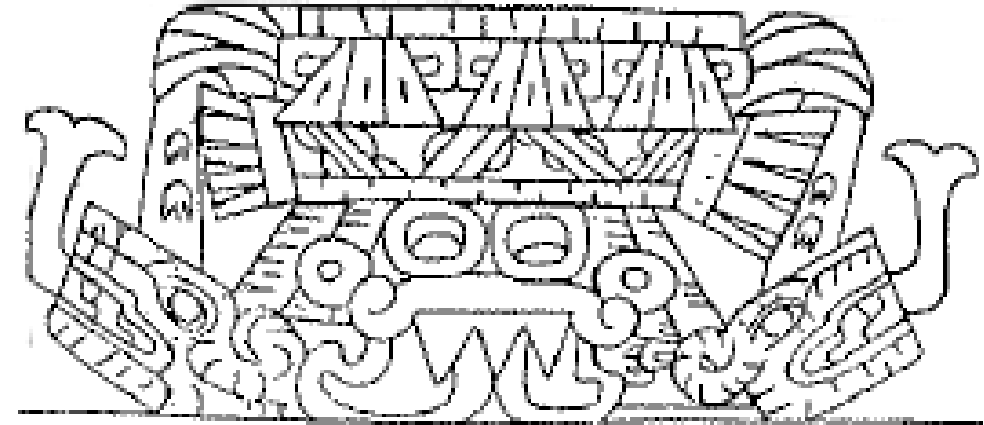
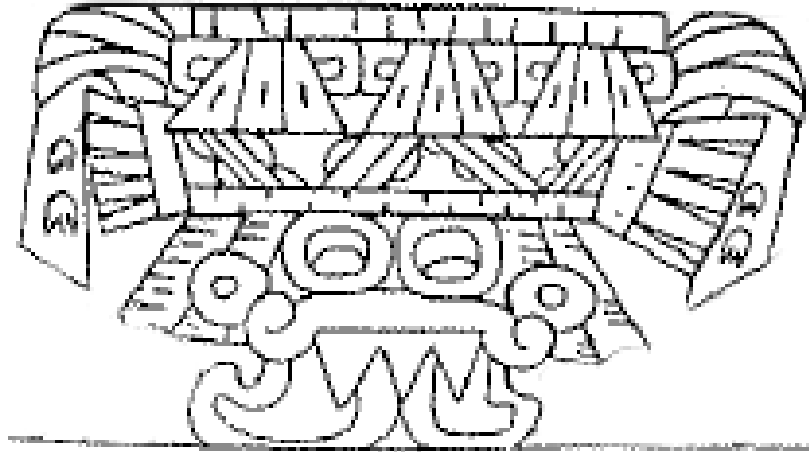
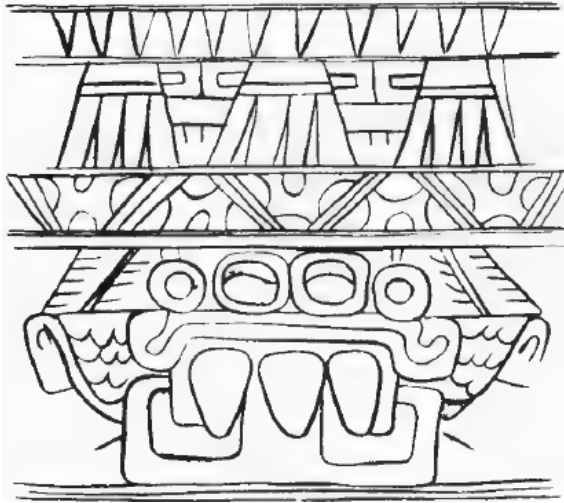


Rollout of the frontal Tlaloc with simplified tasseled headdress (Von Winning vol. 1, Fig. 2,a, page 138, citing Caso 1966: Fig. 34).

Teotihuacan Tlaloc with tasseled headdress (Sejourne 1966: Fig. 41).



This horizontal space, with vertical lines alternating, is a common feature of Tlalocs who are trying to appear dangerous (but I would not be surprised to find this headdress feature in other contexts).



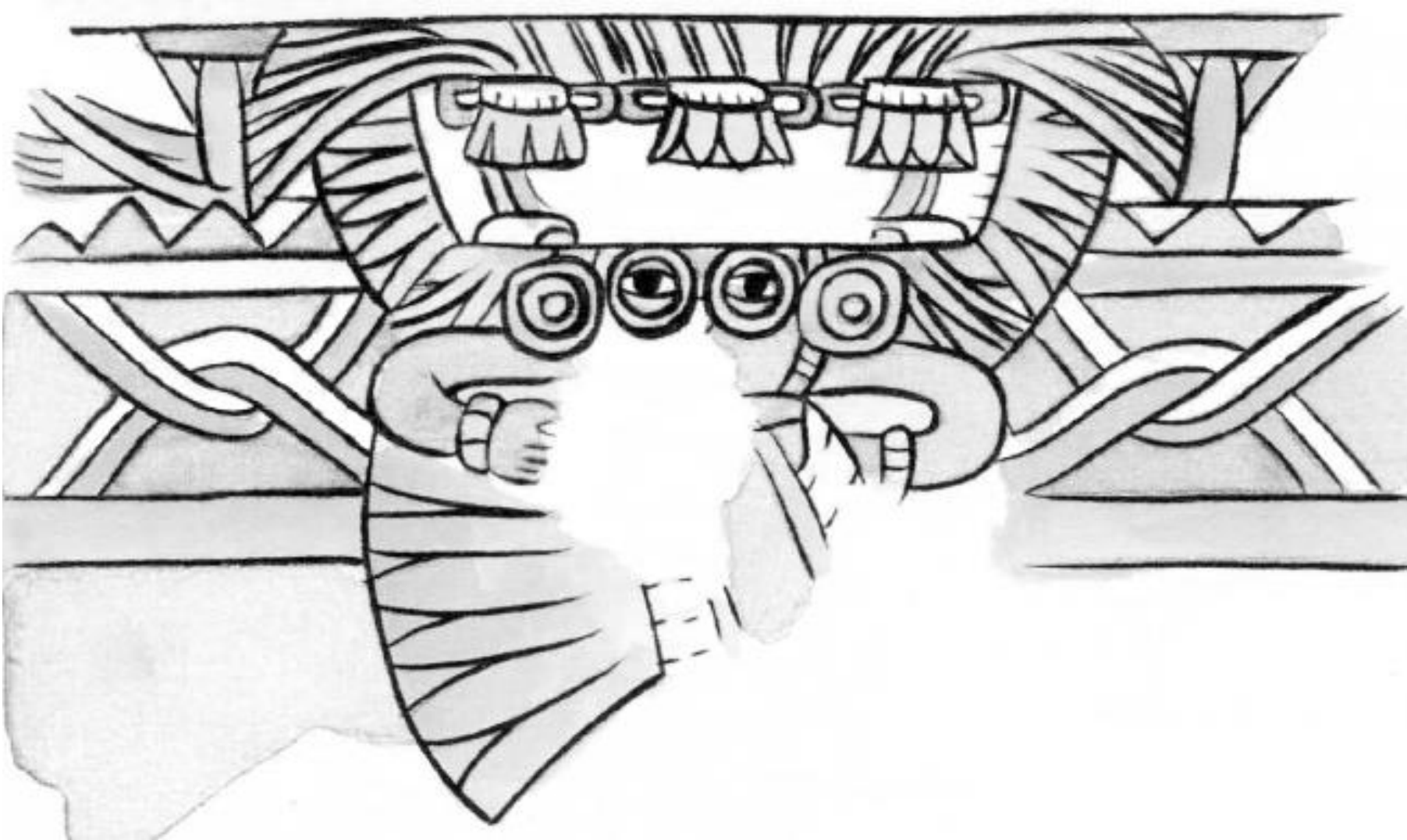
The diagonal aspect of the lower row of motifs (under the row of tassels) is very similar in the two (but not identical).

Since these diagonal aspects are not on any Tikal or Yaxha Tlaloc headdress, I will not study them further at the moment.

The Tlaloc with snakes is published by Caso 1966 Fig 34 in Von Winning Vol 1 Fig. 2,a, page 138.

The Tlaloc at the left is from Sejourne 1966: Fig. 41.

Tassel motifs of this size and shape again remind me of tablero-talud architectural motifs.



Teotihuacan Tlaloc with tasseled headdress on a cylindrical tripod from Zacuala (Sejourne 2002: Fig. V100). The lower part of the headdress was subdued due to lack of space—this shows, once again, that the row of tasseled “tablero” rectangular motifs with a “flowery talud like design” is very important for the patron and artist to feature.

I turned the color drawing in the book into black and white so the color would not distract from the outfit.

Tasseled headdress but the lower area is atypical.

Goggled eyes. Different mouth area with three leaf-like “fangs” and thick scrolls underneath.

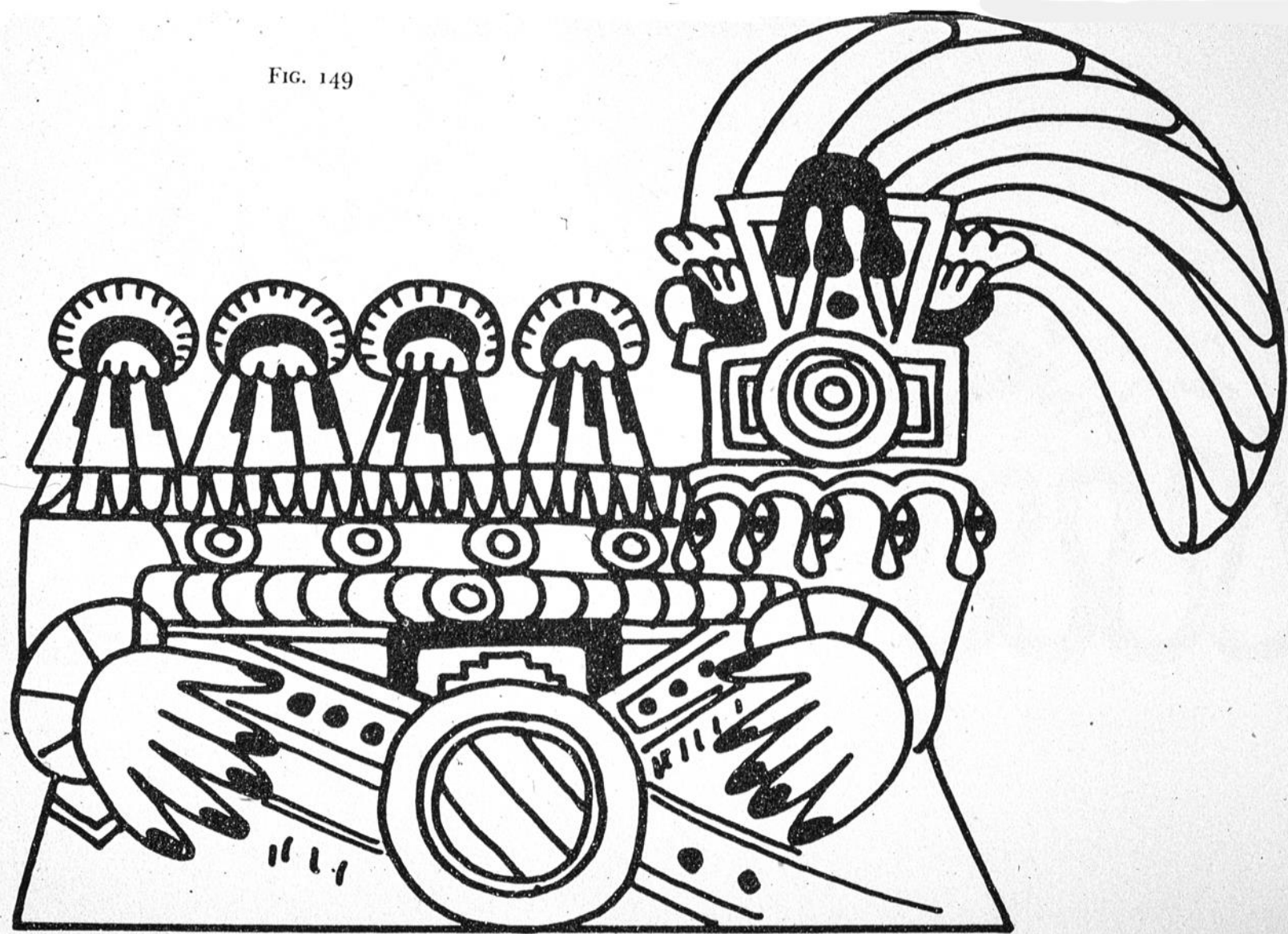


Since there are probably hundreds of unpublished portraits of Teotihuacan Tlalocs and butterflies and raptors and seashell scenes, would be helpful for a Mexican student to produce drawings and a thesis or dissertation to add tons of previously unpublished scenes to help students and scholars around the world.



Fig. 21, we will gladly cite author and illustrator when we find that info.

FIG. 149

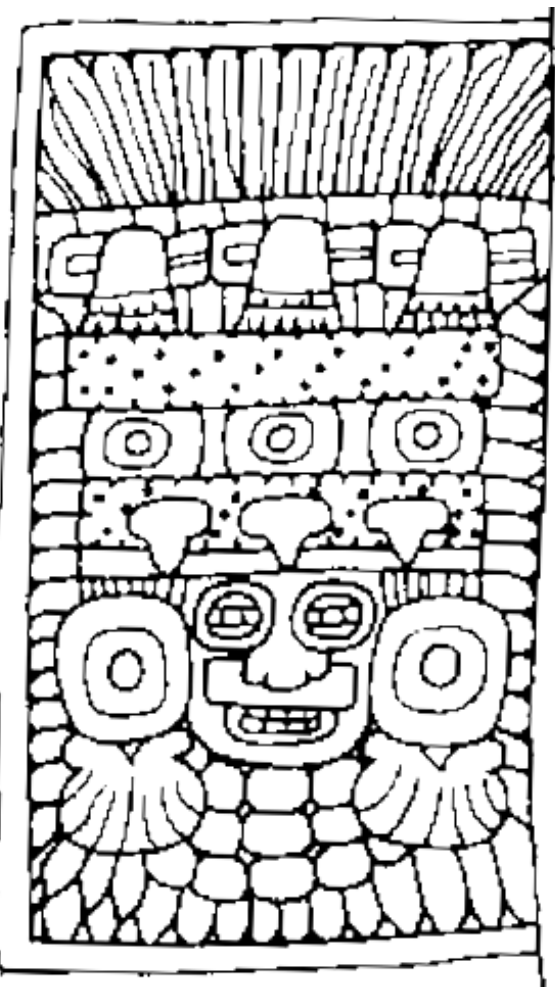


Tasseled headdress is almost always across the top.

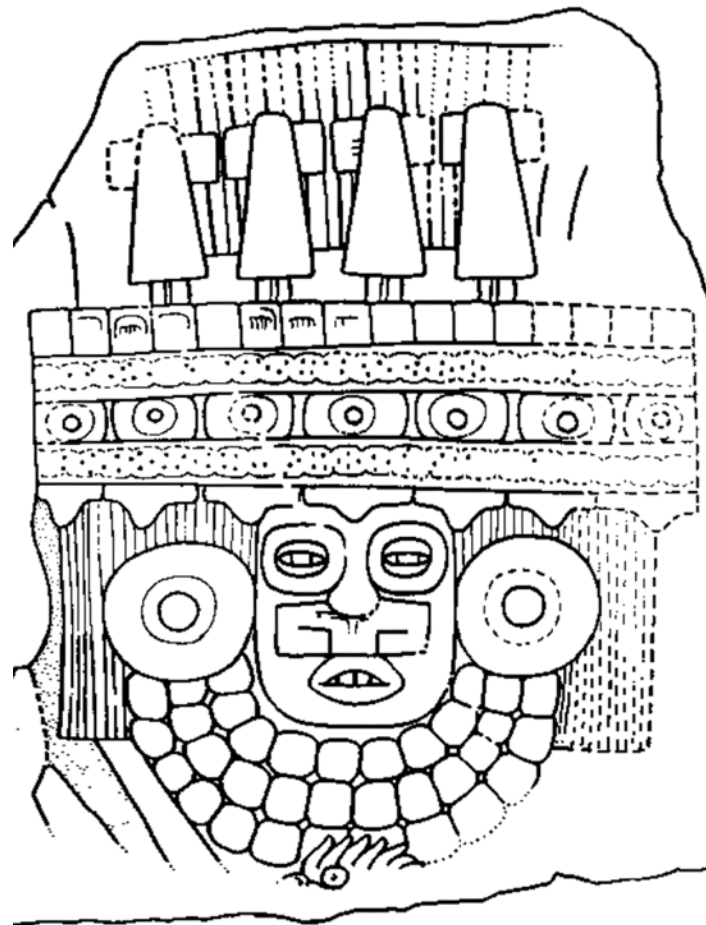
Row of disks is usually the bottom or near the bottom of a multi-row headdress.

Are these fingernails painted?

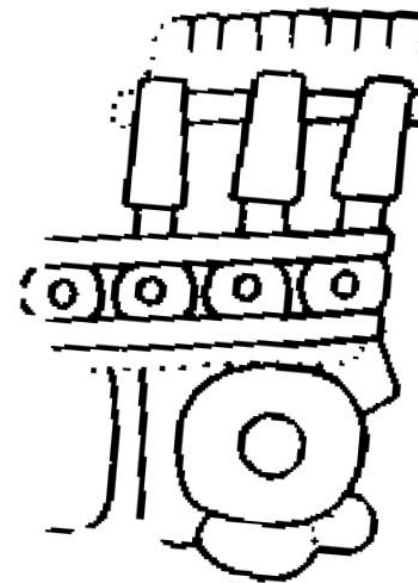
Tasseled Headdress is literally the “top, the upper part” (though the row of feathers is the real top)



Tikal Stela 31, shield, on side.

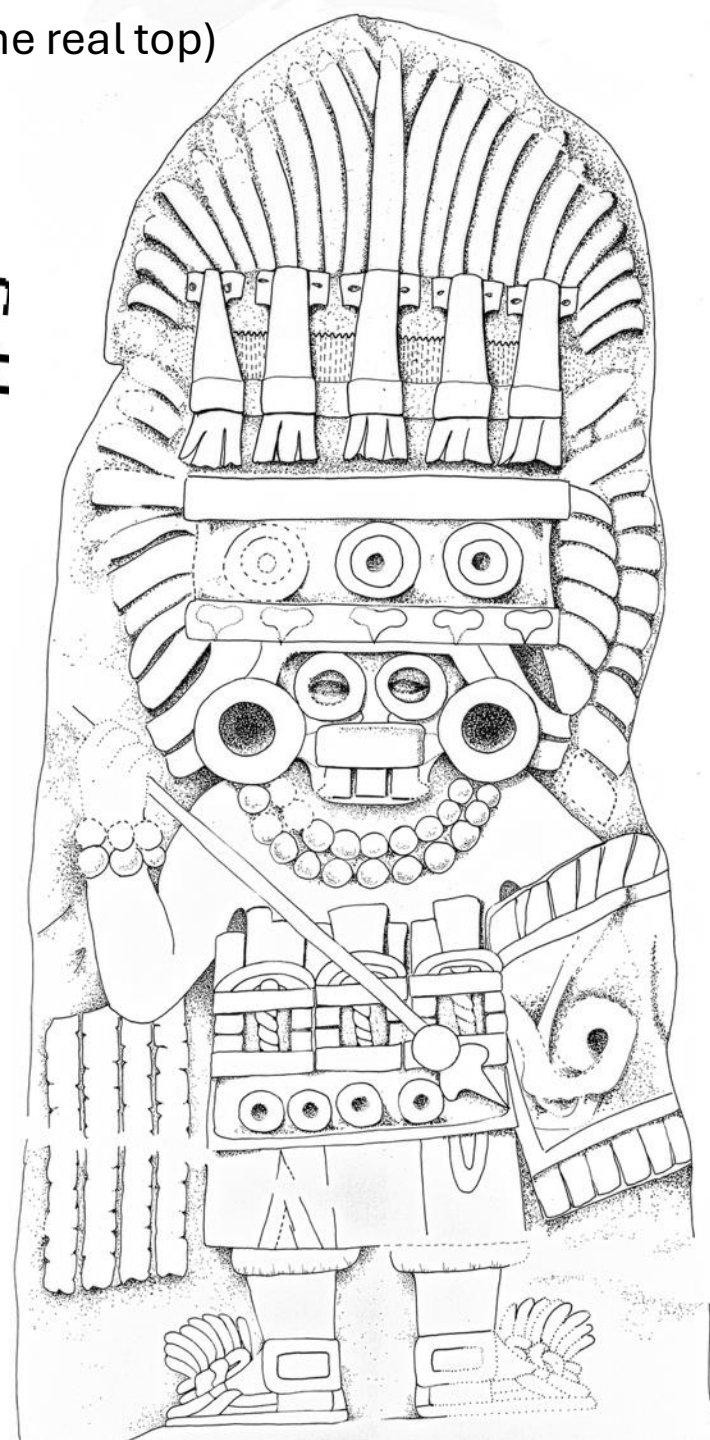


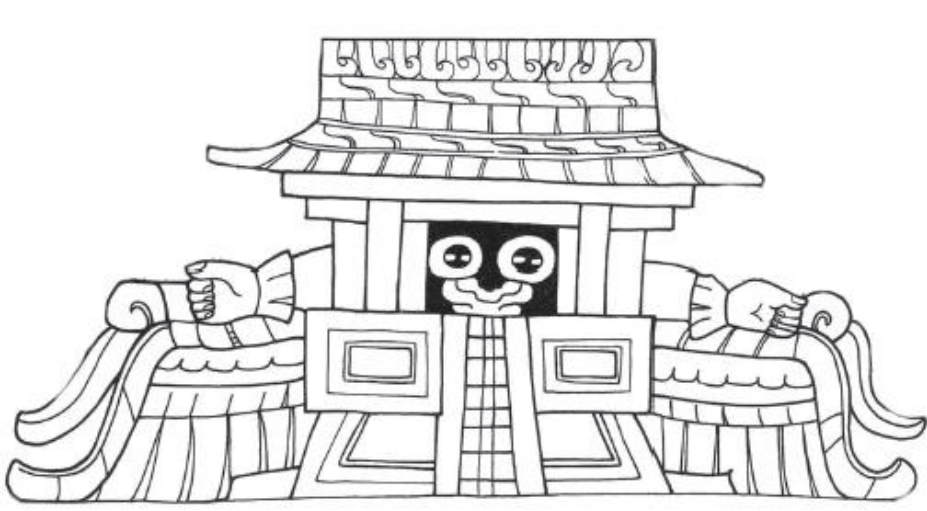
Tikal Stela 32, drawing W. Coe.



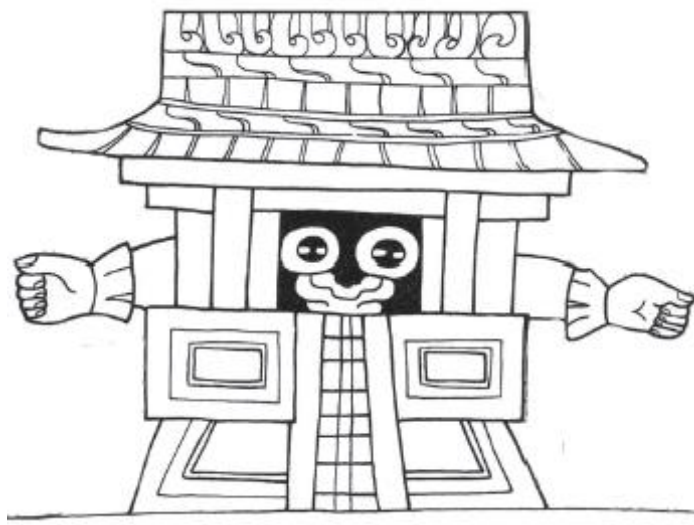
Tikal Stela 18,
drawing W. Coe.

Yaxha Stela
11, FLAAR.

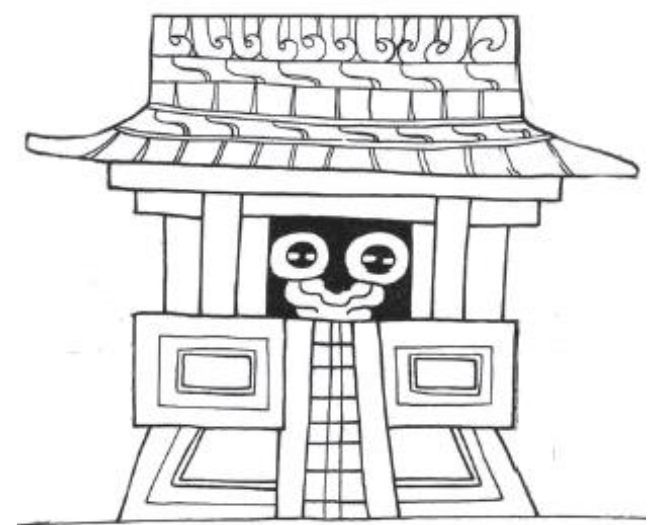




This composite supernatural tablero-talud (and/or the person inside) has wings. Need an in-depth research project to ascertain whether butterfly wings, bird wings, a composite, or merely “generic wings”.



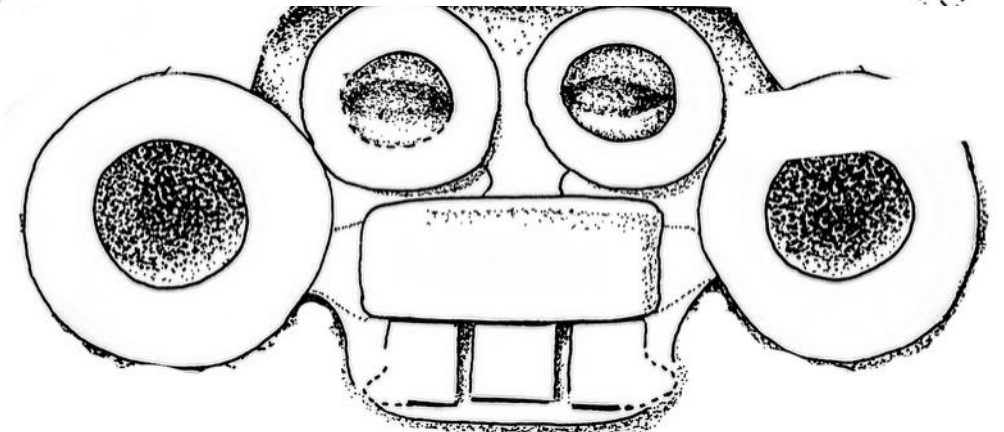
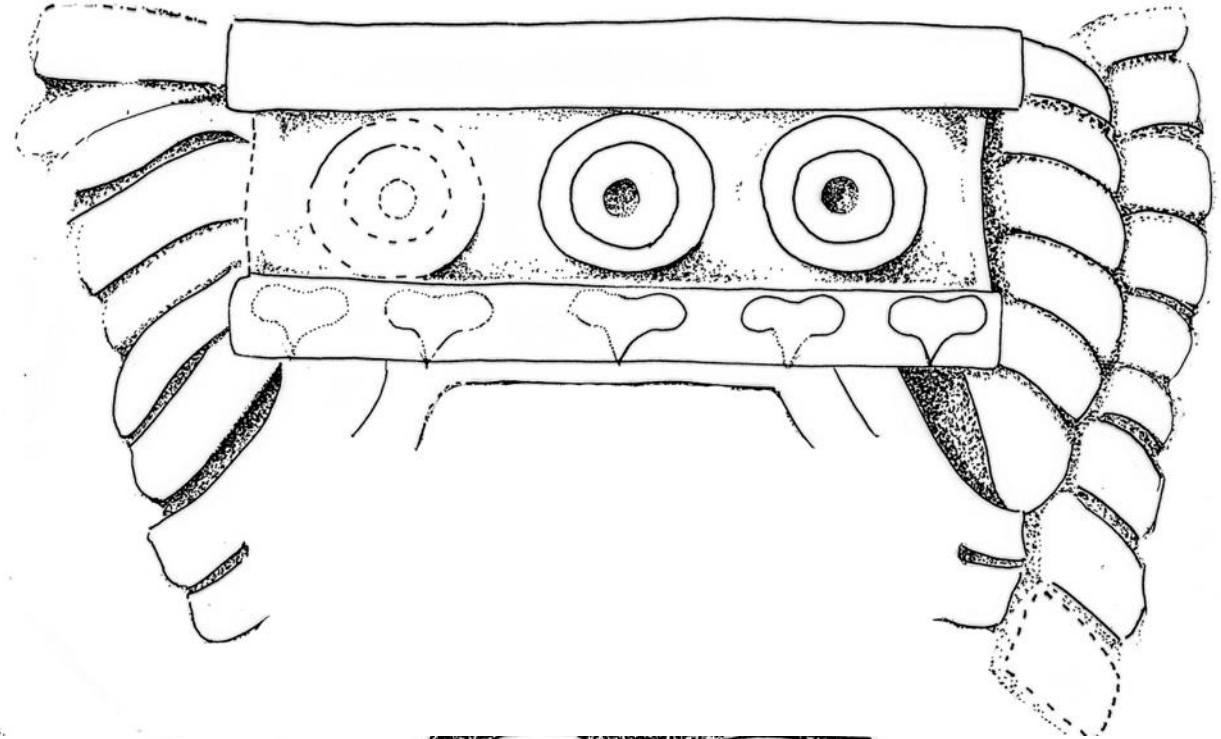
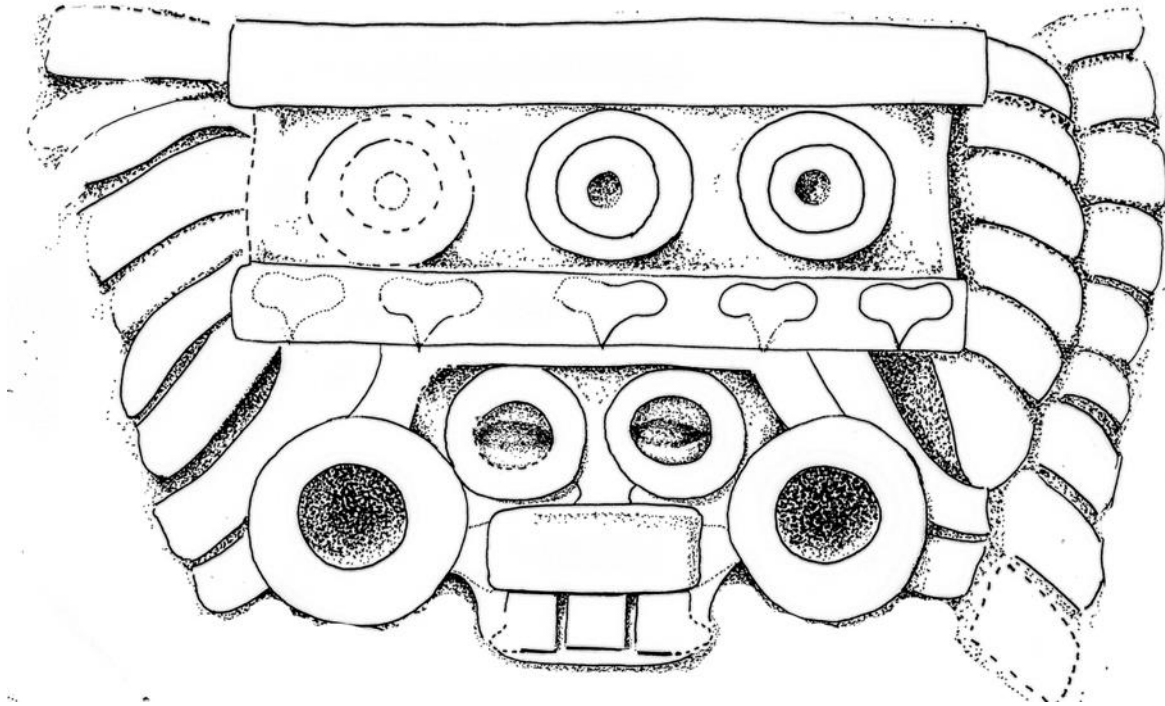
This house is clearly animated.

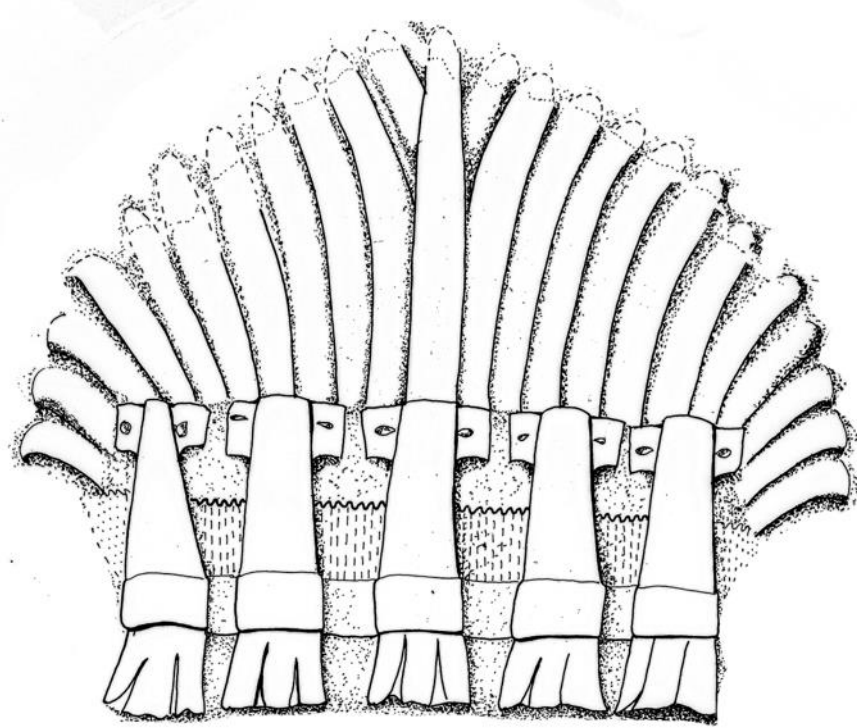
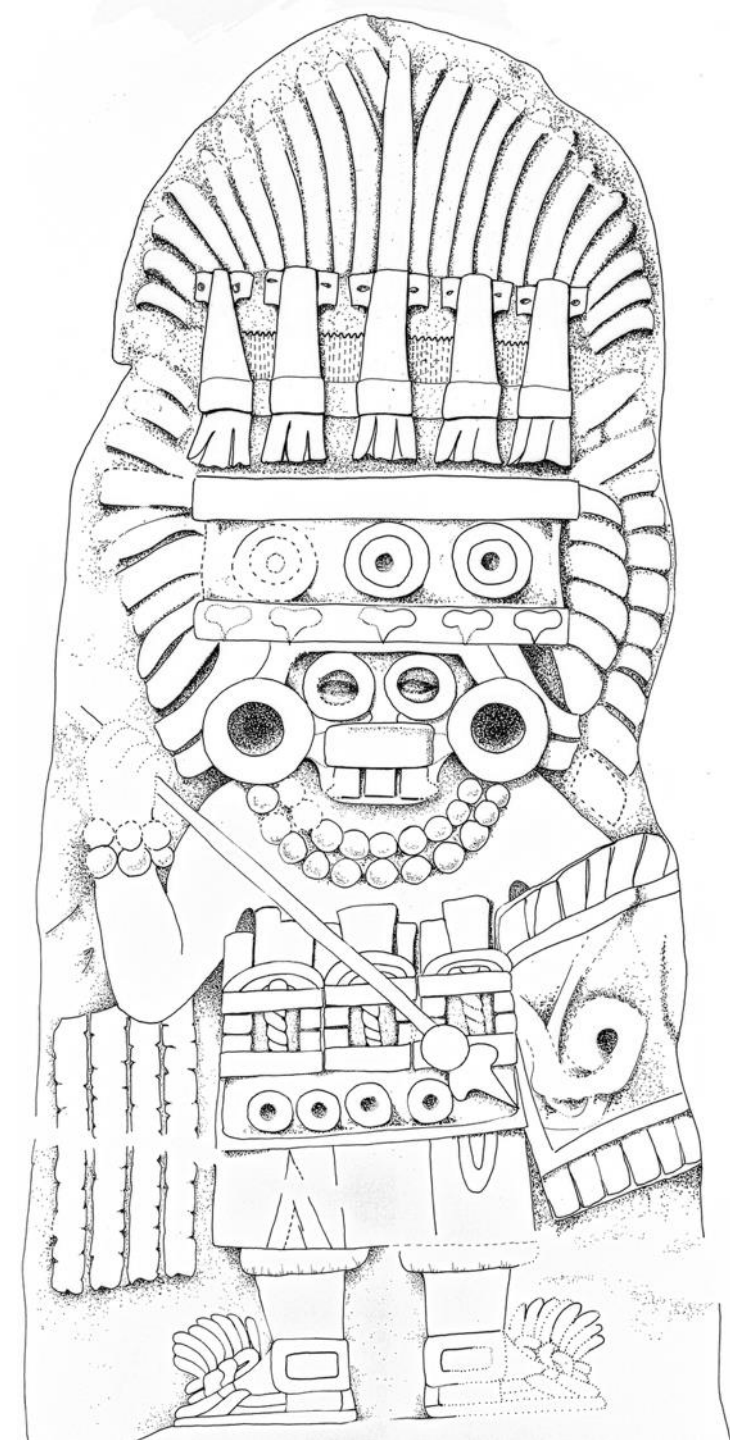


This bird is different than most birds at Teotihuacan—so needs further research.

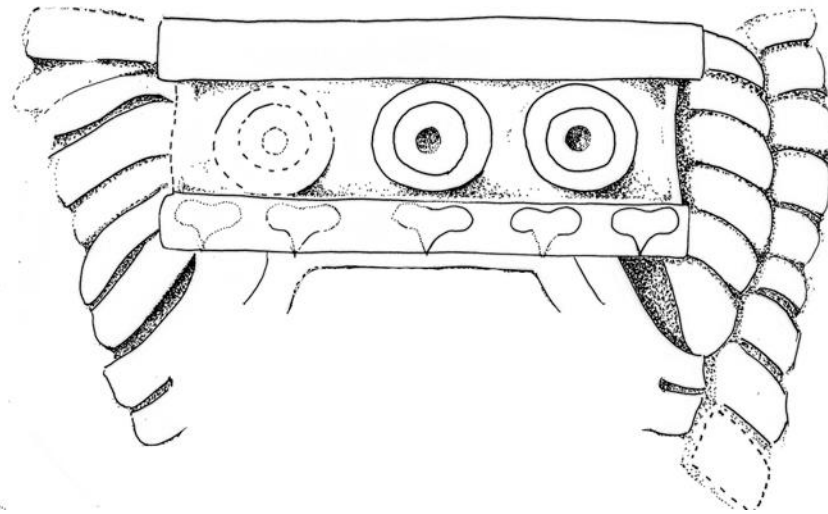
Copan, Teotihuacan style tablero-talud platform for temple (on stuccoed-and-painted cylindrical tripod). Drawing by Barbara Fash in Fash et al. 2009: Fig. 11.

Horizontal Row of Multiple Circles as Disks is a major feature of many (but not all) Tlaloc Headdresses



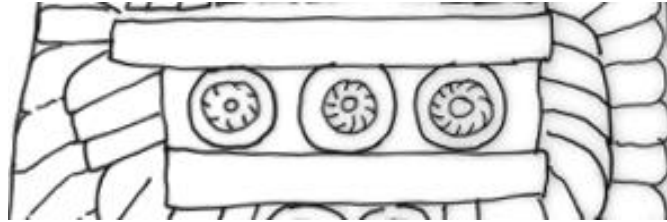


Tasseled Headdress is literally a separate headdress. The warlord of Yaxha Stela 11 literally flaunted this headdress on top of his lower headdress.



The row of five probably dart points, albeit highly stylized (for a short spear for an atlatl) adds to the message of military power. The atlatl spear thrower helped the Teotihuacan warriors and their Maya mercenaries warn the Maya not to attempt to fight back.

**Many Tlaloc Headdresses
feature a horizontal row of thick Circles**



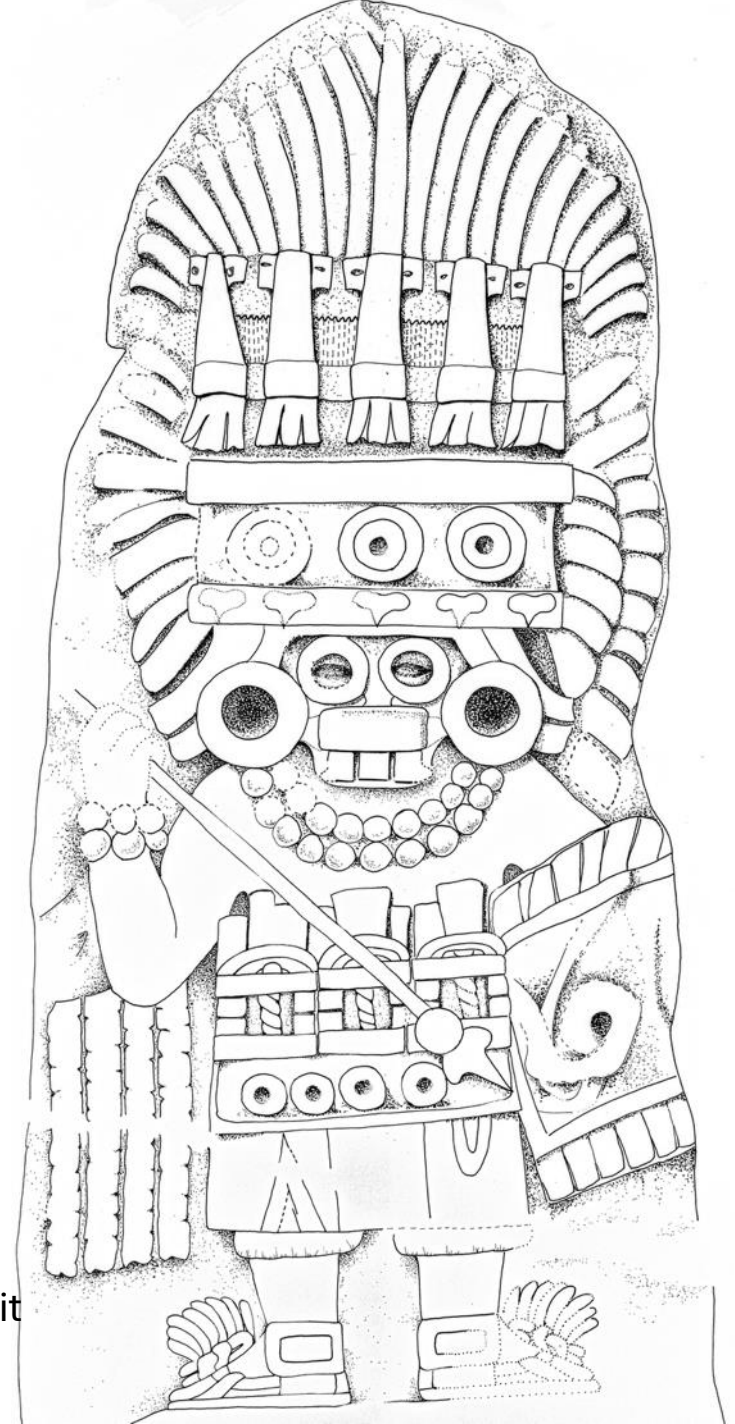
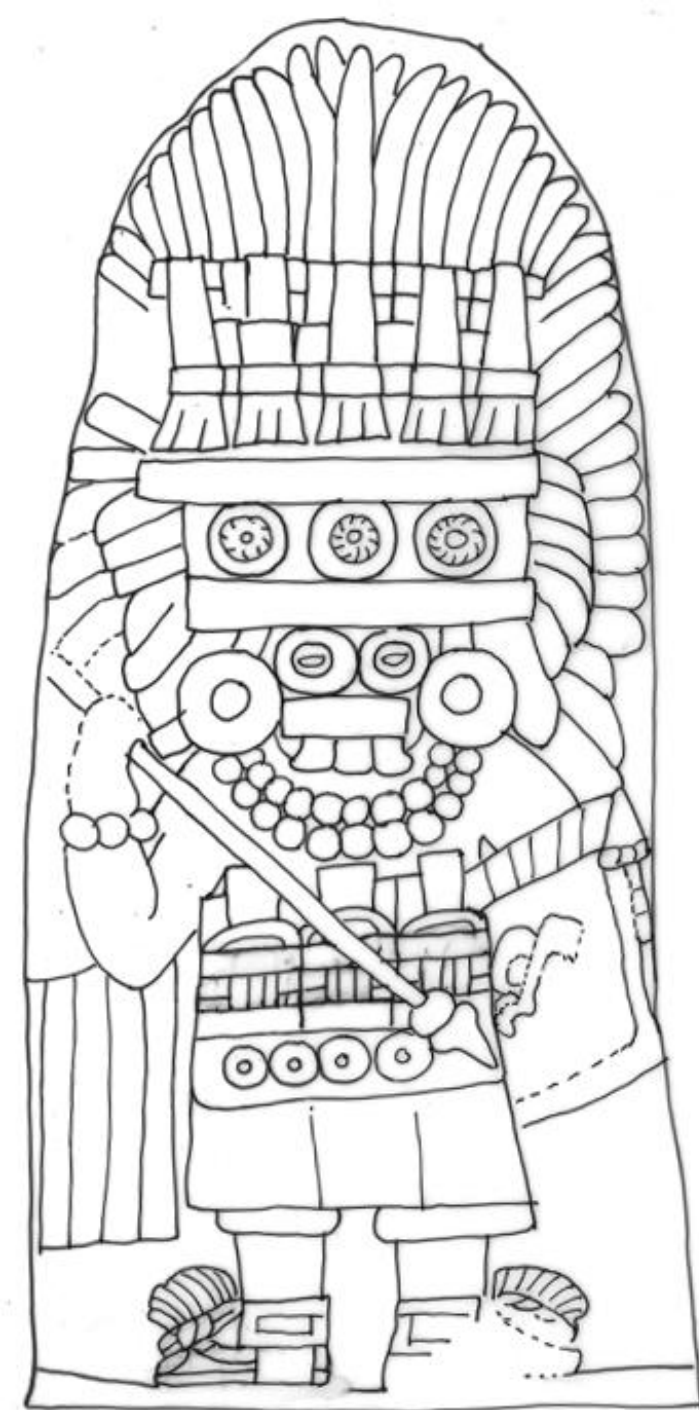
Did Schele put diagonal lines around all three circles because she was the only one in the world to notice them—or did she copy and paste from a Teotihuacan mural or cylindrical tripod portrait of Tlaloc?

On the following pages I show all the available photos of this part of the scene.

Nielsen 2003, Volume II: Figs. A3, a, b and c shows three versions of Yaxha Stela 11 (FLAAR, Schele, and Grube).

Freehand drawing by Linda Schele, SD 7302, on line, AAatLACMA.

FLAAR drawing based on cross-lit photos of Hellmuth.



The middle circular motif in the headdress is here well enough preserved so you can see that it's a doughnut inside a round frame. No "Schele pattern" whatsoever, nor space for lines that long.

AncientAmericas.org web page for the Schele drawing SD-7302 lists source as: Schele, Linda. 1995. "The Olmec Mountain and Tree of Creation in Mesoamerican Cosmology". *Olmec World : Ritual and Rulership*: 5: 112, Fig. 22d.

The Linda Schele photo collection has one photo of Yaxha Stela 11, so clearly she was at Yaxha, but her sole photo shows none of the details she added to her drawing.



Each different angle and intensity of lighting helps see different features. Now you can see a tad of the inner doughnut of the circle at the right.

Keep in mind this is the 1970's, and the portable lighting available to us today was not available over half a century ago. We had a portable Honda electric generator then (and still today) but our portable lighting in the 1970's was rudimentary.



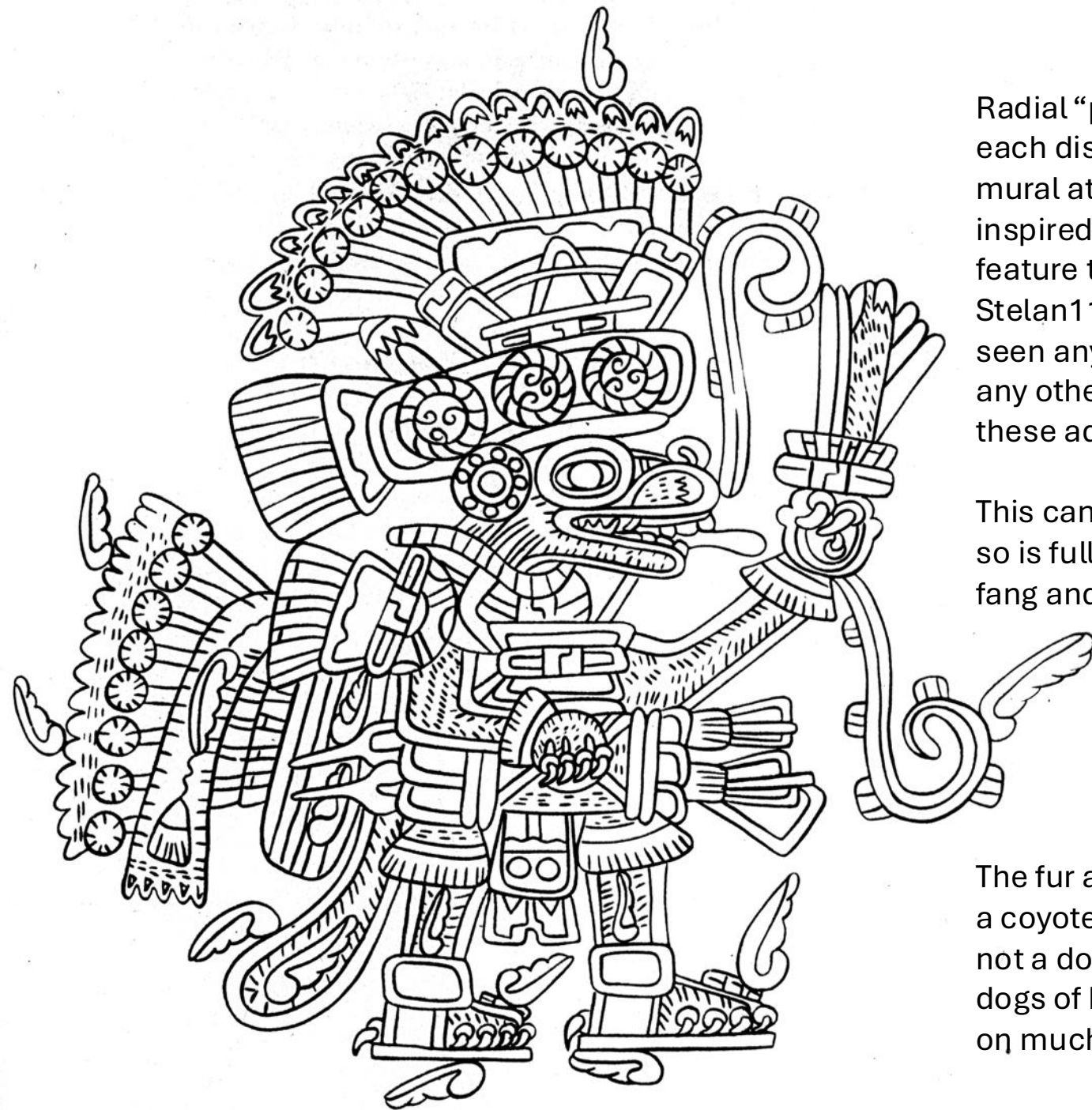
Now you can see that the “frame/background” of each circular motif in the headdress flares out.

But, where in the world did Schele get the 7 to 10 lines that she promotes in her freehand sketch?

She did not “see” the main feature of the shield design, nor the center rope like pattern in each of the three undocumented motifs across the waist area. So how did she “see” the lines that no one else has noticed—nor us that had the stela in front of us for YEARS.

It would help if a student or follower of Schele could find memoirs or diaries of when and how long she was at Yaxha.

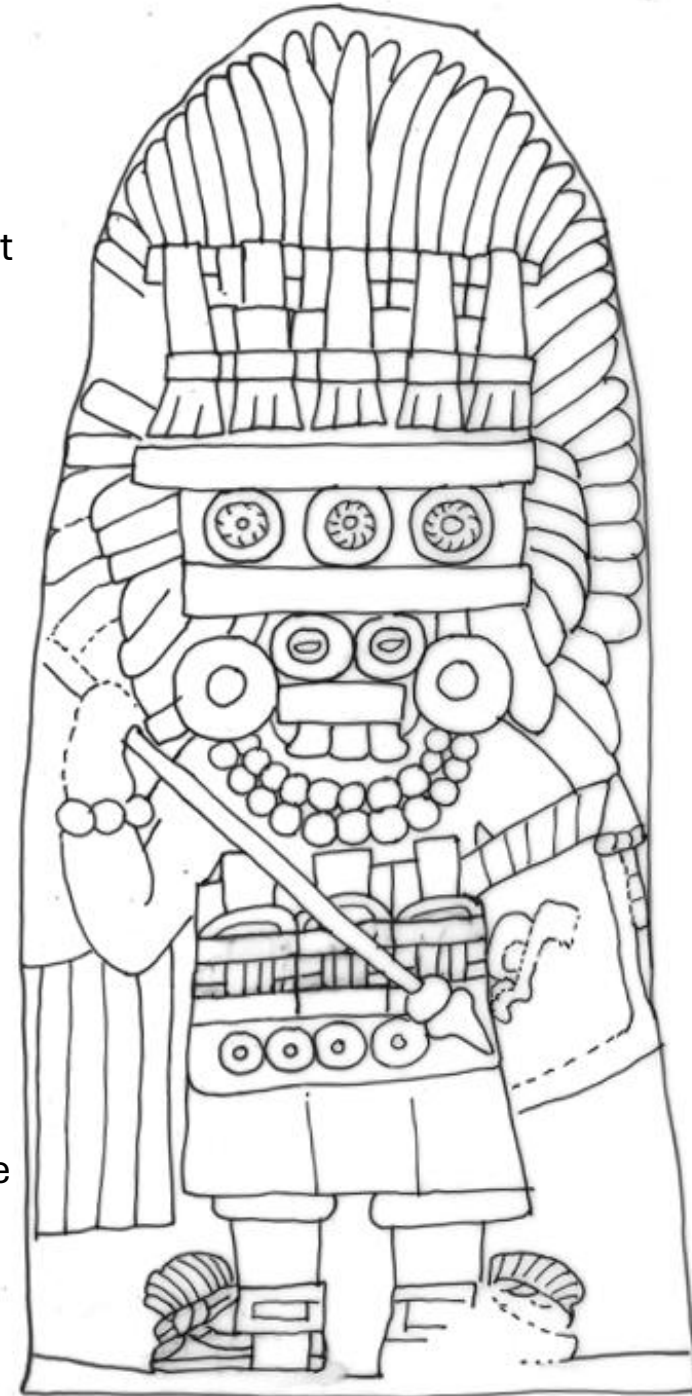


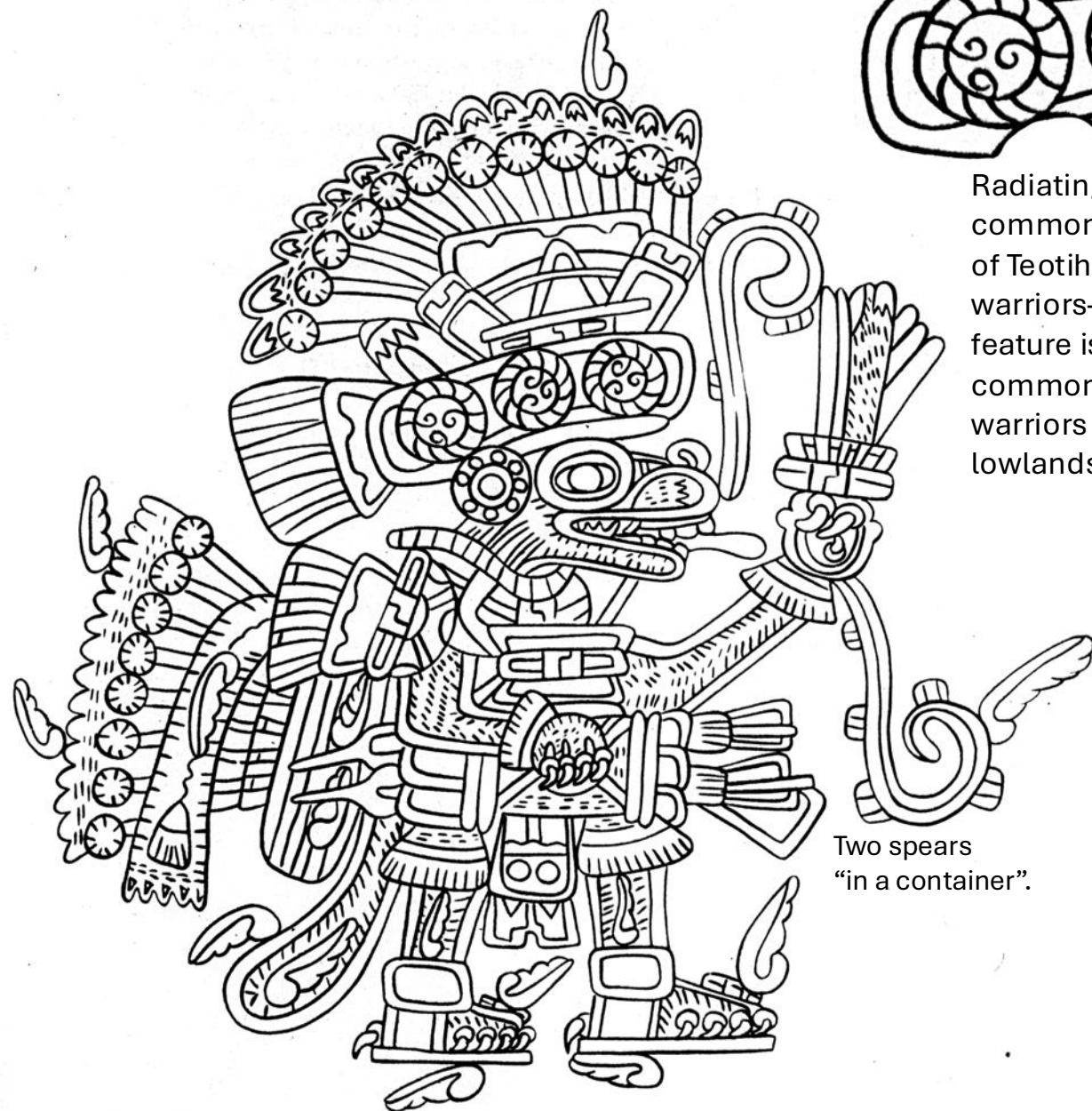


Radial “parallel” lines featured in each disk in the Teotihuacan mural at the left. This may be what inspired Schele to add that feature to her drawing of Yaxha Stelan11 (though we have not yet seen any such decoration nor do any other drawings have any of these added features).

This canine has atlatl and darts—so is fully armed in addition to his fang and powerful claws.

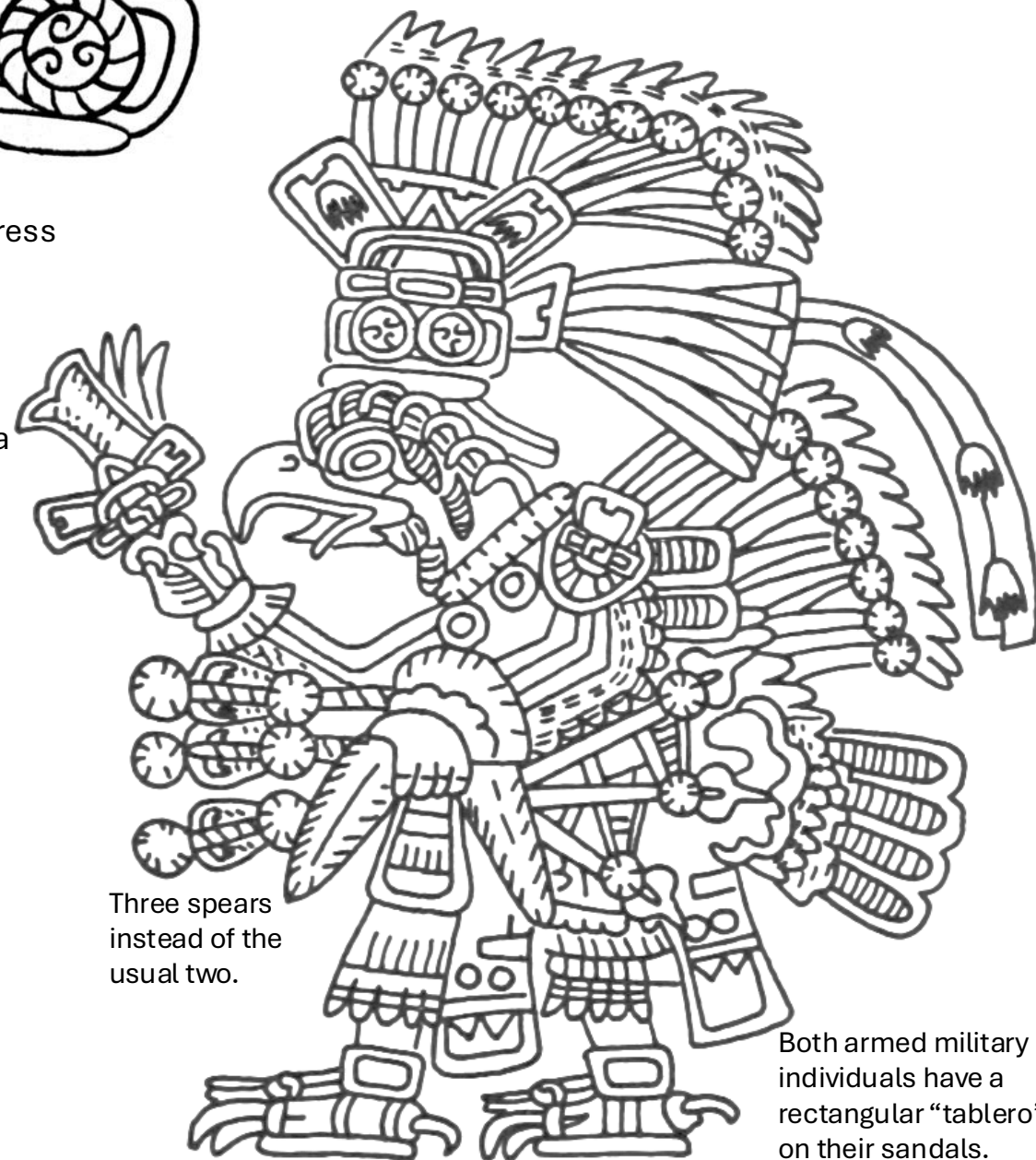
The fur and lack of spots suggest a coyote not a feline. And a coyote not a dog since pre-Columbian dogs of Mesoamerica lacked fur on much of their body.





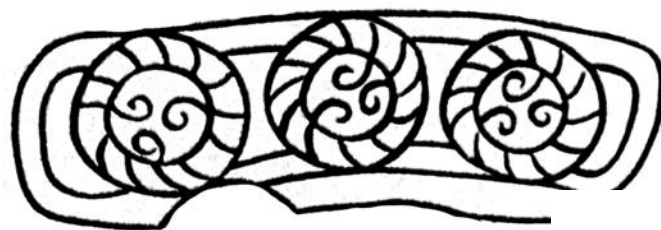
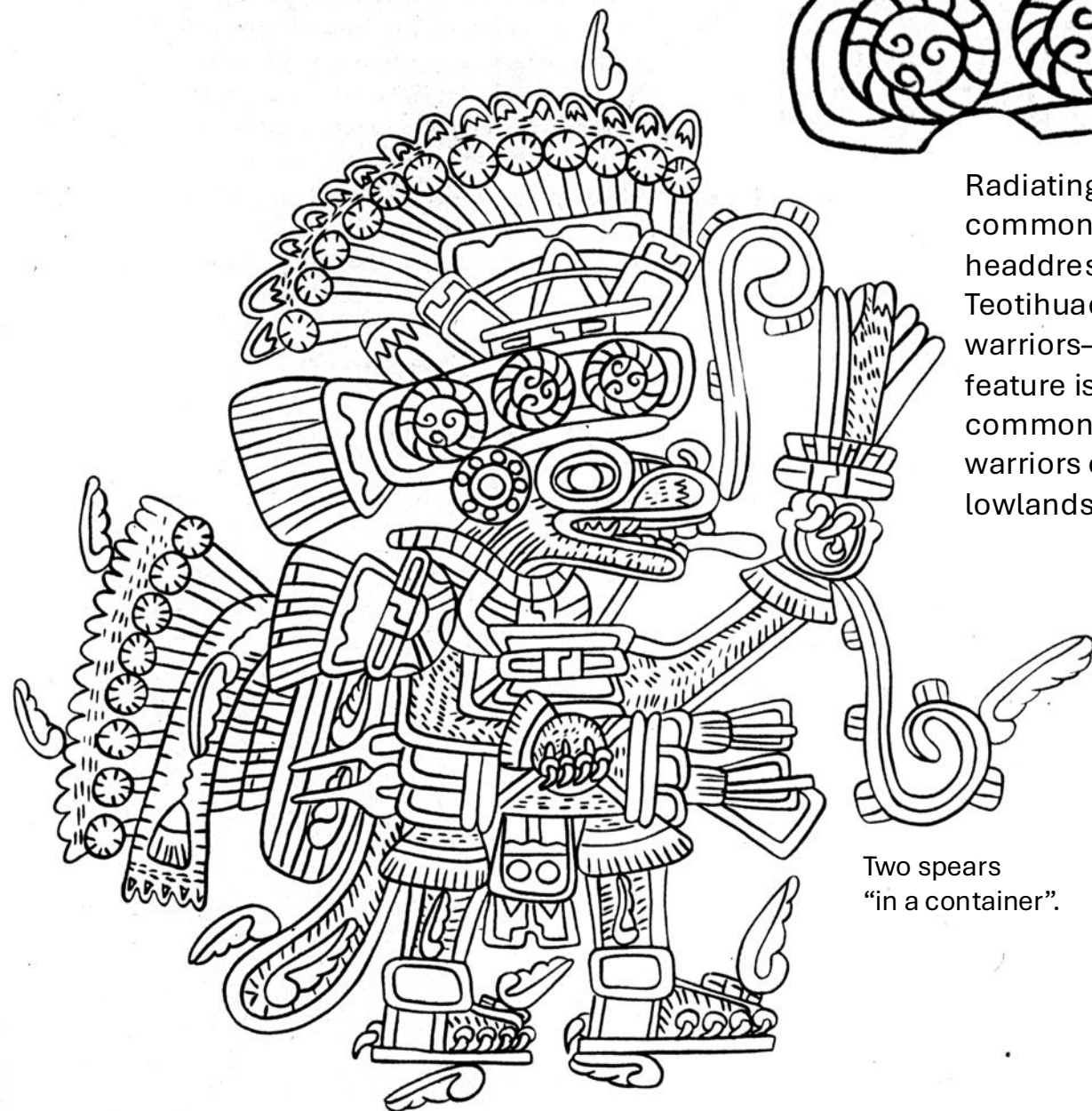
Radiating curls are common for headdress of Teotihuacan warriors—but this feature is NOT common on Tlaloc warriors of the Maya lowlands.

Two spears
"in a container".



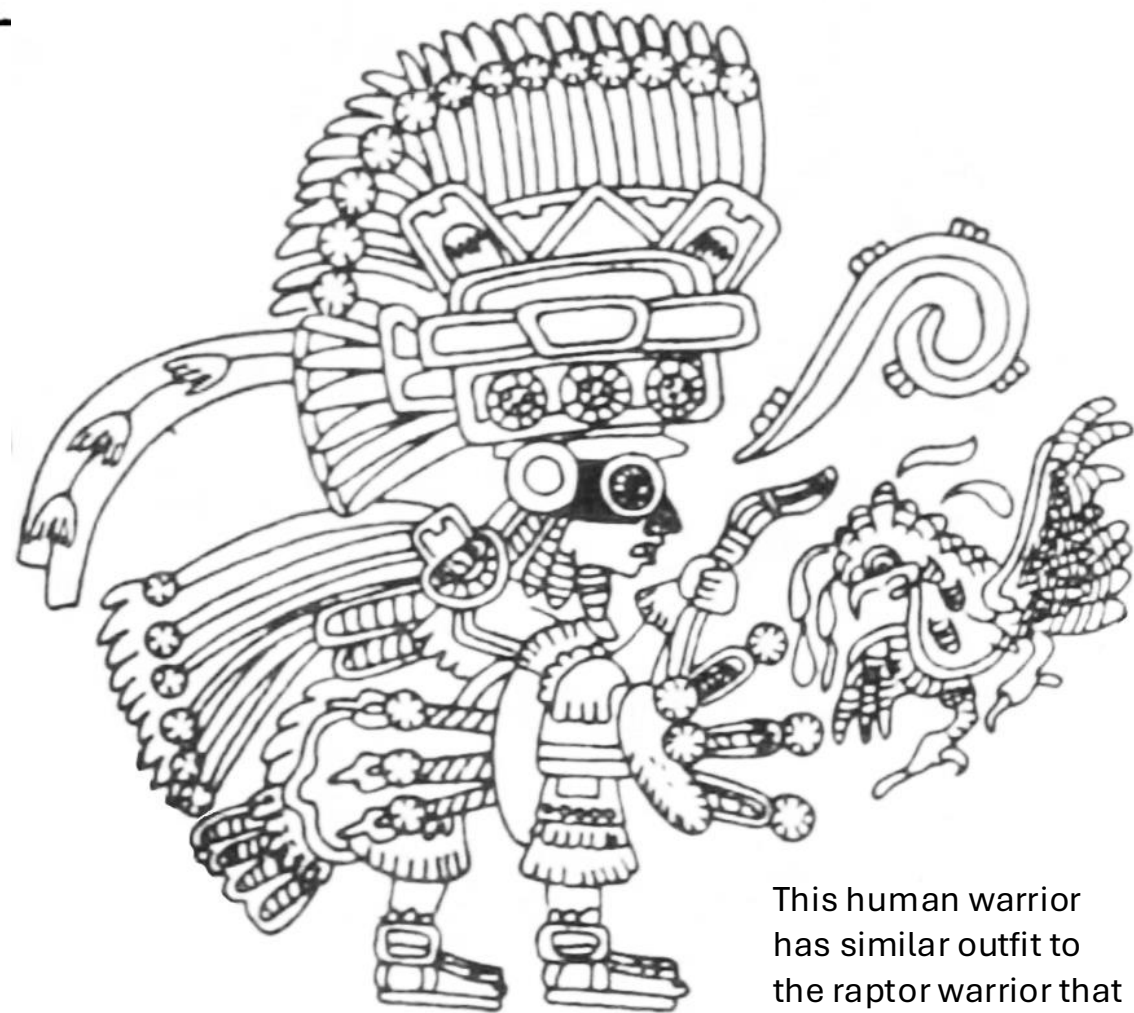
Three spears
instead of the
usual two.

Both armed military individuals have a rectangular "tablero" on their sandals.

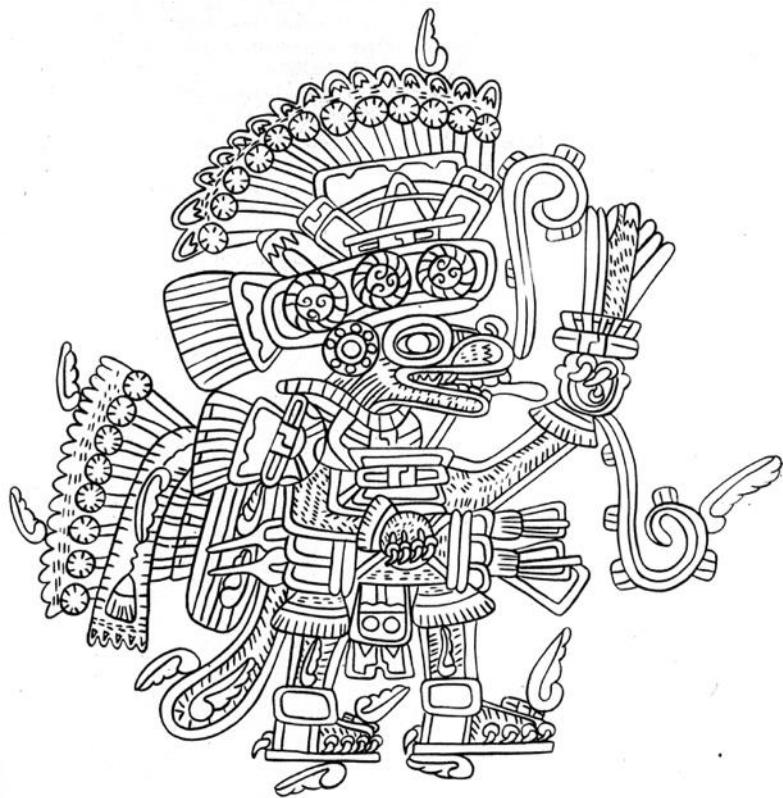


Radiating curls are common for headdress of Teotihuacan warriors—but this feature is NOT common on Tlaloc warriors of the Maya lowlands.

Two spears
“in a container”.



This human warrior has similar outfit to the raptor warrior that I show on the previous page.



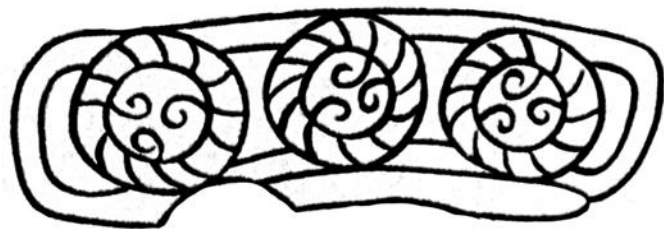
Two spears “in a container”.



Sejourne 1976: Fig. 53, page 140.



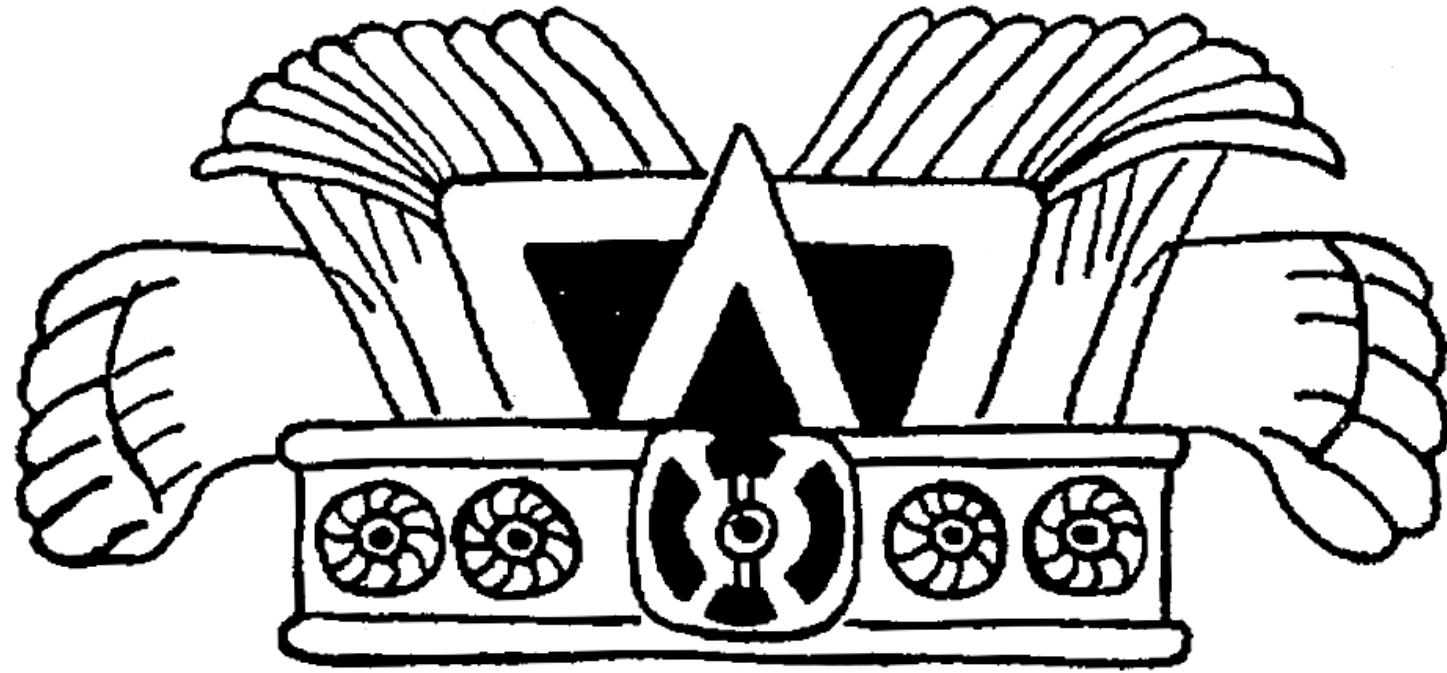
Both have three spears instead of the usual two.



Radiating curls are common for headdress of Teotihuacan warriors—but this feature is NOT common on Tlaloc warriors of the Maya lowlands.



So Schele had dozens of examples of Tlaloc headdresses that featured radial lines. So, understandably, she added these radial lines to her drawing of Yaxha Stela 11. But...these radial lines have not been documented for the disks in the headdress of Yaxha Stela 11, and should be removed.



Teotihuacan headdress featuring a row of disks with radial lines, Teotihuacan ceramic (Navarrete 1976: Fig: 10).

What is atypical is the motif in the center, plus the row of disks have only one line around the outside of their circumference.



These concentric circles show more detail than on any carved stone sculpture. Have same radial lines as Schele's drawing of Yaxha Stela 11 headdress.

Unknown whether this well-preserved incensario is from the Tiquisate area or the Maya Lowlands. Estimated to be Early Classic but could be another date? I doubt this is from Teotihuacan itself.



Butterfly proboscis and antennae, goggled eyes as logo for butterfly, one set of butterfly wings.

The traditional "row of rings" in this Tlaloc headdress have the parallel lines that Linda Schele added to the Tlaloc on Yaxha Stela 11.

Two rows of marine starfish (one row on each side—one side not preserved).

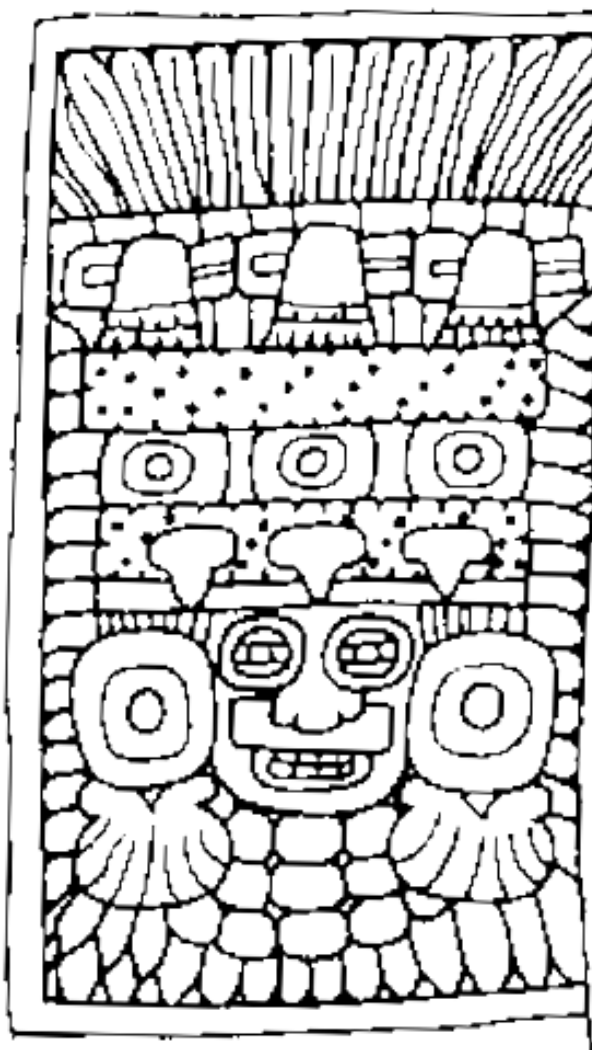
Nose plaque allows the entire nose to be visible and is in surprisingly variant of a *tablero talud* concept. Mouth is open (rare). Photographed over a quarter century ago.



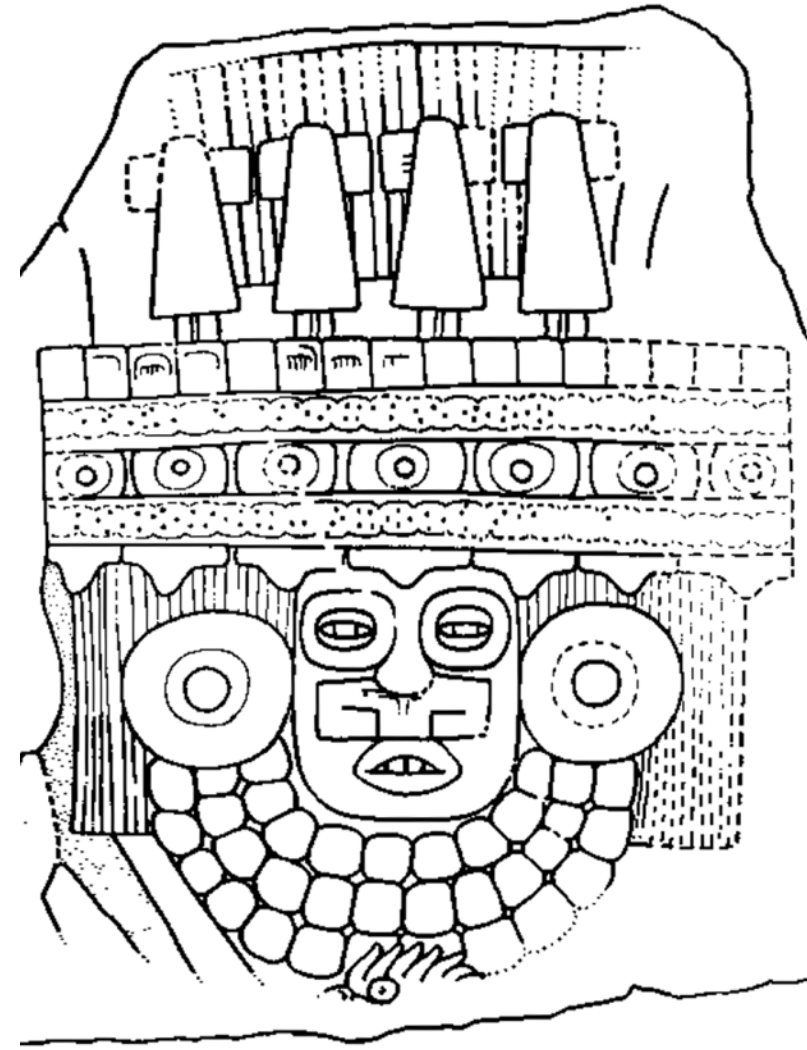
Did Linda Schele use this incensario headdress to create the headdress on Yaxha Stela 11?

Or more likely she used the other Tlaloc headdresses where the disks have these lines?

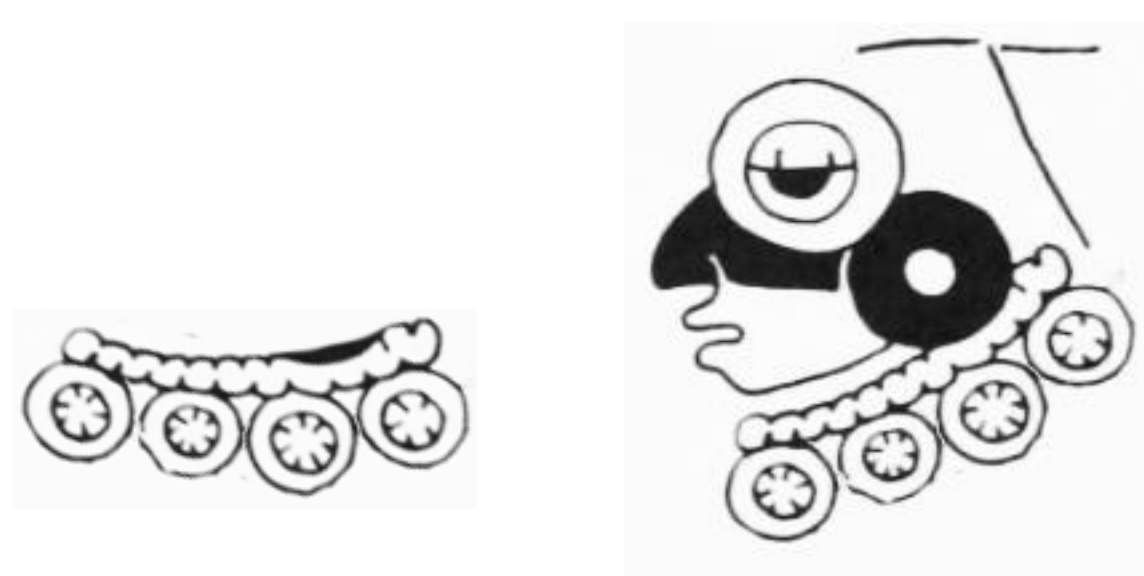
Either way, these lines do NOT exist on the disks of Yaxha Stela 11, Tikal Stela 31, or Tikal Stela 32.



Tikal Stela 31, shield, on side.

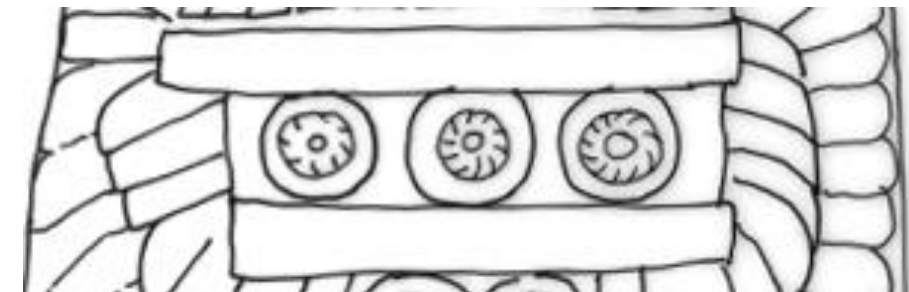


Tikal Stela 32, drawing W. Coe.



Although this is a necklace, and not up in the headdress, the horizontal band has the same undulations as in headdresses of military Tlalocs—and this Teotihuacan Tlaloc has his fingers in the atlatl (curiously three instead of the usual two?) and is carrying two short spears (there is considerable variation in the length of a spear that these soldiers could hurl with their atlatl).

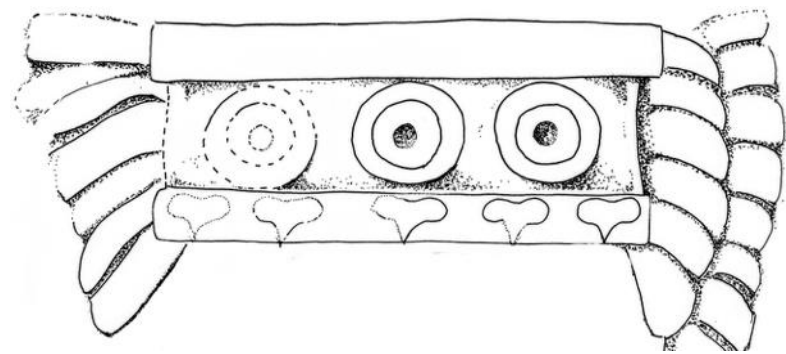
So, Linda Schele had LOTS of disks with radiating lines to inspire her to add these radiating lines into the headdress of the Yaxha Stela 11—but drawings should not add features that are not present.



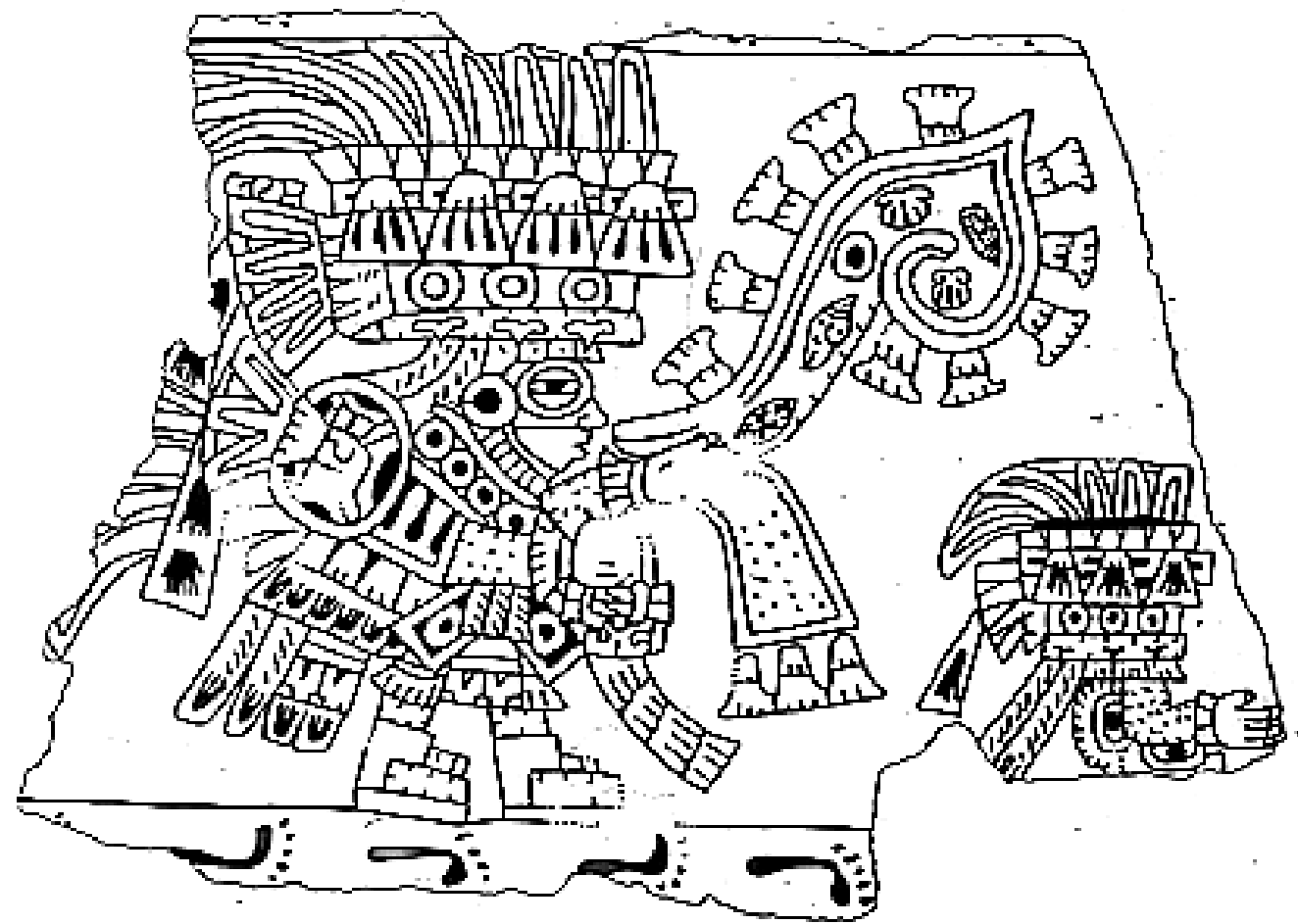
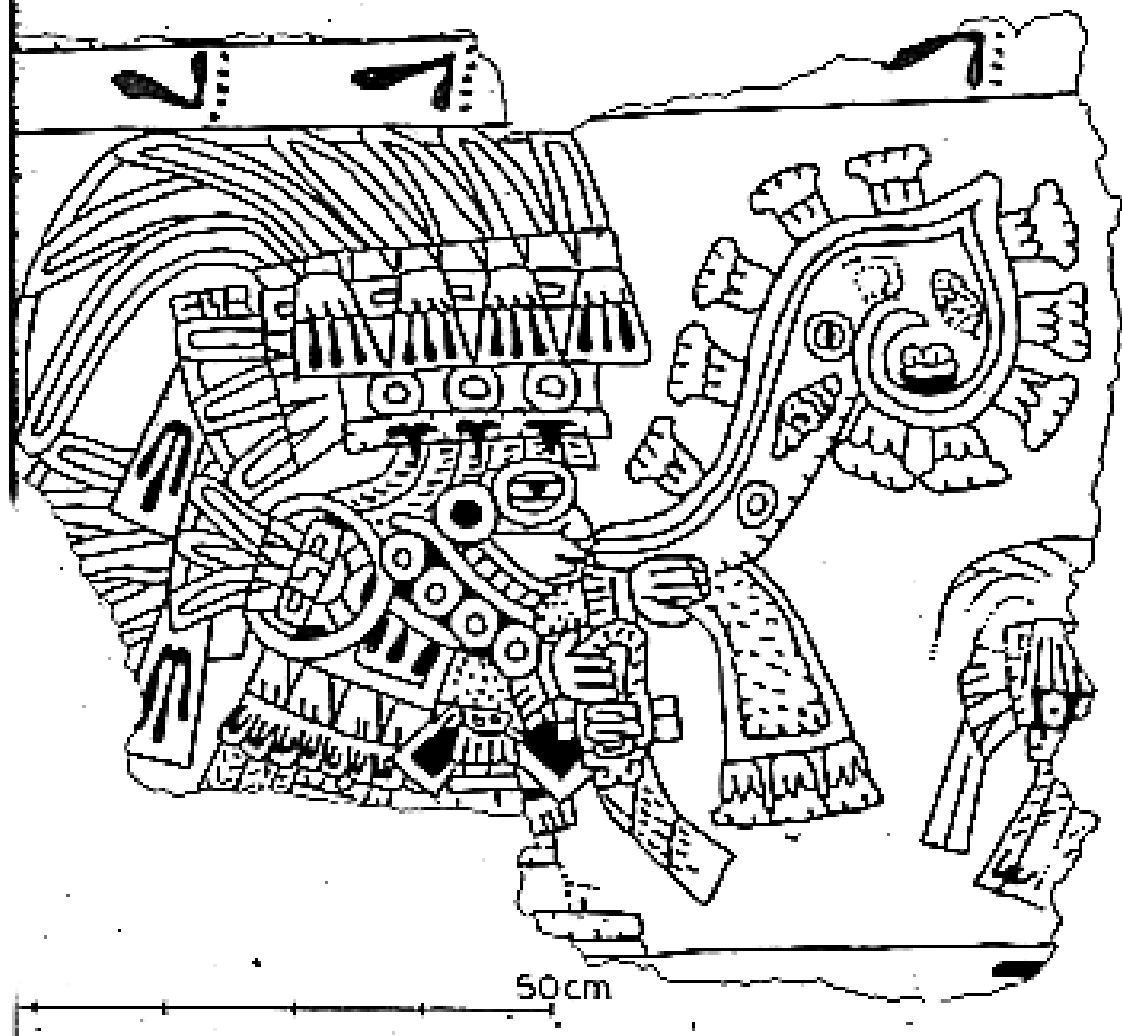
Drawing of Yaxha Stela 11 that shows radial lines that, so far, have NOT been documented whatsoever for Yaxha Stela 11.



The thick object curled below the necklace reminds me of the mysterious curved motif on the shield of Yaxha Stela 11. Cropped by Hellmuth from Sejourne 1976: Fig. 23, page 110.

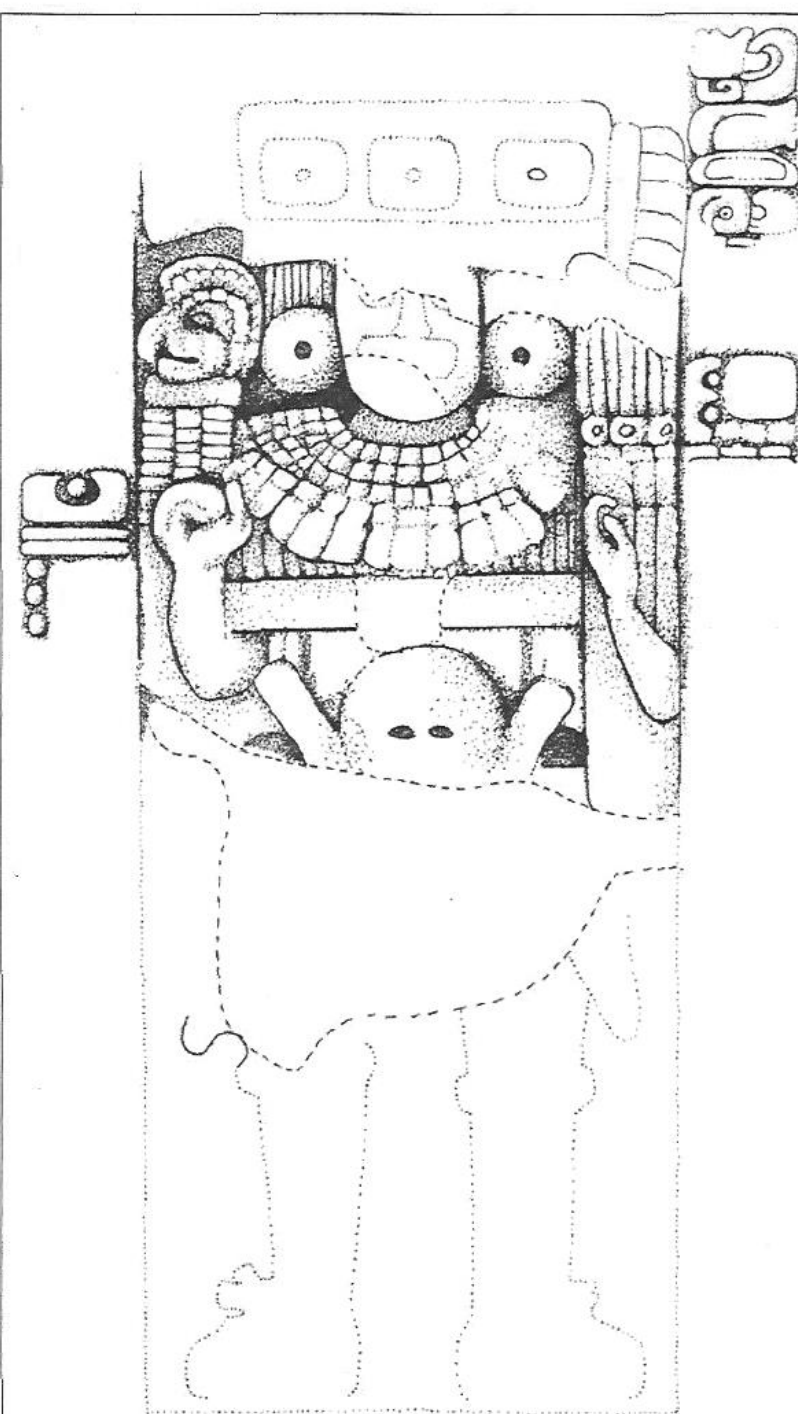


Drawing by M. Delp from photos by Hellmuth and his comments shows that a tracing is more accurate than a freehand drawing.



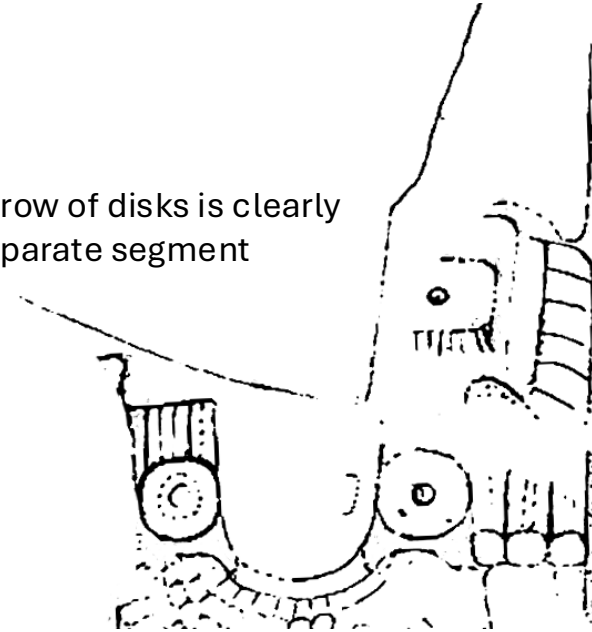
This scene is repeated many times on the murals of the Techinantitla compound of Teotihuacan, and published in dozens of articles and books on art of Teotihuacan.

None of these disks have any decoration inside.



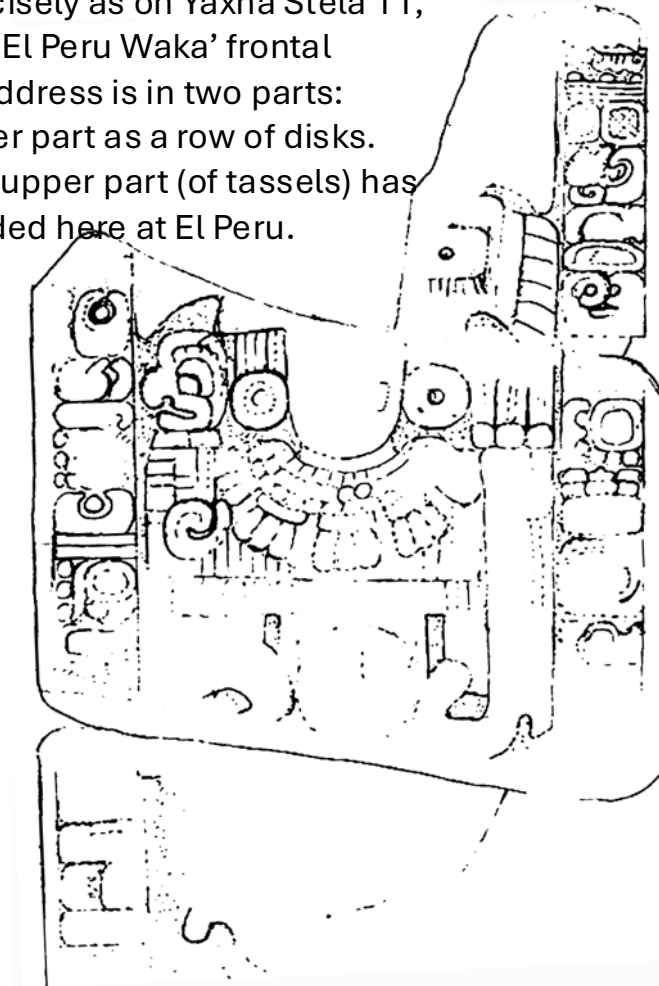
Horizontal Row of Large Disks is a key symbol in the headdresses of “entering” military warlords “entering” as proxies for Teotihuacan

The row of disks is clearly a separate segment



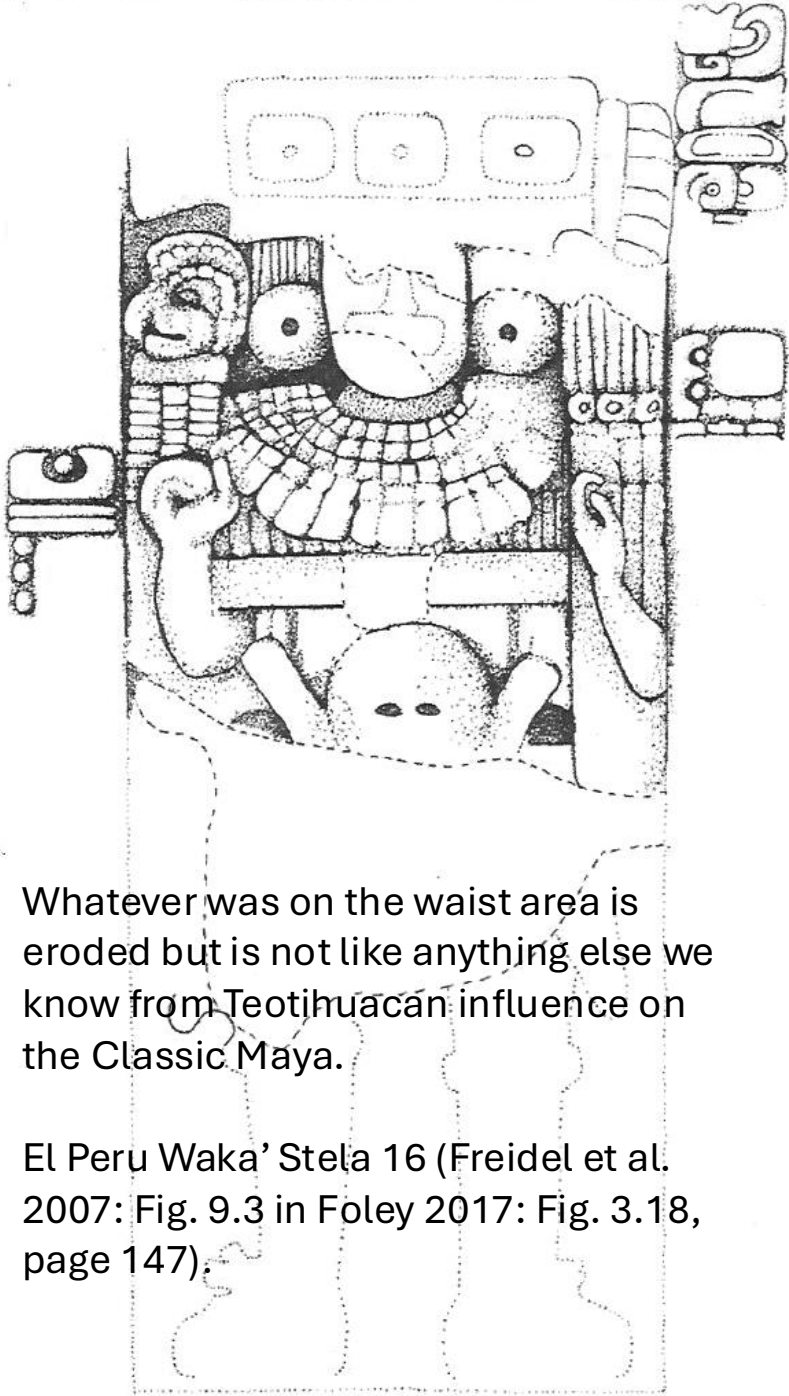
Foley 2017: Figure 3.18, page 147: El Peru/Waka' Stela 16, possibly a portrait of Sihyaj K'ahk', A.D. 465, after Freidel et al. 2007: Fig. 9.3).

Precisely as on Yaxha Stela 11, this El Peru Waka' frontal headdress is in two parts: lower part as a row of disks. The upper part (of tassels) has eroded here at El Peru.



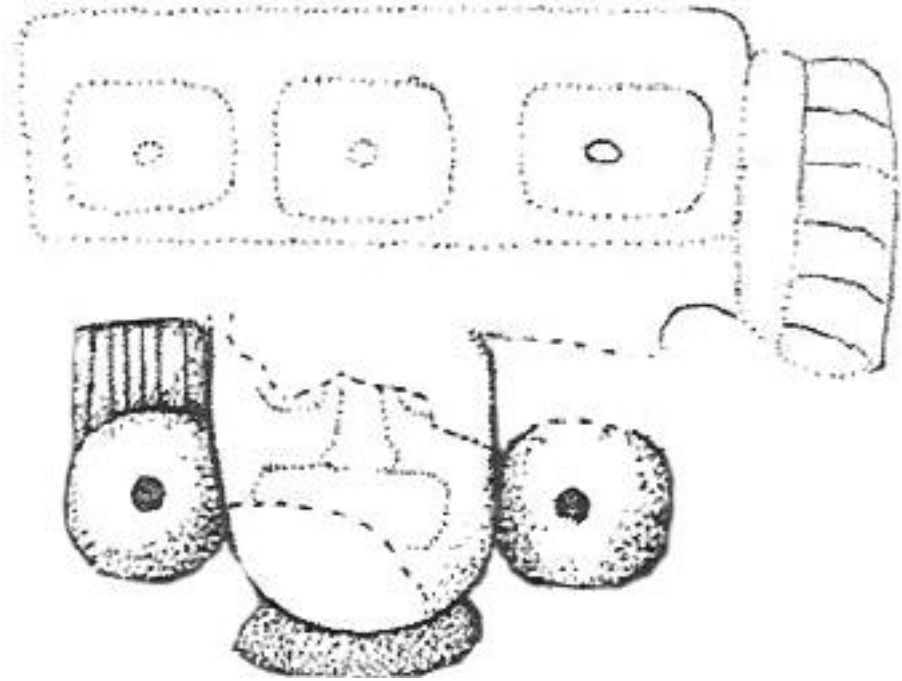
Freidel et al. 2007: Figure 7, page 67: El Peru Waka' Stela 16, field sketch by Ian Graham. He kindly shared his drawings with colleagues. Also published by Nielsen (2003: Vol. 2, Fig. D31).

These two drawings are so different in details and proportions it's noticeable. But Ian Graham shows a still-preserved disk in the lower area of the headdress.



Whatever was on the waist area is eroded but is not like anything else we know from Teotihuacan influence on the Classic Maya.

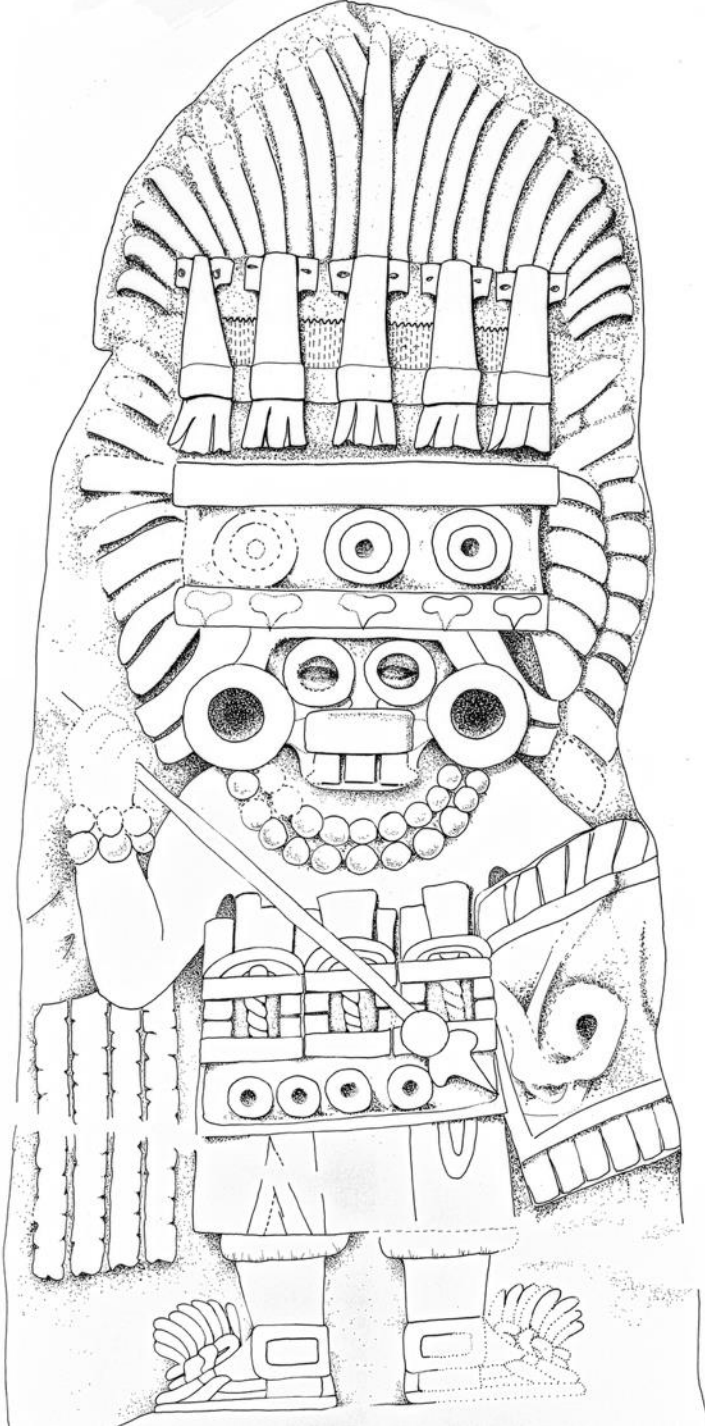
El Peru Waka' Stela 16 (Freidel et al. 2007: Fig. 9.3 in Foley 2017: Fig. 3.18, page 147).

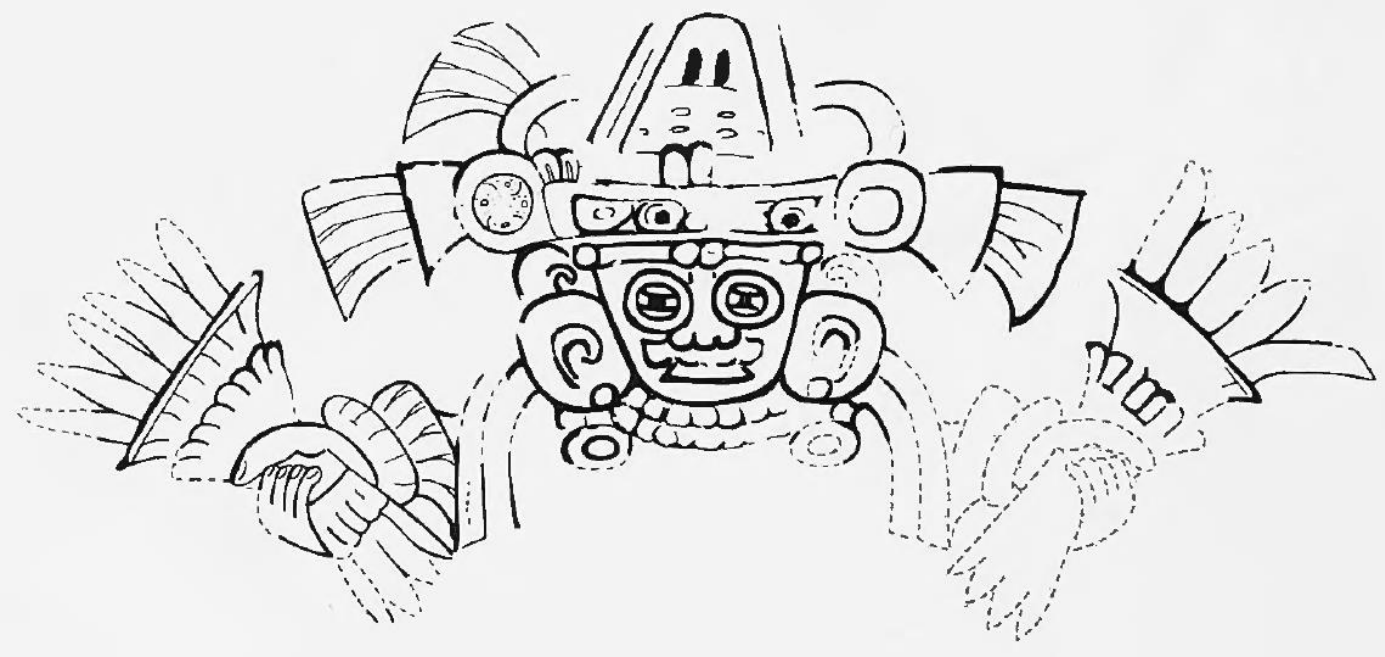


What is notable is that the headdress may have literally featured primarily the row of three disks—documenting again how much of a “logo” this was for Maya reception of Tlaloc (and generally a Tlaloc showing off military strength).

This remarkable frontal stela 16 of El Peru Waka' has Maya hieroglyphs. The necklace looks almost 3 dimensional (looking down at it diagonally, instead of flat frontal view).

The earrings lack the expected central open area. Had a nose plaque but eroded. Seemingly no goggled eyes?



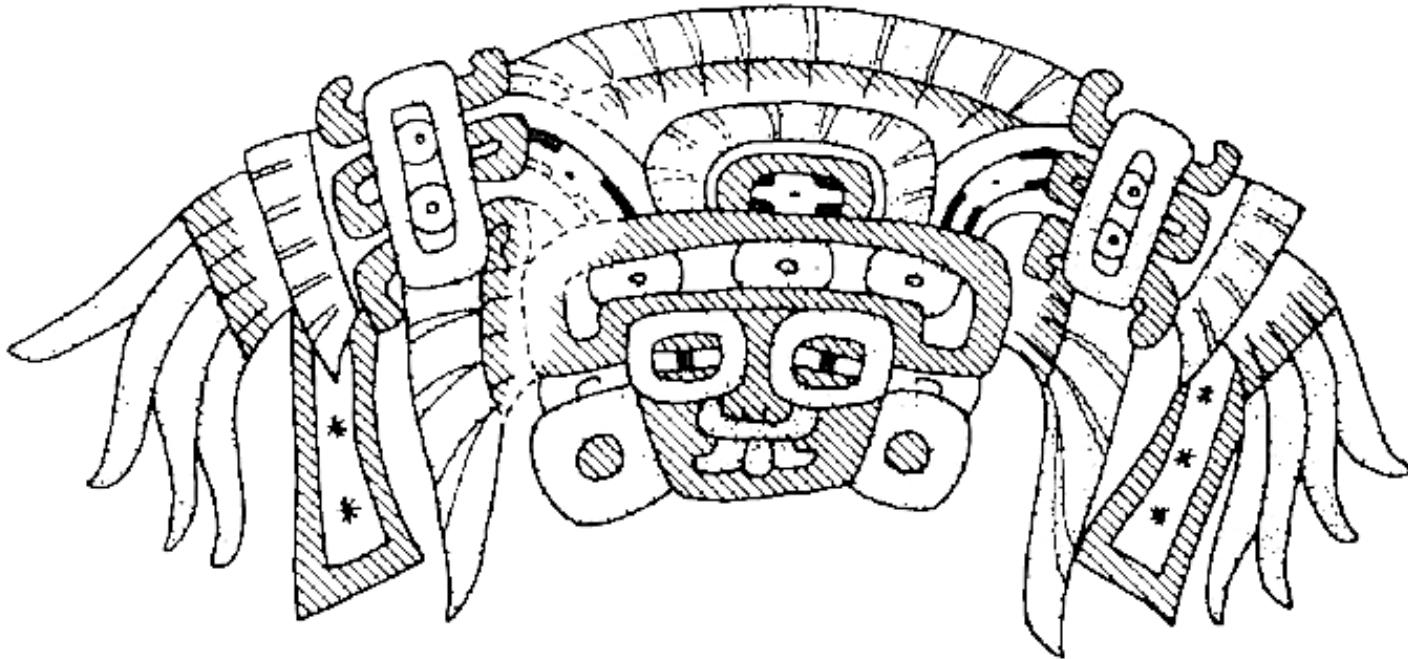


Row of five disks in the traditional rectangular frame, above the forehead of this Tlaloc, Tikal Burial 10 (Culbert 1993: Fig. 15,d).

Each of these Tlaloc-like personages has a different nose plaque—tablero-talud here. The other face has the same as on Yaxha Stela 11.

Both Tlalocs have their eyes highly stylized but also clearly visible. So similar to the eyes of Yaxha Stela 11.

This Tlaloc is holding bundles that are very commonly held by Tlalocs at Teotihuacan and especially in Tiquisate style scenes on cylindrical tripods across the Costa Sur.



Row of three disks in the traditional thick frame, but this unique variant turns down on both sides—I have not seen that elsewhere. Tlaloc, Tikal Burial 10 (Culbert 1993: Fig. 17,a,1).

While studying headdresses of Teotihuacan style Tlalocs hour after hour, day after day, week after week, I realized that what was worn by the military warlord on Yaxha Stela 11 consisted of three separate headdresses, one on top of the other. Then, half an hour later, I was amazed to find an incredibly helpful drawing in Manzanilla 2018: page 774 that showed a headdress of three segments not yet on anyone's head.



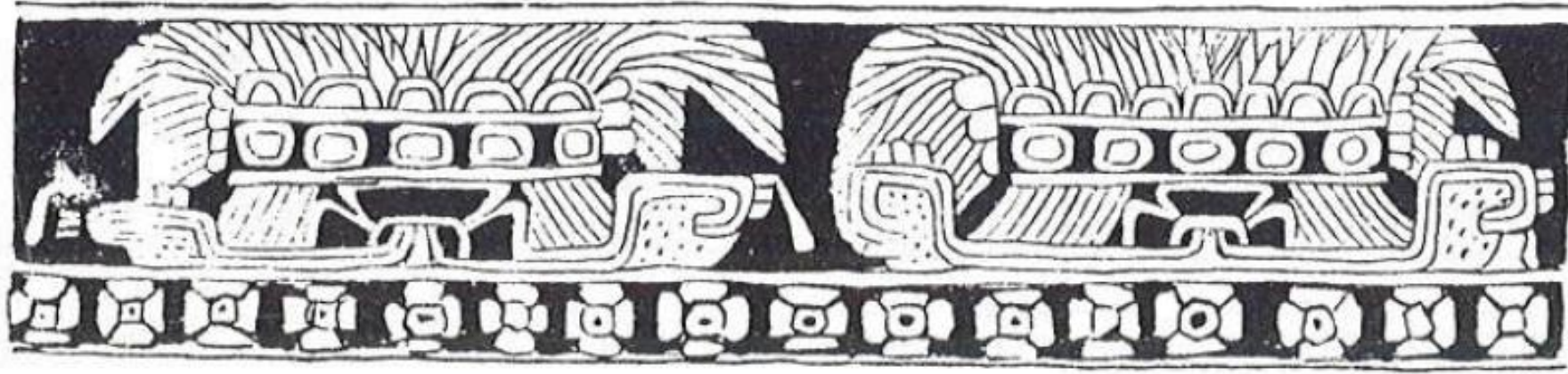
Same headdress repeated three times.

Each headdress has three "layers":

- Upper area with black background, and its own feathers
- Tasseled headdress (that impinges over the top of the row of rings below)
- Horizontal row of rings

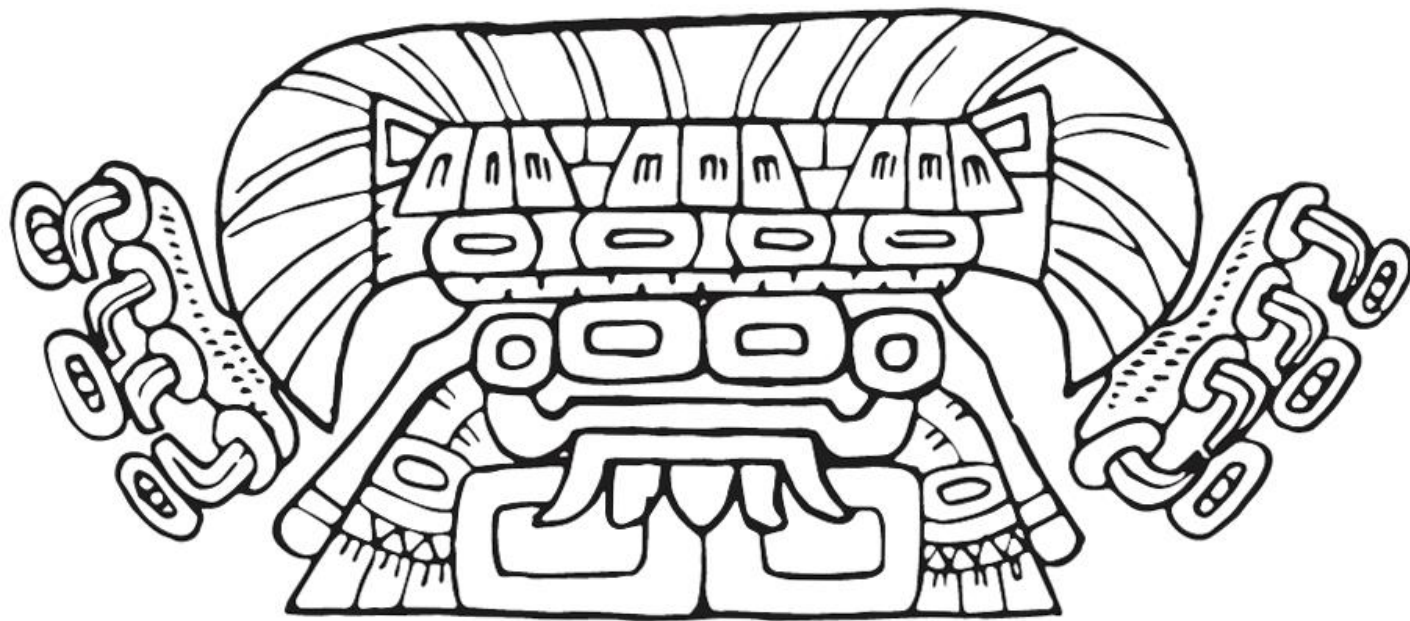
That said, the tasseled designs are "merged" with the row of goggles—they are not as "separate" as on Yaxha Stela 11.

When there is not space to show a complete headdress, different parts are crunched.

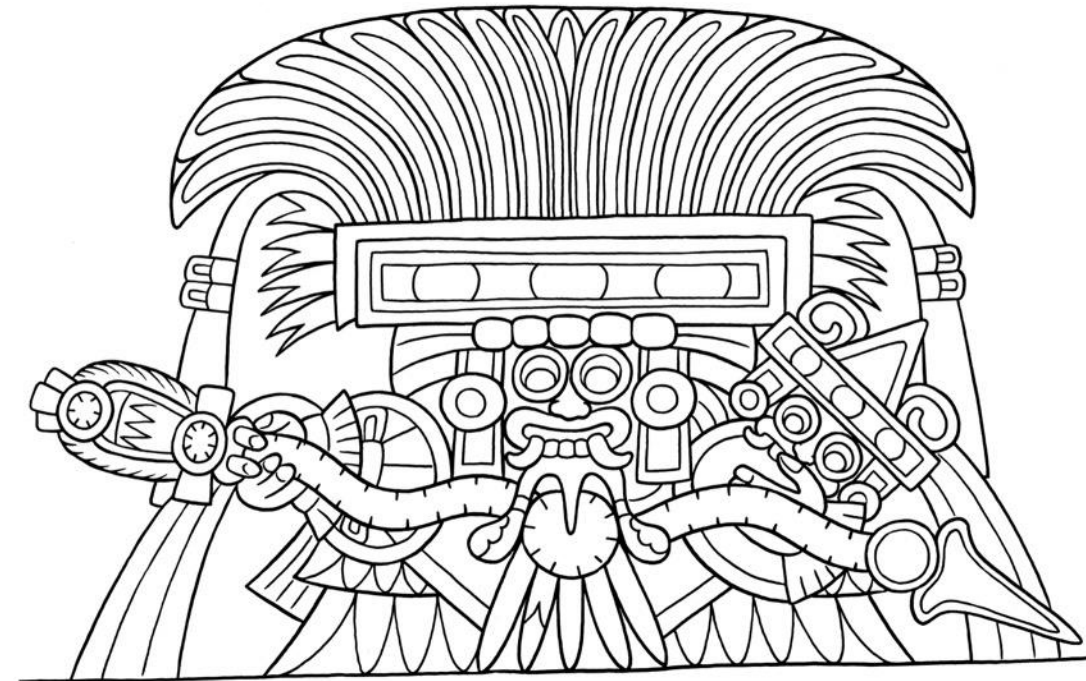


3,i. Dos volutas (de la palabra?) saliendo de la media flor. Xolalpan, seg. Linné 1934, fig. 25.

Not enough space for the tall tassels, but the row of disks is clearly featured (Von Winning, Vol. 2, Fig. 3.1).



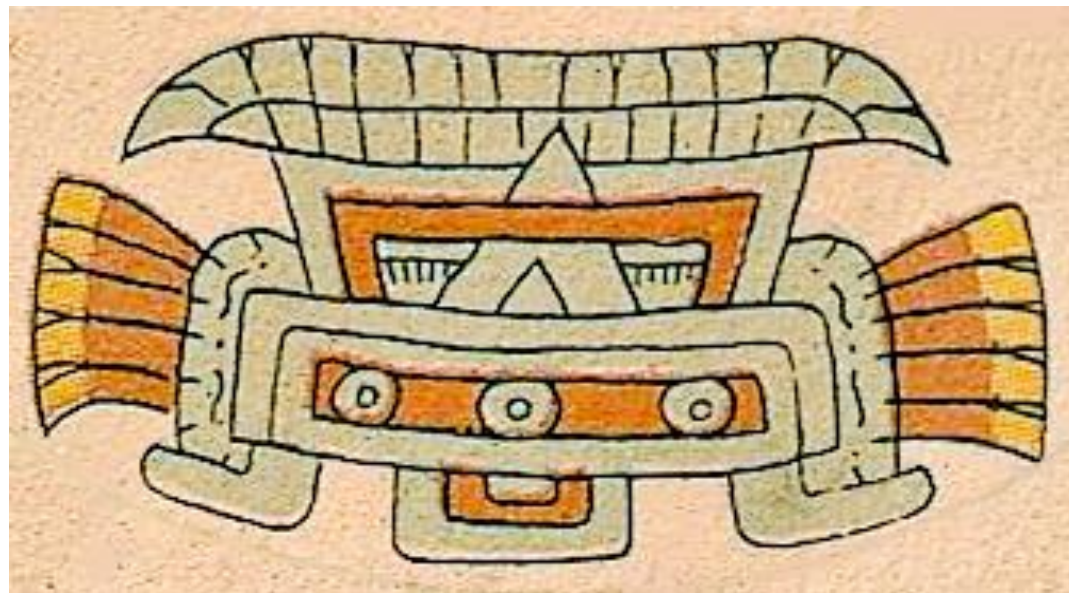
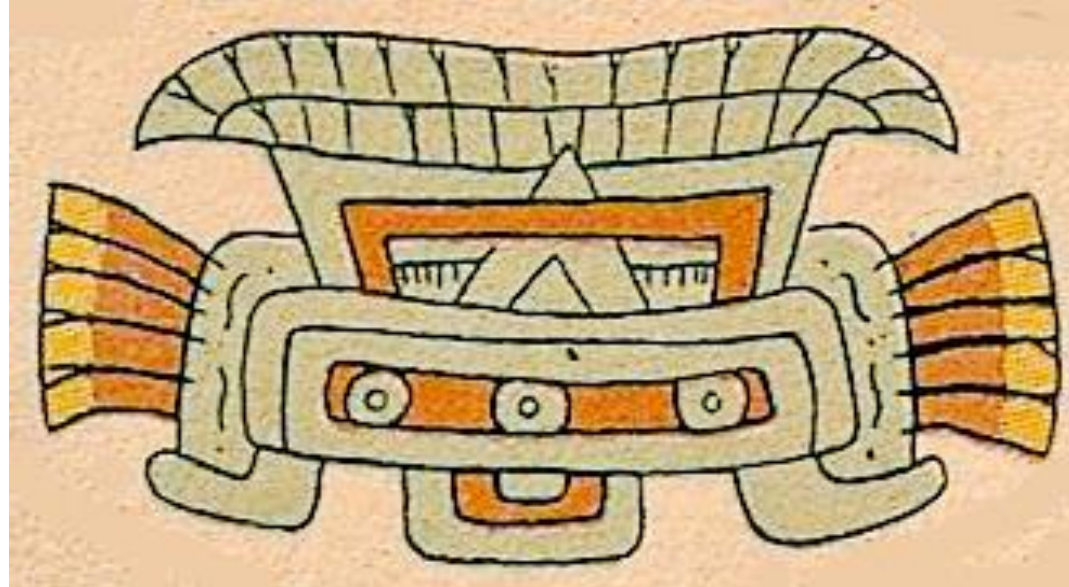
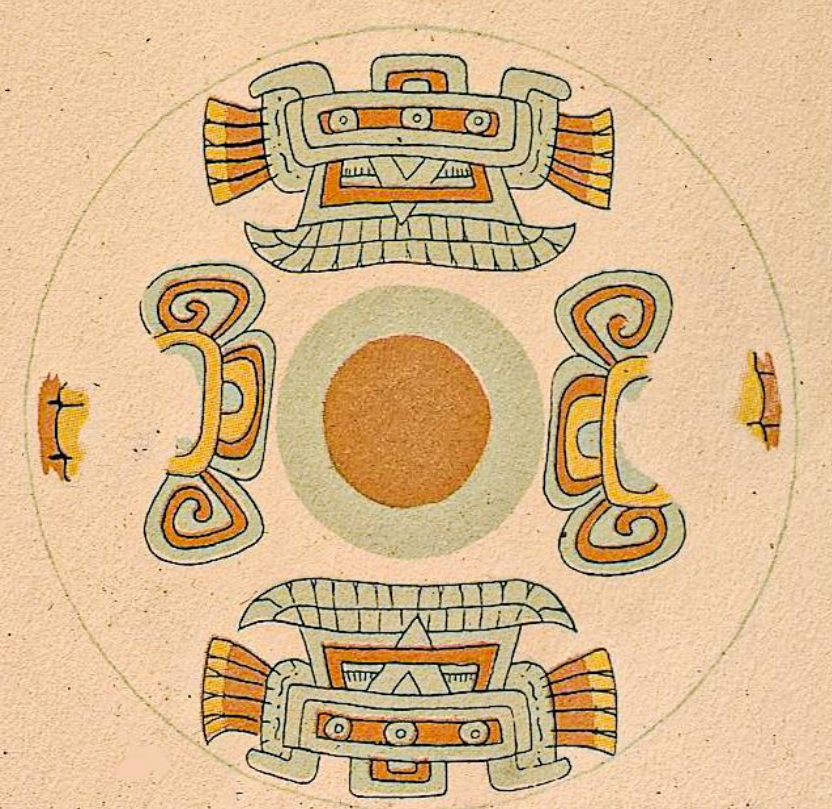
Tlaloc with row of feathers, then traditional tasseled headdress, then the row of disks, then lower bar (disks are usually with bar above and below). (Paulinyi 2025: Fig: 2a citing Covarrubias 1957: Fig. 22).



Tlaloc with undulating spear with his two fingers in the spear thrower. The round plant part should be checked to see whether it's a completely stylized water lily pad (or something else). The two other plant parts look like buds. Another scene of this same deity (but with completely different headdress) is from Tepantitla (Sejourne 1956: Fig. 14).

No nose plaque on this Tlaloc because they want to show its power to produce healthy plants.

This scene is in scores of articles and dozens of books on art of Teotihuacan. (Couvreur 2017: Fig. 2).



Row of disks across the lower part of the headdress (cropped from Kidder et al. 1946: Fig. 207). Published frequently including in Nielsen 2003: Vol. 2, Fig. E34, page 149.



Tlaloc holds two tied bundles from which lots of “drops” issue out. These bundles are VERY COMMON on Tiquisate tripods.

This Tlaloc is “rising out of” the same cosmogram as on three incensarios that we show in a previous chapter.



Very similar to Tikal Stela 31, 32 and Yaxha Stela 11, but no row of stylized spear points across the lower area.

Kidder et al. 1946: Fig. 175a in Taube Collected Works, page 206. Originally in the original 1992a article. Also in Nielsen 2003: Vol. 2, Fig. E39.

This simplified headdress features the row of three thick disks in a horizontal frame.

Round goggles are very large—to remind you of their importance.

No nose plaque.

This Tlaloc on pottery from Teotihuacan is holding objects that could be stylized (exaggerated) plant parts?

Photo by Nicholas Hellmuth, December 1993, FLAAR Photo Archive, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University.





Rollout by Justin Kerr

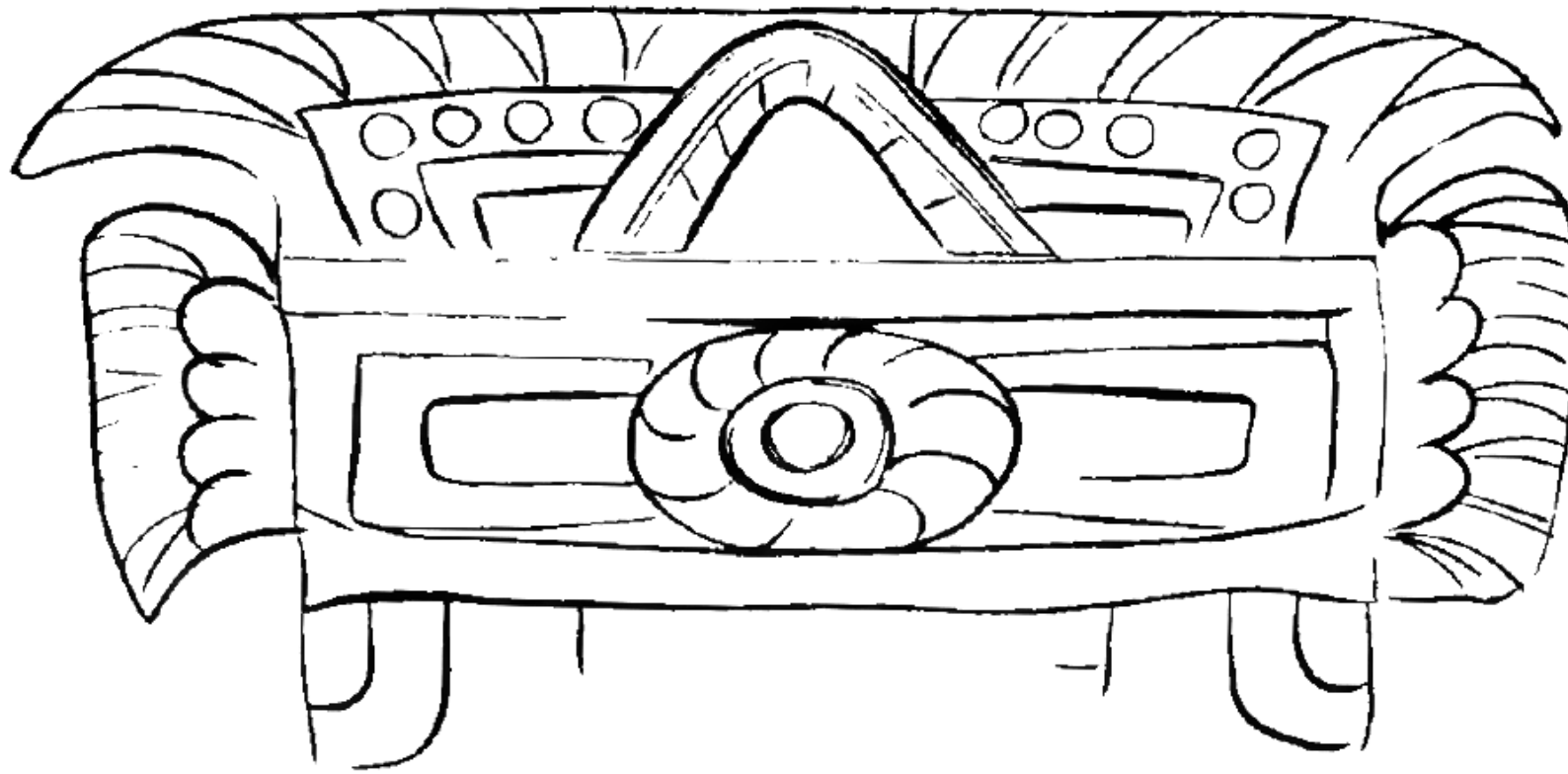


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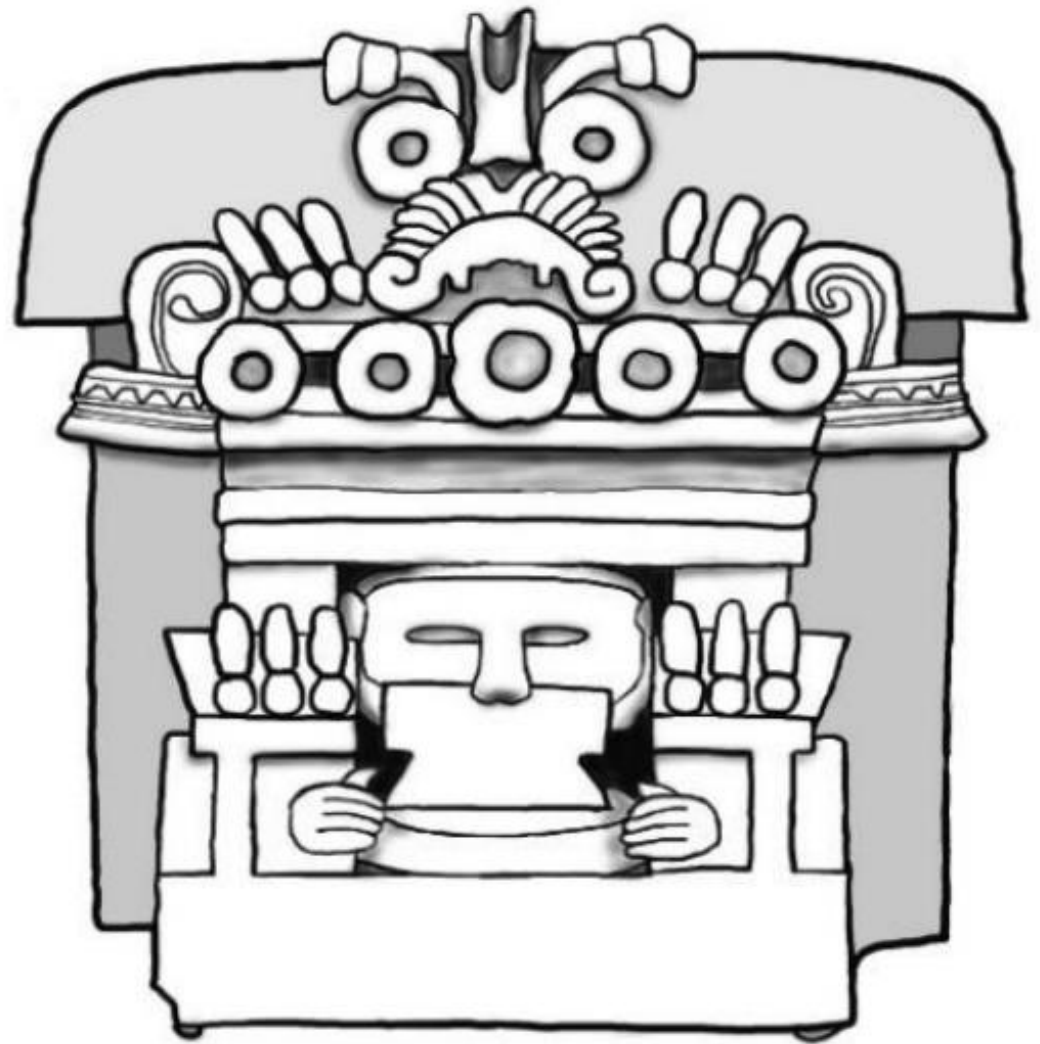
The cacao aspects in this scene were discussed by a Hellmuth lecture at MUNAG on May 13, 2026. Gouged and incised instead of mold impressed (though supports are mold made).



Not much space for any other “layers” of headdress decoration, so this 4th 5th century artist selected the row of circles. But no complete rectangular frame.



This is a common variant—instead of a row of “empty” disks, this is more flower-like or at least some other special meaning for Teotihuacanos and their allies. Sejourne primarily just presents a substantial corpus, so my captions are not from her—just the illustrations (Sejourne 1966: Fig. 86).

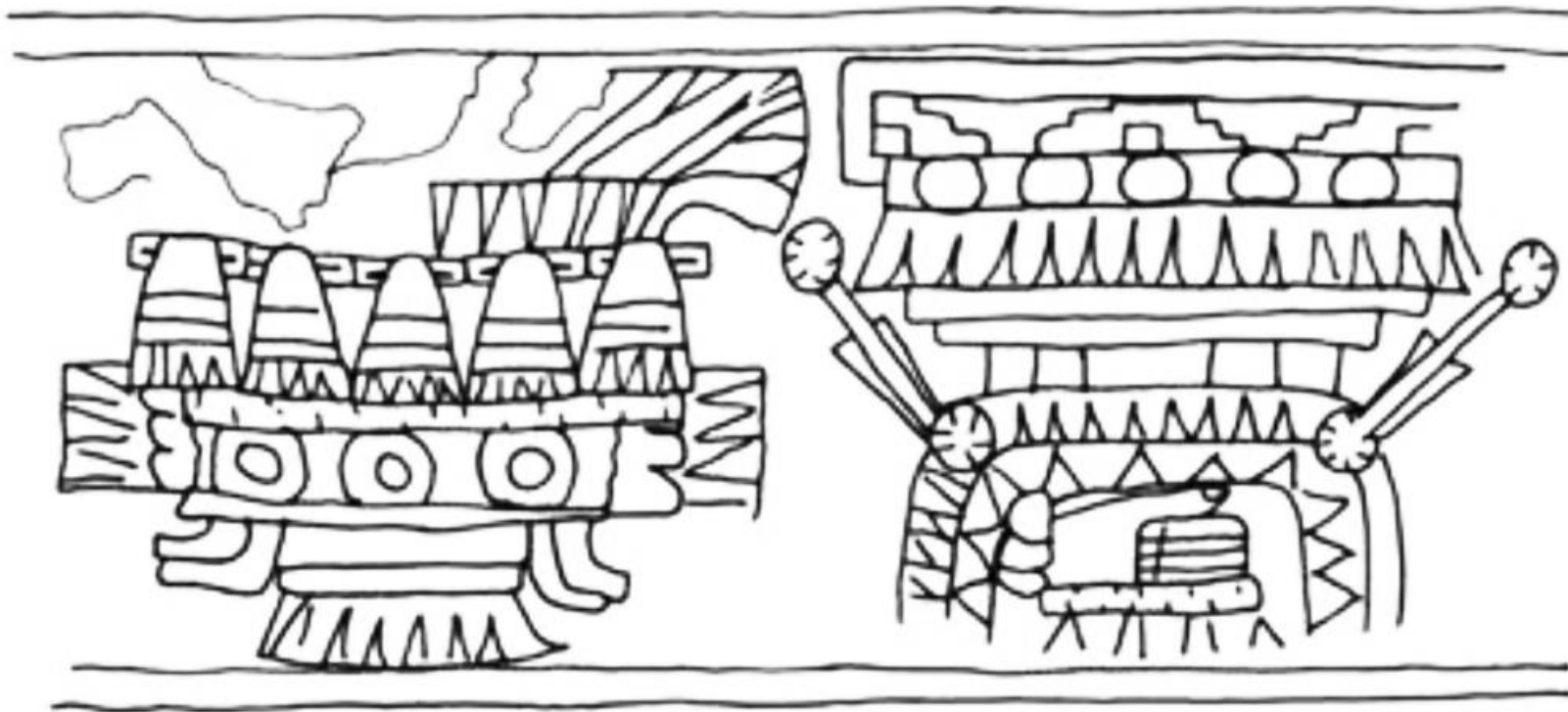


Tiquisate style incensario lid has a row of circles, though out in front of the rectangular area (not framed). The center disk is larger than the others.

This butterfly personage has no Tlaloc goggled eyes but has shield-like item in each hand. Has butterfly face in headdress with obvious goggle eyes. Has the complete tablero-talud nose plaque that is often associated with butterfly impersonators. So clearly the goggled eyes of Tlaloc are associated with stylized butterflies (and potentially with raptors such as owls).

(Gillespie 2024: Fig. 5 citing Hellmuth 1975: Plate 2).

Figure 5. Lid of a Teotihuacan-inspired theater style censer from Tiquisate, Escuintla region, Guatemala. (Drawing by the author from a photograph in Hellmuth, 1975: Plate 24)



Row of "goggles" as main lower feature of Tasseled Headdress.

Row of simple circles as middle feature of "headdress" of Teotihuacan temple.

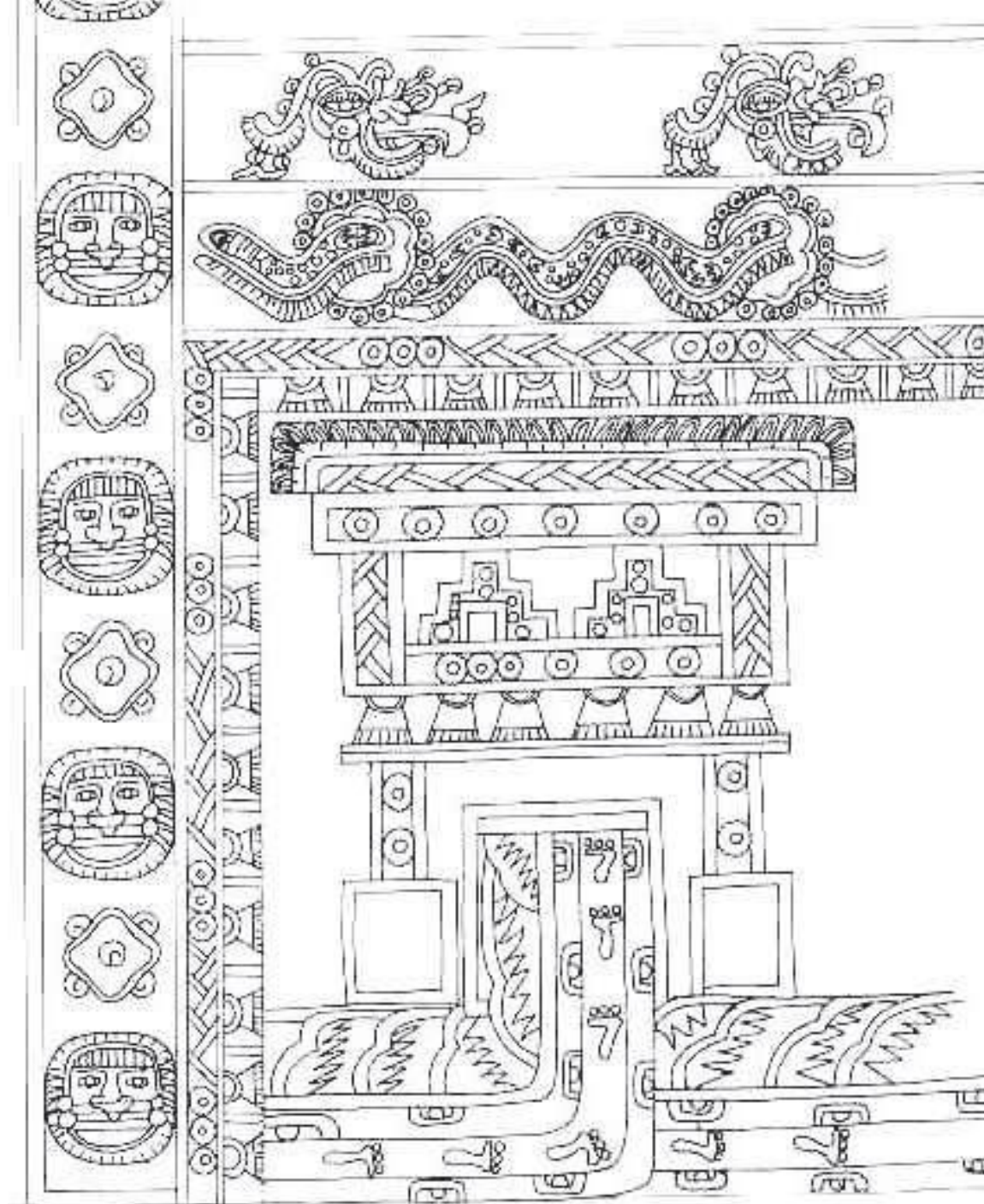
Drawing of a Teotihuacan ceramic at LACMA, in Garcia 2002: Fig. 7 citing Conides and Barbour 2002: Fig. 7.

Teotihuacan ceramic workshops produced lots of these headdresses with no person wearing them. This suggests that the headdress is very very important.

The yearsign over a horizontal row of disks is very common—but here there are no disks, just a row of round spots (but clearly the same meaning).



Helpful download
at helpful
resolution (MB, not
KB) from LACMA.



Tetitla, mural, Corredor 12
(Gazzola 2024: Fig. 158, page 261
citing Fuente 2001d: 308).

Potentially same row of disks
that are horizontal bars on
headdresses of military
Tlalocs in Peten.

In other words, this front
façade of the stylized
Teotihuacan temple is
potentially the “headdress” for
the temple entrance. So are
some Teotihuacan temples
personified, as is the Tlaloc
temple on the Copan
cylindrical tripod?

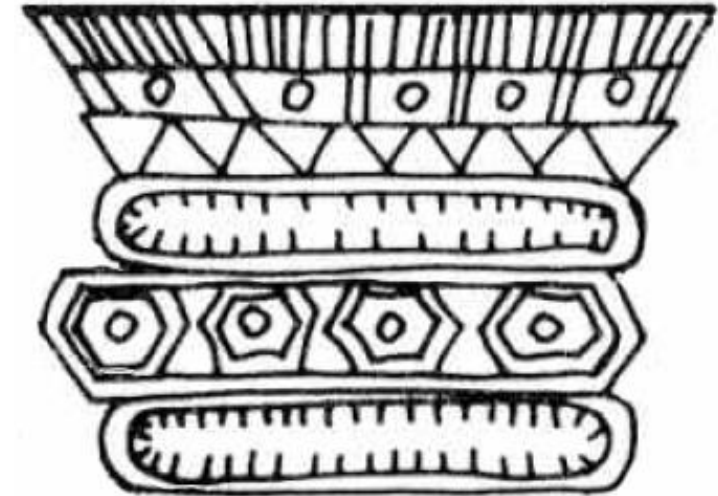


Teotihuacan, Atetelco murals, Nielsen and Helmke Fig. 3.

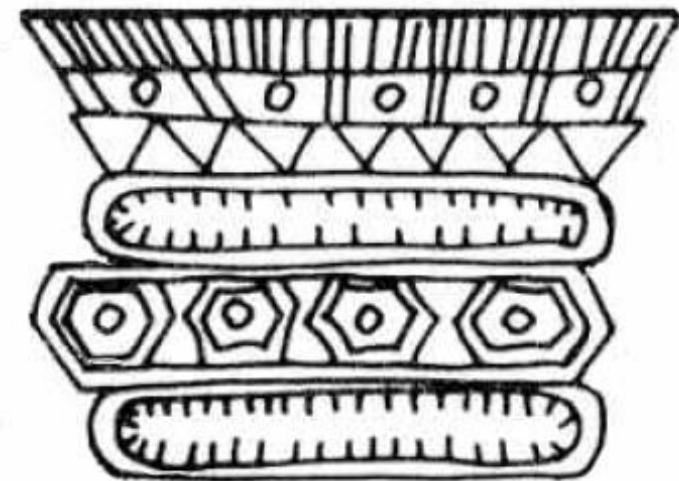


Cropped by Hellmuth to show the segments of an upside-down headdress, then turned around to put the “tail feathers” across the top which is the more usual position.

The row of “circles” are geometrically altered by this artist but clearly sending a comparable message.



We have an entire chapter on this design in Tlaloc headdresses.





All these personages feature a row of disks as the main part of their headdress. But none have Tlaloc eye but two have tablero-talud nose plaques (but no overt butterfly features).



Most scenes on Tiquisate style mold-impressed cylindrical tripods are repeated—occasionally on giant (wide tripods) as well as on the normal sized smaller tripod ceramics.

Many Tiquisate style cylindrical tripods are very wide and correspondingly tall. So their supports are quite large—large enough to show a beautiful frontal (or profile) portrait, as we see below. No Tlaloc eyes but features the basic lower headdress of a warrior Tlaloc.

So here you can see that the row of disks is literally an entire headdress unto itself.



Another example showing that the row of disks is an entire headdress by itself—so is separate from a tasseled headdress that more elite Tlalocs wear (and when the scene has space for that extra tall tasseled headdress).





The support of this large Tiquisate style cylindrical tripod is large enough to show an entire frontal portrait.

The support is mold-impressed but the scene above looks gouged-and-incised.

The parading person is not a Tlaloc, but has wings issuing from each arm.





Five different Escuintla area Tiquisate style cylindrical tripods show the “same scene” but featuring two different personalities:

- one person with no mouth plaque at all and upper headdress feathers in segments.
- one person with tablero-talud mouth plaque and headdress feathers in a neat row. But, the tablero-talud mouth plaque is not associated with any butterfly features?

The posture and accessories of the two standing personages is not yet documented for any Early Classic scene in Peten. And needs to be found what ritual of imperial Teotihuacan is being enacted here—or is this a local Costa Sur event?



Either way, ALL of these special personages have a row of disks as a main feature of their headdress. This row of disks is also featured on Tlaloc headdresses of Yaxha and Tikal—but this Tiquisate personage has a tablero-talud nose plaque and no goggled eyes.

A lot more research is needed on Tiquisate style scenes. Would help to have a corpus of all examples in museums around the world.



We are working on a long-range project to learn whether one single mold is used for all the panels on a single ceramic, or whether a different mold is used for each panel. In most cases, a different mold (albeit the same scene) is used for each panel.





Digital rollout by Hellmuth with Better Light scan back on a 4x5" studio camera with Rodenstock or Schneider lens of Made in Germany quality. Already by 1997 FLAAR had the most powerful digital rollout camera in the world, resulting in a digital resolution of 229 MB for this cylindrical tripod rollout. Hellmuth was the beta tester for the original Dicomed model (Dicomed was the initial distributor for Better Light cameras). Our goal is to help scholars and students to be able to study these scenes via an eventual database of Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University.



Early Classic Tiquisate style mold-impressed cylindrical tripod panel. Photo by Hellmuth, FLAAR Photo Archive, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University.



Frontal portrait in obvious Teotihuacan style (but rest of body is profile).

The headdress consists of just the horizontal row of disks—precisely as I discovered from Yaxha-Stela 11—this row of disks is literally “a complete headdress unto itself”.

The cacao “tree” is understandably not shown realistically, but is not as stylized as the gouged-and-incised scene on the previous pages.

This mold-impressed scene is filled with birds—but none are owls. And none are shown as fierce—so possibly none are raptors. Since all these photos are very high resolution, Google “Images” won’t accept them, so I can’t find if this scene has ever been published previously elsewhere.

This scene definitely needs a rollout and then a line-drawing (and digital drawing—not a freehand sketch).

Curious that 90% of these ceramics were made in Guatemala and less in Soconusco in adjacent Chiapas or adjacent El Salvador to the south.



Row of circles as central feature of this headdress for an obvious Tlaloc.



The curling “moustache” on this Tlaloc variant is rare, but I don’t (yet) think this is Curly Face of the Tiquisate Trinity (that I discovered decades ago on dozens of other mold-impressed and even painted cylindrical tripods in Tiquisate style, plus at Kaminaljuyu, Monte Alban, and featured on the face of Early Classic “cookie jar” lids of Peten.

It makes no difference how broken a ceramic is. What helps is that the restoration is not faking missing details by adding missing parts. This extremely wide Tiquisate style cylindrical tripod was not faked by excessive restoration.

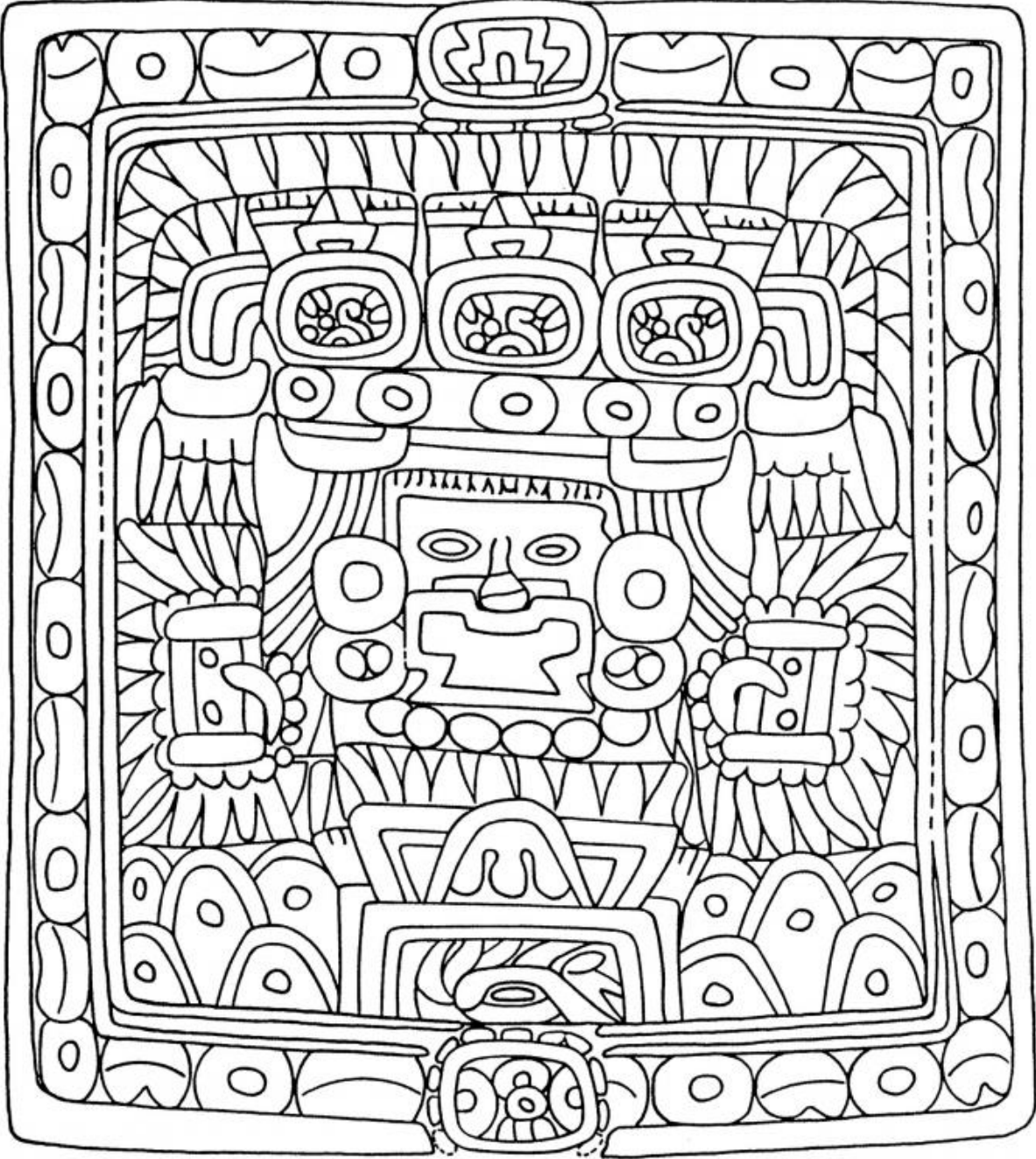
The parading person holding a very large strap bag ("incense bag") is a scene found on many Teotihuacan murals and ceramics.



Framed by a row of simplified stylized designs that I estimate represent seashells.

This potential military leader is flaunting in each hand identical feathered accessories. Are these stylized shields (not actual full size due to lack of space?) or are they the objects held in scenes of Tiquisate style? I estimate they are shields but minimized due to lack of space. López, Neff and Sugiyama call these shields (2000: 232).

The two areas of five “steep hills” and most of the other motifs are shown on other Teotihuacan scenes in the two volumes by Hasso Von Winning.



Upper headdress is “Yearsign Row”, But Langley calls these Manta Compound (by López, Neff and Sugiyama (2000: 233).

Then a row of three obvious Reptile’s Eye Glyphs.

Then the traditional row of disks as the lower part of a complex headdress.

Tablero talud nose plaque but no Tlaloc goggled eyes. The iconography is discussed by López, Neff and Sugiyama (2000: 232ff).

I thank the authors for providing helpful illustrations for this presentation at SIAG MUNAE

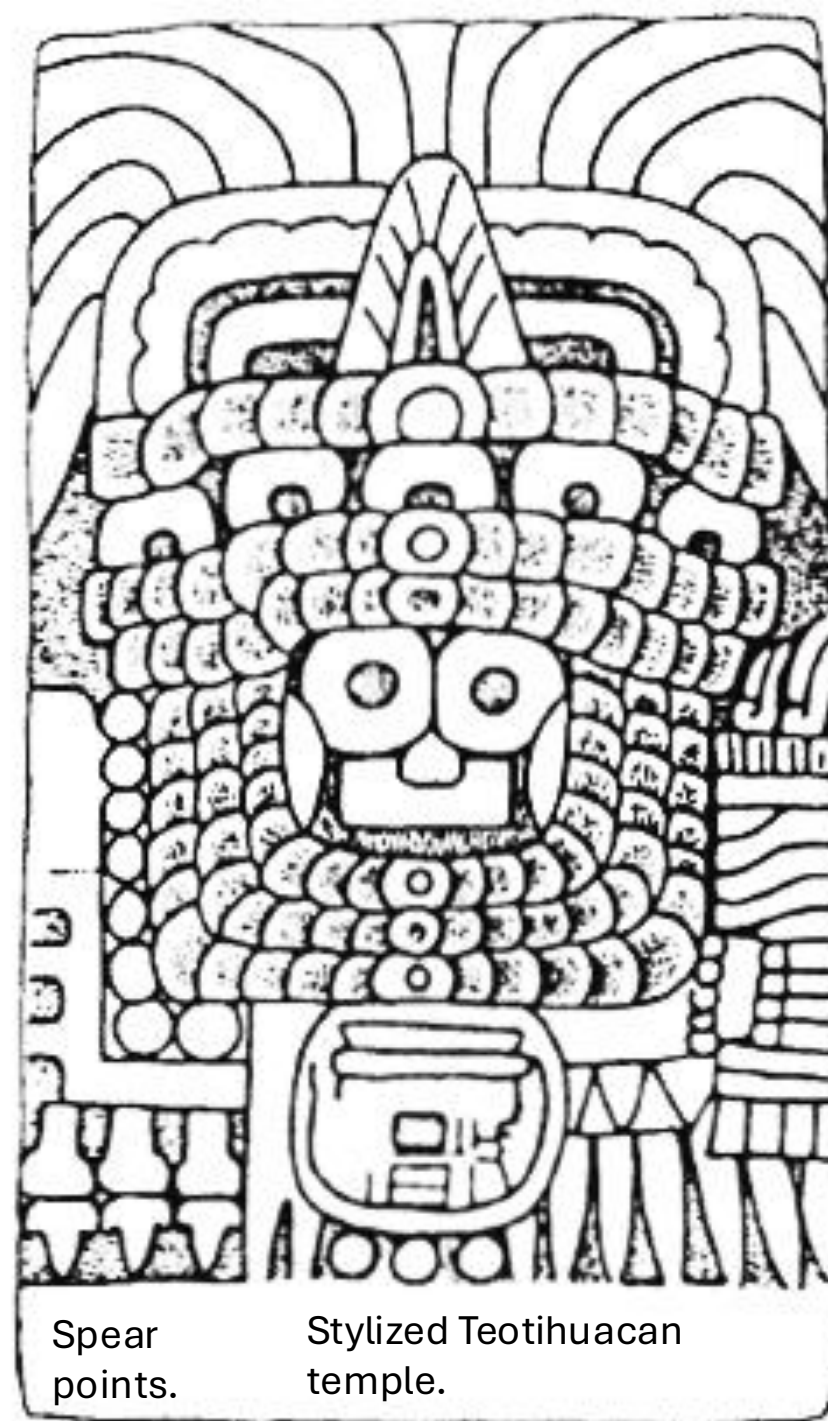


9 Xi ceramic, Offering V, House of Eagles, Tenochtitlan, drawing Fernando Carrizosa, courtesy of the Proyecto Templo Mayor, illustration courtesy of López, Neff and Sugiyama (2000: Fig. 8.8).

Amazing headdress with massive (protective???) areas pendant from the headdress (even covering the giant earrings). Rare outfit, especially since the mass of “sequins” are only over the forehead and as necklace—not making a “helmet” (probably because the patron wanted to feature the row of disks topped by a stylized possible yearsign).

Taube’s caption (2000: Fig. 30,d) is: Small basalt stela with Teotihuacan style warrior holding burning torch Date 3 House on abdomen (after Xirau 1973: Plate 61).

These “torches” are very very common at Teotihuacan itself and across the Costa Sur of Guatemala on Tiquisate style cylindrical tripods. To be neutral I often call them “bundles”.



Simplified possible Yearsign

Row of disks.

Goggled Tlaloc eyes and nose plaque with no teeth.

Burning bundle held by his hand.

Spear points.

Stylized Teotihuacan temple.

Are these
vertical
objects
upraised
raptor talons
or claws of a
feline?



There are several ways to describe this scene: atypical, unique, unexpected.

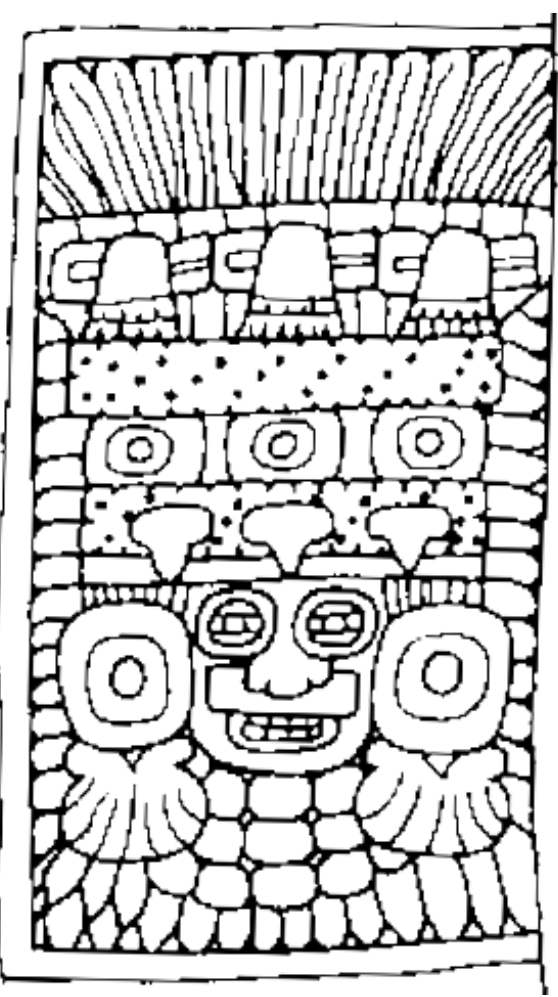
The height and narrowness I have not seen on any other cylindrical tripod in half a century of studying cylindrical tripods.

The goggled-eyes, pseudo-tablero-talud nose plaque show this is a “Tlaloc”. But the row of “circles” in the headdress are solid and with X incised across each.

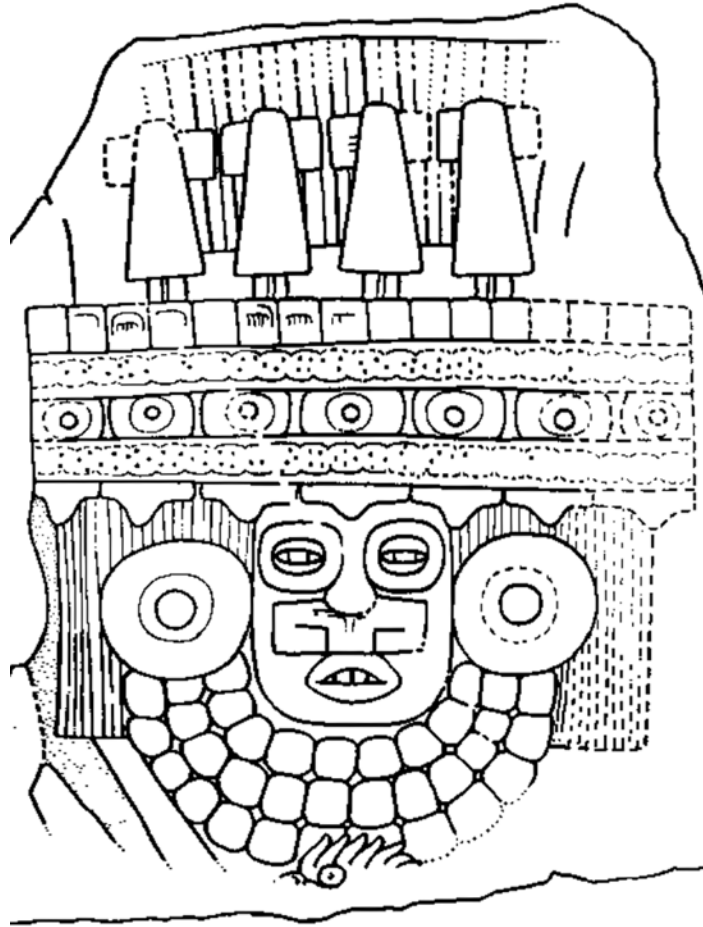
Yet I doubt this is a fake. The other possibility is that it’s not from the Costa Sur but from somewhere else that received Teotihuacan influence. Google Images does not accept files over 20 MB so I do not yet have any returns from AI.

Another notable aspect is that the earrings are below the goggled Tlaloc eyes. That’s a placement that needs to be studied.

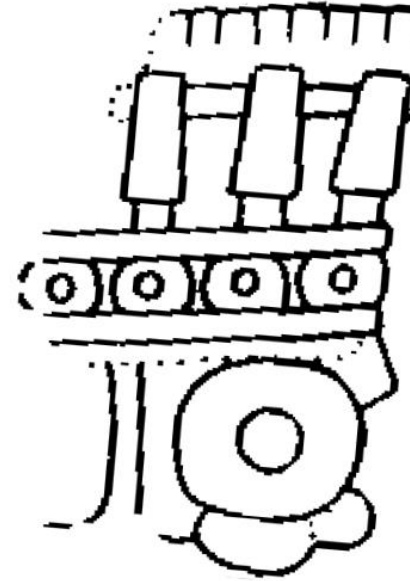
So, all the “main” frontal military Tlaloc portraits
of Tikal-Yaxha have a row of large circles



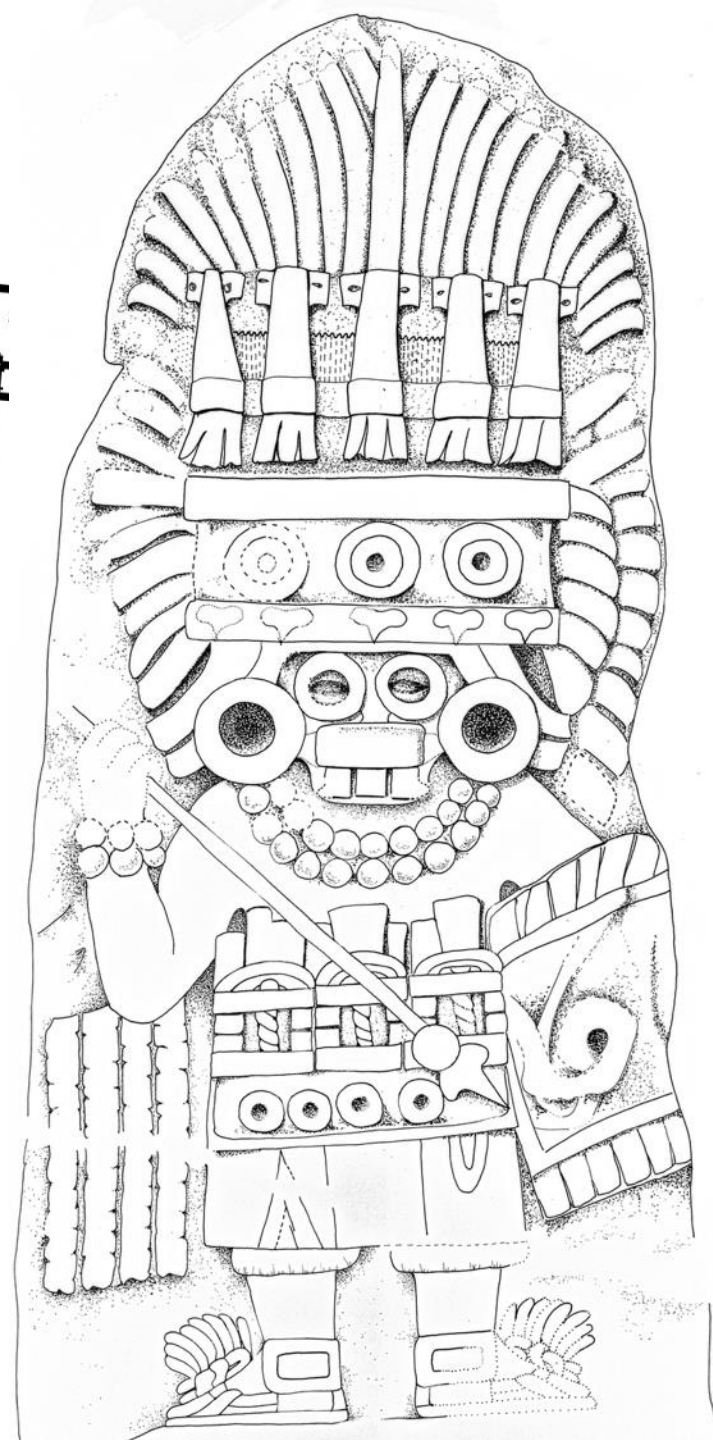
Tikal Stela 31, shield, on side.



Tikal Stela 32, drawing W. Coe.



Tikal Stela 18,
drawing W. Coe.



Yaxha Stela
11, FLAAR.

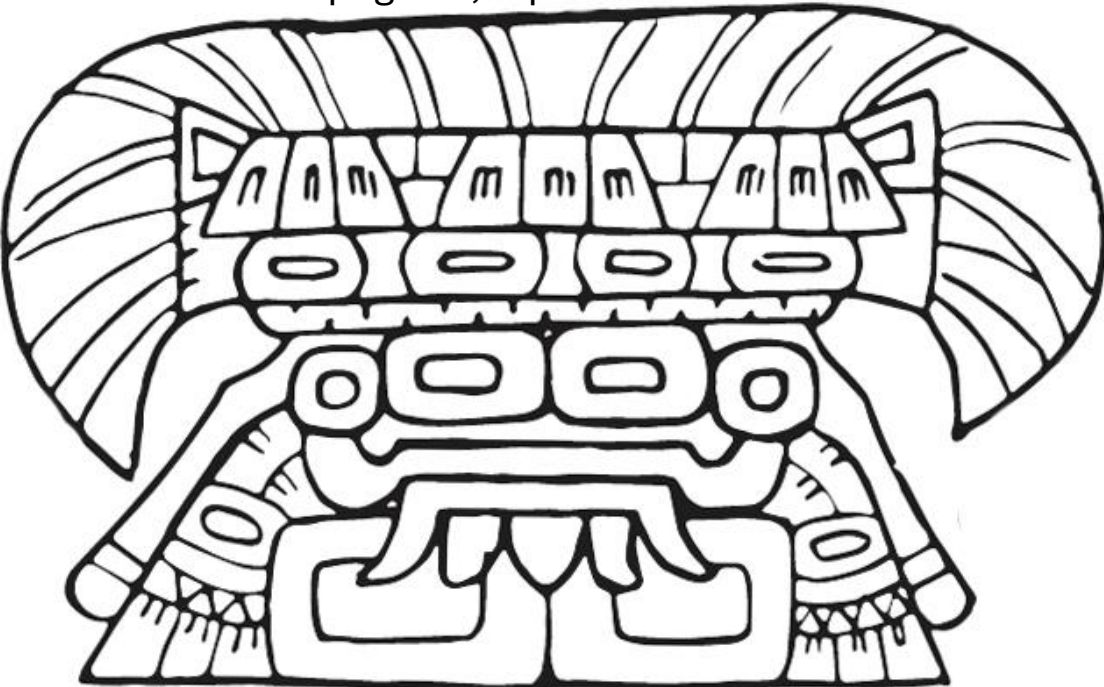


Tlaloc Kaminaljuyu mirror back Kidder et al 1946 Fig 175a in Taube 1992a: page 20; reprinted in *Taube Selected Works*.

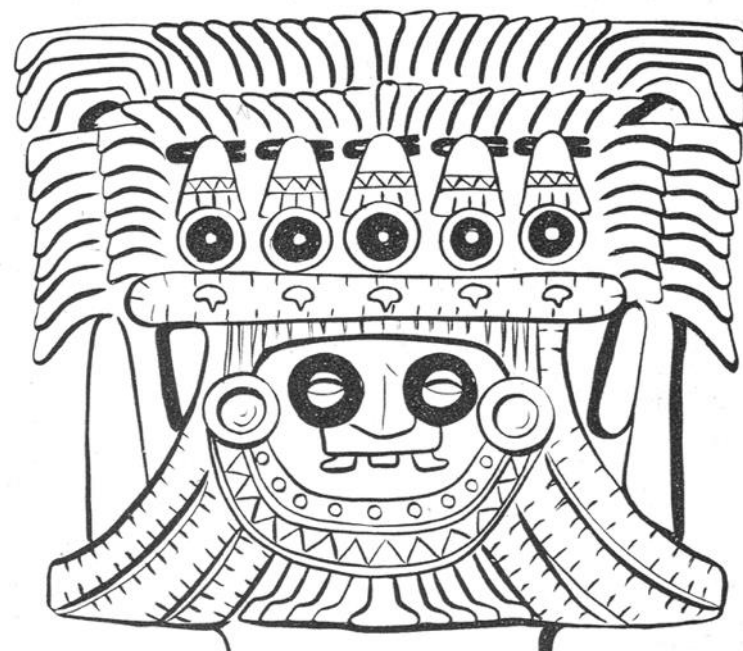
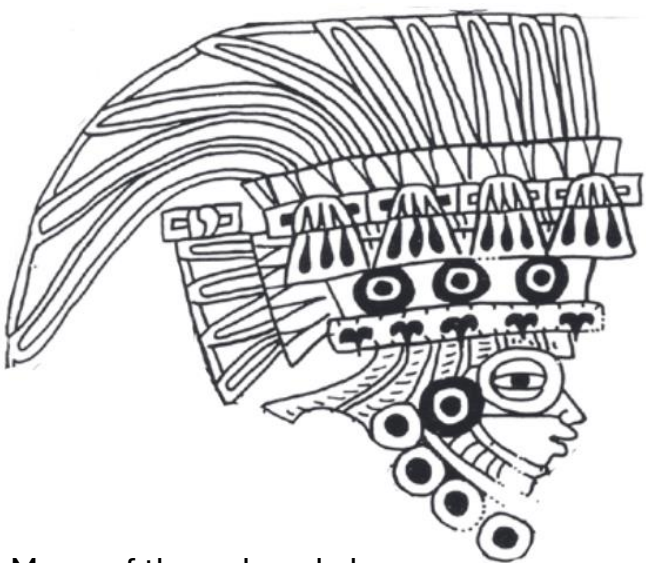
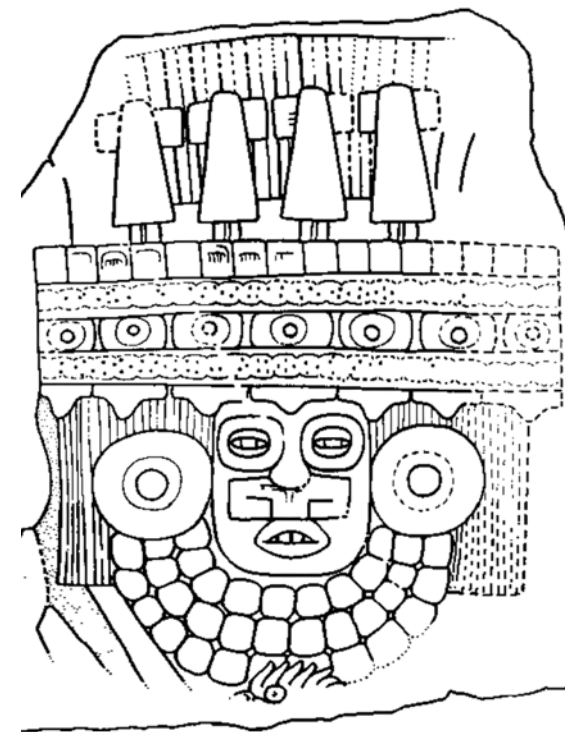
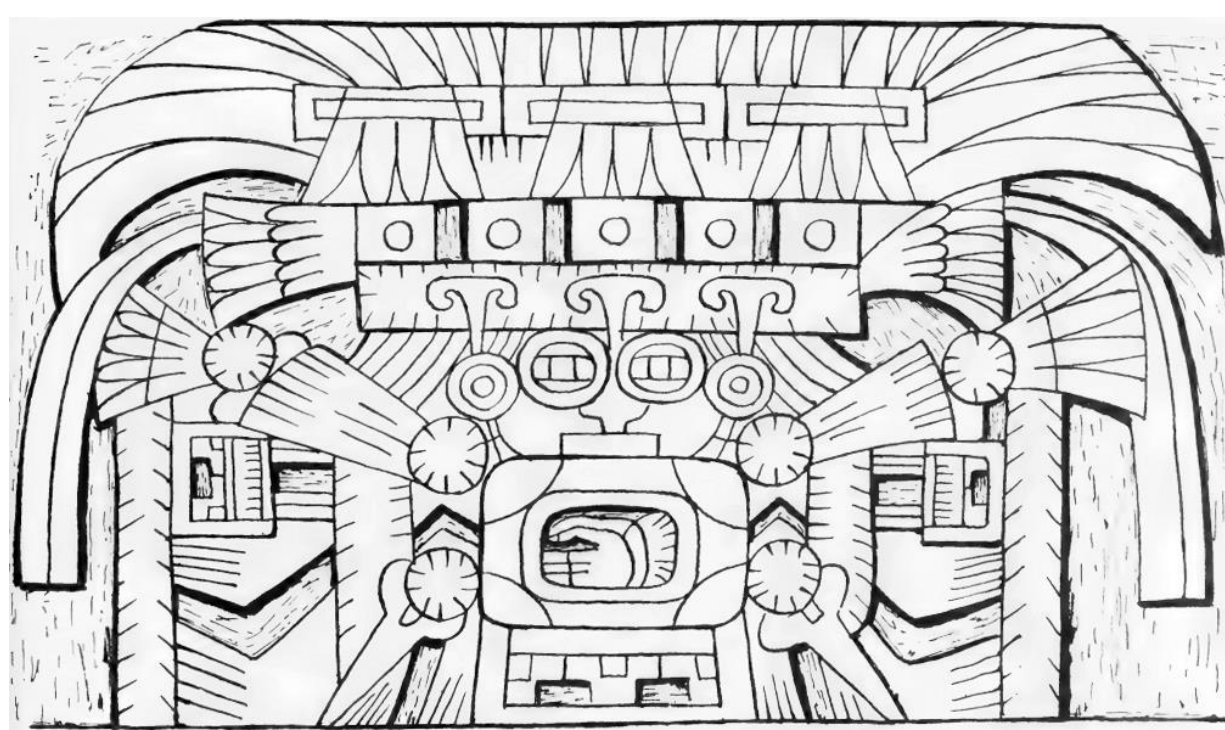
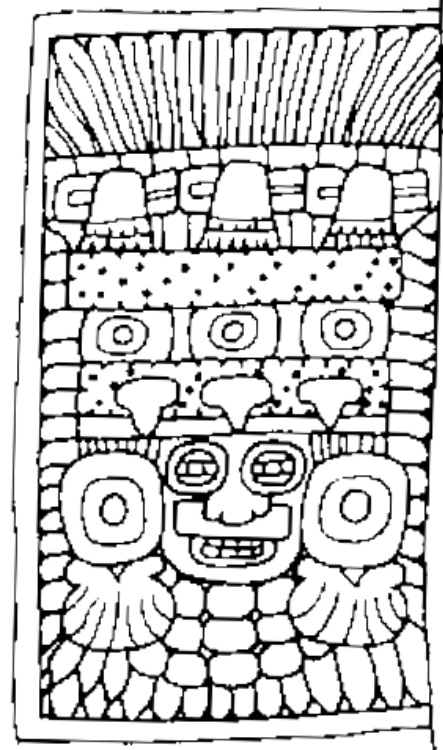


**A Teotihuacan Detail
of Tasseled Military Headdress
that has not yet been noticed
in the horizontal band of Yaxha Stela 11**

**A Detail of Headdresses
that, to my knowledge,
has not yet been studied or named
despite it being common at Teotihuacan**

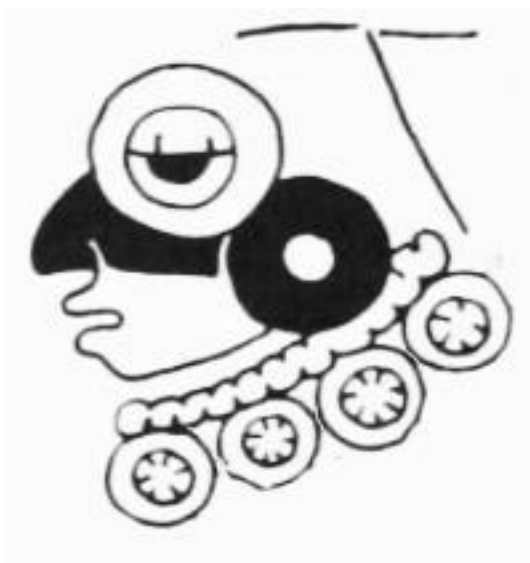


So far...none of us who did drawings of the headdress of Yaxha Stela 11 has noticed this pattern across the lower horizontal bar (nor on the horizontal frame above). Yet a related pattern is on the Tlaloc tasseled headdresses of Tikal Stela 31 and Tikal Stela 32—so now that we have noticed this, would help to see if any remains are on Yaxha Stela 11.



Many of these bands have a row of stylized spear heads.

Most tasseled headdresses have this band, in several variants —but I estimate have the same meaning.



The same design but as the support
for a necklace.



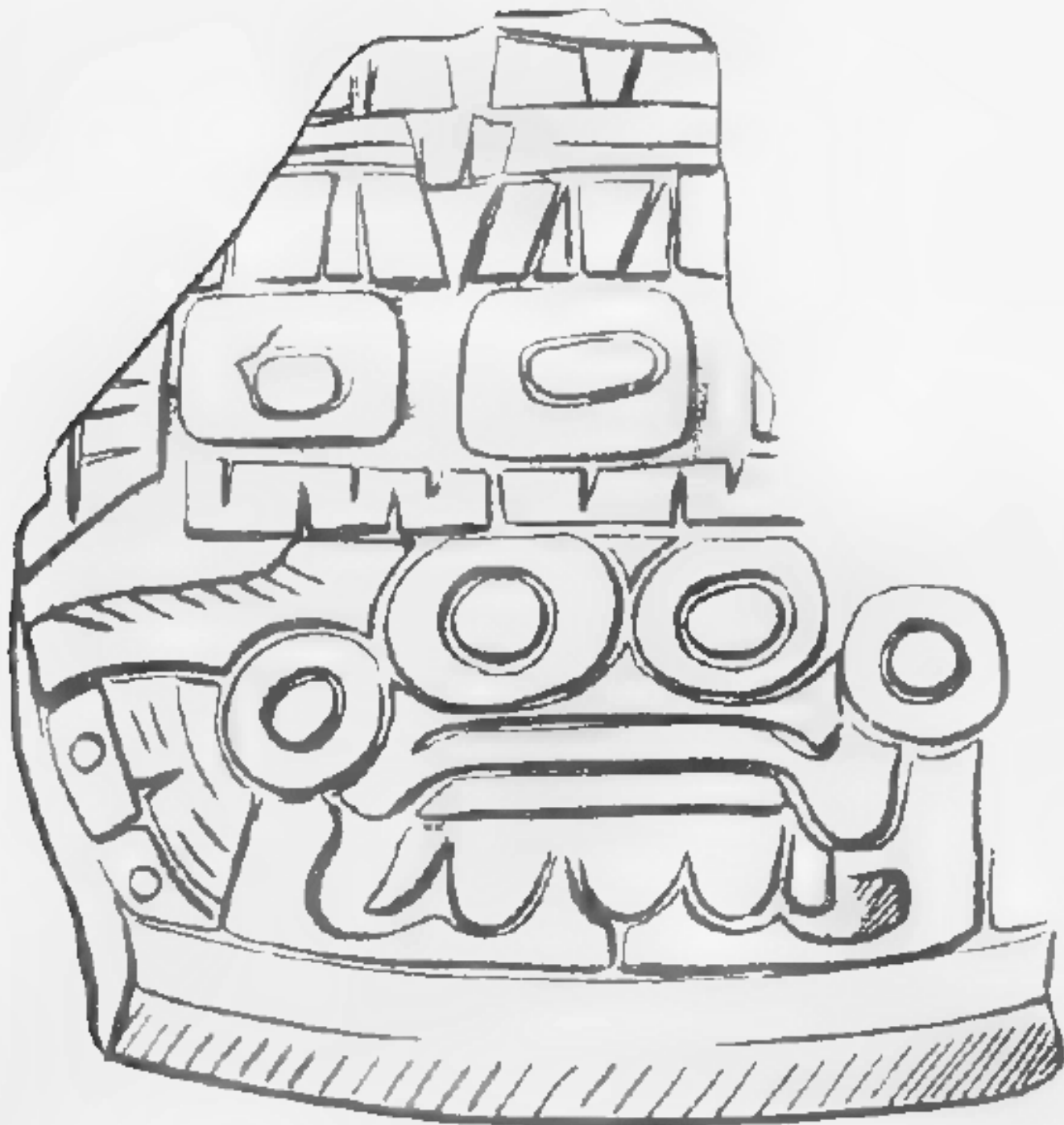
This necklace is an upside-down variant of a military Tlaloc headdress.



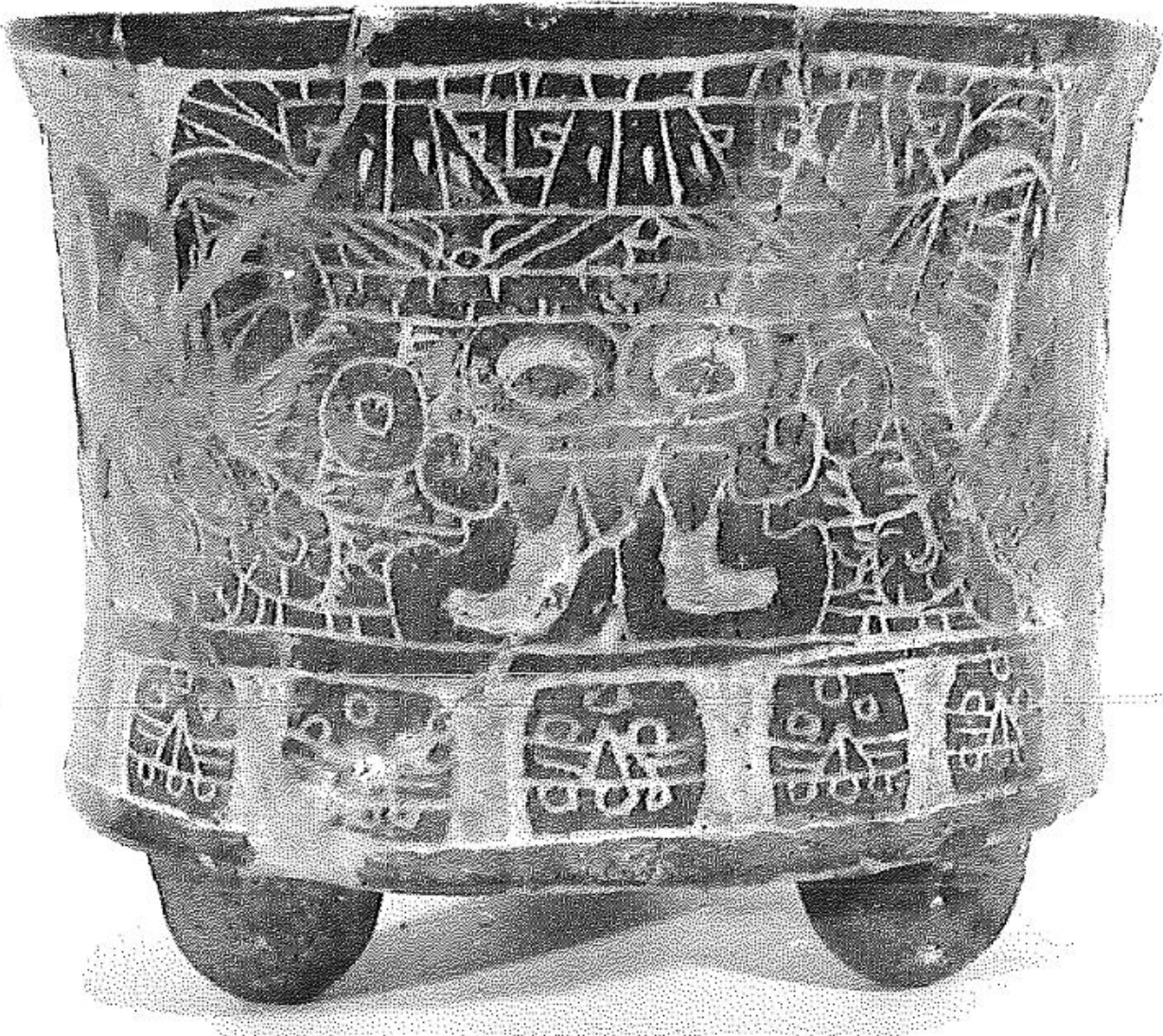
Although this is a necklace, and not up in the headdress, the horizontal band has the same undulations as in headdresses of military Tlalocs—and this Teotihuacan Tlaloc has his fingers in the atlatl (curiously three instead of the usual two?) and is carrying two short spears (there is considerable variation in the length of a spear that these soldiers could hurl with their atlatl).



The thick object curled below the necklace reminds me of the mysterious curved motif on the shield of Yaxha Stela 11. Cropped by Hellmuth from Sejourne 1976: Fig. 23, page 110.

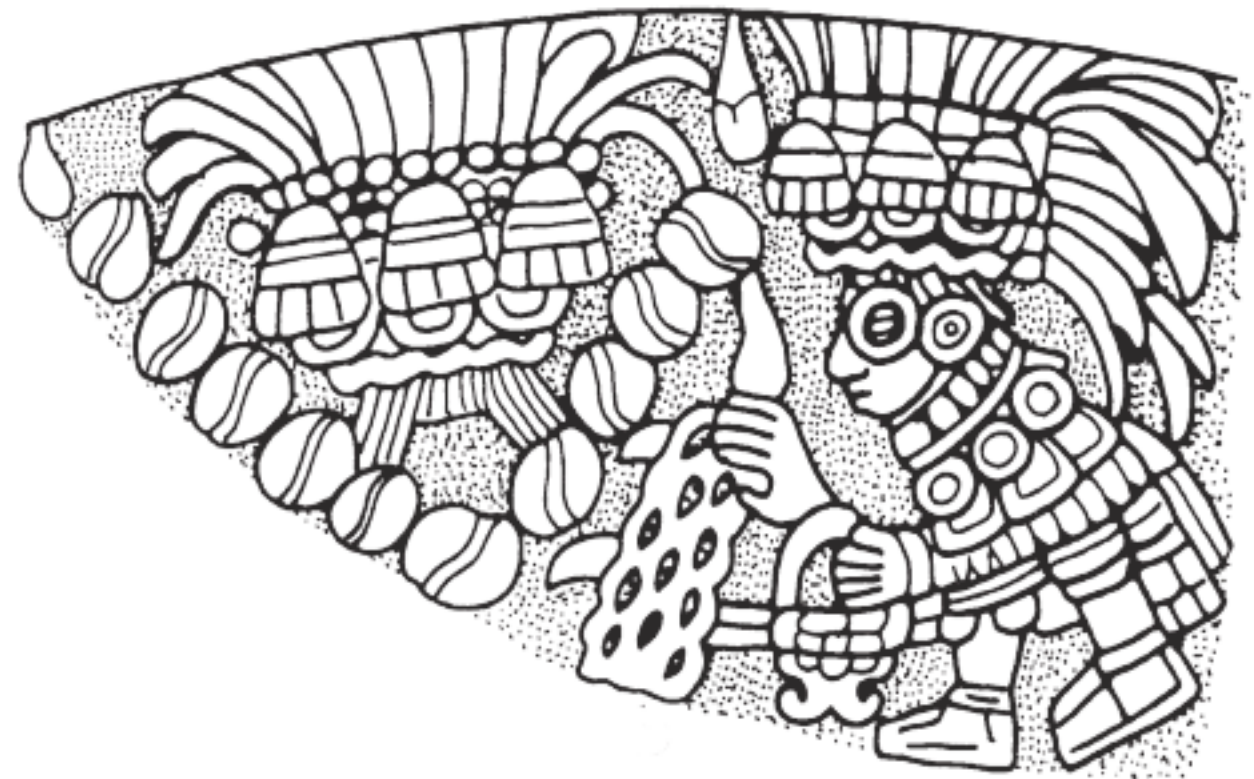


Sejourne 1966: Fig. 49.



Sometimes the band is flat and horizontal.

Teotihuacan, Zacuala patios, Burial 2, photo by Levey (Rattray 2001: Fig. 150).



And sometimes the band is undulating. Here, both on the parading Tlaloc and on the separate enlarged headdress in front.

In most—but not all—examples it's across the bottom of the tasseled headdress.

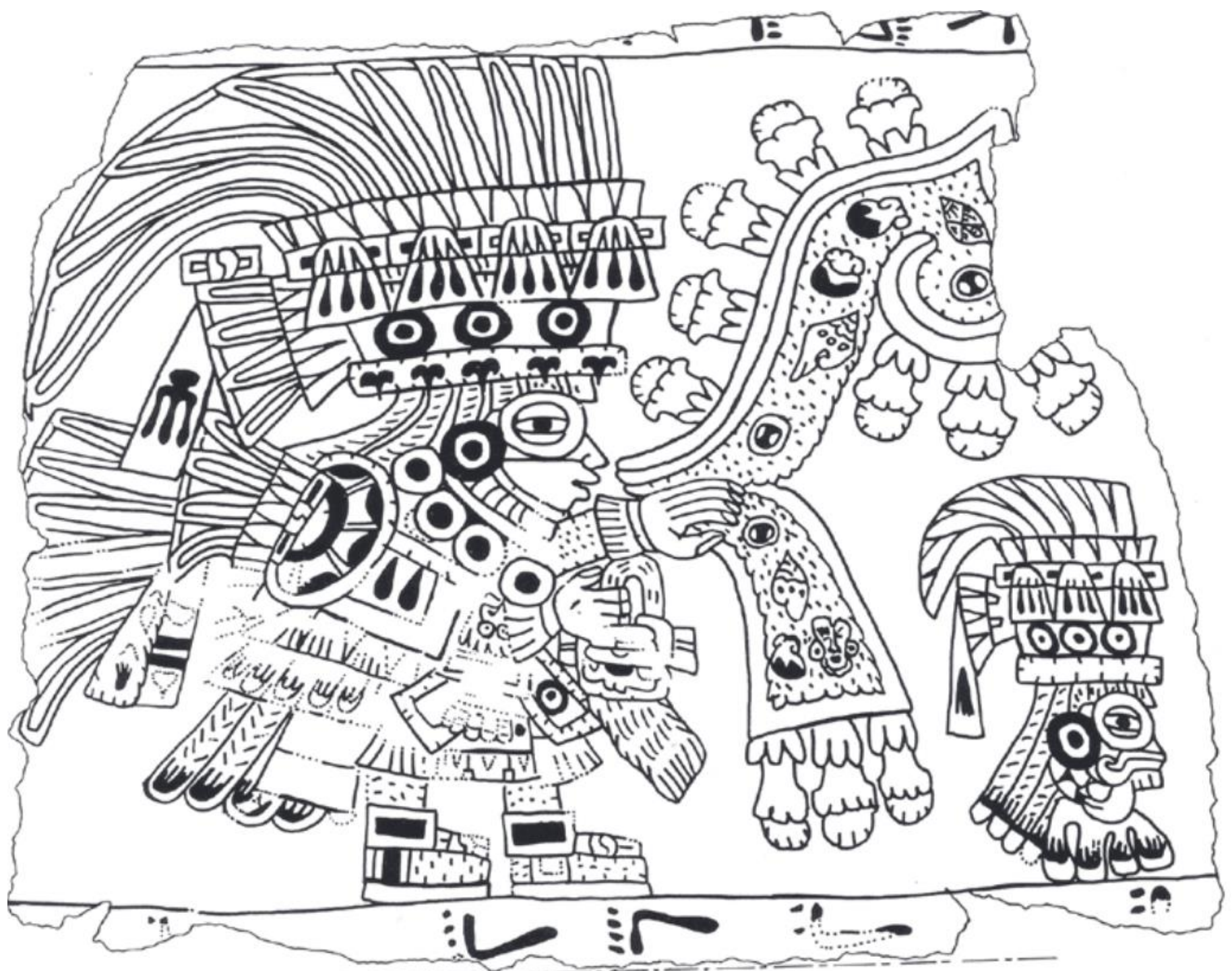
Linne Bowl, Taube 2000: Fig. 8,b, page 12, citing Linne 1942: Fig.128

Both the Tlaloc headdresses have the same lower horizontal band. The main Tlaloc also has a row of spear heads on this horizontal bar—but he has no atlatl, no spear and no shield—he is “sowing” seashells and other precious symbols while holding a strap bag that is almost always present when “scattering”. Why is this called an “incense bag” if he is scattering seashells and “talking about seashells in his speech scroll.

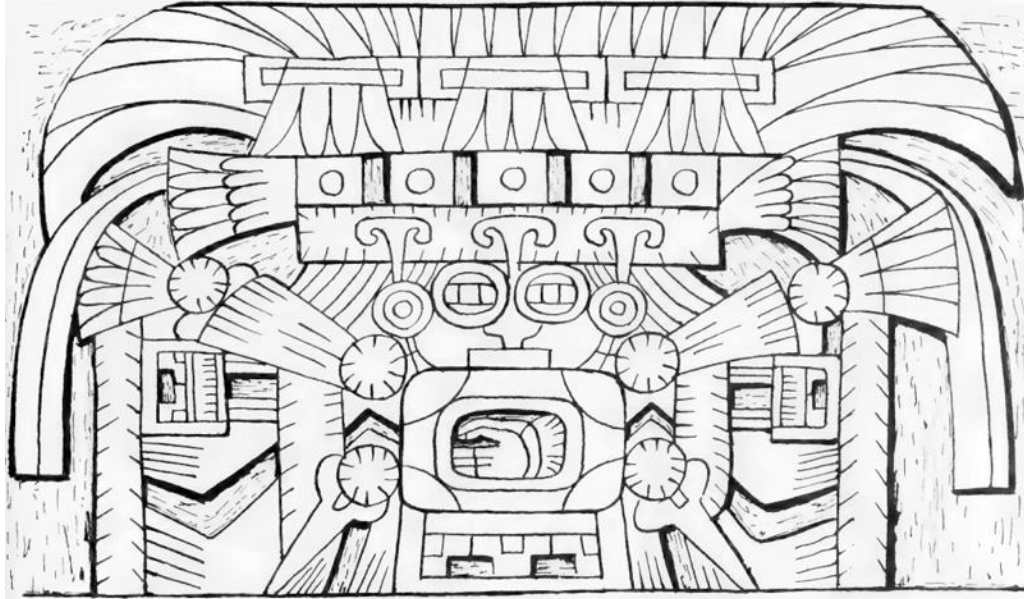
This mural at Teotihuacan had almost a dozen of this same personage.

Taube shows four of these figures (2000: Fig. 7, a, b, c, d), citing Berrin 1988: Figures V, 1, 2, 3, 4).

This segment is also in Paulinyi 2025: Fig. 1, a citing C. Millon 1988a: Fig. V.I. Plus illustrating dozens of other articles and theses.



Chapter 8



Tlaloc military frontal Sejourne 1966a: Fig 87.

The spears thrown with the atlatl vary in size and shape and are often exaggerated to look more dangerous.

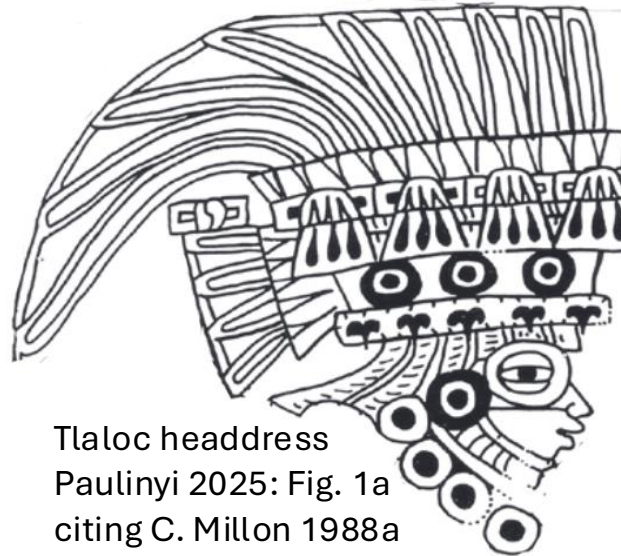


Kubler 1967: Fig. 14, citing, Sejourne.

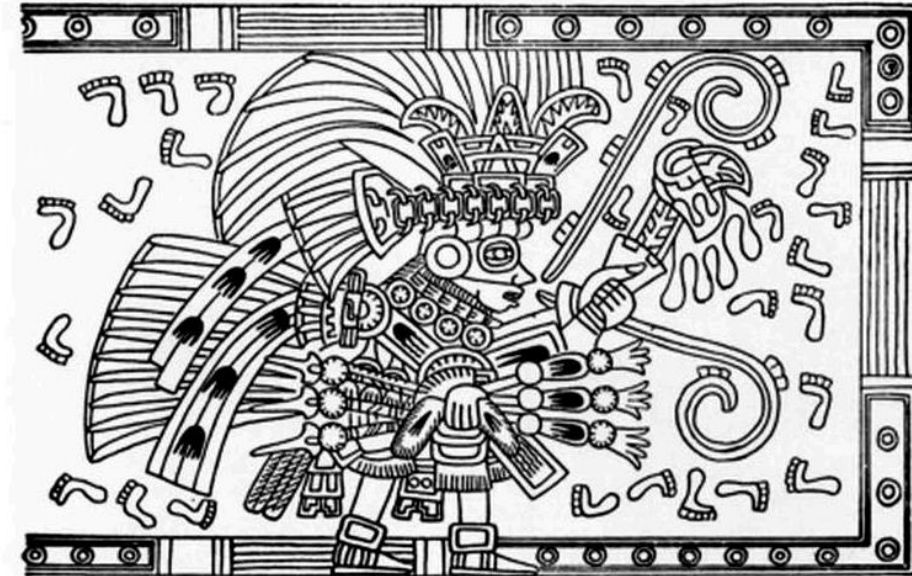
**Spear Points in a row
across lower part
of the traditional
“Row of Disks”
that is “a separate headdress”
below the Tasseled Headdress
of Teotihuacan War Power**

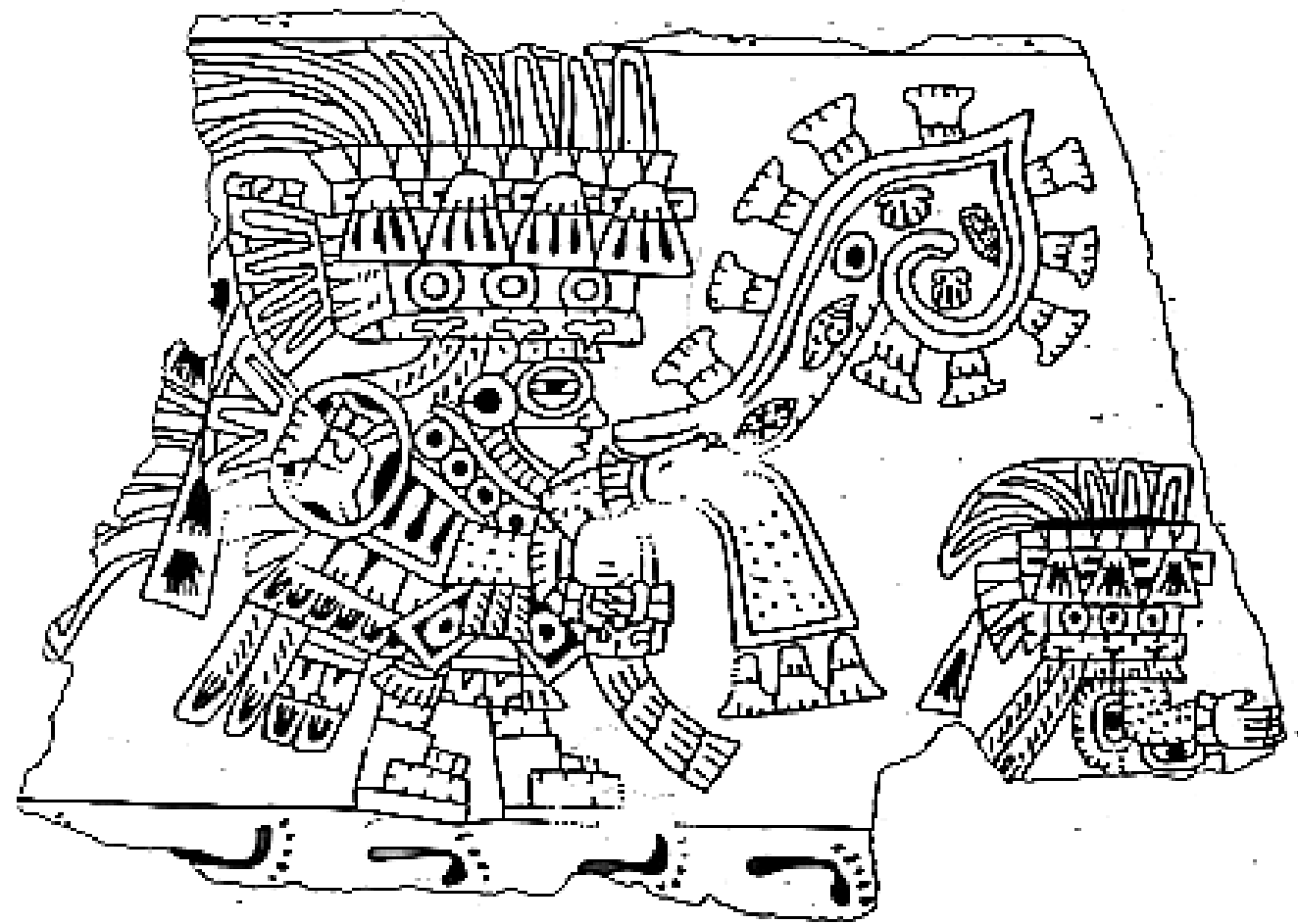
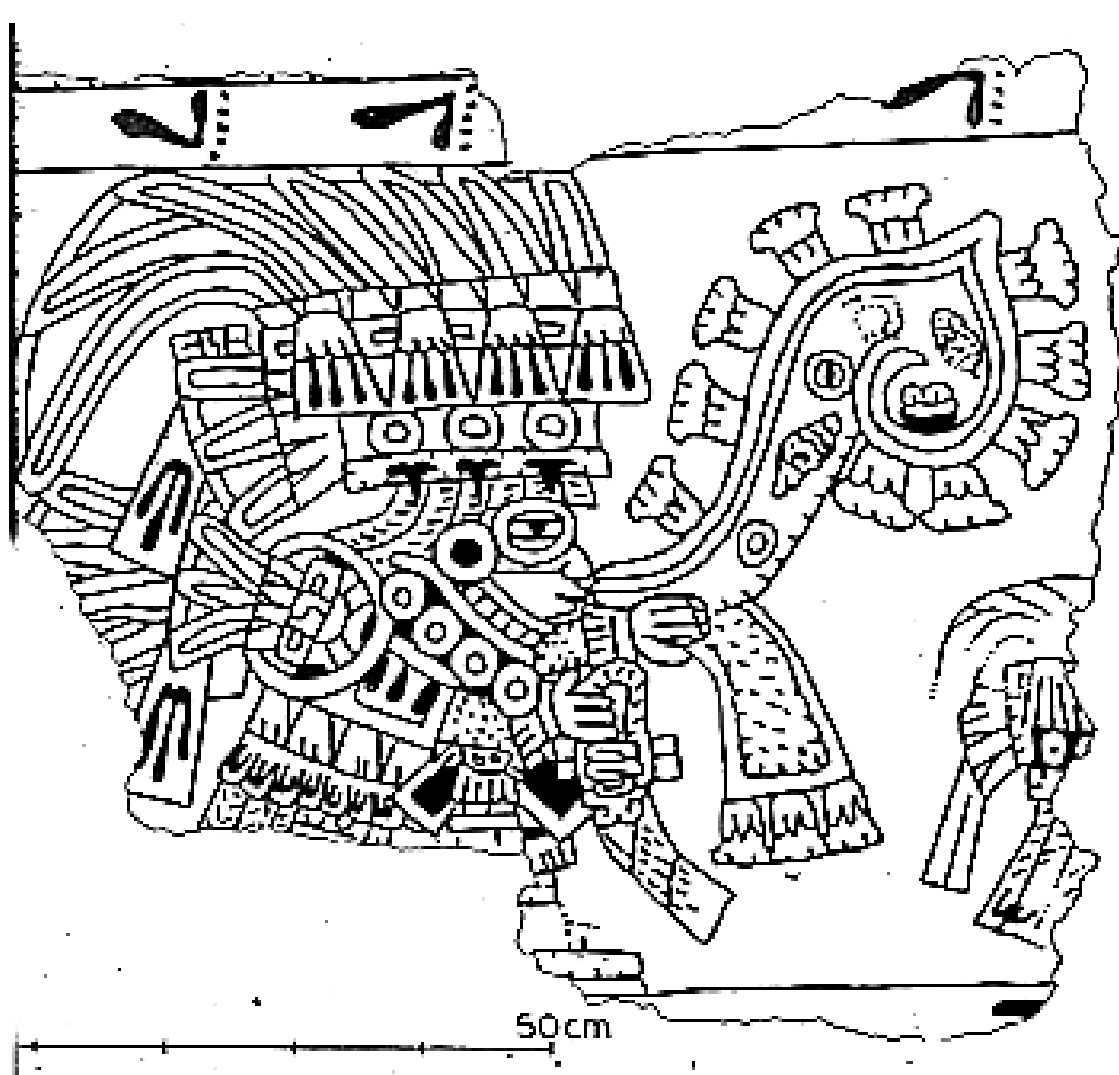


Tlaloc Great Tasseled Headdress Paulinyi 2025 Fig. 1,c from Robb 2017: 6.



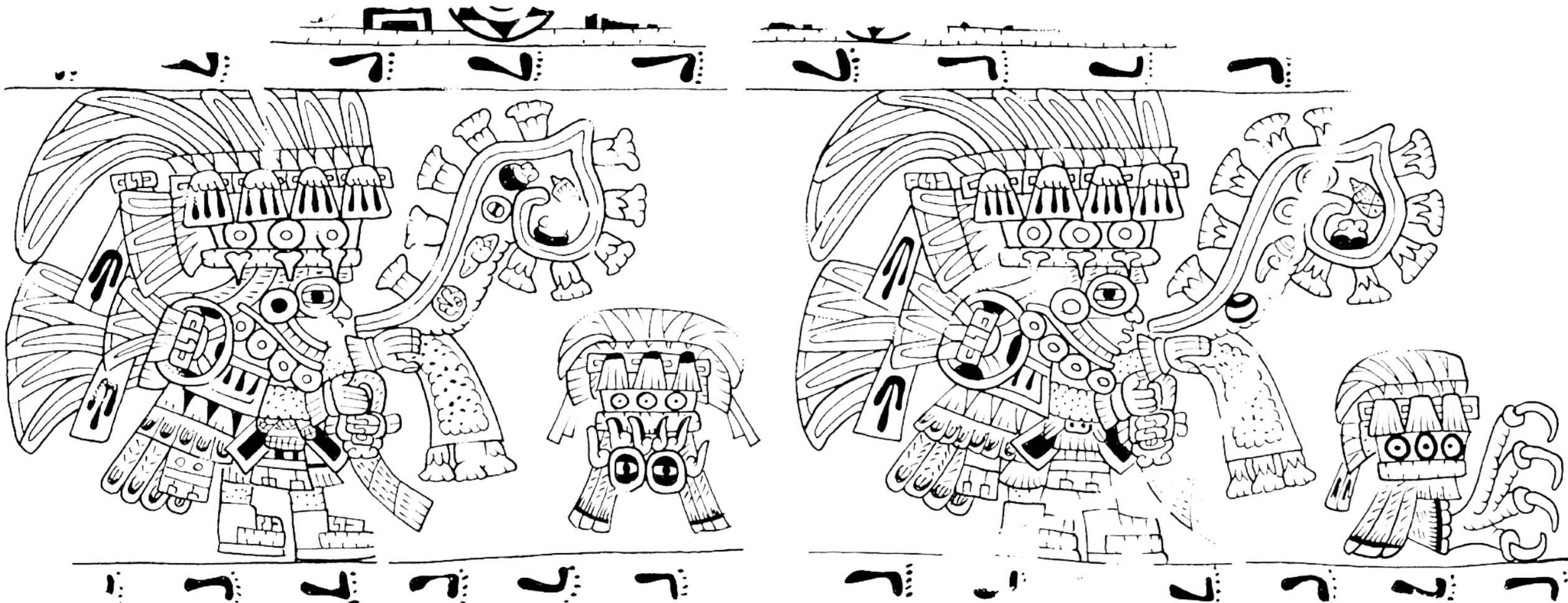
Tlaloc headdress
Paulinyi 2025: Fig. 1a
citing C. Millon 1988a
Fig V.I.





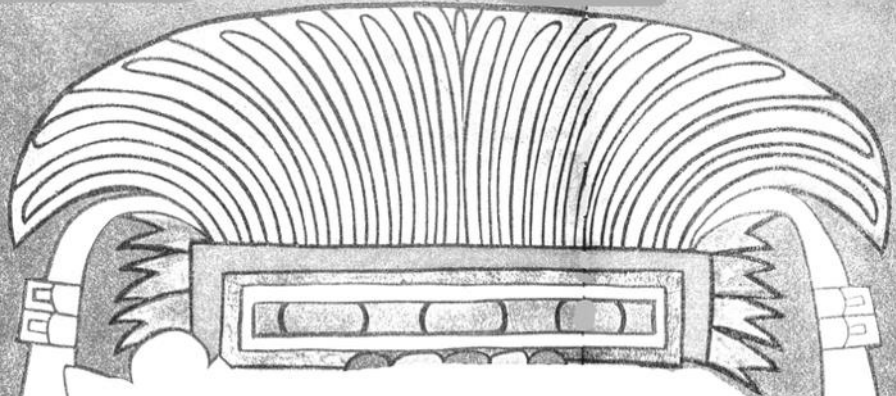
Three spear points clearly pictured across the lower portion of the lower headdress. But...no shield, no atlatl, no spears (other than the tasseled headdress that is clearly a military outfit for the top level of Tlaloc impersonators).

This scene is repeated many times on the murals of the Techinantitla compound of Teotihuacan, and published in dozens of articles and books on art of Teotihuacan.

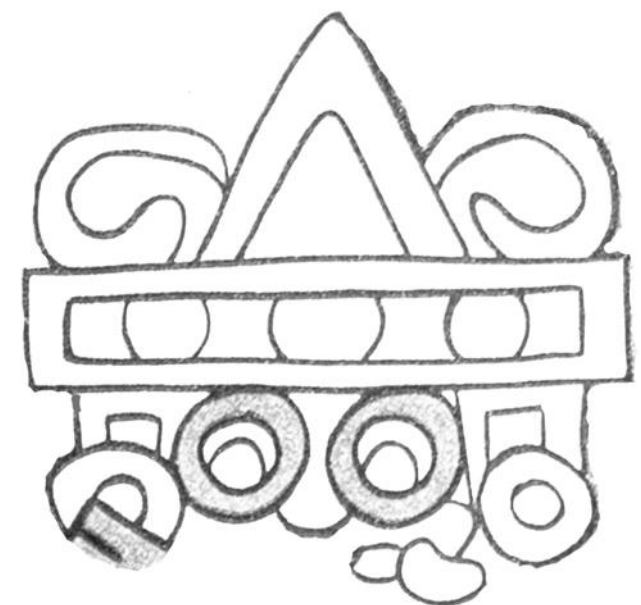


The row of three downward pointing atlatl spearheads are clearly visible on these two Tlalocs of Teotihuacan murals. But, there are no spear points on the smaller Tlaloc headdresses that are estimated to be “name glyphs” in front of each individual.

The headdresses have rectangular tableros from which the splatters cascade. On all the drawings of the Yaxha Stela 11, only that of FLAAR shows a tablero shape; all drawings by Graham, Schele and von Winning did not suggest an open tablero. That aspect needs to be checked on the original stela at Yaxha. The row of footprints means a long journey—found on the Teotihuacan-inspired Maya murals of Sufricaya, Peten.

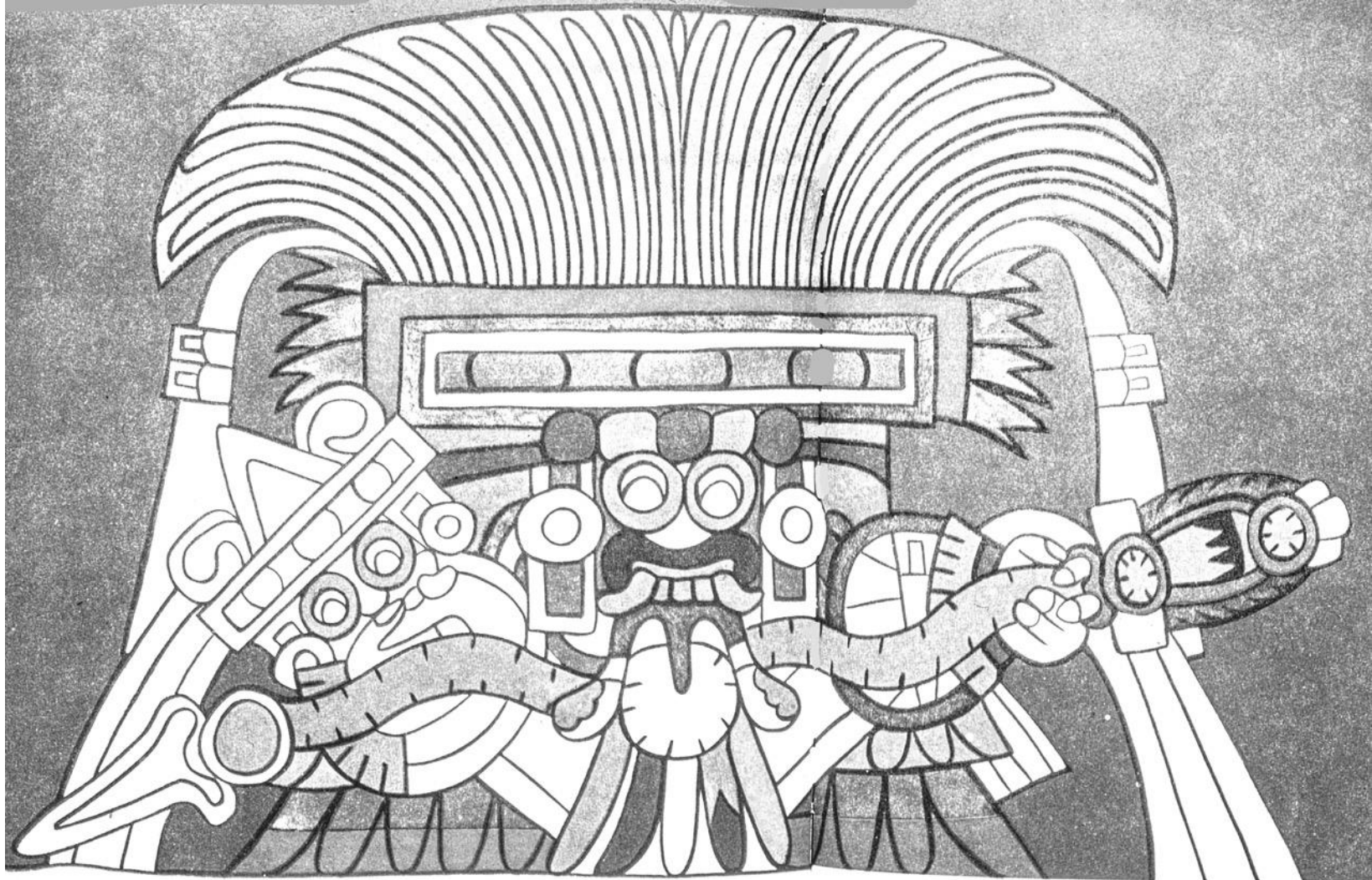


The horizontal frame has several parallel outlines. You could also consider this one “headdress” and the mass of feathers above as “a separate headdress”.



Rotated so you can see the horizontal area with the three circles inside. This row of three circles is clearly an important headdress (here with a variant of a Yearsign-looking motif).

The other teeth are hidden by the hand of the main Tlaloc.



This headdress is 70% feathers. And this Tlaloc has only one row of symbols: circles. Same for the Tlaloc held in his hand (but has a Yearsign decorating the top).

The published color is printed too dark on the page, so I turned the color into black-and-white so you could see the details much better. Probably from a Sejourne book.

Stelae 31 and 32 at Tikal, and 11 at Yaxha, and probably the Tlaloc on Tikal Stela 18, do not represent only (or even?) the Rain God, but focus on military aspects of the ruler or rulers of Teotihuacan or their patron god of military aspects, since these stelae do not have the characteristic supernatural mouth and teeth of the Rain God, but a human mouth and teeth; they also have the rectangular nose pendant or the rectangular nose pendant with supernatural teeth (in the case of Stela 11 at Yaxha), which is not an attribute of the “Rain God”. Both types of nose pendant are worn by rulers in Teotihuacan. Furthermore, the figures carved on the three Maya Teotihuacan related stelae cited wear a row of spear points on their headdresses, an attribute not normally worn by the Rain God in Teotihuacan art; it is only recorded in association with the rulers, as mentioned above (Berrin and Pasztory 1993: No. 140; Conides 2018: Plate 18; Paulinyi 2001: Figure 1).

This is the basis for my proposal that on Stela 31, the ruler of Tikal, Yax Nun Ahin, bears a shield with a frontal representation of the face of a ruler of Teotihuacan. According to the testimony of the glyph texts on this stela, and on the Tikal Marker stone, his father was Spear Thrower Owl, ruler...(Paulinyi 2025: 61).

All that said, the same tasseled headdress is featured by the Tlaloc that is carrying a strap bag and “sowing” and speaking with a speech scroll. So potentially more realistic to call these Maya examples a combined, composite Tlaloc to bring both the agricultural benefits and military superiority of Tlaloc.

Independently, I already estimated that the geometric downward pointing motifs were spear points, albeit simplified. This row of spear points does not show up on the rubbing by Merle Greene Robertson, nor on the drawings by Schele, or drawings by Grube, or the drawings by Ian Graham, or Von Winning.... That is precisely why I brought a portable Honda electric generator up to the plaza so we could photograph Yaxha Stela 11 with cross lighting. Not many other archaeologists travel with a heavy Honda electric generator. We still bring a Honda portable electric generator on all recent field trips (2020-2026) but to recharge the batteries of the drones, cameras, and battery-powered lighting. We are now photographing trees, flowers, fruits, bee hives, wasp nests, etc.—not photographing stelae.

Each seated soldier has three spears. Although no atlatl is pictured, I estimate these spears are for use with an atlatl.

These are all basic soldiers—not leaders—so none wear Tlaloc goggles on their faces.

Are the rows of two disks in each headdress an abbreviated variant of the more normal row of three or more disks? Or are the two disks a play on the goggled eyes of Tlaloc?

Sufricaya Mural 2, rows 2 to 6 (Foley 2017: Fig. 7.5, page 366, drawing by Jena DeJulio).



The most often published Maya murals are those of Bonampak (Hellmuth was a student intern there flown in by the INAH team circa 1962 or 1963 to a Lacandon settlement and then I helped the INAH team carry their equipment many kilometers to Bonampak—no airfield at Bonampak itself in the early 1960's). These murals nudged the Carnegie archaeologists to recognize that the Classic Maya did more than astronomy and monumental architecture—warfare and sacrifice of captives are hard to ignore in these murals.

Then came the amazing murals of San Bartolo, that shows us to what degree the early Maya borrowed facial style and other aspects from the epi-Olmecs.

Then came the murals of Sufricaya, that documented the power that Teotihuacan offered to Maya rulers—if the Maya rulers subjected themselves to Teotihuacan alliances.

The Calakmul murals show an educational chapter about daily Maya life.

The Cacaxtla murals document that much of Mexico had “Maya influence” just as much of the Maya areas had “Teotihuacan influence” (Xochicalco is another example, but in sculpture, not murals).

The murals of Xultun provide archaeastronomical documentation.

Lots of murals from later centuries.

Spear or Dart for Atlatl (Spear Thrower)

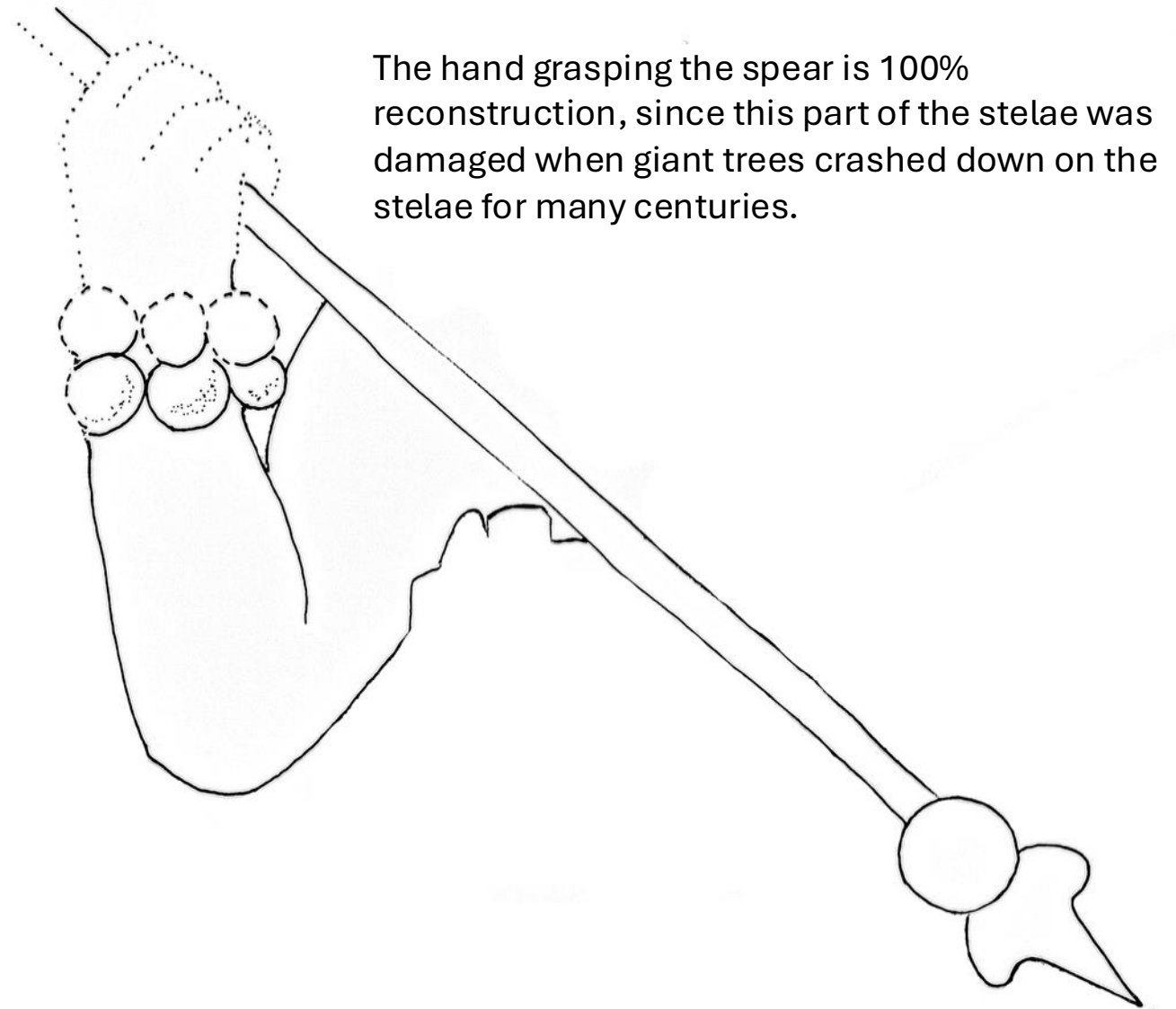
The Classic Maya used long spears, thrusting or throwing with their hands. Lots of palace scenes on Late Classic vases show soldiers or palace guards with these long spears. Occasionally on stelae the ruler himself flaunts a long spear.

But the Teotihuacanos who “entered” the Peten in the Early Classic, 4th-century, came with spear-throwers, atlatls and were able to “out-spear” the Maya.

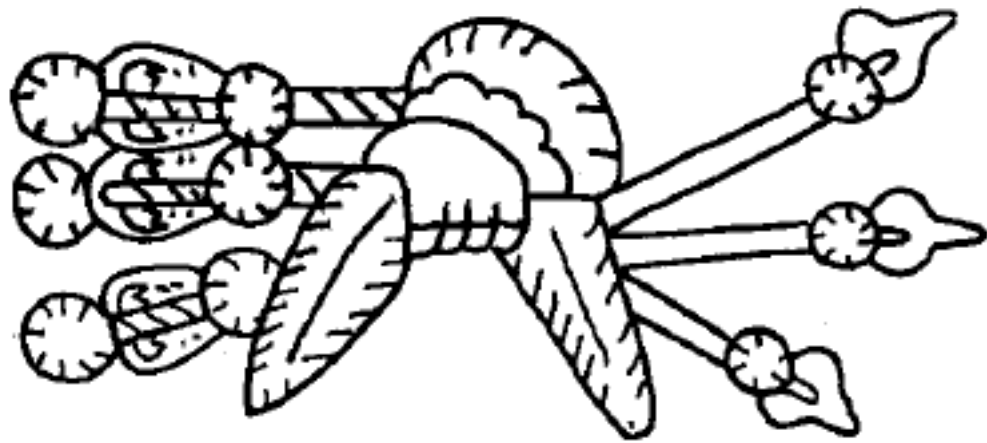
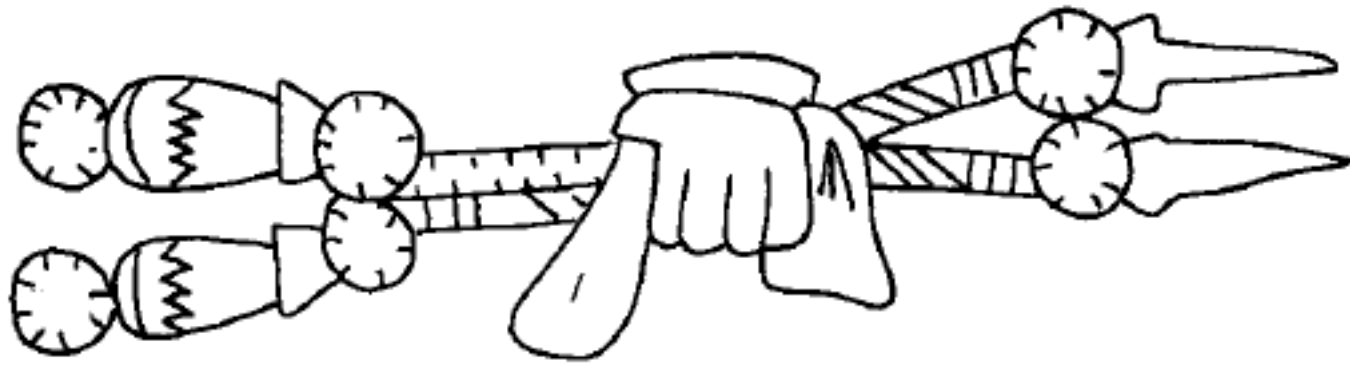
Because the spear held in the hand (NOT in an atlatl) of the Tlaloc war lord on Yaxha Stela 11 is rather long, my question has always been, how long can a spear be yet still “hurled” by the atlatl (spear thrower)?

A very helpful MA thesis on the atlatl (Ciofalo 2012) has lots of documentation but zero mention or illustration of Yaxha Stela 11 (Tikal is even in the title—but not Yaxha because no atlatl is featured—just the spear).

An atlatl can hurl a spear quite long distance, but it is notable that the Yaxha warlord is potentially holding the spear in his hand—or was there an atlatl before this part of the stelae was damaged or eroded?

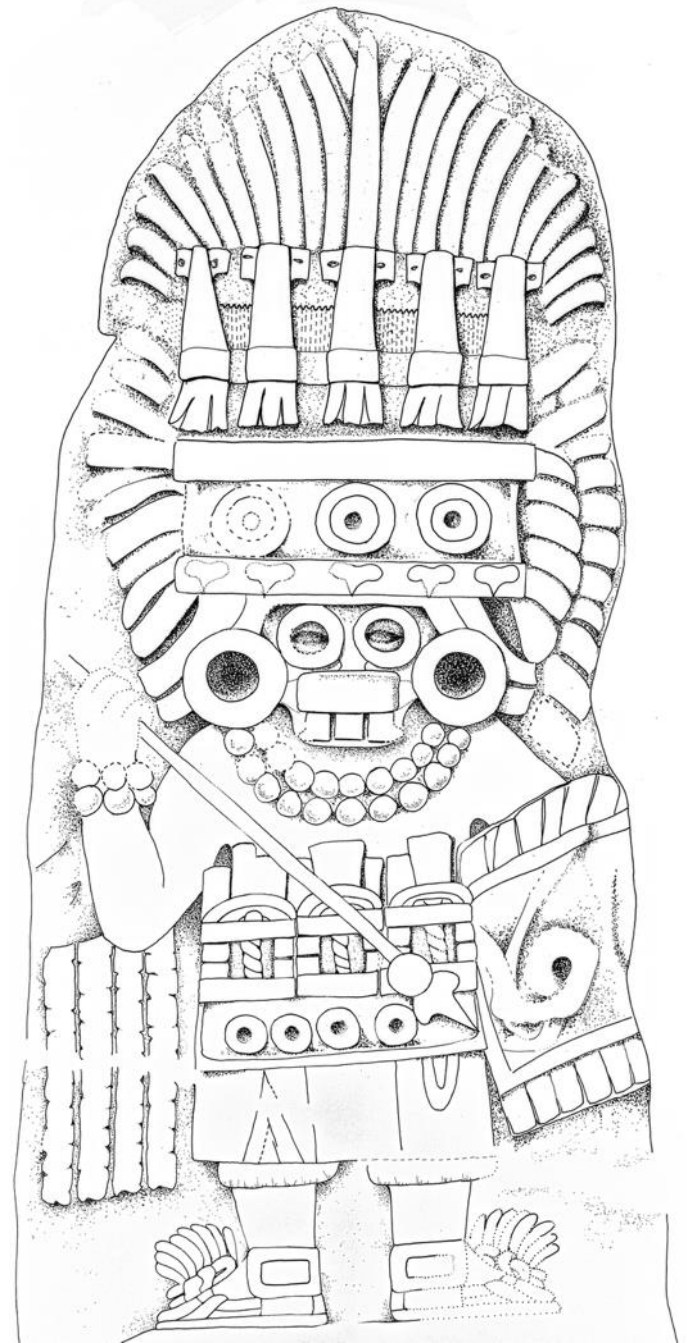


The hand grasping the spear is 100% reconstruction, since this part of the stelae was damaged when giant trees crashed down on the stelae for many centuries.



Taube 2011: Fig 5.16b citing Miller 1973 Fig 193.

Taube 2011: Fig 5.16c citing Winning 1987, volume I, Chapter 7.

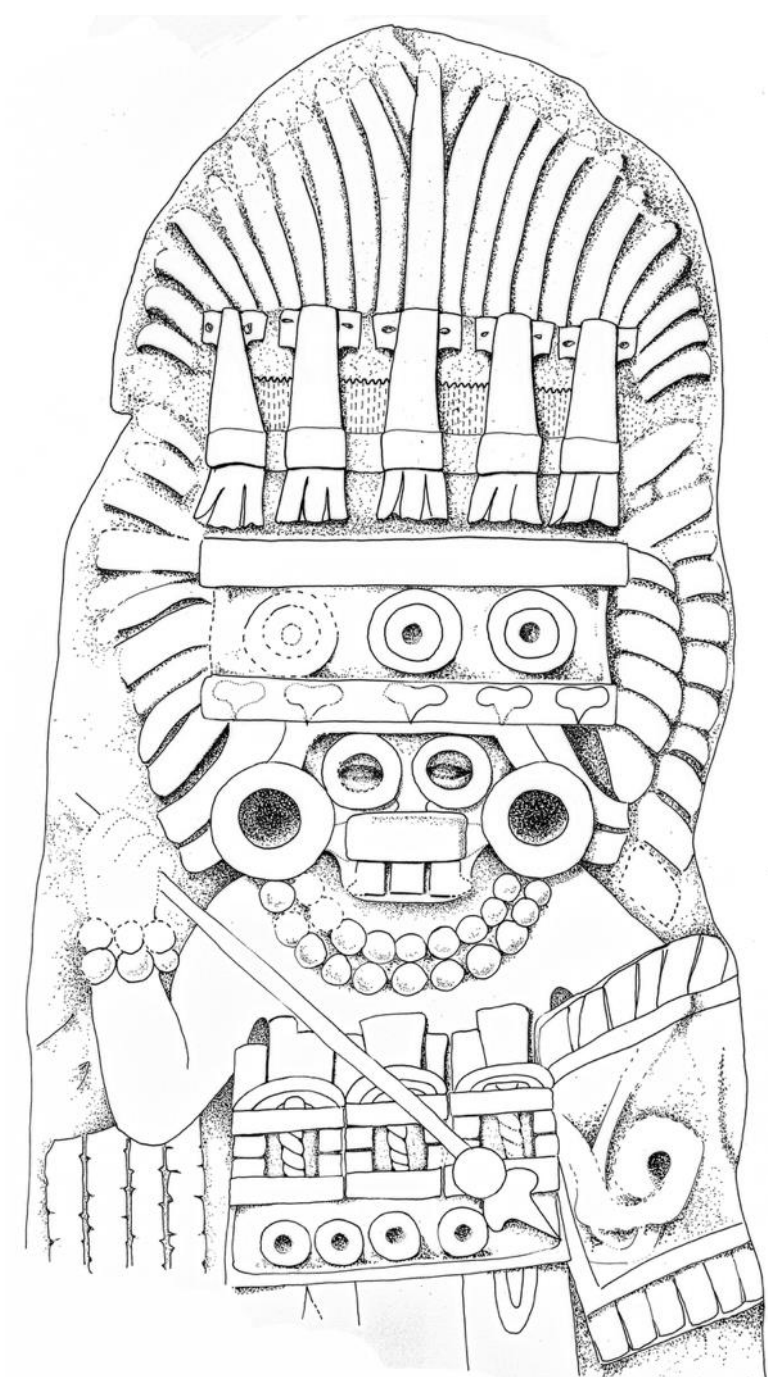
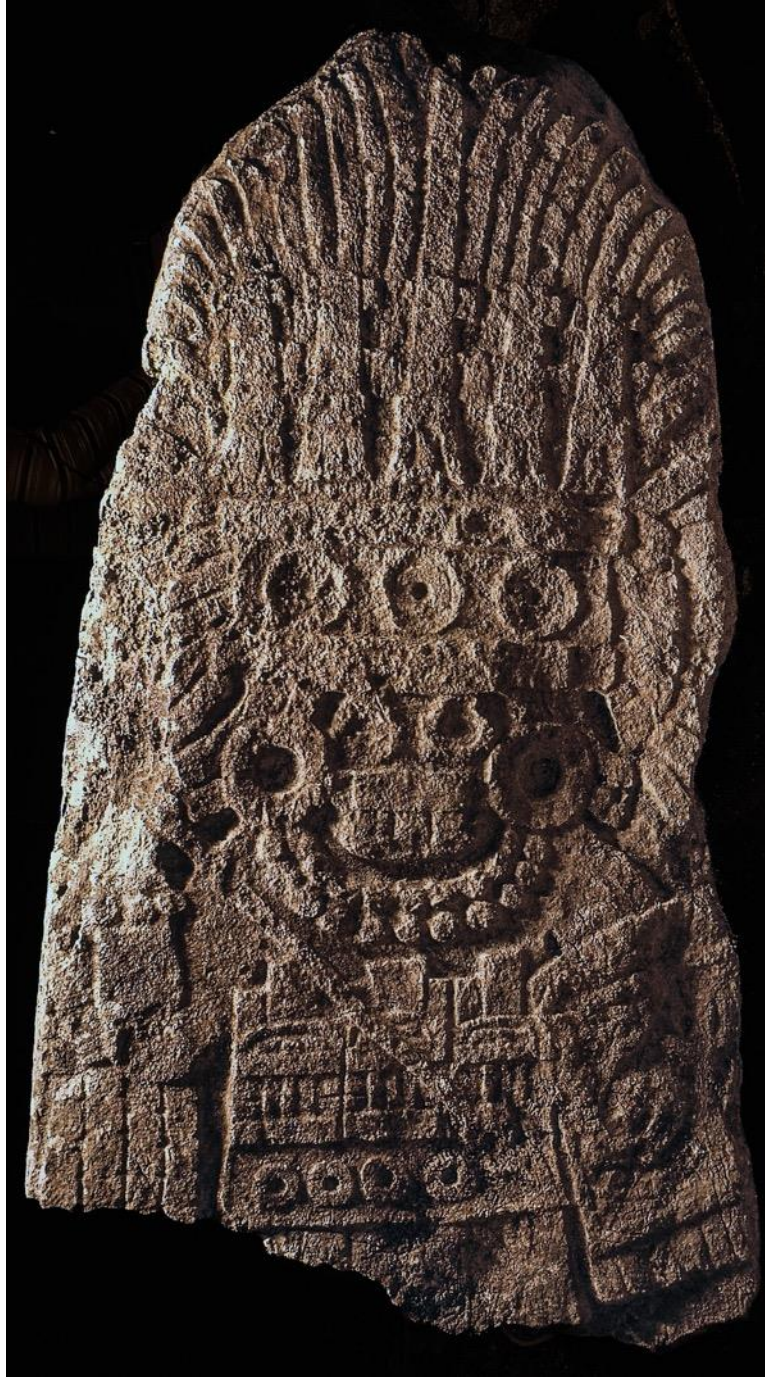


Yaxha Stela 11.



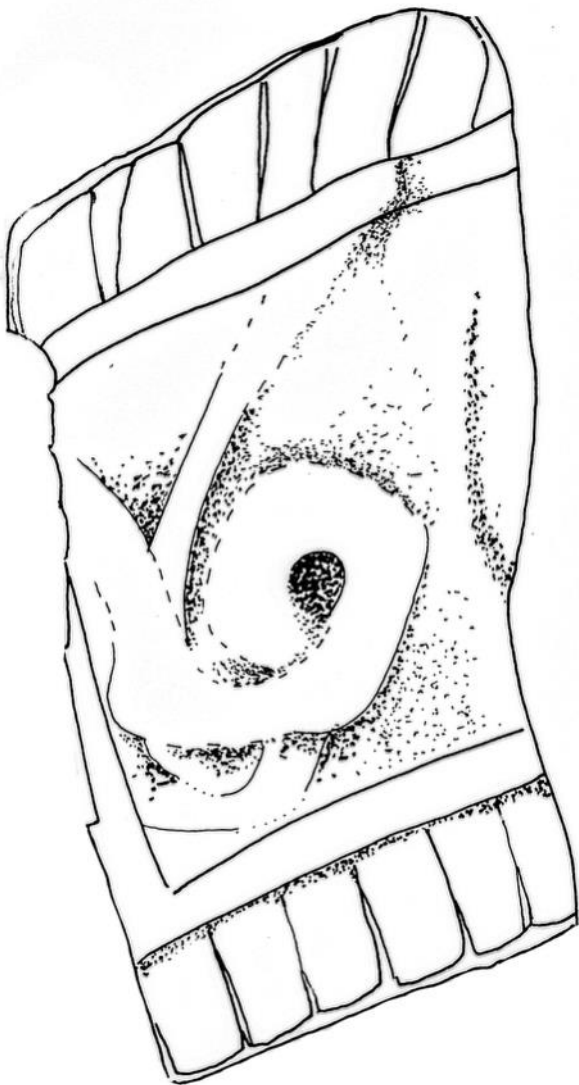
Not much space for an atlatl but this photo documents that the “hand grasping the spear” is totally reconstructed

Each different angle of cross-lighting reveals additional details. So it is essential to move the lighting and take multiple photos.



FLAAR drawing by M. Delp with input from Hellmuth.

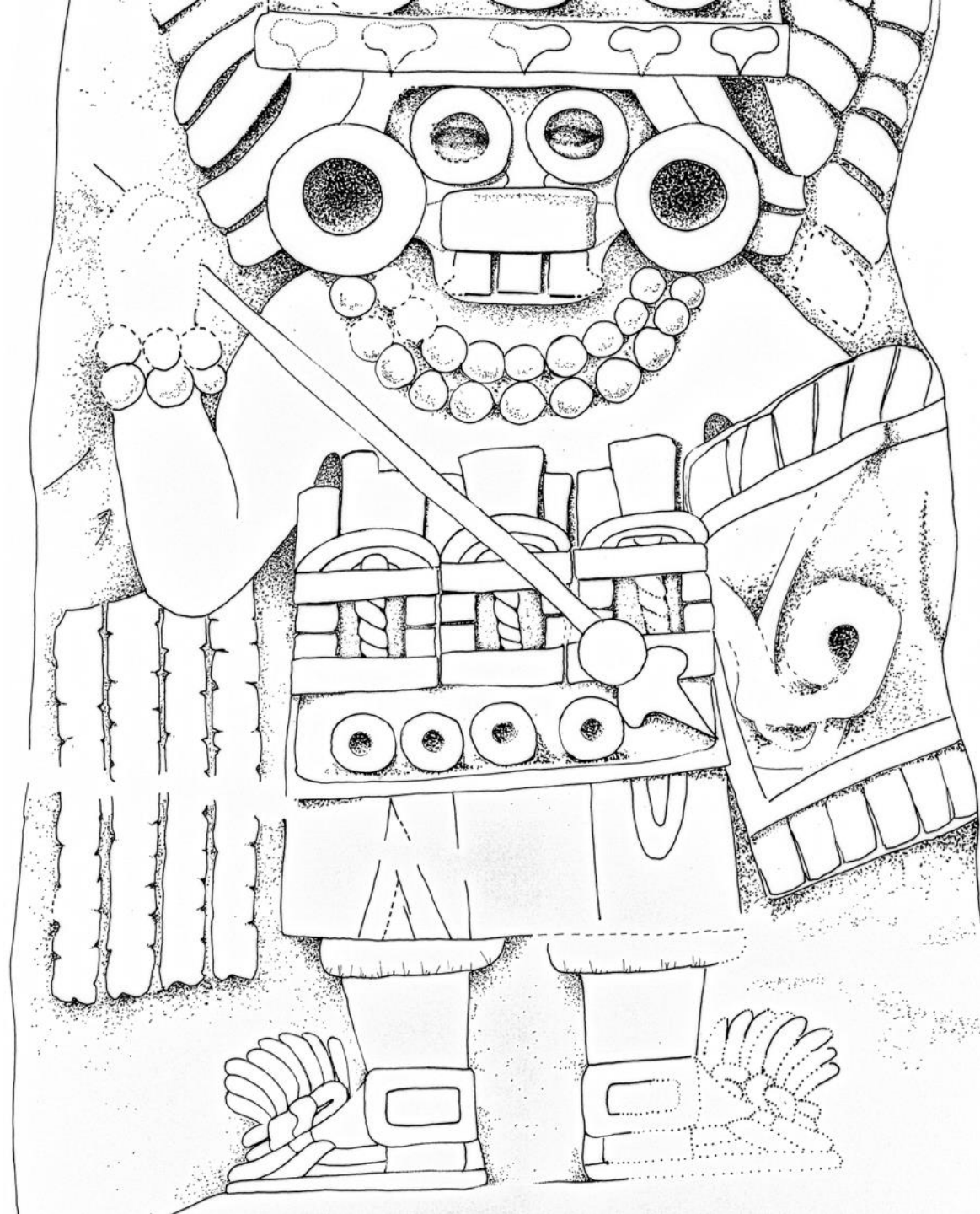
Chapter 10 Rectangular Shield



The rectangular shield area of Yaxha Stela 11 is the most eroded part of this monumental sculpture. So, no surprise that not one single freehand sketch recognized the scroll-like curl.

Although I have studied the art and iconography of Teotihuacan since my 1969 MA thesis on Teotihuacan influence that continued into the Late Classic (long after the imperial capital had been destroyed), I never knew of any shield with a curl being its feature. But today in the digital era, I do 99% of my research with PDFs of books and scholarly articles and MA theses and PhD dissertations that can easily be downloaded—plus many helpful colleagues have sent me PDFs of their publications.

So, during weeks of research to prepare this 39th SIAG, year 2026 lecture at MUNAE, I was elated to find THREE actual Teotihuacan shields with wide curved motif (that I show on the following page).



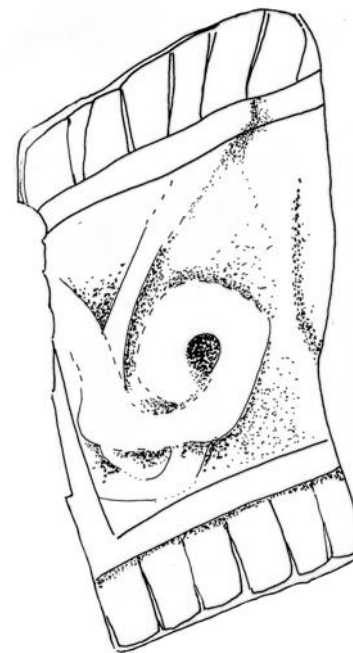
Rectangular Shields are Logo for Teotihuacan Warriors



Teotihuacan shield with curve, scroll, drawing by Fernando Botas (Manzanilla 2018: Fig. 3.20, page 174).

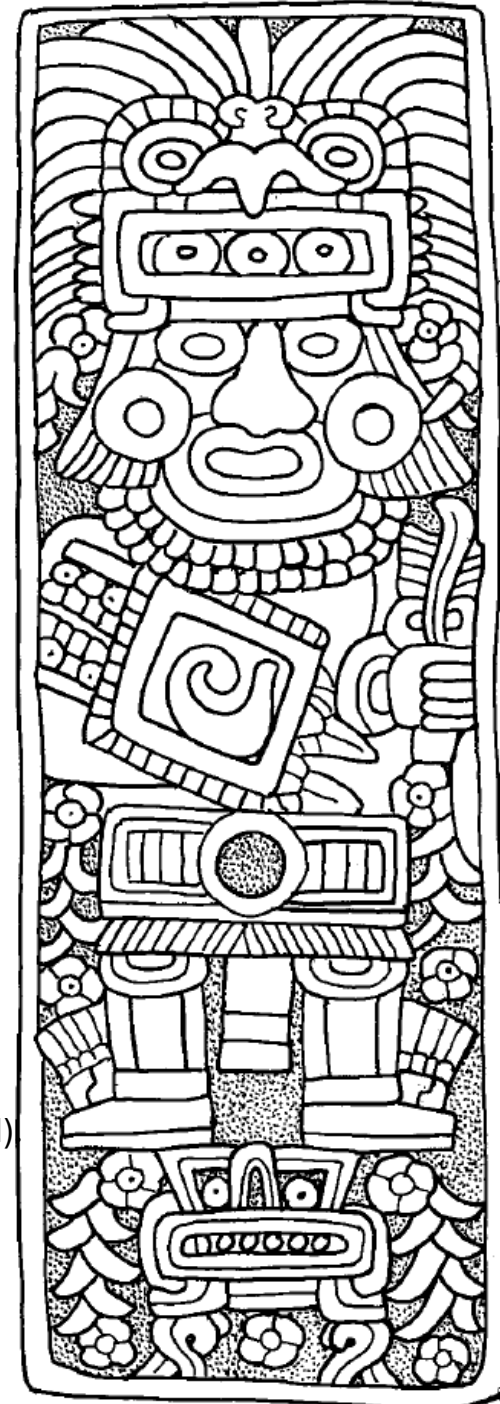


Tlaloc shield with curved motif, Zacuala Palace mural (Taube 2011: Fig. 5.13,b citing Sejourne 1959: Plate 28).



Yaxha Stela 11, shield needs to be redrawn.

Tlaloc shield with curved motif, Acatempo Stela, Taube 2011: Fig 15.13,a and a completely different style drawing in Taube 2000: Fig. 6,d)



When Maya rulers wanted to pretend they had the military power of Teotihuacan, they would flaunt a rectangular shield. So, the personage on Yaxha Stela 11, who is either a proxy for Teotihuacan or otherwise obviously representing Teotihuacan imperial power (and control), he needs to show the key military symbols (tasseled headdress, rectangular shield, and spear head of the shape used at Teotihuacan).



Tlaloc shield with curved motif, Zacuala Palace mural (Taube 2011: Fig. 5.13,b citing Sejourne 1959: Plate 28).

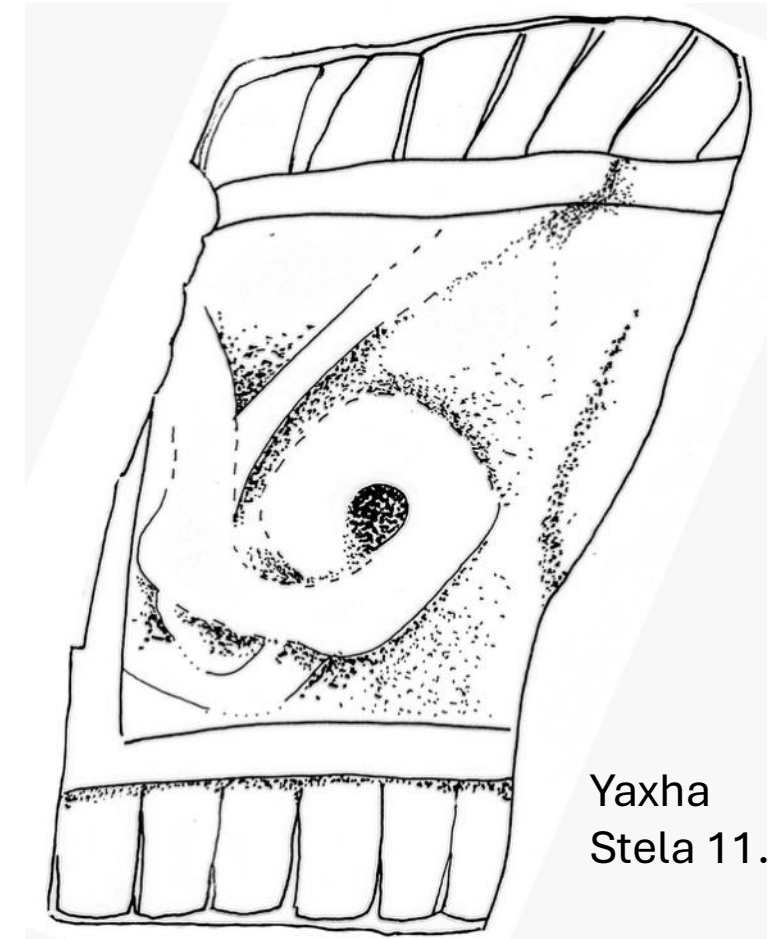
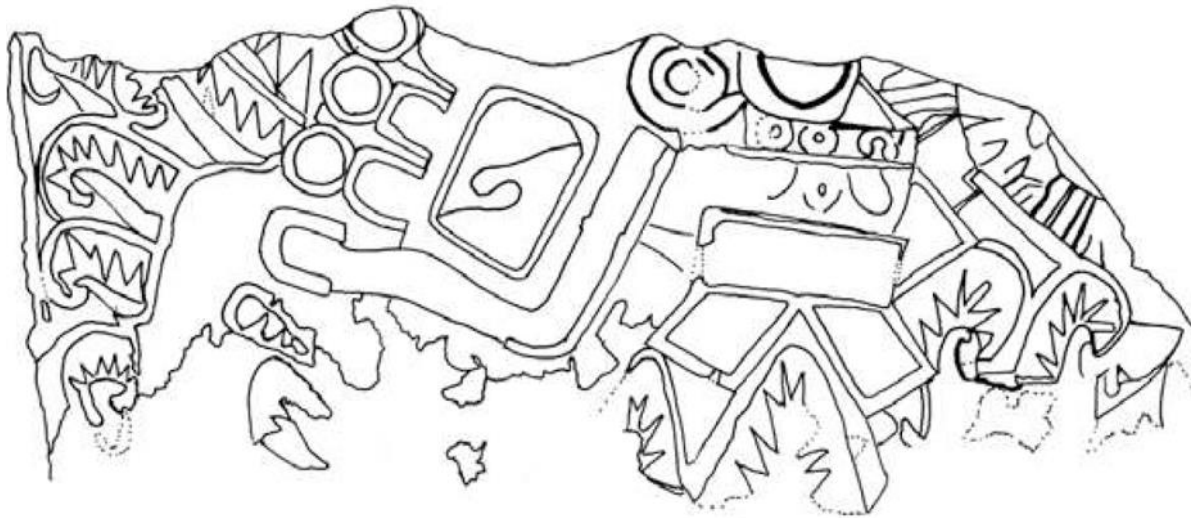
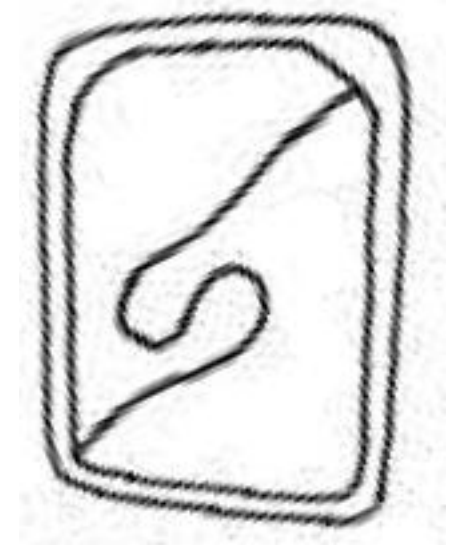
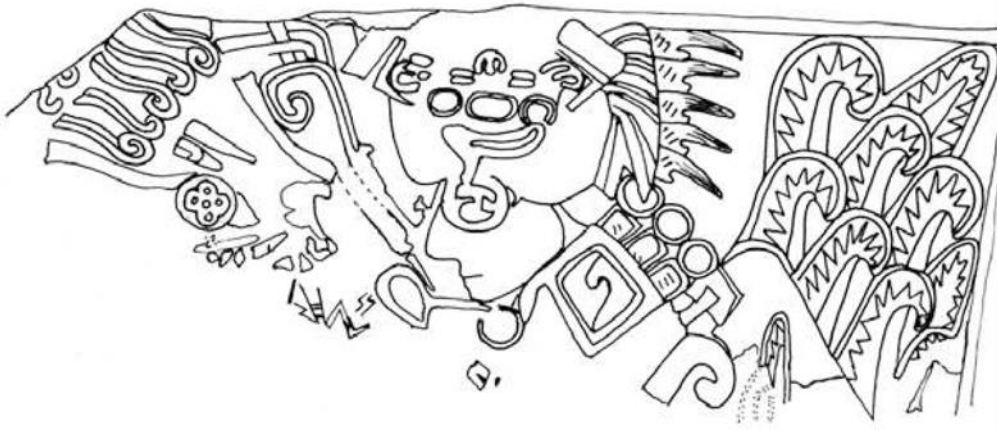


Sejourne 1962: Fig. 154 in Von Winning , Vol 2, Fig. 3.g.

No goggled Tlaloc eyes; no nose plaque, no tasseled headdress.

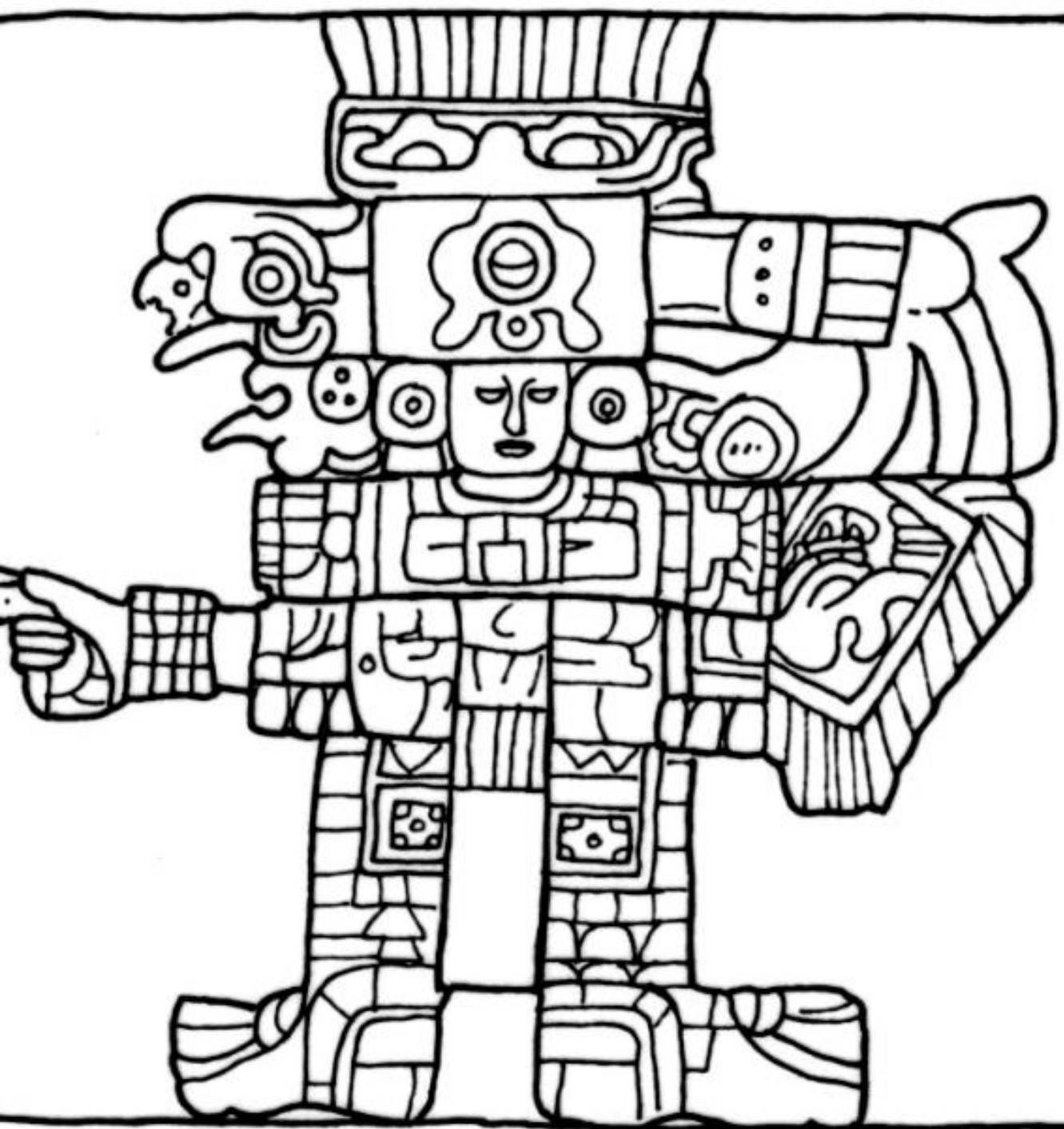
Although no atlatl or spears, the feline at the left is deliberately “dangerous” and the composite bird feline headdress is also featured to claim this individual is armed to kill.

Rectangular shields (with feathers around at least two sides), are a symbol of Teotihuacan military power and presence. Piedras Negras Panel 2 has all eight individuals with rectangular shields (and the six kneeling elite warriors have a Yearsign on top of their Teotihuacan military helmet). El Peru Waka’ Stela 51 also has a prominent rectangular shield (Navarro, Perez, Perez, Freidel and Kelly 2021: Fig. 1.4. But that shield has a full figure howling raptor (not a geometric curved motif).



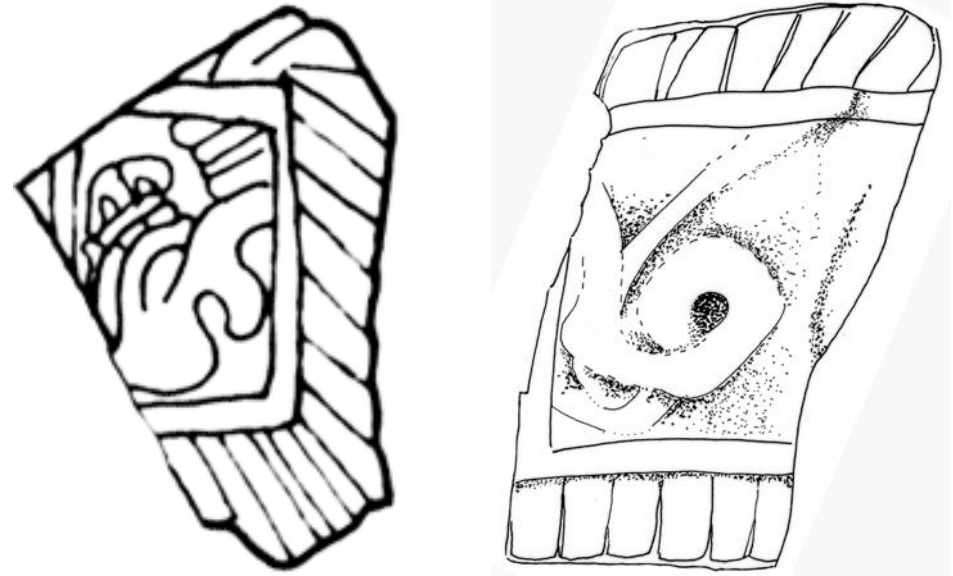
Yaxha
Stela 11.

Even though not well preserved, and even though not large enough to be a typical shield, the rectangular objects in these two scenes on murals at Teotihuacan seem to have the same motif as is on the shield carried by the Tlaloc on Yaxha Stela 11.



Since this drawing by Linda Schele is readily available on-line as a download, it is included in several publications on Teotihuacan-Maya interaction. But, I have not yet found any thesis or dissertation focused on interpreting every single motif—the headdress alone has nothing from Tikal Stela 18, 31 or 32, nor Yaxha Stela 11—all the symbols on this Str. 5D-57 scene are different (but obviously local interpretations of Teotihuacan symbolism).

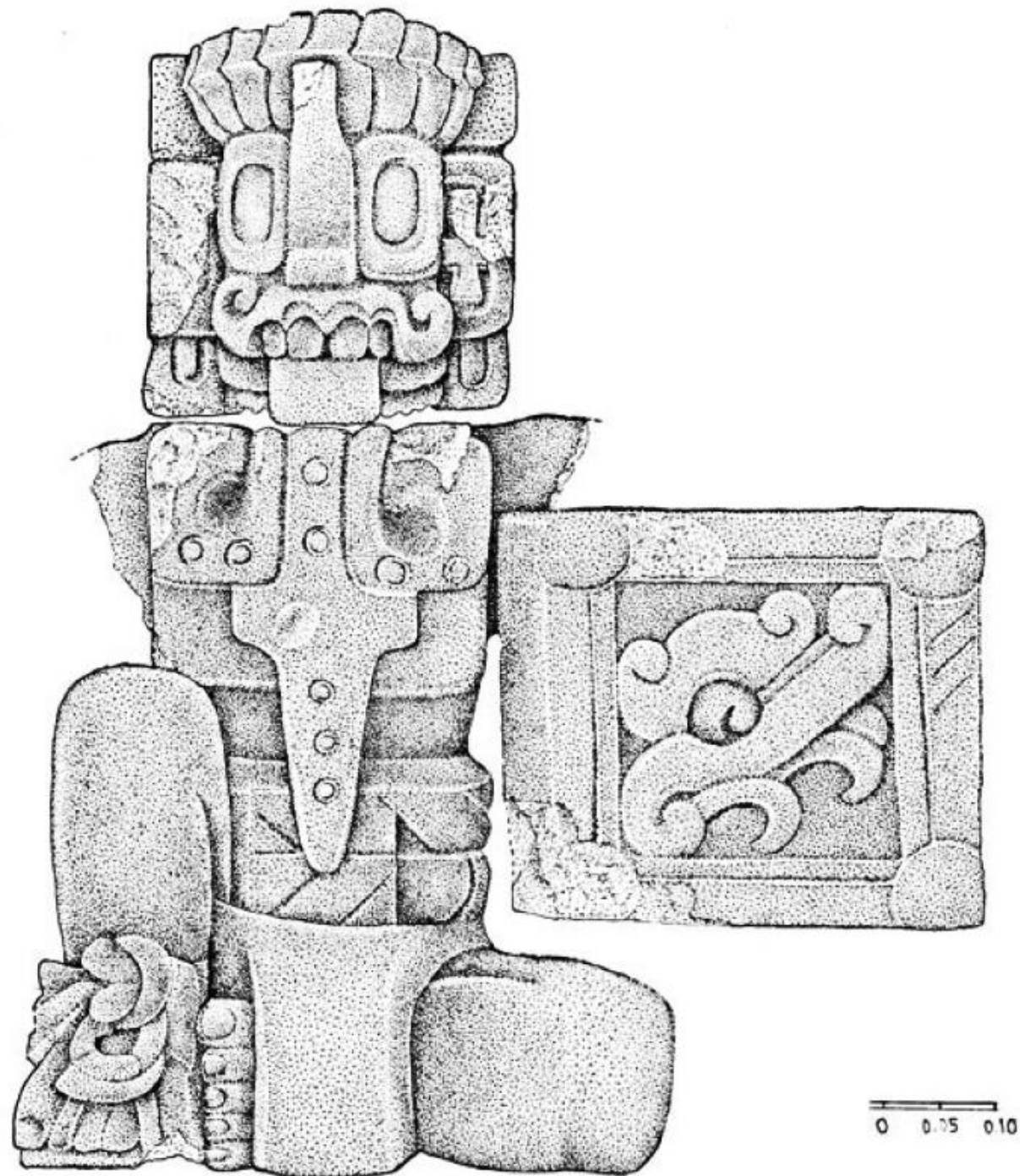
I have not yet found the Tikal Project publication on this or the other “Teotihuacan warlord” stucco on the same Tikal structure.

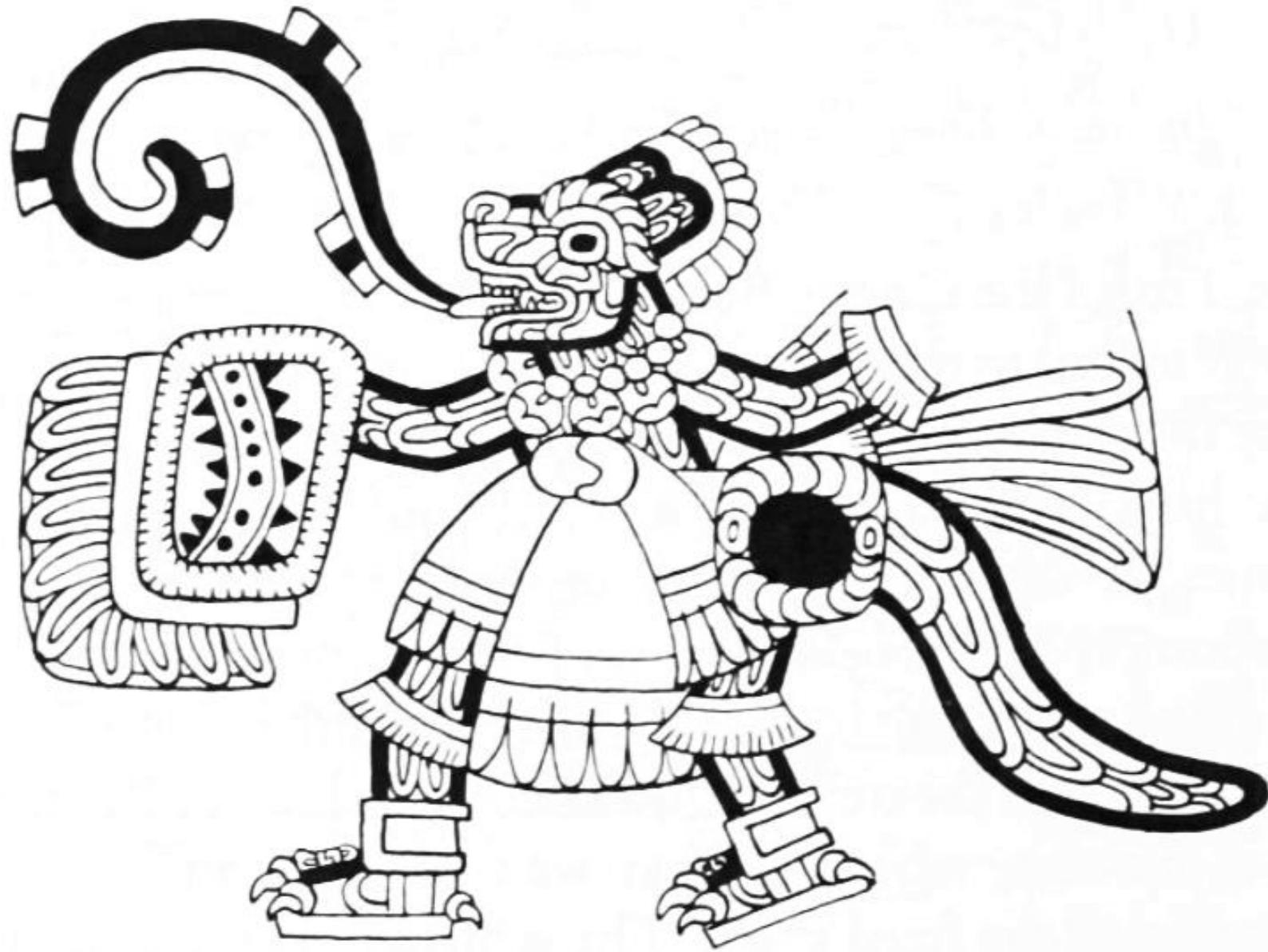


Frontal presentation of Tikal ruler pretending to be still associated with the power and wealth of Teotihuacan. Stucco façade of Tikal Structure 5D-57. Drawing by Linda Schele, SD-2073, on-line.

Tlaloc with rectangular accessory that I estimate may be a stylized shield. Caption estimates the personage is Kinich Yax K'uk Mo', but curiously he is rarely pictured elsewhere at Copan as armed and dangerous from a military aspect.

Copan Temple 16, drawing by Jose Espinoza in Ramos 2003: Fig. 9.





Would help to have a student inspired to accomplish a Master's Thesis on shields of Teotihuacan and associated cultures.

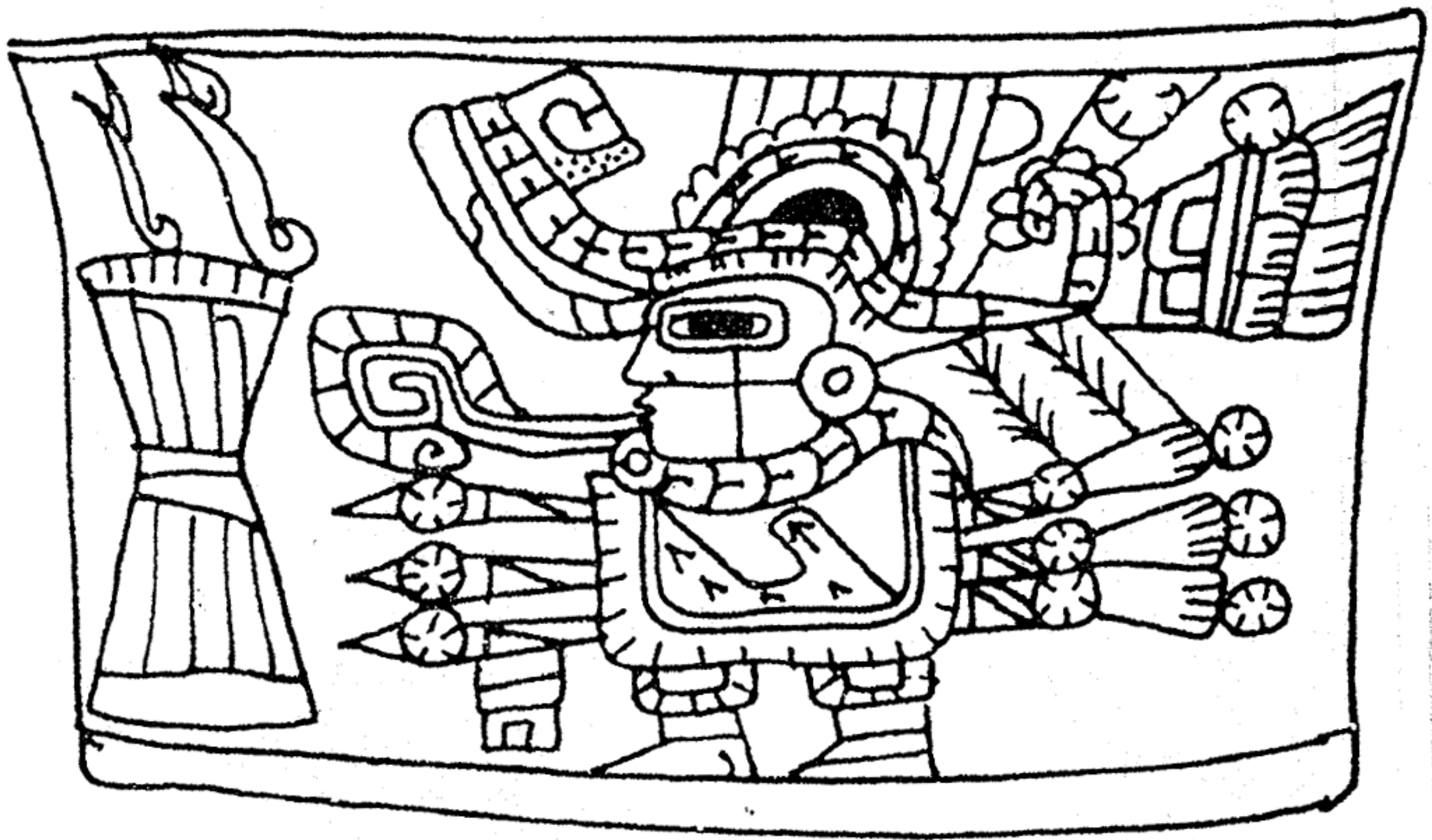
Teotihuacan mural, Sejourne 1976: Fig. 31, page 118.

Butterfly aspect but rest of the face is a fanged mammal.

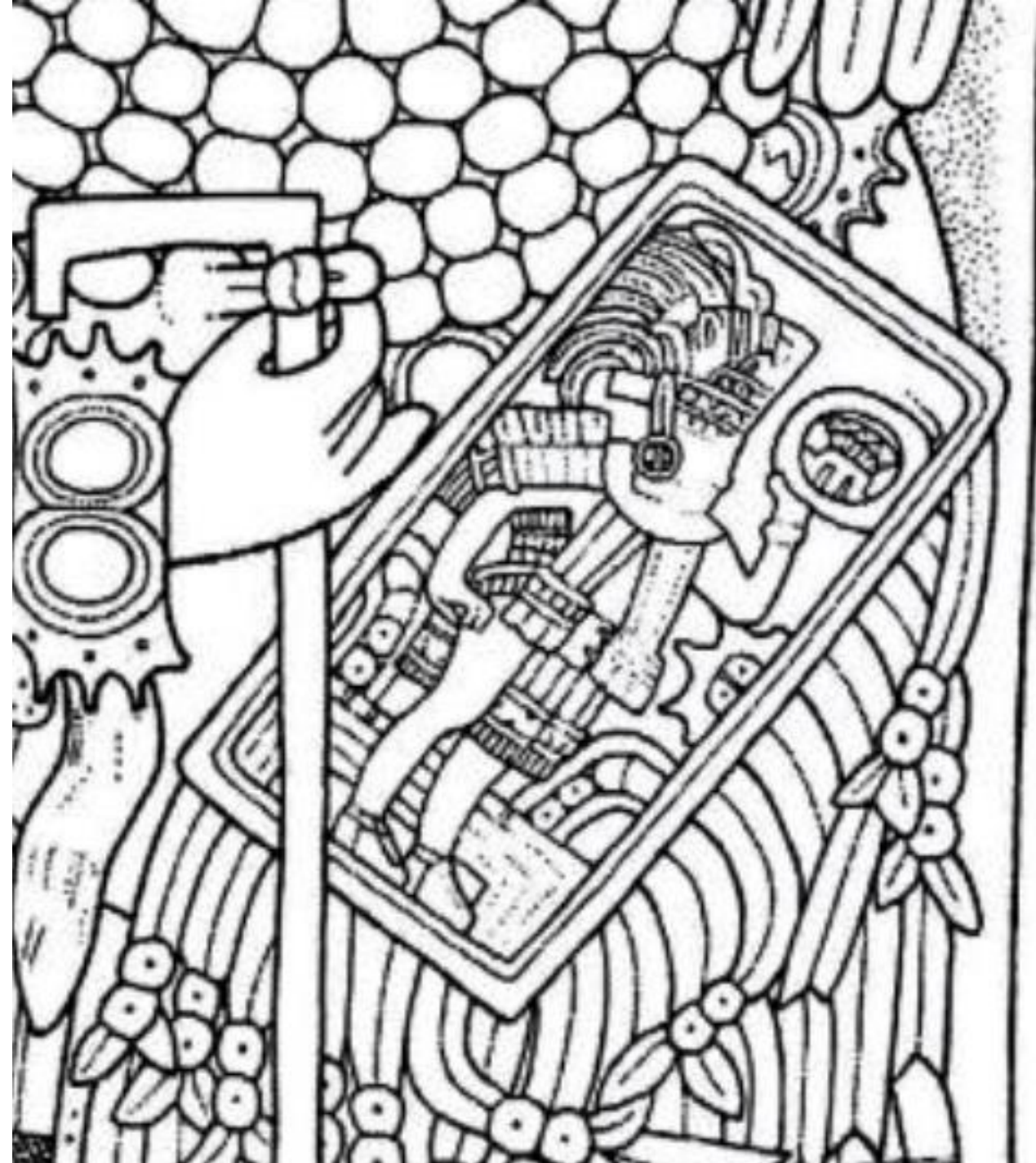


Rectangular Teotihuacan style shield, murals of Xelha, Quintana Roo (Miller and Taube 1997: page 49).

Would help to have an energetic student accomplish a MA thesis on “Shields and Bundles carried in the Arms of Teotihuacan Warriors, Deity Impersonators at Teotihuacan, Oaxaca, Tiquisate Style, Peten Cylindrical Tripods, Incensarios, Figurines, and Murals.”



Teotihuacan spears, shield, flaming bundle (but no war helmet): Nielsen 2003, Volume II: Fig: C59 citing Berlo 1984: Plate 135.



Possible Yearsign in the
headdress.

The symbol inside the oval
object is clearly to show a
Teotihuacan symbol.

Lacanha Stela 7, drawing by Simon Martin.

XIII-D1



a



b



c

D2



d



e

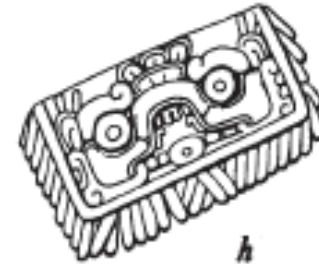
D3



f



g



h



i

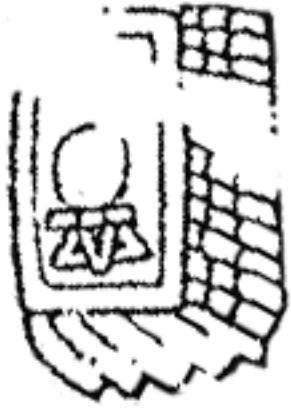


j

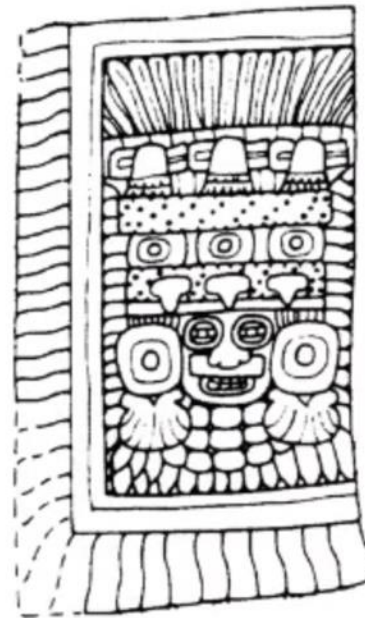
Already in the 1950's, Proskouriakoff recognized that the rectangular shields flaunted by the Classic Maya deserved their own special illustration (1950: Fig. 32, a to j). Most of these rectangular shields (especially a, b, c, d, f, and g) are associated with the Maya flaunting Teotihuacan military aspects. But today in 2026, lots more shields are needed to find the decoration used on the Tlaloc warlord shield of Yaxha Stela 11.

Warrior Shields at Piedras Negras

Piedras Negras Panel 2
drawing David Stuart



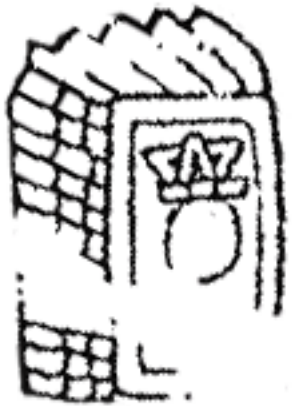
This is the way the tassels
should be pointed.



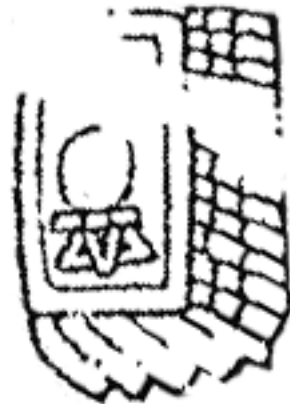
Tikal

Piedras Negras, drawings by
David Stuart in his helpful
1999 or year 2000 lecture.

Position of tassels on the shield of the ruler on the same Panel 2



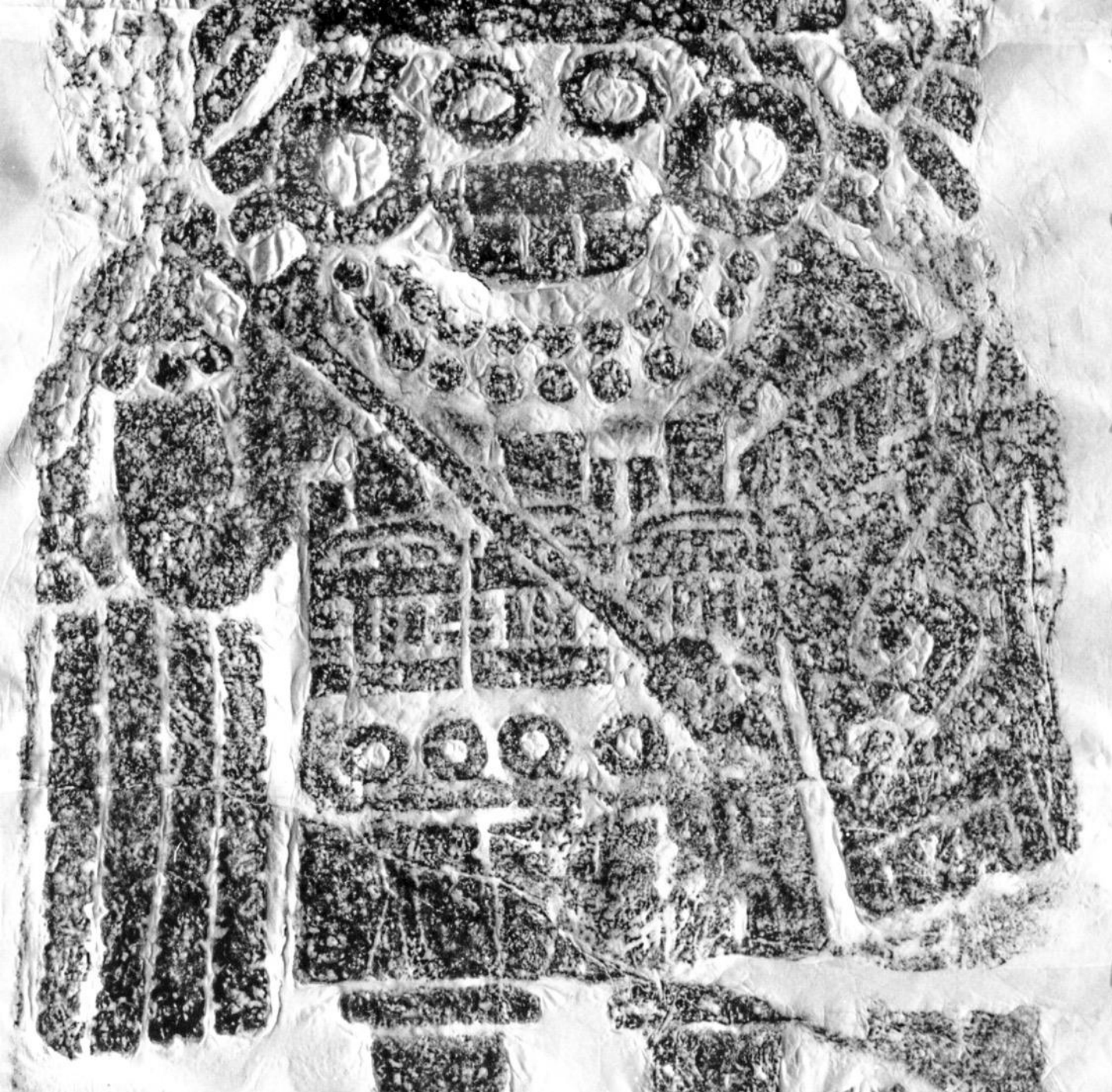
This shows the Yearsign “correctly upwards” but the tassels on the shield area ll in the wrong direction.



This shows the tassels correctly oriented (compared to most other Teo-Maya shields) but that leaves the Yearsign upside down???



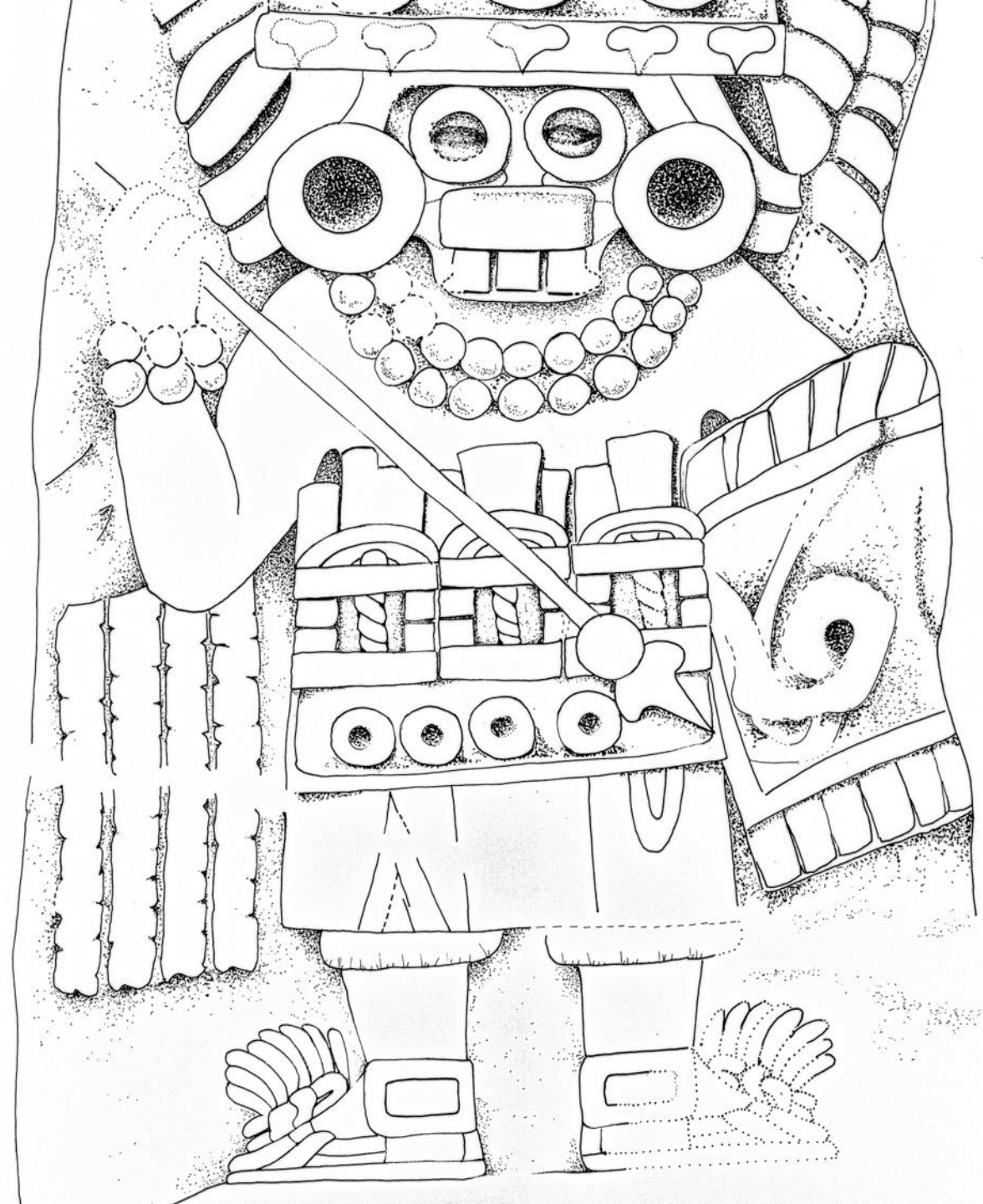
Rotated.



This detail of the rubbing will help a bit improve the drawing of the unknown motif on the shield.



Piedras Negras,
drawing by David
Stuart in his
helpful 1999 or
year 2000 lecture.



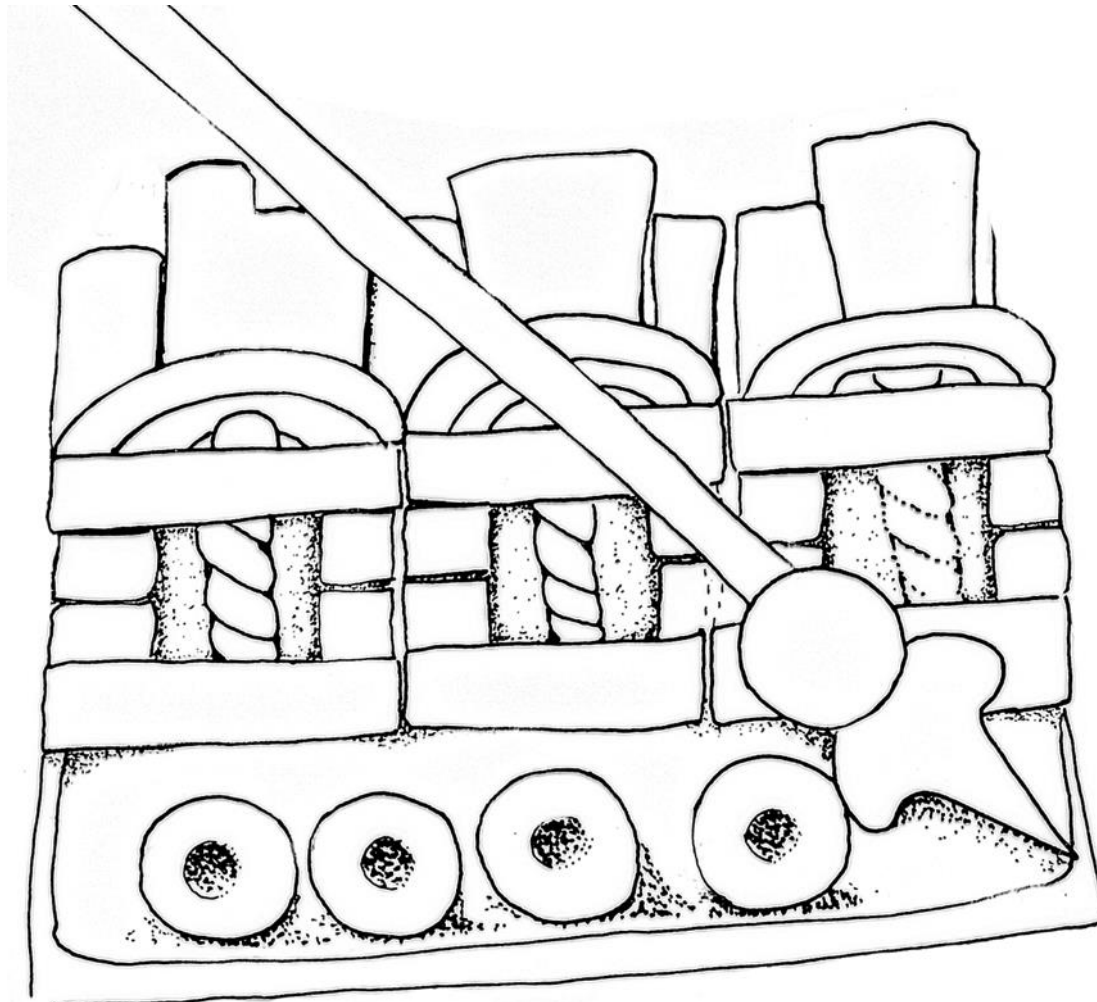
Yaxha Stela 11
M. Delp-N. Hellmuth,
FLAAR drawing.

Main Feature of this Yaxha Teotihuacan-inspired Warrior Deity Costume that is, so far, not well known to Iconographers

The spear or long dart is obvious, and the size and shape of the point is obviously inspired by Teotihuacan.

The row of four doughnut-shaped concentric circles is similar to the row on the headdress. And some Teotihuacan personages have this row under their neck. Individual doughnuts are the prominent earrings of most Teotihuacan Tlalocs (but also common elsewhere). But to have this across the middle of the body is not yet well known (though I found rare examples while immersed in library research for this SIAG-MUNAE symposium presentation).

The geometric term for two concentric circles with space between them is annulus. Ring or hardware washer are other more generic names.



I estimate that the center is a rope twisted around a long narrow support. . But since almost all other parts of this military Tlaloc outfit are already known for Teotihuacan (and for Tikal Stelae 31 and 32) surely a Teotihuacan archaeologist can find this motif somewhere.

So far, neither in the two volumes by Hasso von Winning nor in hundreds of papers on Teotihuacan symbolism by Karl Taube have I noticed anything close to the main motifs (here three in a row).

Surely a scholar working at Teotihuacan itself will be able to find examples there.

I have not found this yet in Maya sculptures (but there are HUNDREDS more that need to be checked).

Need also to
see if there are
any motifs like
this in Oaxaca
or Xochicalco.

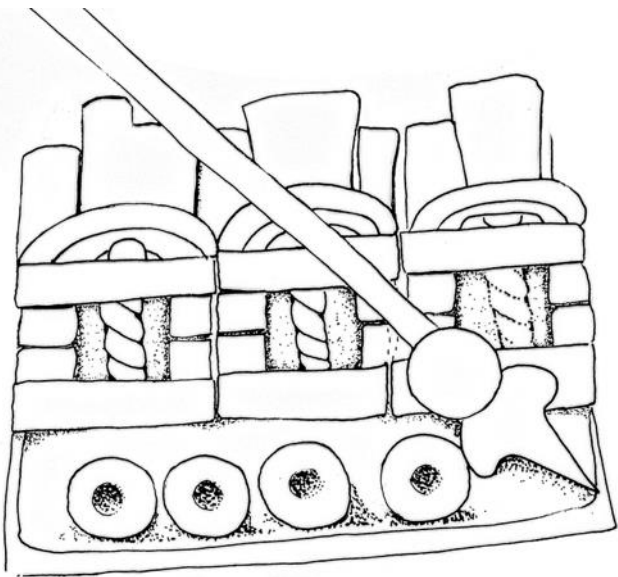






So far, this is the best view of the curved motif on the rectangular shield.





Yaxha Stela 11.

The “Lacandon area” panel has a horizontal band of disks across his waist area (plus disks in the geometric X pattern). Drawing by Barbara Van Heusen, in Europe.

This identical drawing has been published several times not citing the Van Heusen / FLAAR drawing. We also have cross-lit photos of this small vertical panel.

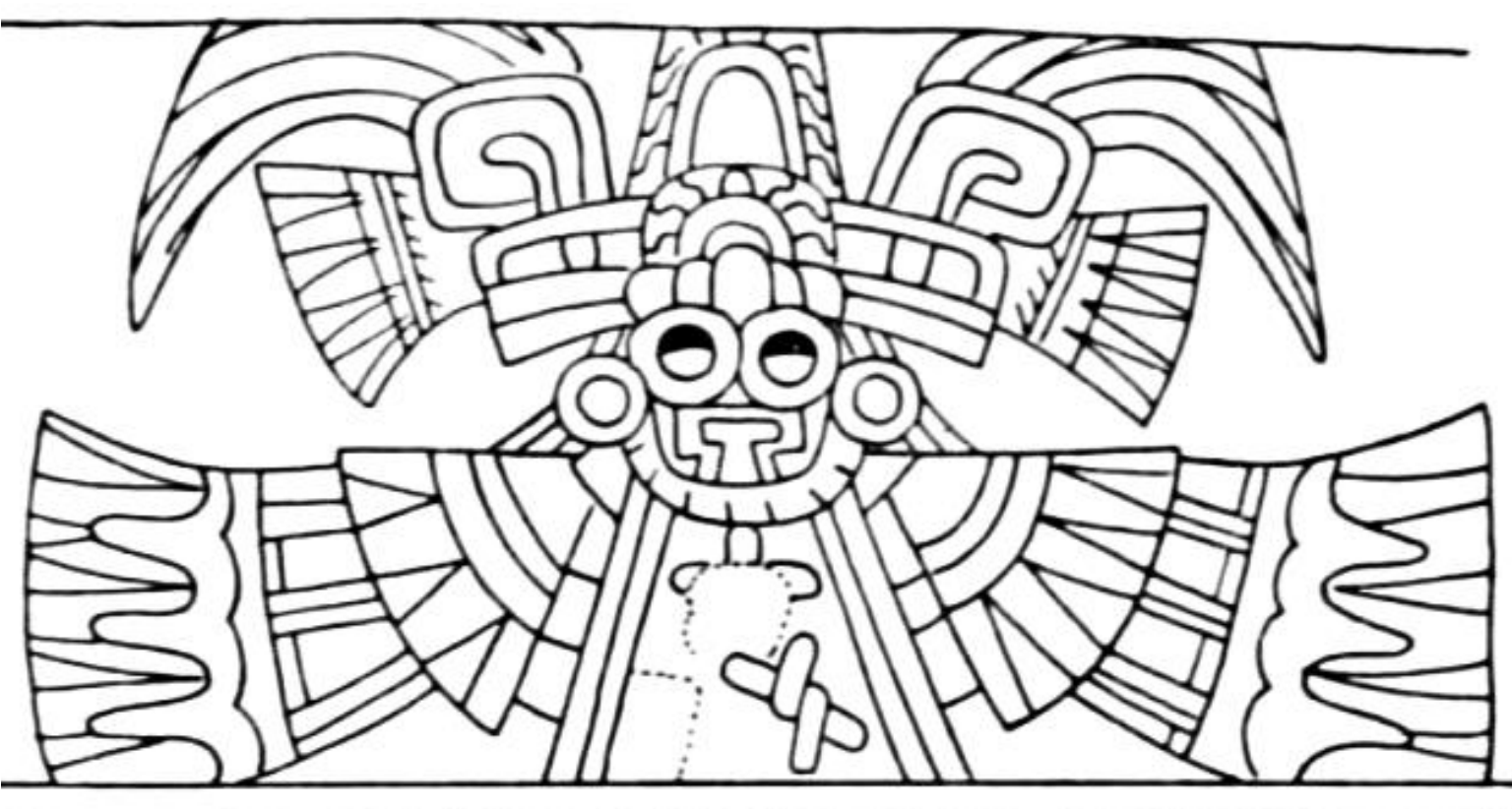


Row of disks in rectangular clothing accessory across waist area.

Stela fragment (Beliaev and De León 2013: 587). In that past decade this fragment was stored in the bodega del Museo de Cerámica Sylvanus Morley.

Also published by Karl Herbert Mayer (1991: 26, Plate 165).



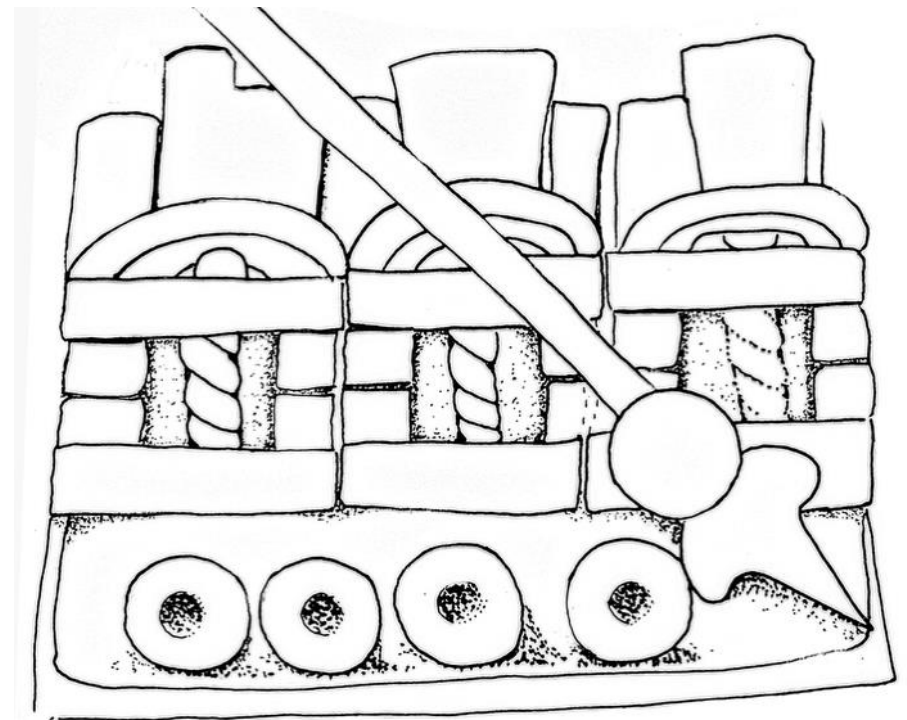


Teotihuacan butterfly Tlaloc with his expected tablero-talud nose plaque (that is common on butterfly variant of Tlaloc).

The knotted symbol on his outfit reminds me of the “woven” rope symbol on Yaxha Stela 11—but they are not identical and may not have the same meaning.

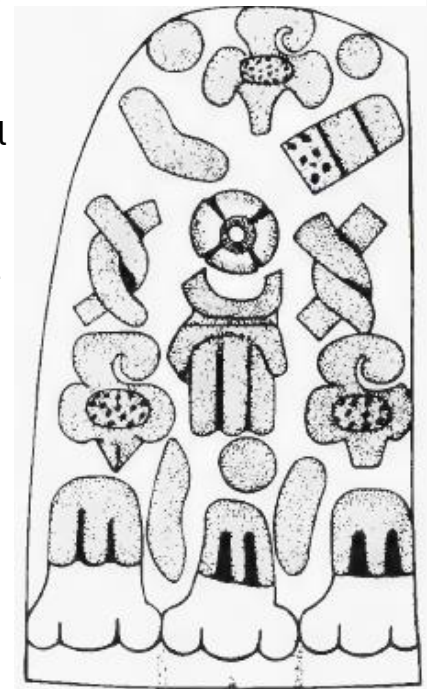
These three woven rope (or thick thread) symbols is a feature of Yaxha Stela 11 that I have not yet found elsewhere.

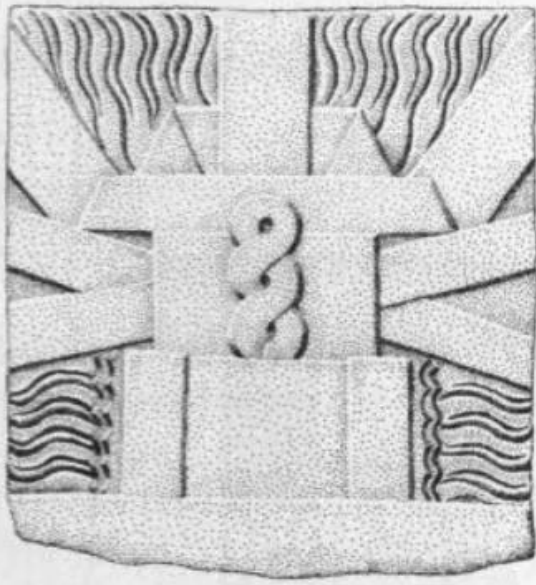
Sejourne 1976: Fig, 18, page 106.



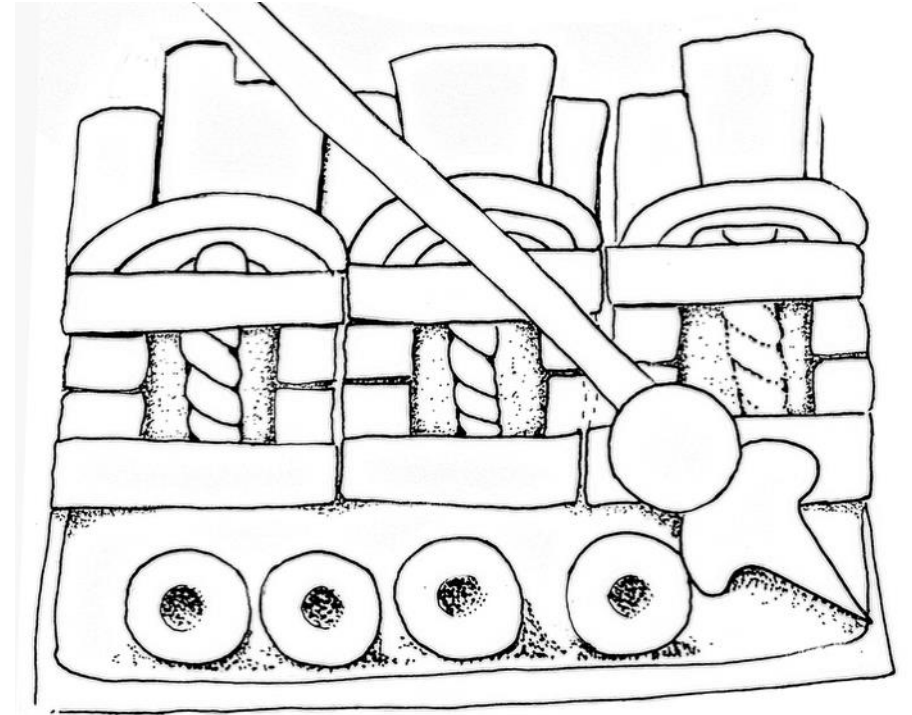
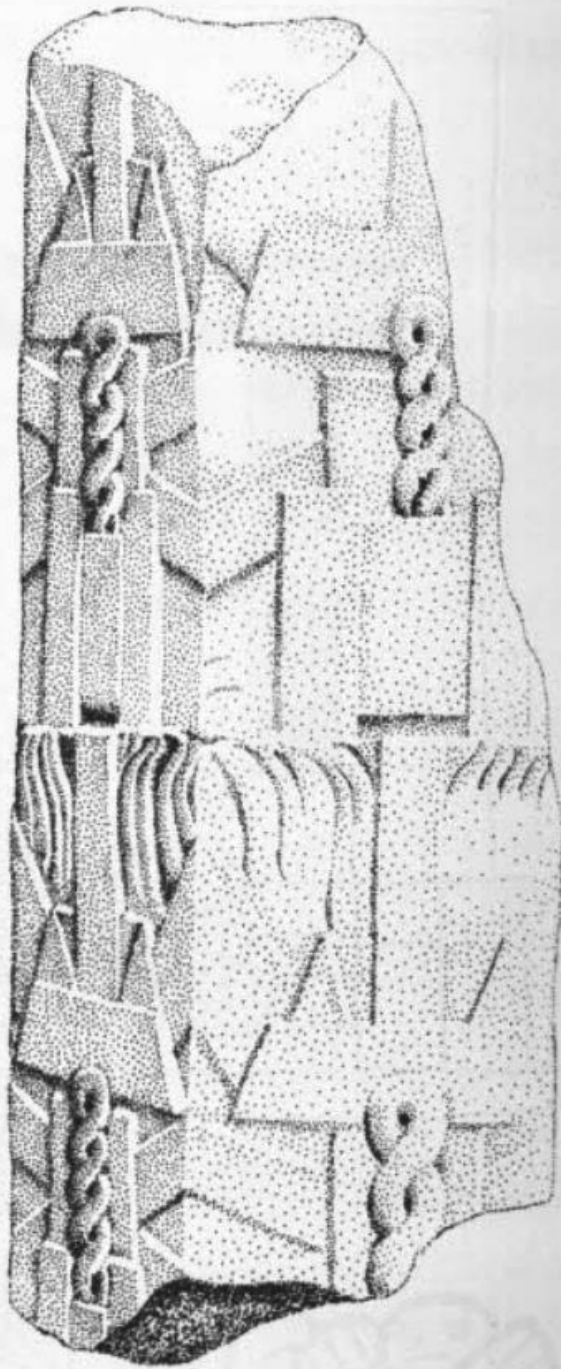
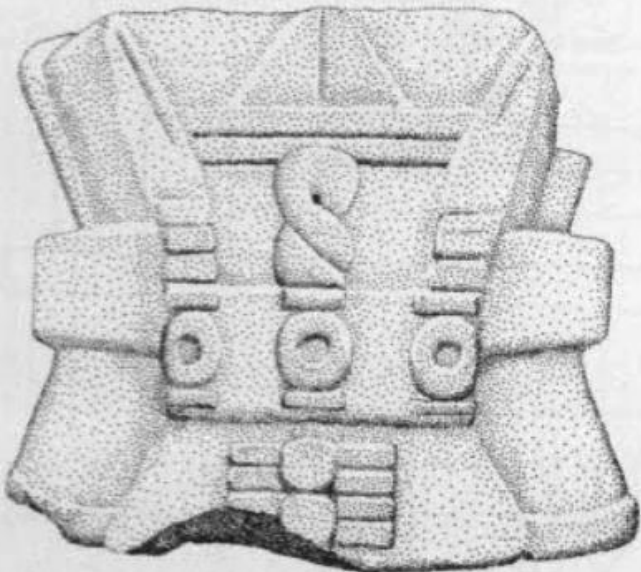
Although these two entwined rope symbols are not identical to the continuous twisted rope symbol of Yaxha Stela 11, these other examples, still should be pictured.

The same twisted “rope” is on this Tiquisate incensario. Drawing by James Langley in Langley 1993: Fig. 7 (also in Taube 2000: Fig.1,c citing Langley).

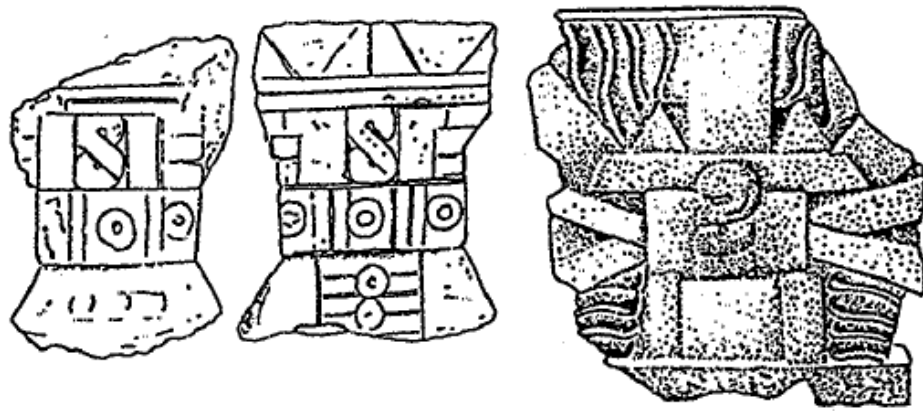




Adosada Platform, Teotihuacan.



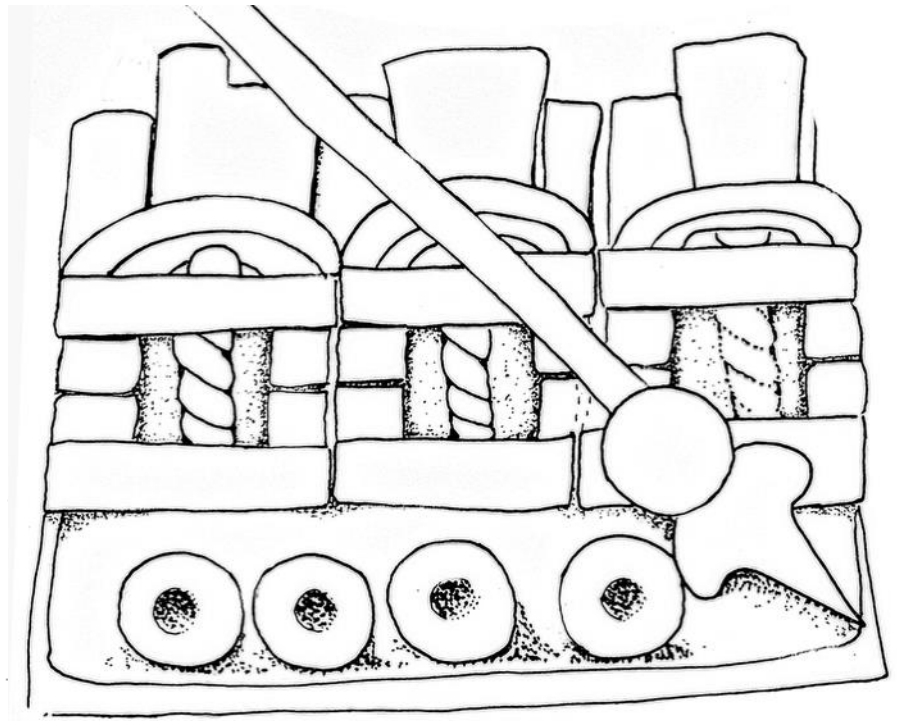
This twisted cord drawing by Alexandre Tokovinine in Fash, Tokovinine, Fash (2009: Fig 5, page 208) is the closest motif to the twisted cord on Yaxha Stela 11 that I have yet found in weeks of library research. The height of the twisted cord they show is closer to the one on the Yaxha stela than the simple twisted cord motifs that I show on the previous page. That said, the cord on the Yaxha stela is very tight—all the other cords are not as tight. More research is required but at least I found the example at the left.



Several capable scholars have found the “twisted cord” motif at Teotihuacan. Since there are no plant parts, probably not a “twisted root” (Taube 1992: Figs. 13, 14, 15).



After Von Winning in Nielsen 2003: vol. 2, Fig. B4.

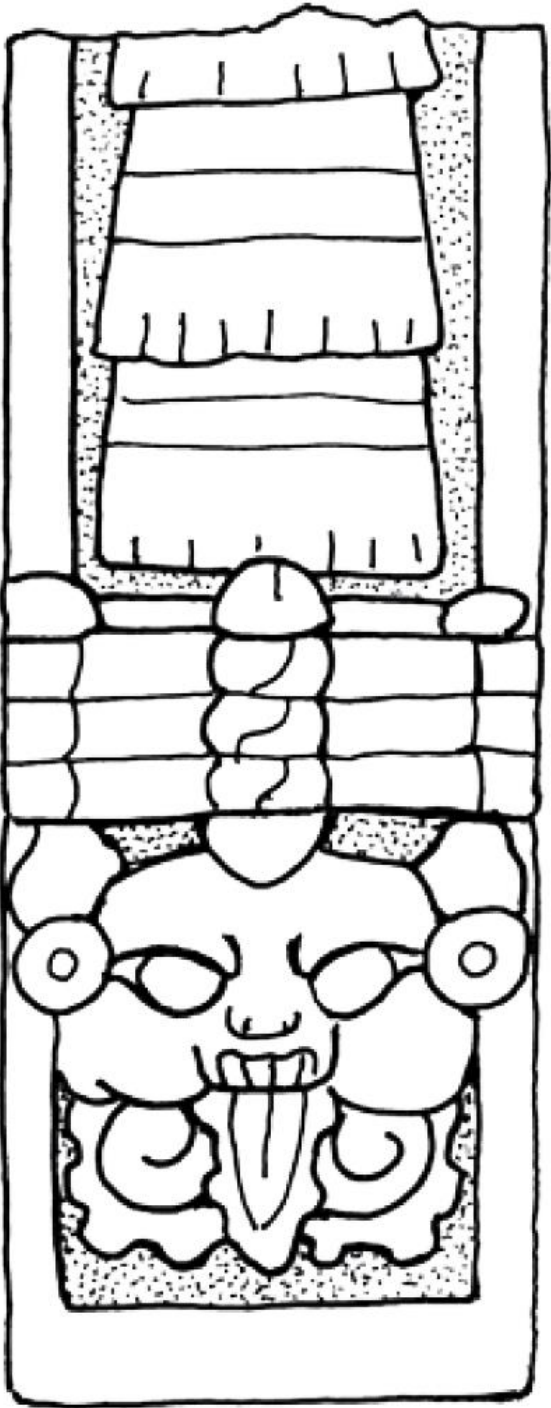


Yaxha Stela 11.

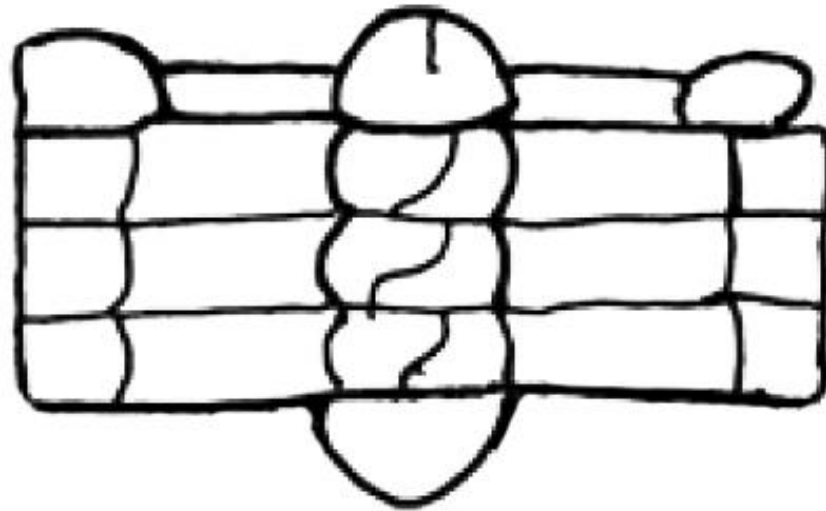
The obvious question is, did the sculptor at Yaxha adapt this twisted cord from Teotihuacan to “send a message” by framing it three times on the front of the warlord on Yaxha Stela 11.

Either way, we still need to find lots more twisted-cord designs and especially with the rounded top of Yaxha and the “enclosure” of the twisted cord within a frame, plus the shapes sticking out from behind.

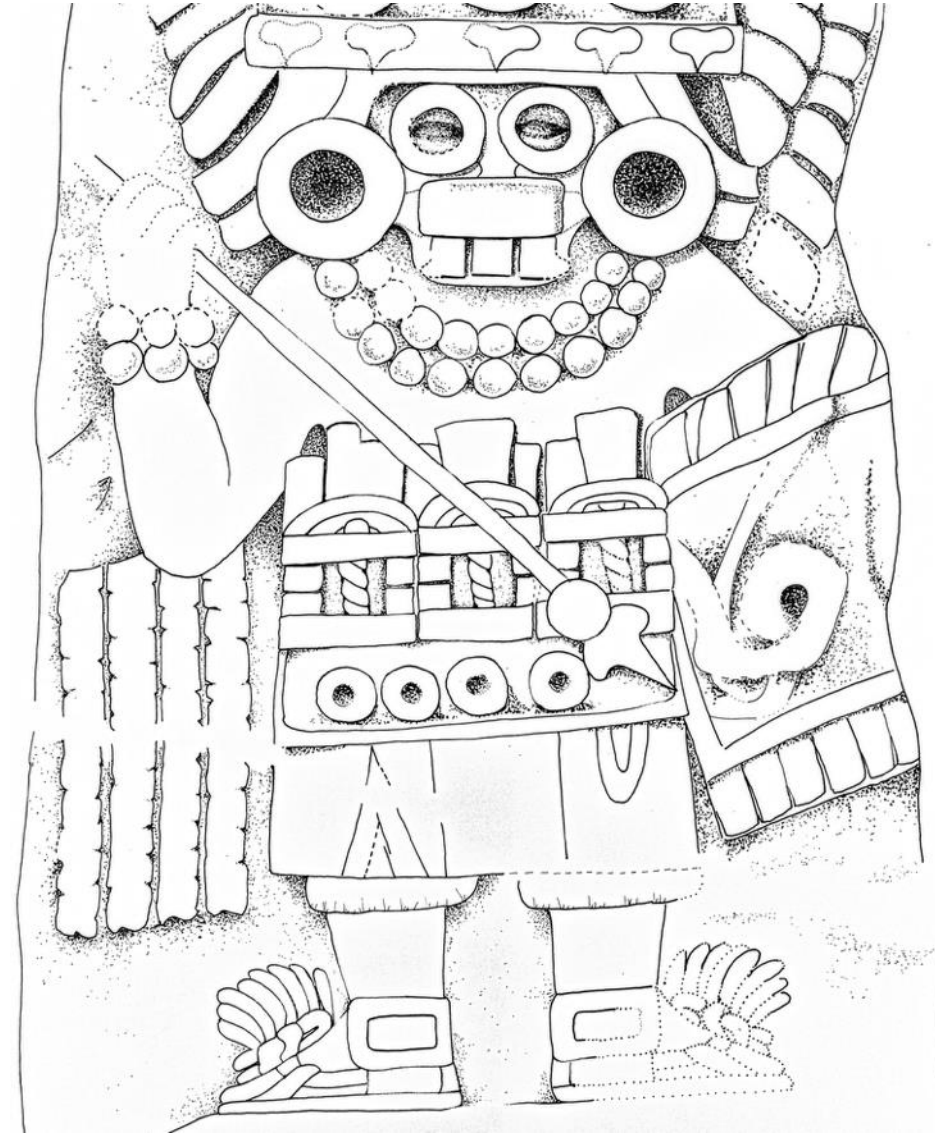
Fig.B4: Stone reliefs from Teotihuacan representing twisted cords and drill sticks (after von Winning 1979:Figs.2h-j & 4a-b).



Tied-bundle symbol, Tonina Taube in Taube and Houston 2015: Fig. 5.8c after Becquelin and Baudez 1982: Fig. 24.

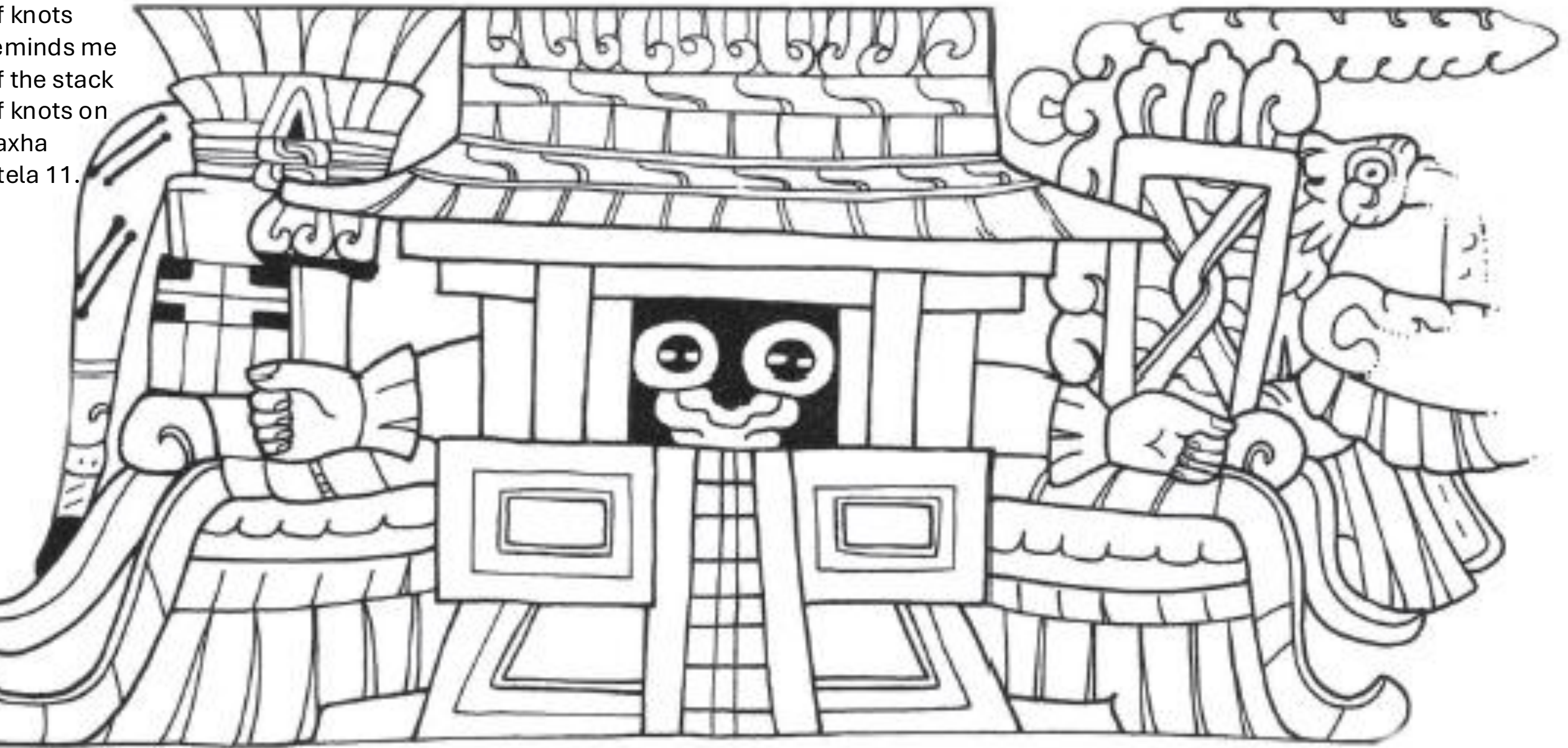


Although not necessarily the same tied symbol whatsoever, this motif from Tonina is worth showing.



Yaxha Stela 11, drawing by FLAAR (M. Delp with photos and suggestions by Hellmuth).

his "stack"
f knots
reminds me
f the stack
f knots on
axha
tela 11.



Copan, Teotihuacan style tablero-talud platform for temple (on stuccoed-and-painted cylindrical tripod). Drawing by Barbara Fash in Fash et al. 2009: Fig. 11.

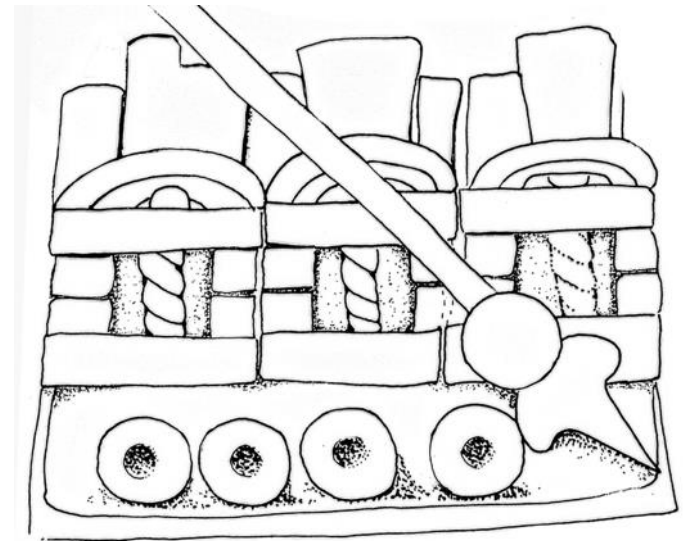
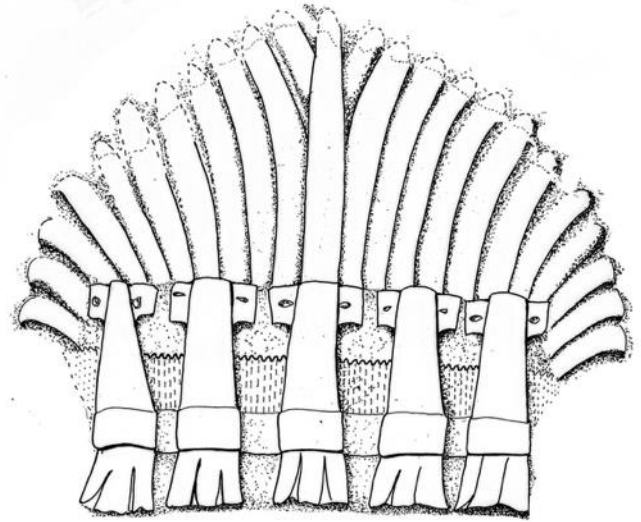


Mold-impressed panel on a Tiquisate style cylindrical tripod, drawing by Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos after Hellmuth (1975, fig. 13).

Actual roof of a temple.
Chinchilla's Figures 1 and 2 in his year 2019 iconography report inspired me to estimate that the top of the headdress of Yaxha Stela 31 Tlaloc was a visual play on the stylized front of a Teotihuacan temple (or throne room hut).

Rectangular area enclosing a row of circles, across the waist area of this Tiquisate style Tlaloc.

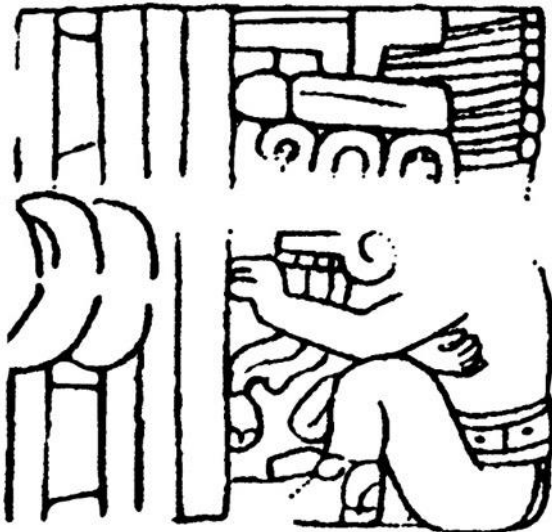
The Tlaloc on Yaxha Stela 31 also has a row of four circles (albeit not in a tablero architectural area).



Profile “half-frontal” presentation of Tlaloc. Two Yearsigns in the headdress.

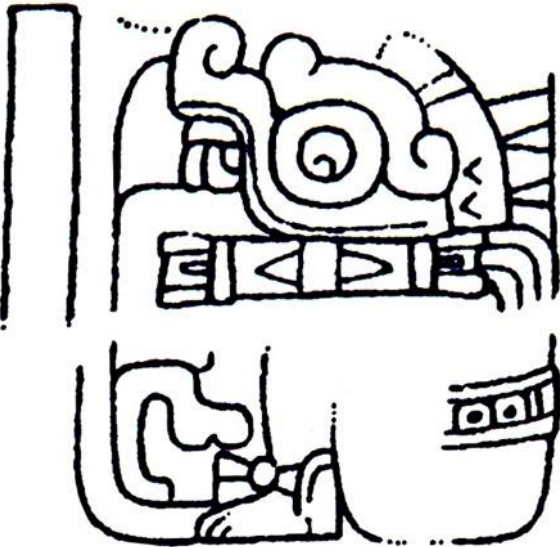
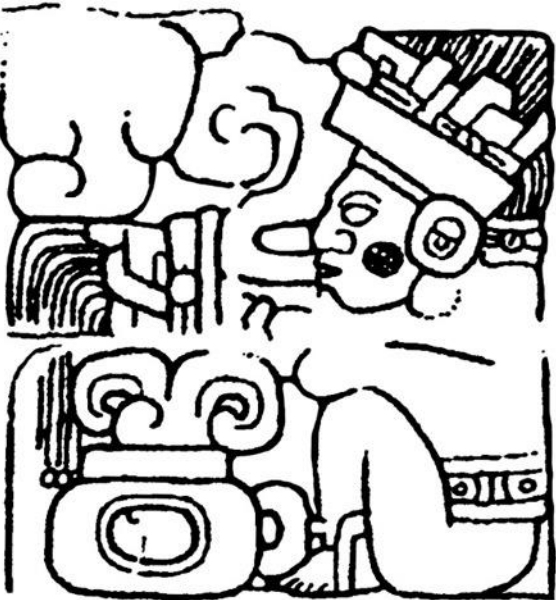


Multiple Teotihuacan-Associated (often Tlaloc-like) Personages have a row of Disks across their waist

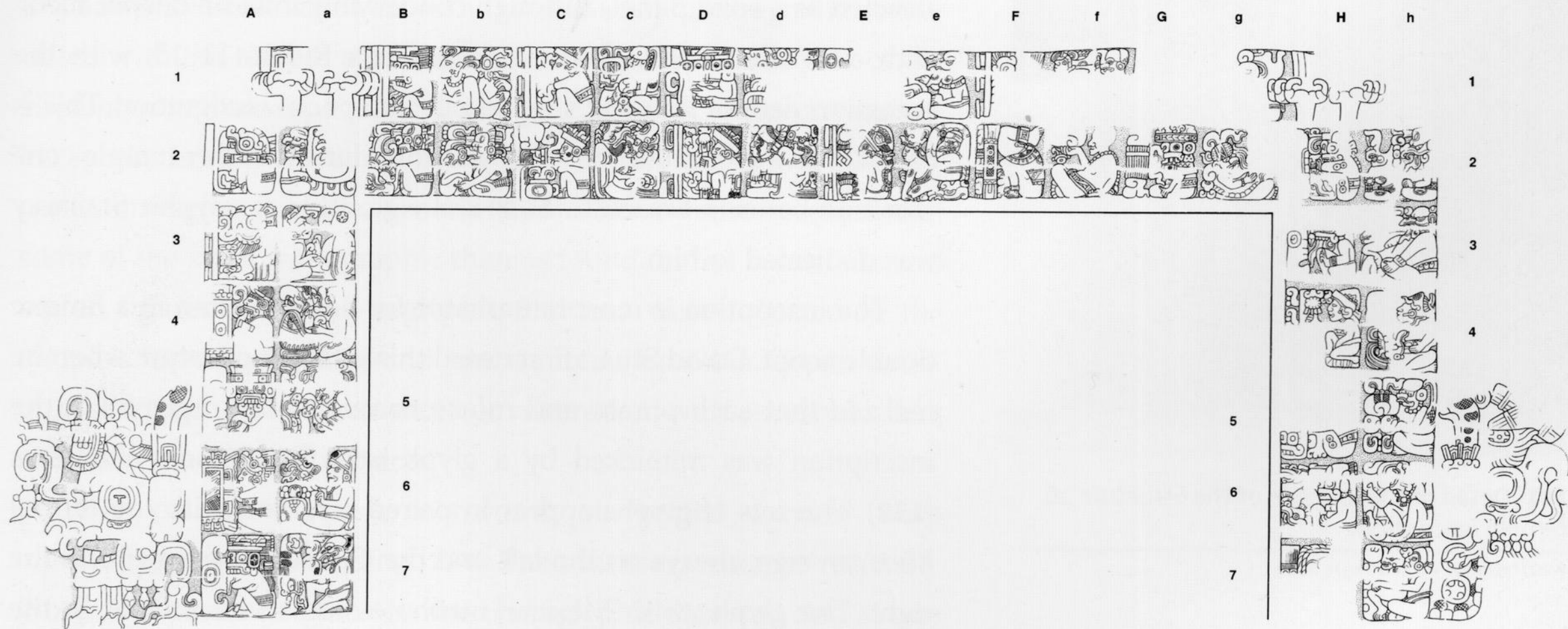


K’awil God K forehead but Tlaloc eyes, mouth and Yearsign headdress.

Copan Temple 26 façade text (Str. 10L-26). Enlarged by high-res scan of the helpful drawing by David Stuart in Barbara Fash 2011.



No traditional Tlaloc features.



129. Drawing of the Temple 26 inscriptions showing parallel “fonts,” Mayan and Teotihuacano. This inscription is one of the most beautiful carvings at Copan. Each hieroglyph is carved as a full figure, a more elegant and artful way of writing the words than the more commonly used phonetic and logographic elements. (Logographs are symbols representing entire words.) Most of the figures hold objects or crouch in profile and appear to be engaged in rituals or other interactions.

DRAWING BY DAVID STUART.

Drawing by David Stuart in B. Fash 2011: Fig. 129 is one of the most important texts associated with Teotihuacan-Maya interaction, but never has been published or available at the super-high digital resolution that is needed to allow to study each glyph. So we scanned the tiny published version with a powerful scanner—but still—would be best to have a scan from the incredible original drawing. Caption from Hellmuth 2024c: 129.



Waist band
with a row
of disks.



Waist band
with a row
of disks.

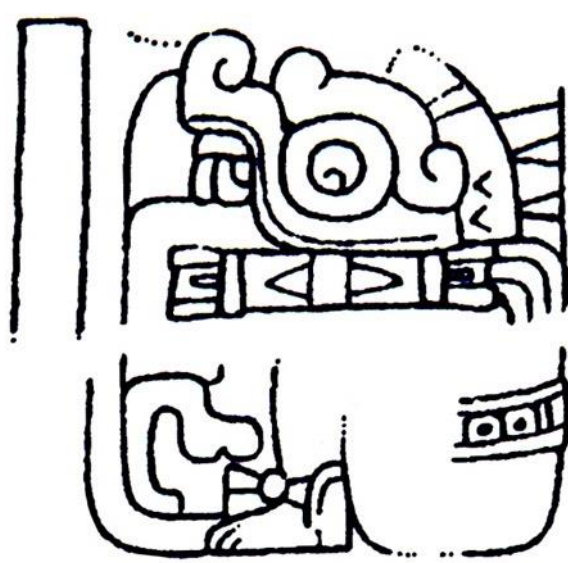


In order to be able to see the details better on each individual hieroglyph, we went to Copan with a complete portable photo studio, a team of photographers and photography assistants to accomplish photographing each individual hieroglyph at healthy digital resolution. We thank the INAH officials and the Copan Park team for facilitating and assisting this photography because this text of Copan Temple 26 is one of the most amazing “bilingual” multi-cultural international texts ever found. Plus it’s one of the longest texts outside Palenque.

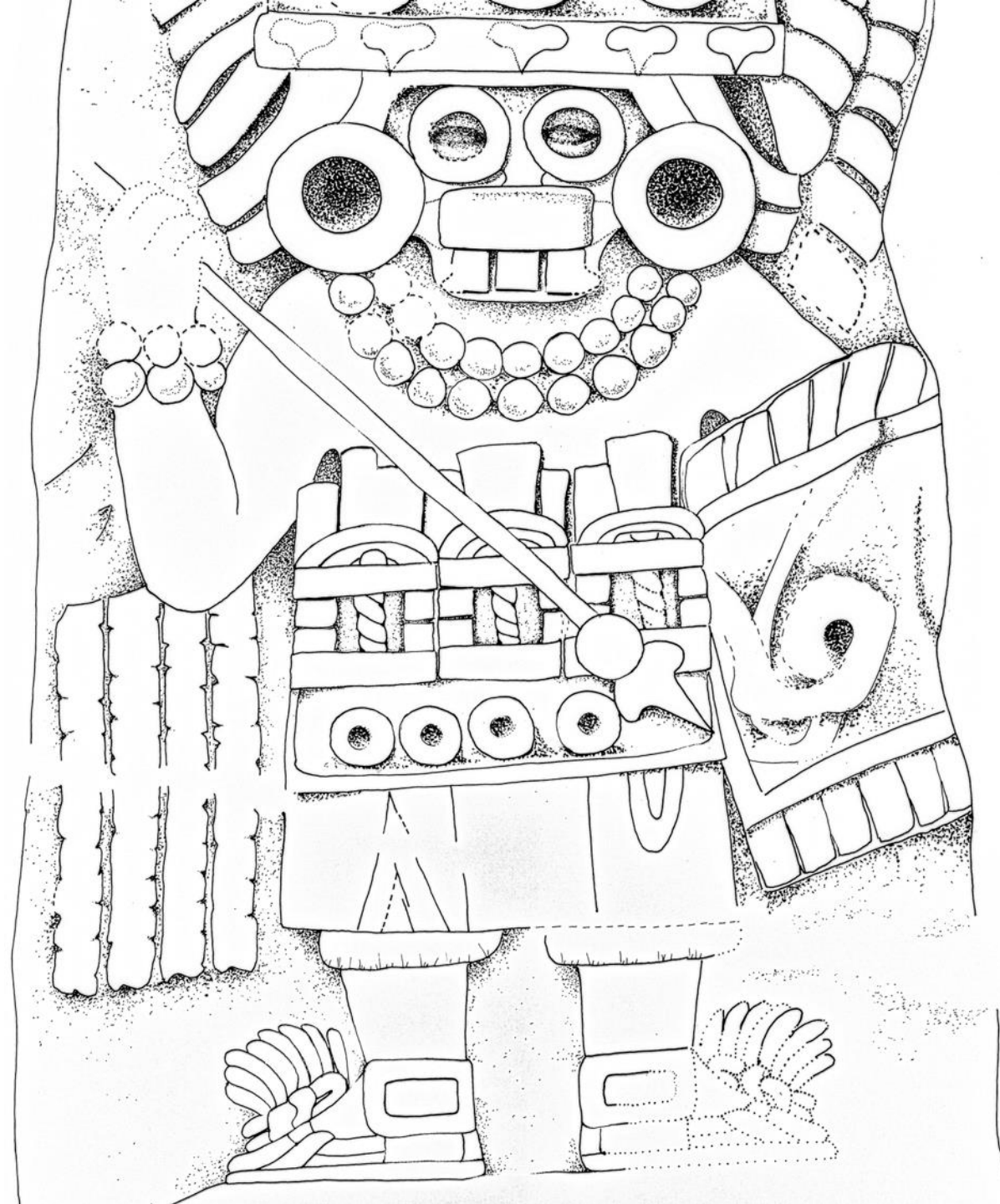


Waist band
with a row
of disks.





The row of disks on Yaxha Stela 11 is continuous—no vertical dividers. And the row of disks on Stela 11 seems to be on an accessory hung around the middle of the body (so the disks don't look like a belt band). Nonetheless, the presence of rows of disks around the waist of so many Tlalocs and Tlaloc associates at Copan definitely is a suggestion.



Cropped by Hellmuth from high-res scan of the drawing by David Stuart.



This waist band with a row of disks is totally missing in the drawing.

But the helpful drawing does show the spear point at the end of the elaborated shaft. Spears, atlatls, and rectangular shields are not common at Copan—so the “arrival” of Teotihuacan power may have offered so much commercial and family benefits that the “heavenly” benefits were enough that the rulers of Copan did not need to flaunt the military power of atlatls as was done in the Early Classic murals of Sufricaya, Peten.

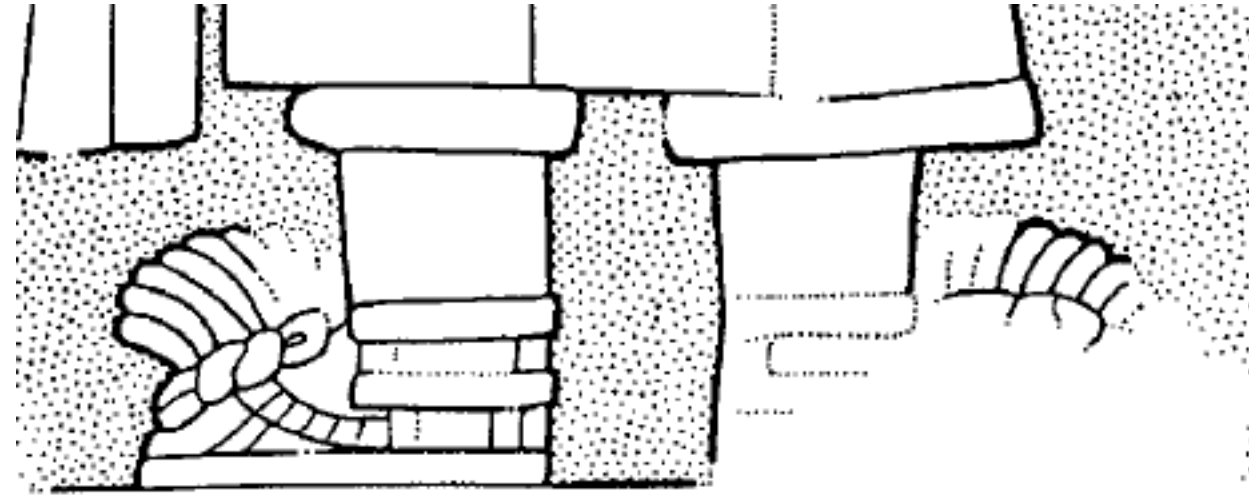
Although the impressive and super-helpful reconstruction of the façade of Temple 26 in the sculpture museum has over 90% of the hieroglyphs, several that are in the drawing were not in the museum exhibit. We photographed only the ones on display.

But what would be amazing would be for a student to accomplish a MS thesis or PhD dissertation to re-draw the entire text in digital quality—by tracing the details of each photo from a digital image. All our photos have been donated to IHAH and to Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University. This is not only a treasure of epigraphy but also of iconography. It would also help to know the precise date of this text.

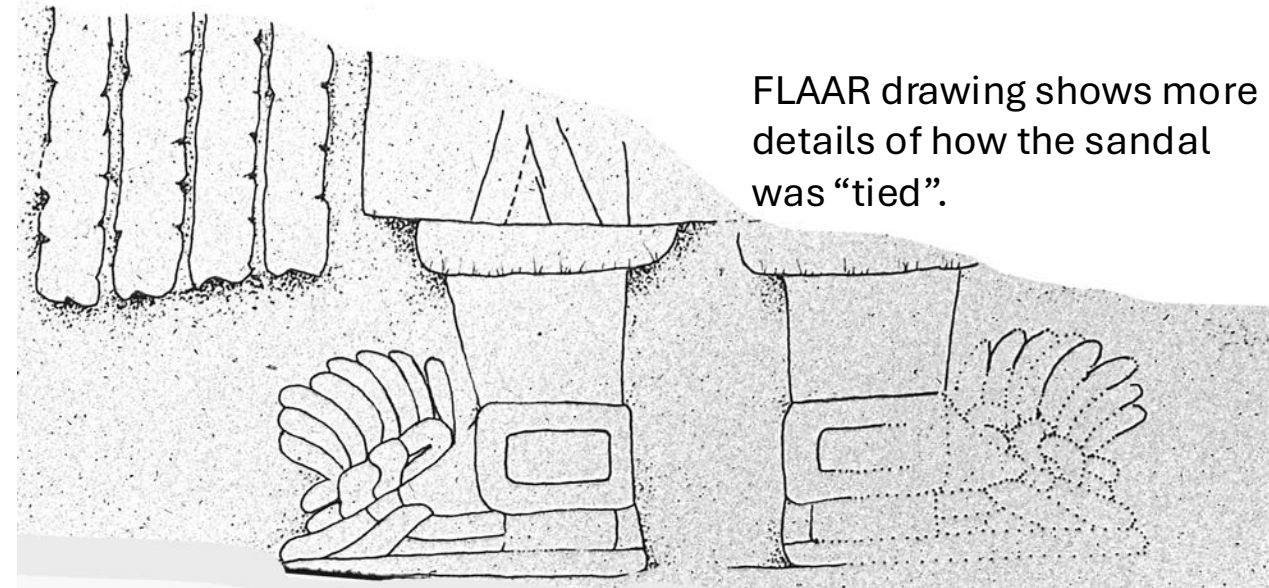
Chapter 12 Rectangular Frame on Ankle Area of Teotihuacan inspired Footwear



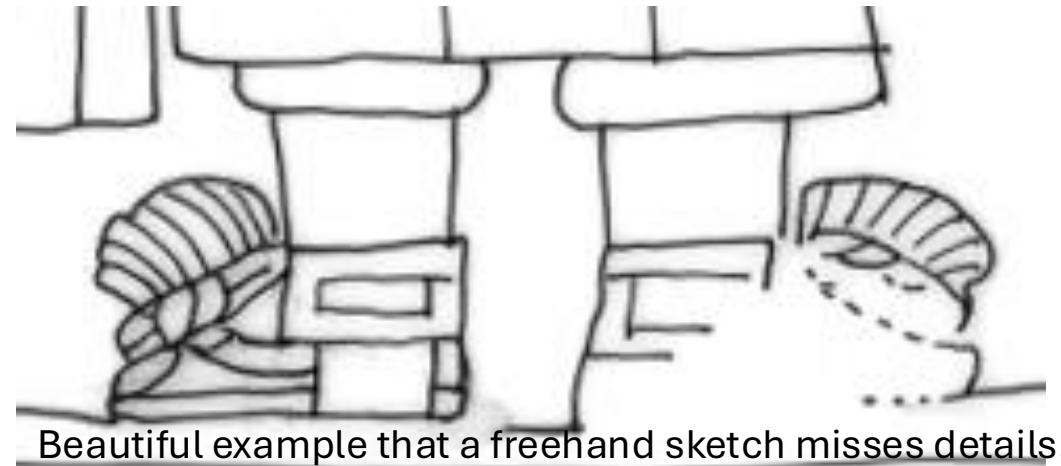
The rectangular “tablero” shape is obvious (but no surprise, on this footwear no talud). It helps to have dedicated 5 years to Yaxha.



Grube's drawing helps to suggest that the rectangle may not be continuous. But for the “soft rope” that goes across the sides, the Yaxha team shows that aspect more naturalistic.



FLAAR drawing shows more details of how the sandal was “tied”.



Beautiful example that a freehand sketch misses details.

I doubt anyone has written a thesis about "Footwear of Teotihuacan Elite and Deities". But the rectangular feature on this footwear is the same as on the Tlaloc with tasseled headdress of Yaxha Stela 11. The difference is that these Tlalocs are carrying a strap bag (more neutral term than assuming it's an incense bag)—and not a shield or spear. Plus, they are scattering (seashells) and their speech scroll is also seashells—both creating abundant "flowers". I am not yet convinced they are scattering incense though I am open to multiple interpretations.

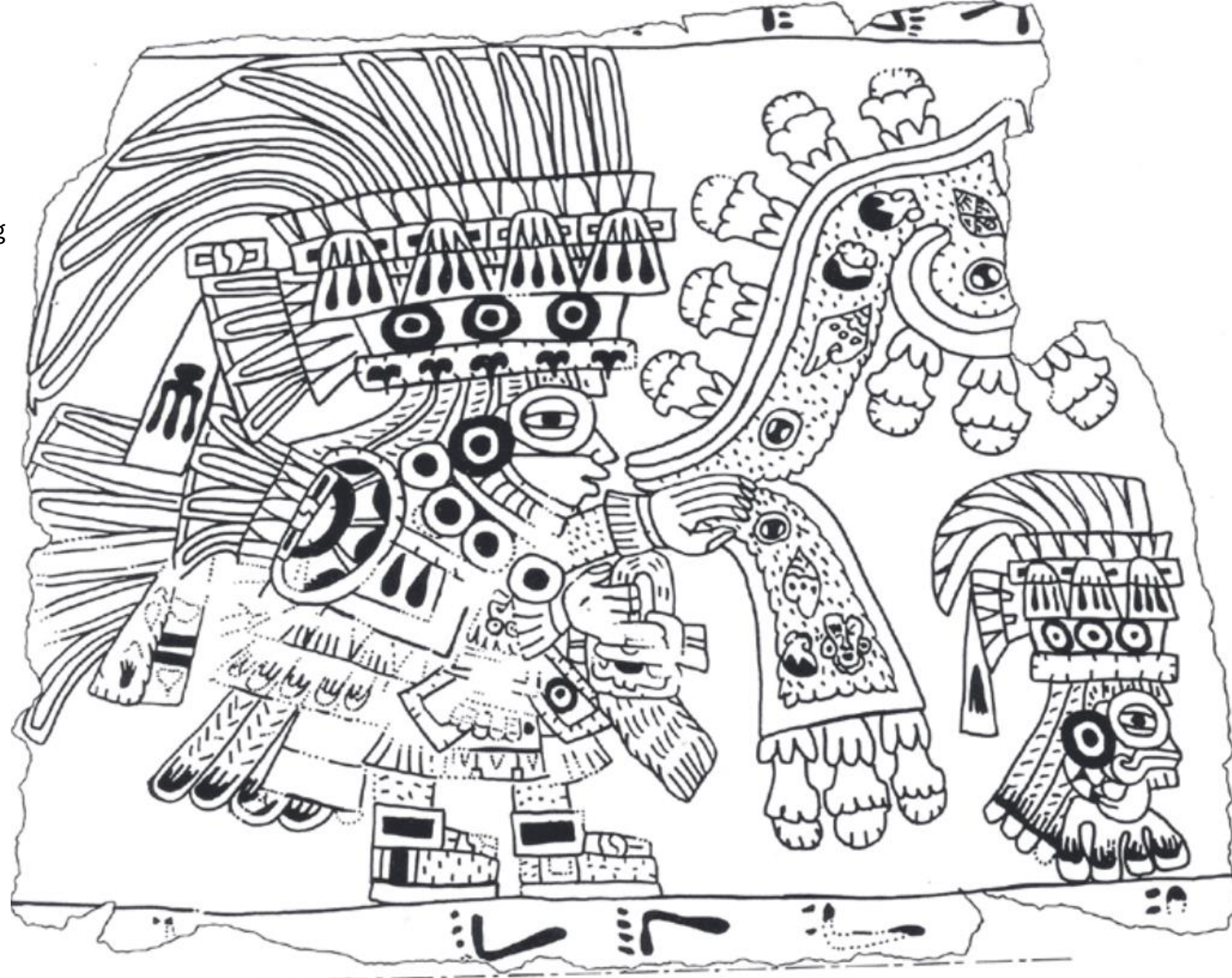
So even with a tasseled headdress and a row of stylized spear points as a headdress, this Tlaloc is clearly doing a theatrical presentation on something other than military power. So, although I have suggested two initial variants:

- Tlaloc as military power
- Tlaloc as "sowing" helpful aspects

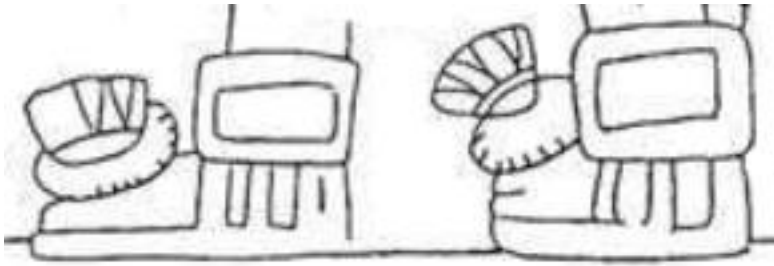
In fact, this "Tlaloc" has both aspects: military headdress, strap bag, speech scroll and sowing.

Taube shows four of these figures (2000: Fig. 7, a, b, c, d), citing Berrin 1988: Figures V, 1, 2, 3, 4).

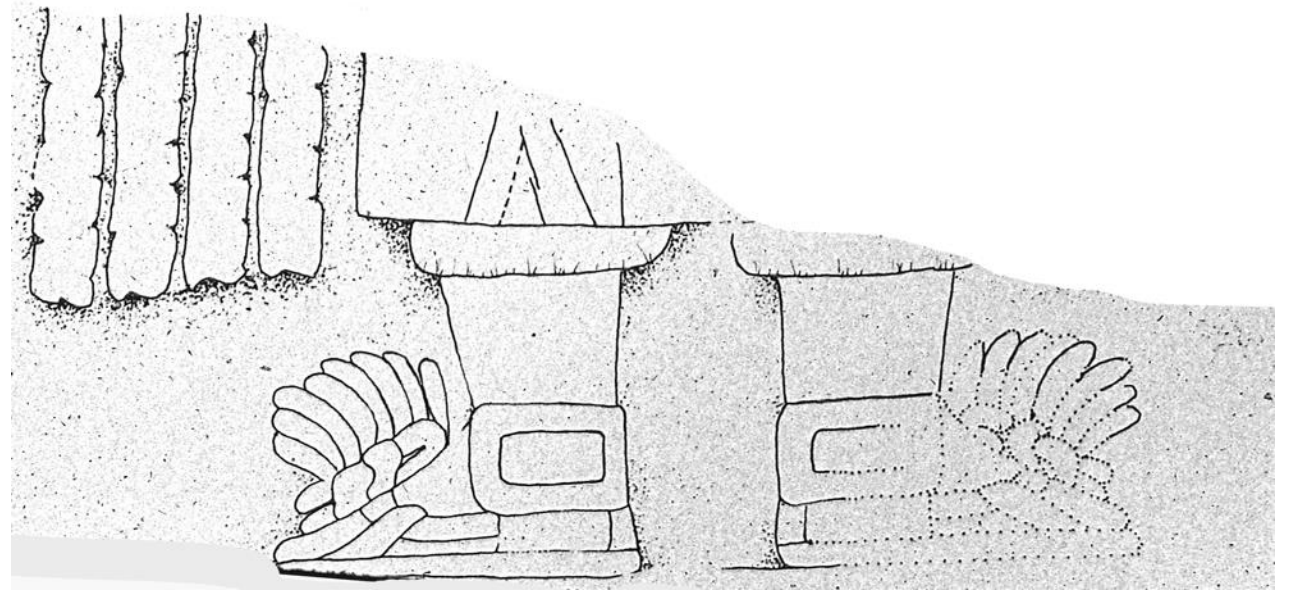
This segment is also in Paulinyi 2025: Fig. 1, a citing C. Millon 1988a: Fig. V.I.



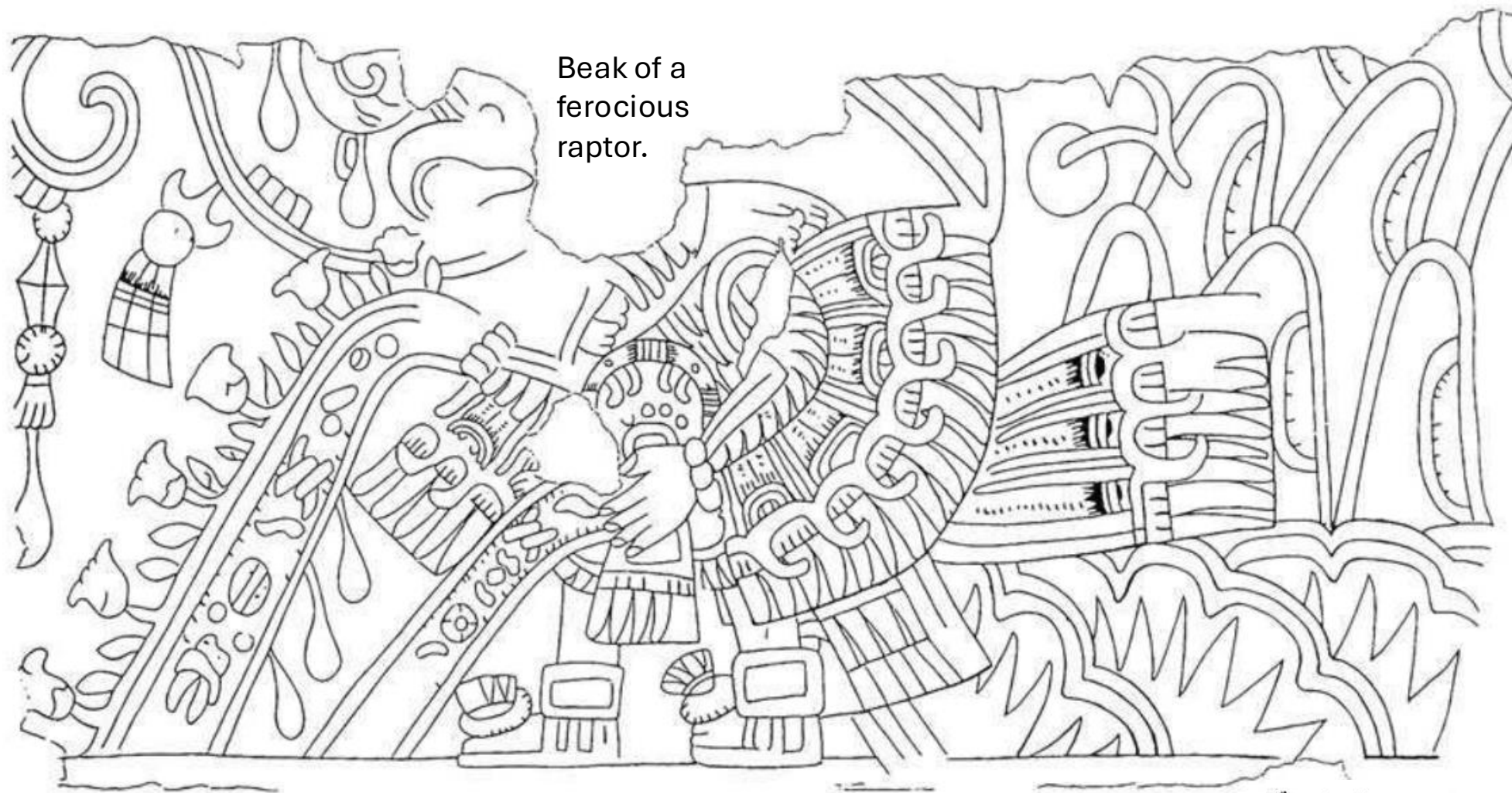
This scene is repeated many times on the murals of the Techinantitla compound of Teotihuacan, and published in dozens of articles and books on art of Teotihuacan. The footprints are expertly studied by Helmke, Nielsen and Rivera



Butterfly Bird God rectangular angle part of sandals, Atetelco, Mural 3, Teotihuacan. Drawing by Victor Alvarez in Paulinyi 2014: Fig. 2.



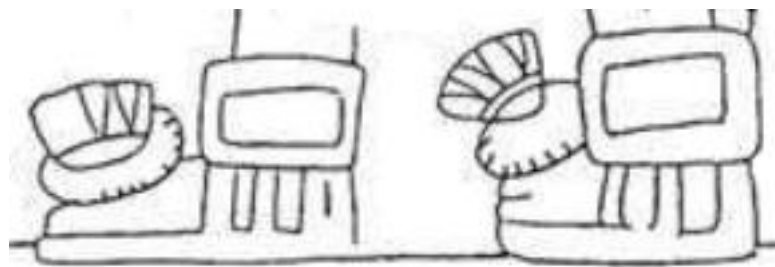
Sandals worn by Tlaloc warlord on Yaxha Stela 11, cropped by Hellmuth from FLAAR project drawing by M. Delp based on Hellmuth photos and the actual stela. The body of Tlaloc is frontal to focus on the head and headdress but the feet are profile so you can see the complete details of the sandals. In other words, these aspects were desired to be featured by the patron and sculptor.



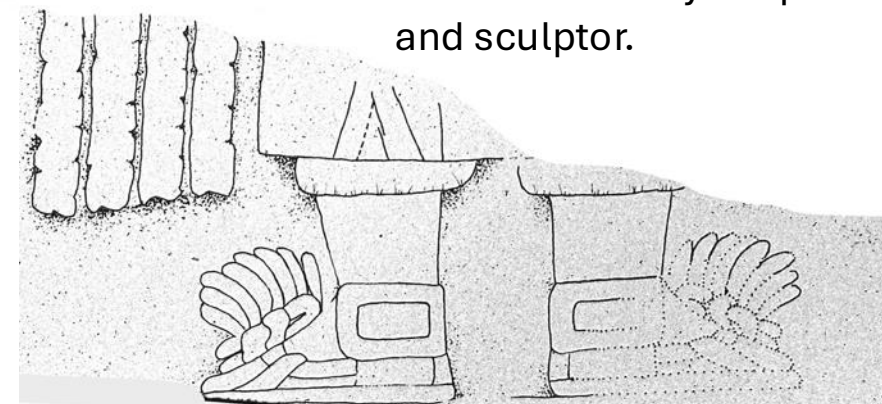
Beak of a
ferocious
raptor.

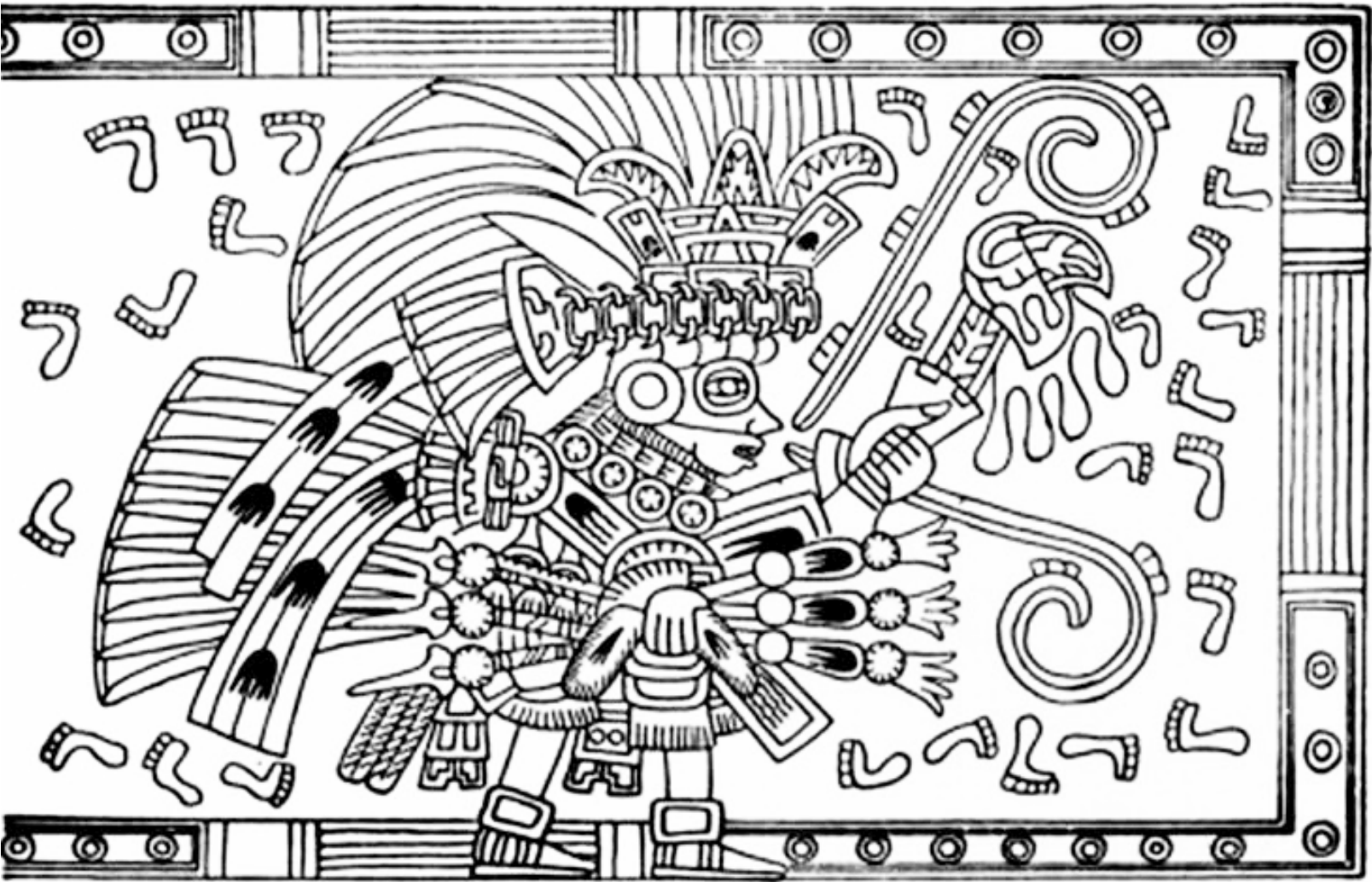
Sandals worn by Tlaloc
warlord on Yaxha Stela 11,
cropped by Hellmuth from
FLAAR project drawing
based on Hellmuth photos
and the actual stela. The
body of Tlaloc is frontal to
focus on the head and
headdress but the feet are
profile so you can see the
complete details of the
sandals. In other words,
these aspects were desired
to be featured by the patron
and sculptor.

Butterflies have no “tail” so this is a raptor (bird) tail.



Butterfly Bird God
rectangular angle part of
sandals, Mural 3
Atetelco, Teotihuacan.
Drawing by Victor Alvarez
in Paulinyi 2014: Fig. 2.

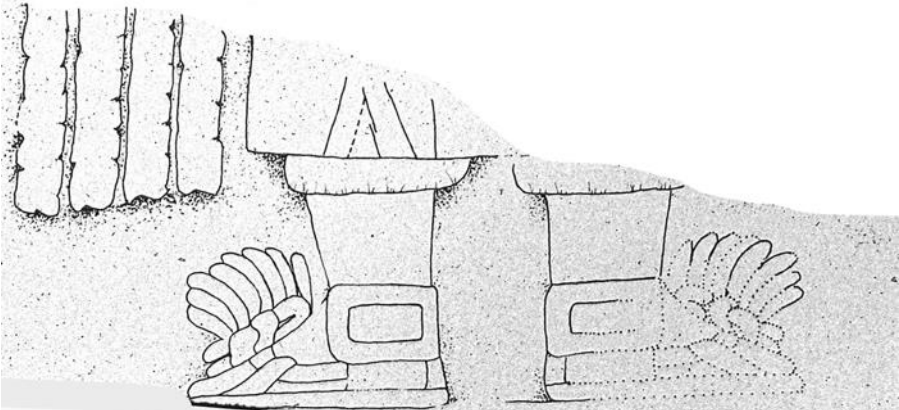


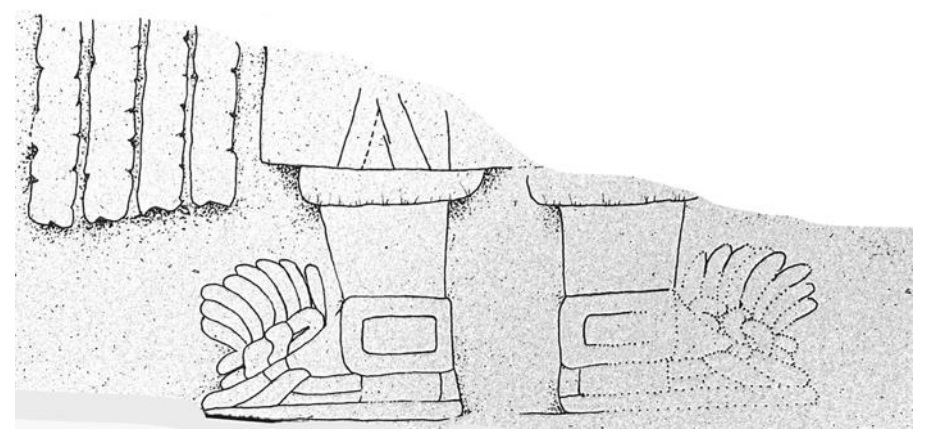


Sandals worn by Tlaloc warlord on Yaxha Stela 11, cropped by Hellmuth from FLAAR project drawing based on Hellmuth photos and the actual stela. The body of Tlaloc is frontal to focus on the head and headdress but the feet are profile so you can see the complete details of the sandals. In other words, these aspects were desired to be featured by the patron and sculptor.

Plus, this Teotihuacan-affiliated warlord wanted to show that he was stationary at Yaxha—he was not walking away (so his feet are shown standing still).

Frequently published Teotihuacan mural.





The Yaxha sandals are “tied on” differently than all the sandals in Teotihuacan murals—so definitely would help for a student to do a thesis on sandals of Teotihuacan.



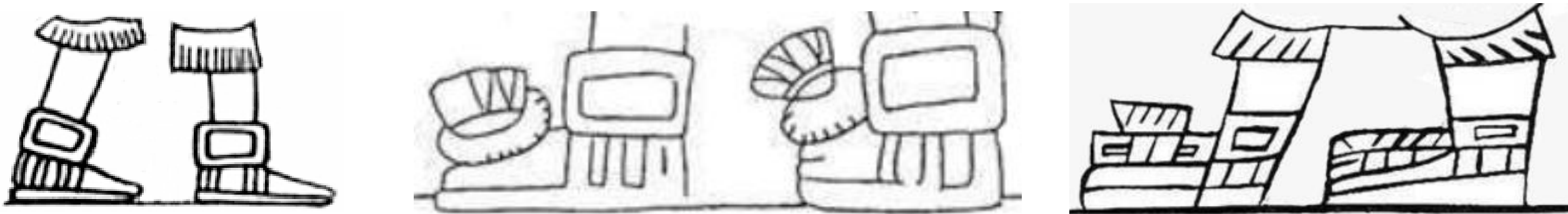
Sandals with rectangular (tablero) shape on ankle (Paulini 2014: Fig. 3,a citing Sejourne 1966a: Fig. 38).

This is the complete segment of the Sela 11 that Hellmuth and team discovered by careful excavation in order to have a complete portrait. In the previous century, no other archaeologist even tried to find this segment with the legs and sandals.

FLAAR was initiated in 1969 to find this fragment. And to see what aspects of the architectural layout of Yaxha was potentially inspired by Teotihuacan (such as streets and avenues).

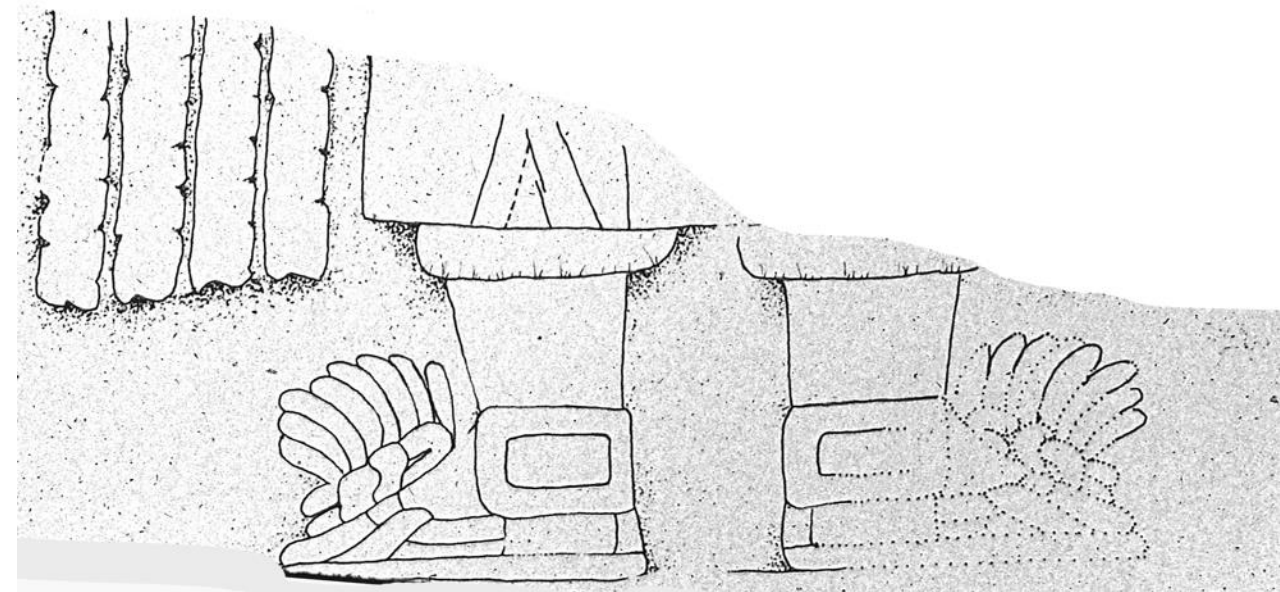
We found one tablero-talud platform in the middle of the West Group. Plus we found two areas of Yaxha with “streets and avenues”.





Examples of sandals with rectangular feature across the ankle, in murals and on ceramics at the imperial capital of Teotihuacan.

So far, I am not aware of any thesis on “sandals and footwear of Teotihuacan nobles, deities, soldiers, and other individuals.”



Yaxha Stela 11.

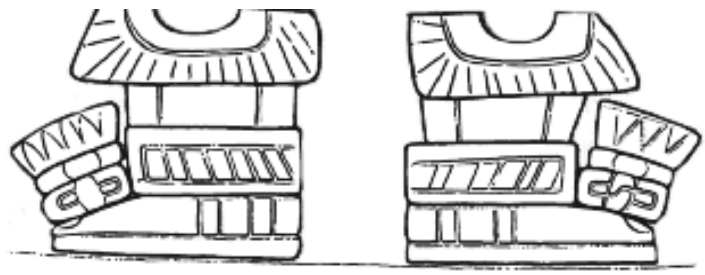
No Early Classic Tlaloc at Tikal have their feet included because Stela 32 Tlaloc is the bust only and Stela 31 Tlaloc is just the main head and headdress scrunched into the rectangular space of a shield. Same with the Tlaloc on Tikal Stela 18—only a fraction of the head remains.

The feet of all three personages on Tikal Stela 31 have either eroded or were knocked off when the stela was dug up by the Maya and then moved to be a cache-like offering inside a pyramid on the North Acropolis.

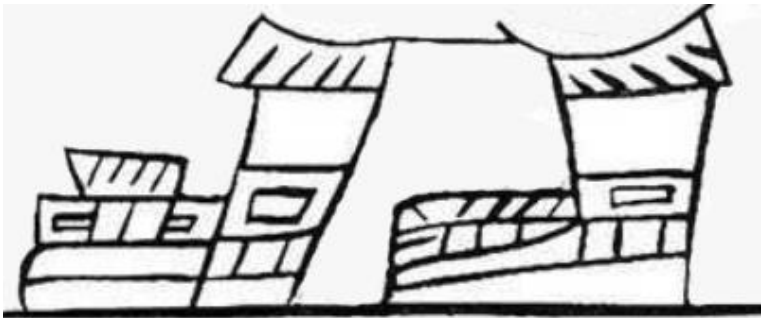
Yaxha Stela 11 is one of the few Early Classic Tlaloc portraits that was still visible for many centuries after it was first sculpted in the 4th or 5th century.



Sejourne 1976: Fig. 53.

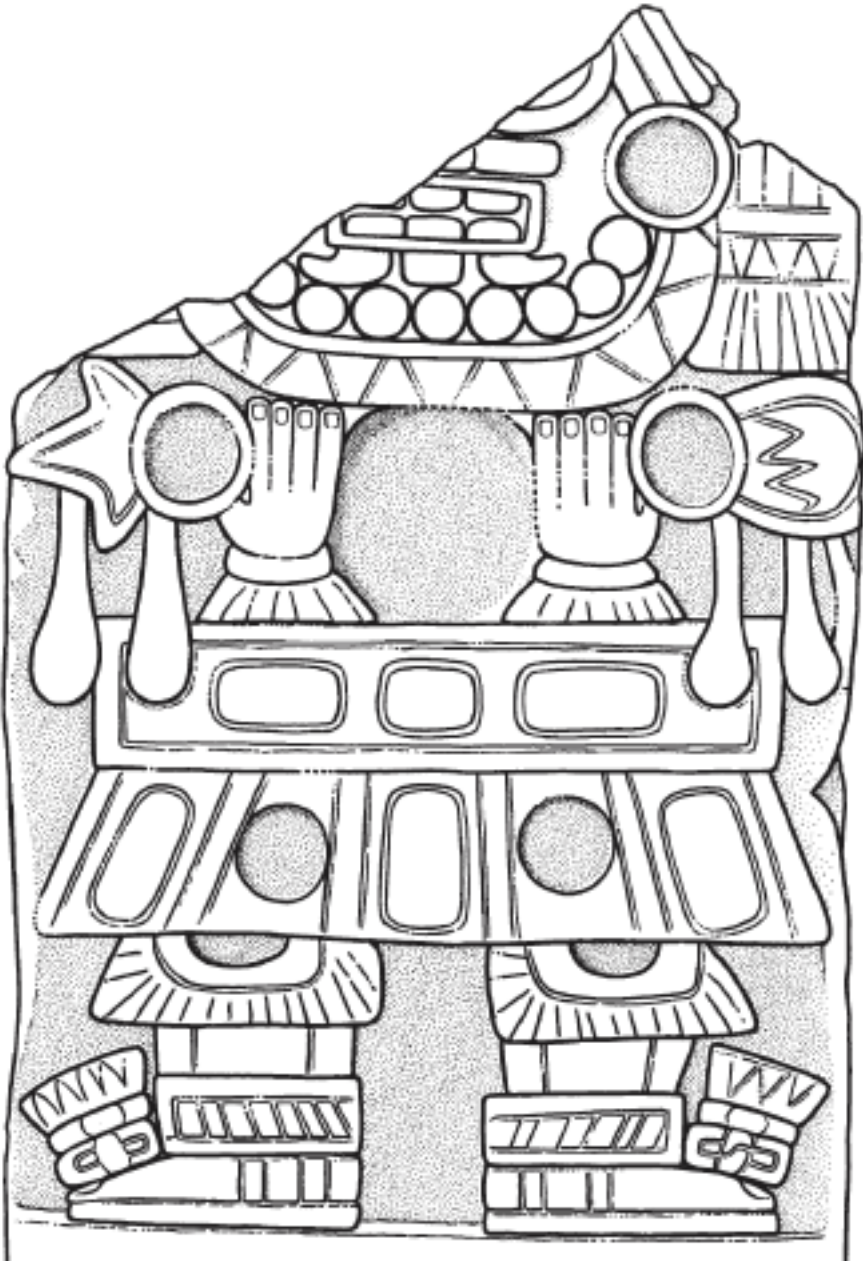


Tepecoacuilco Stela 1, drawing by Nicolas Latsanopoulos (Nielsen, Jimenez and Rivera 2019: Fig. 6.3_.

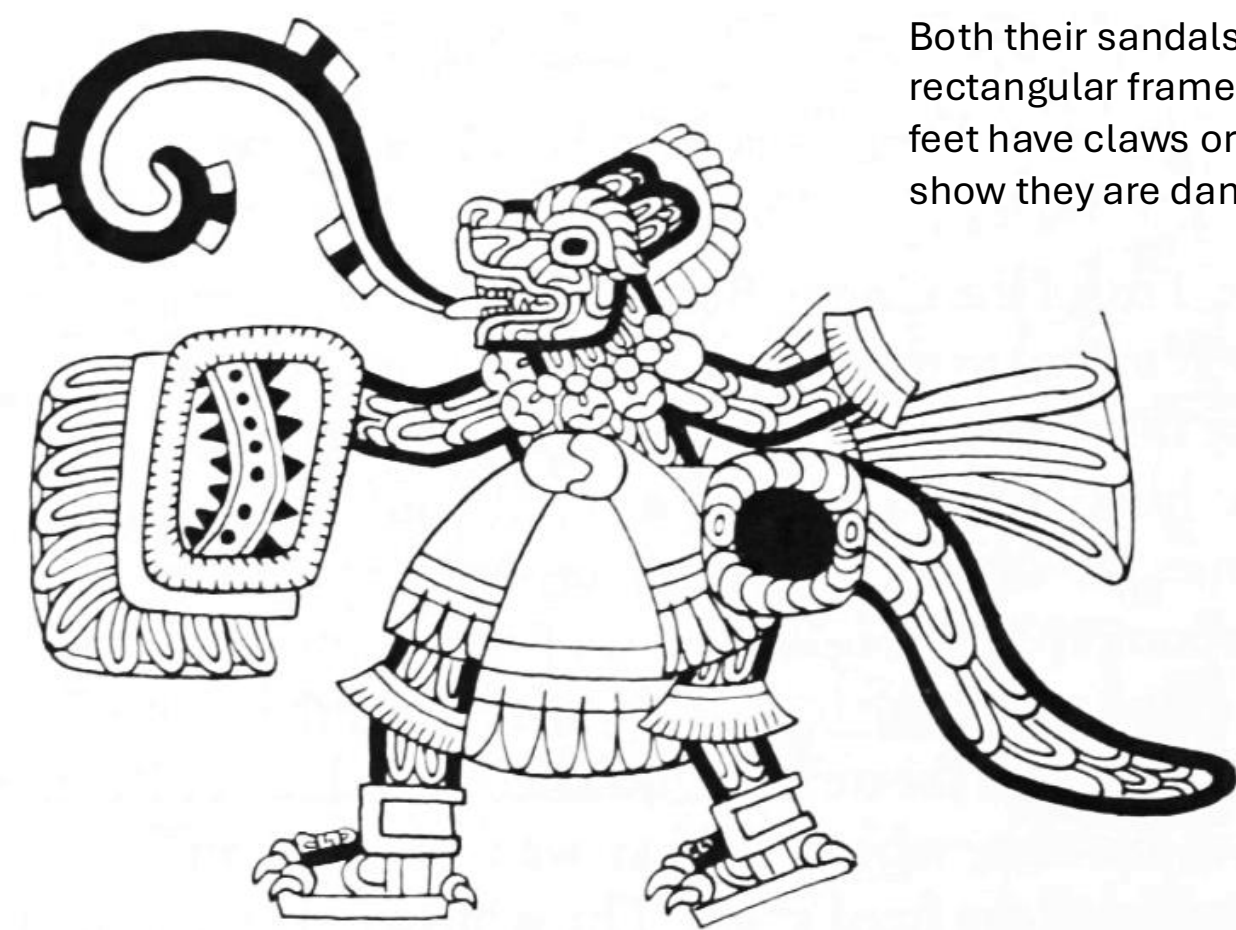


Paulini Fig 3a citing Sejourne 1966a: Fig 38.

Tepecoacuilco Stela 1, drawing by Nicolas Latsanopoulos in Nielsen, Jimenez and Rivera 2019: Fig. 6.3.



Both their sandals feature a rectangular frame. Both their feet have claws or talons—to show they are dangerous.



Teotihuacan mural, Sejourne 1976: Fig. 31, page 118.



Teotihuacan mural, Sejourne 1976: Fig. 30, page 117.



Suggested Additional Research

There were clearly several “trade routes” used by the Teotihuacans. In the 1960’s-1980’s everyone claimed the route was “Teotihuacan to Kaminaljuyu to Peten” but epigraphers have helped document that the route used for the “entrada” was via western Peten: El Peru-Waka’ then to Tikal, Uaxactun (90% of these studies ignore Yaxha Stela 11, probably because it has no hieroglyphic texts—so no person’s name or location from where he came, or date(s)). Nonetheless, a good general discussion of Teotihuacan influence across Peten is by Styuflyae and Stadnik (2024).

There was clearly a Teotihuacan international trade (and military) route through the Costa Sur of Retalhuleu and Escuintla, then north probably through Lake Amatitlán to Kaminaljuyu. Would help greatly to learn where the Teotihuacan military and mercantile route left evidence from Kaminaljuyu to Peten (or whether it stopped in the Highlands—and the military take over of Peten came through Tabasco to El Peru-Waka’ etc.). In other words, was Kaminaljuyu the end-station from the Costa Sur through Lake Amatitlan? It has always been assumed that the trade route through the Costa Sur (well documented by Olmec mask in the Nottebohm collection and elsewhere) was to reach northwest Costa Rica to obtain blue jade—but now archaeologists have found blue jade in Guatemala so that is no longer acceptable as a reason for any trade route to go from Teotihuacan to the Costa Sur down to Costa Rica—need to find what else encouraged this route—quetzal feathers (more common in Costa Rica than Highlands of Guatemala?).

The role of the Zapotecs and their neighbors of Oaxaca is crucial to learn whether this was probably a main point of Teotihuacan military and commercial movement from the imperial capital down to the Costa Sur of Guatemala. The recent discovery of Teotihuacan-inspired scenes of Tumba 10 of Huitzo is one of dozens of areas with Oaxaca-Teotihuacan mixture of style and content.

Another question: why are there hundreds of impressive Teotihuacan-influenced hourglass-based incensario lids and over a thousand cylindrical tripods from the Costa Sur but nothing of this level in the cacao area of nearby Soconusco? Every time I visited Izapa ruins I saw cacao plantations throughout this area. There are no more such cacao areas in the Costa Sur since it was cotton plantations and/or cattle ranches in the 1960’s-1970’s then most of the remaining Pre-Columbian ruins were bulldozed for sugar cane plantations. Today most of the *Theobroma cacao* is in the hilly area of the Boca Costa where you can’t plow flat areas for cotton and then sugar cane.

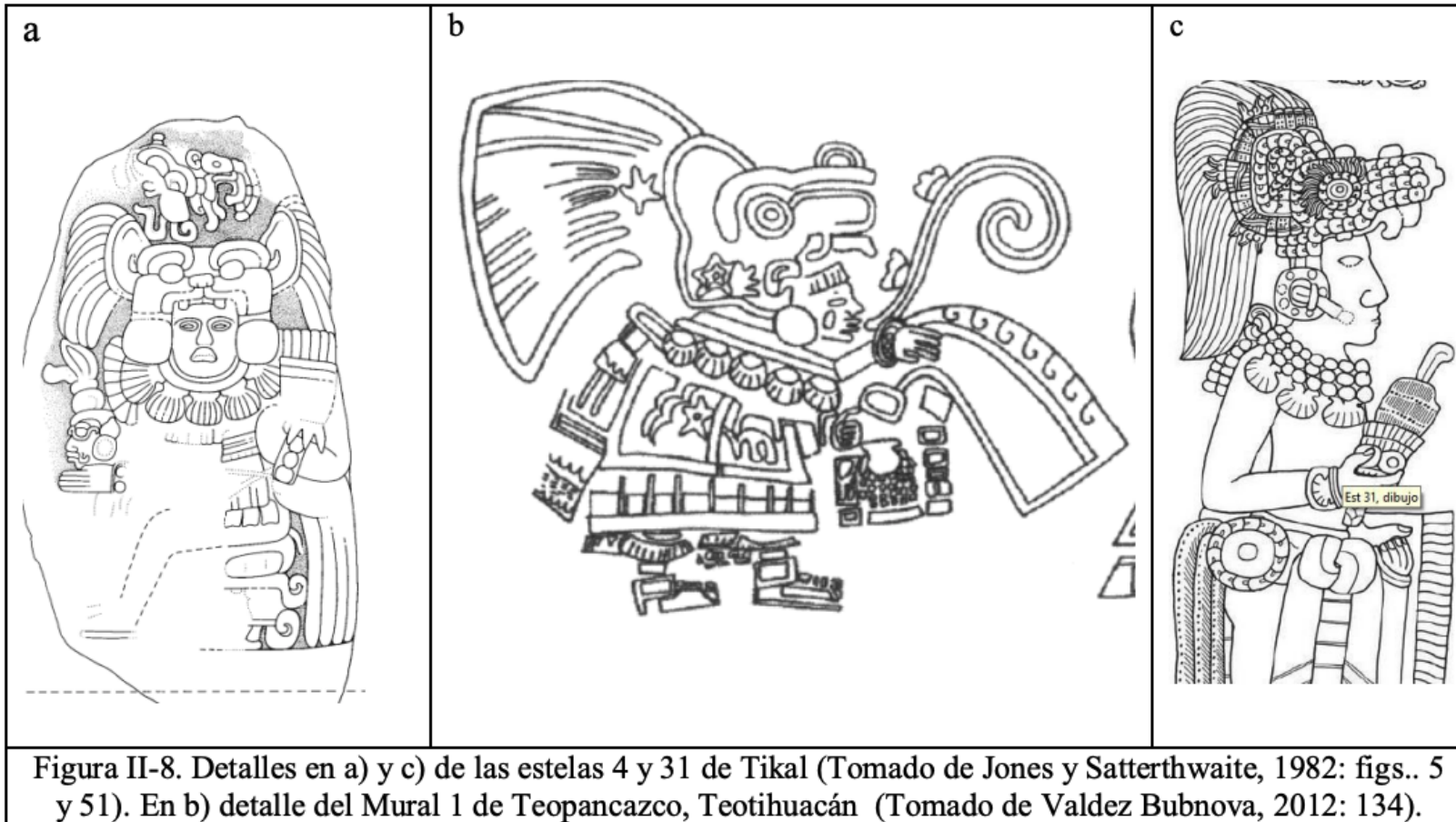
The most helpful future research would be to find the royal tomb of this Tlaloc Warlord under the Acropolis that Yaxha Stela 11 faces

**Was the Tlaloc Warlord of Yaxha Stela 11
moved to face the royal burial area where a Teotihuacan Vassel was buried?**

Tikal Stela 31 was enshrined inside a pyramid potentially dedicated to Sihyaj Chan K'awiil II (O'Neil 2009: 125). This raises the question of whether Yaxha Stela 11 was reset up the stairway facing straight into the acropolis fill because this warlord is buried there?

Probably almost a thousand Classic Maya stelae are known, plus stelae from many other cultures across the Bilbao area and across Mexico. Would be an interesting thesis topic to document how many were reset inside a pyramid (assumed to be an offering), how many were dumped inside a pyramid "to get rid of them"

Another Aspect of Maya Adaptation of Teotihuacan Features is a necklace of Seashells



Guerrero presents an astute documentation of a necklace of seashells as being another attribute that the Early Classic Maya borrowed. I show the helpful illustration in her 2015 PhD dissertation on stelae of Tikal. But since there are no seashells on the necklace of Yaxha Stela 11, this trait deserves a separate research project—to find more examples at Teotihuacan and across the Maya areas (and in between, at Monte Alban, Costa Sur, etc.).

General Carlos Manuel Arana Osorio, Presidente de Guatemala, visited Yaxha circa 1971-1972 with archaeologist David Sedat (with his girlfriend); and owner of a popular newspaper in Guatemala, plus two other prominent businessmen.

A few months later the president telephoned me to ask if I could be his guide at Tikal. So during these two visits, I had the opportunity to ask the President to initiate making a national park to protect Yaxha, the islands, and Nakum from looters. The last day of the project we found a sign left by Fydep saying Parque Nacional Laguna Yaxha Laguna Sacnab. I had never been to Naranjo but it was added later by other conservationists.



References Cited on Tlaloc and on Yaxha, plus additional Suggested Reading

AQUINO, Daniel E. and Adriana L. SEGURA

- 2008 Los monumentos del sitio arqueológico Yaxha, Petén: La problemática de su conservación. The monuments of the Yaxha archaeological site, Peten: The problem of their preservation. *Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala*. XXI, 2007: 1122–1143. J. P. Laporte; B. Arroyo and H. Mejía (editors). Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología. Guatemala City.

AQUINO, Daniel E.; MATUTE Rodríguez, Mónica Varinia; FLORES González, Giovanni; Salazar Flores, Walda Renée and Adriana Lucia SEGURA Rodas

- 2008 Crecimiento y Distribución de Organismos Vegetales Menores en La Arquitectura Prehispánica y su Relación con el Deterioro del Patrimonio Cultural Edificado: Propuesta Técnica para su Control Sitio Arqueológico Yaxha. USAC, Dirección General de Investigación IIHAA – Escuela de Historia, Programa Universitario de Investigación de Cultura, Pensamiento e Identidad de la Sociedad Guatemalteca. 101 pages in the PDF online https://digi.usac.edu.gt/bvirtual/informes/cultura/INF_2008_049.pdf

BARRIOS, Edy and Claudia QUINTANILLA

- 2008 Tres Islas: Un pequeño centro de comercio de las Tierras Bajas en el río Pasión, Sayaxche, Petén. In *XXI Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala, 2007* (editado por J. P. Laporte, B. Arroyo y H. Mejía), pages 214-238. Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala (versión digital).

https://www.mesoweb.com/Simposio/pdf/21/Barrios_y_Quintanilla.2008.pdf

BARRIOS Villar, Edy Alejandro

- 2006 Tres Islas: Un Puesto de Control Comercial en el Río La Pasión. Thesis, USAC. 115 pages in downloadable PDF.

BELIAEV, Dmitri and Mónica DE LEÓN

- 2013 Informe Final No. 1 Temporada abril-mayo 2013. Proyecto Atlas Epigráfico de Petén, Fase I. Centro de Estudios Mayas. Yuri Knorosov. 614 pp PDF.

https://www.wayeb.org/download/resources/informe_peten_2013.pdf

BERLO, Janet

1980 Teotihuacan Art Abroad: A Study of Metropolitan Style and Provincial Transformation in Incensario Workshops. PhD dissertation , 2 volumes, University Microfilms. Has another date, 1981.

We have not yet found this book available as a free download. Hellmuth provided about 73 photos for her dissertation, so their origin should be mentioned when citing the helpful Berlo dissertation.

BERLO, Janet

1984 Teotihuacan Art Abroad: A Study of Metropolitan Style and Provincial Transformation in Incensario Workshops. BAR, British Archaeological Reports. 255 pages.

We have not yet found this book available as a free download.

BERRIN, Kathleen (editor)

1989 Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees: Reconstructing the Murals of Teotihuacan. The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. 238 pages.

We have not yet found this book available as a download. Also listed as 1988 published by University of Washington Press.

BIRO, Peter

2011 Teotihuacan and the Secondary Elite: the Western Maya Region during the 5th 6th Centuries AD. Chapter III, pages 74-102 in: *The Classic Maya Western Region: A History*. BAR Publishing. Available as a download on Academia.edu.

BIRO, Peter

2017 A New Teotitla Lord of the South: K’ahk’ Uti’ Chan Yopat (578-628 C.E.) and the Renaissance of Copan. *Glyph Dwellers, Report 57*, Sept. 2017.

Since no journal has space to show drawings at adequate size, Stela 11 is shown at barely 3 centimeters height (barely more than one inch high). Since Tikal Stela 32 is just the head, it gets shown at larger size. Both are in Fig. 5. Available as a download

BECQUELIN, Pierre and Claude F. BAUDEZ

1982 Tonina, une cité maya du Chiapas (Mexique), t. 2. Mission Archéologique et Ethnologique Française au Mexique, Etudes Mésoaméricaines 6(2). Centred’Études Mexicaines et Centraméricaines, Mexico.

BLOM, Frans

1929 Preliminary report on the John Geddings Gray Memorial Expedition. Dept. of Middle American Research, Tulane University.

So far, I have not found this book on line as a PDF. I would greatly appreciate if a colleague could send me a PDF.

BULLARD, William R., Jr.

1960 Maya settlement pattern in northeastern Peten, Guatemala. *American Antiquity*, vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 355-372.

BULLARD, William R., Jr.

1961 Archaeological investigation of the Maya ruin of Topoxté, Peten, Guatemala. *American Philosophical Society, Year Book 1960*, pp. 551–554.

BULLARD, William R., Jr.

1970 Topoxte, a Postclassic Maya Site in Petén, Guatemala. in *Monographs and Papers in Maya Archaeology*, William R. Bullard, editor, pp. 247-307.
Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology 61. Harvard University.

BULLARD, William R., Jr.

n.d. Two-page letter and one page map of Yaxha to Hellmuth. Bullard was probably one of the readers of my 1967 Harvard undergraduate BA honor’s thesis, so I contact with him still into the 1970’s.

CASO, Alfonso and Ignacio BERNAL

1952 Urnas de Oaxaca. INAH. 389 pages.

So far I have not found any download, but you can nonetheless, read it on line for free. Snag is that quality of t he printed photos is weak.

CHINCHILLA Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2008 Los estilos artísticos del periodo Clásico en la costa sur de Guatemala: ¿Reflejos de identidad étnica? In *El Territorio Maya: Memoria de la Quinta Mesa Redonda de Palenque* (edited by Rodrigo Liendo Stuardo), pp. 455-474. Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, México,

CHINCHILLA Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2016 Human Sacrifice and Divine Nourishment In Mesoamerica: The Iconography of Cacao on the Pacific Coast of Guatemala. *Ancient Mesoamerica*, Volume 27, Issue 2, Fall 2016, pp. 361 375. The Spanish version has no date: La Cosecha Gloriosa: El Cacao y el Sacrificio Humano en la Costa Sur de Guatemala.

CHINCHILLA Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2019a Los Incensarios Templo en estilo Teotihuacano de Escuintla y lo que revelan sobre la arquitectura de la Ciudad de los Dioses. In XXXII Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala, 2018 (edited by B. Arroyo, L. Méndez Salinas and G. Ajú Álvarez), pp. 791-803. Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala.

<https://www.mesoweb.com/Simposio/pdf/32/Chinchilla.2019.pdf>

CHINCHILLA Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2019b Temples to the Great Bird, Architecture, mythology, and ritual in Teotihuacan-style censers from Escuintla, Guatemala. *RES* 71/72, pp. 78-96.

Available as an easy download.

CHINCHILLA Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2021 The Southern Cities: Urban Archaeology in Pacific Guatemala and Eastern Soconusco, Mexico. *Journal of Archaeological Research* (2021) 29: 47–91.

Not available except at excessive price by the publisher (not the fault of the author).

CIOFALO, Andrew J.

2012 Maya Use and Prevalence of the Atlatl: Projectile Point Classification Function Analysis from Chichén Itzá, Tikal, and Caracol. MA thesis, University of Central Florida. 99 pages in the downloadable PDF. Helpful information but shows only atlatl images from the Maya—none of the DOZENS from Teotihuacan.

CONIDES, Cynthia and Warren BARBOUR

2002 Tocados dentro del paisaje arquitectónico y social en Teotihuacan. In *Ideología y política a través de materiales, imágenes y símbolos: Memoria de la Primera Mesa Redonda de Teotihuacán*, edited by María Elena Ruiz Gallut. Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes–INAH.

CONIDES, Cynthia

2018 Made to Order: Painted Ceramics of Ancient Teotihuacan. University of Oklahoma Press.

Not available on line as a download.

DORSINFANG-Smets, Annie

1964 L’Amerique Precolombienne. Bloud et Gay. 155 pages.

DORSINFANG-Smets, Annie; HUBOT, P. and A.M. D’ANS

1973 L’Amérique précolombienne- Les civilisations du maïs. Meddens, 220 pages

DORSINFANG-Smets, Annie

1976 Art de Mesoamerique. Société Générale de Banque, Bruxelles. I have also seen this listed with the date 1977.

FASH, William L.; TOKOVININE, Alexandre and Barbara W. FASH

2009 The House of New Fire at Teotihuacan and Its Legacy in Mesoamerica. Pages 201-229 in *The Art of Urbanism: How Mesoamerican Kingdoms Represented Themselves in Architecture and Imagery*, edited by William L. Fash and Leonardo Lopez Lujan, Dumbarton Oaks.

Available as a download on Academia.edu and also on Researchgate.net These are the two download sites that I subscribe to for years.

FASH, Barbara

2011 The Copan Sculpture Museum: Ancient Maya Artistry in Stucco and Stone. Peabody Museum Press. 216 pages. **Not available as a PDF download.**

FENOGLIO Limón, Fiorella Gina

2024 Teotihuacan fuera de Teotihuacan, La porción oriental del Bajío Mexicano durante el Clásico. PhD dissertation, Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia, INAH. 306 pages in the download on-line.

Shows the incredible “pure Teotihuacan mural” in an excellent drawing by Christophe Helmke on page: 213.

FOLEY, Jennifer Marie

2017 When Worlds Collide: Understanding the Effects of Maya Teotihuacán Interaction on Ancient Maya Identity and Community. P hD dissertation, Vanderbilt University. 477 pages. Available as a download on line.

An excellent PhD dissertation, with focus on the murals of Sufricaya, Peten, that show clear Teotihuacan Maya interaction. As usual, Yaxha Stela 11 is never pictured anywhere (but is mentioned). As I have observed, “90%” of helpful studies of Teotihuacan influence on the Maya do not show Yaxha Stela 11—probably because it has no hieroglyphic inscriptions to name the royalty and the date of the monument. But the date is obviously the same as Tikal Stela 31, Tikal Stela 32 and comparable frontal Tlaloc portraits elsewhere in Peten.

FREIDEL, David; ESCOBEDO, Héctor L. and Stanley P. GUENTER

2007 A crossroads of conquerors: Waka' and Gordon Willey's "Rehearsal for the collapse" hypothesis. In *Gordon R. Willey and American archaeology contemporary perspectives*. Edited by W. L. Fash and J. A. Sabloff, pp. 187-208. University of Oklahoma Press.

FREIDEL, David; ESCOBEDO, Héctor L.; LEE, David; GUENTER, Stanley P. and Juan Carlos MELÉNDEZ

2007 El Perú y la ruta terrestre de la Dinastía Kan hacia el Altiplano. In *XX Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala, 2006* (J. P. Laporte, B. Arroyo and H. Mejía, editors), pp.59-76. Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala (versión digital).

FUENTE, Beatriz de la (editor)

1995 La Pintura Mural Prehispánica en México I: Teotihuacán, Tomo I, Catálogo. México, D.F.: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas.

UNAM has published many super-helpful volumes on murals of Teotihuacan, Cacaxtla, and Maya sites.

GÁMEZ Díaz, Laura Lucía

2013 Cosmology and Society: Household Ritual among the Terminal Classic Maya People of Yaxha (ca. A.D. 850-950), Guatemala. PhD dissertation. 238 pages.

Shows a drawing of the complete Yaxha Stela 11 but the focus of this dissertation is half a millennium later (Terminal Classic).

<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/17173237.pdf>

GILLESPIE, Susan D.

2024 Place and Person at Pre Hispanic Teotihuacan, Mexico. *International Journal of Arts, Humanities & Social Science*, Vol, 5; Issue no 5: May,14 pages.

GROFF, Amanda Toyie

2007 The Emergence of the Maya Tlaloc: A Late Classic Religious Icon. University of Central Florida, MA thesis. 67 pages.

Helpful download. Schele’s drawing of Yaxha Stela 11 is in Fig. 12, page 46.

GALINDO, Juan

1832 Memoire de M. Galindo... adresse a M. le secretaire de la Societe de Geographie de Paris *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris*, Tomo 18, No. 114, pages 198-214.

GALINDO, Juan

- 1834 A short Account of some Antiquities discovered in the District of Peten, in Central America, in a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Juan Galindo, Governor of Peten, addressed to Nicholas Carlisle.

GARCÍA des Lauriers, Claudia

- 2017 The Regalia of Sacred War: costume and militarism at Teotihuacan. *Americae, European Journal of Americanist Archaeology* (online), Teotihuacan, 2, 2017, pages 83-98. https://americae.fr/wpcontent/uploads/2020/12/ame_2017_5_art_garciadeslauriers.pdf

GONZÁLEZ Block, Miguel A.

- 2024 From the Great Goddess to the Storm God: Cosmic transformations at the boundary between the dry and rainy seasons in Classic Teotihuacan. *Ancient Mesoamerica* (2024), 35, 839–864. doi:10.1017/S0956536124000087

GREENE, Merle; RANDS, Robert L. and John GRAHAM

- 1972 Maya Sculpture from the Southern Lowlands, Highlands and Pacific Piedmont. Lederer, Street and Zeus,

Shows rubbing of Yaxha Stela 11 in Plate. 163. There is also the 1995 publication by Merle Greene Robertson (her name changed after her marriage).

GRUBE, Nikolai

- 2000 Monumentos Esculpidos e Inscripciones Jeroglíficas en el Triángulo Yaxha Nakum Naranjo. In *El Sitio Maya de Topoxte: Investigaciones en una isla del lago Yaxha, Peten, Guatemala*, edited by W. W. Wurster, pp. 294-268. vol. 57. Verlag Philipp von Zabern.

Yaxha Stela 11 is Fig. 3.3,a, credited to Grube 2000. Fortunately, the Grube 2000 is a helpful download, and you can find Yaxha Stela 11 as Fig. 199.

GUERRERO Orozco, Ana María

- 2015 La Evolución Estilística de las Gráficas Mayas del Periodo Clásico en el Sitio de Tikal. PhD dissertation, UNAM. 453 pages in the PDF.

<https://www.mesoweb.com/es/tesis/Guerrero2015.pdf>

https://escholarship.org/content/qt8wc9w29z/qt8wc9w29z_noSplash_db1f0ec49d60394c30bf54d0fef35919.pdf

HAGERMAN, Kiri L.

2018 Domestic Ritual and Identity in the Teotihuacan State: Exploring Regional Processes of Social Integration through Ceramic Figurines. PhD dissertation, University of California, San Diego.

Yaxha Stela 11 is shown as Figure 6.44, based on photos and drawings by Linda Schele, but Hagerman intelligently omits the radial set of lines in the three disks across the headdress.

HEADRICK, Annabeth and Dorie REENTS-BUDET

2017 The Afterlife in Exile: Butterfly Imagery on Teotihuacan-style Censers from the Pacific Coast of Guatemala. Presented at The 81st Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, Vancouver, British Columbia. 2017.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1969 Mexican Symbols in the Classic Art of the Southern Maya Lowlands. MA thesis, Department of Anthropology, Brown University,

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1970a Some Notes on First Season Explorations and Excavations at Yaxha, El Petén, Guatemala. *Katunob* VII(3):35-36, 50-51.

HELLMUTH, NICHOLAS M.

1970b Tlalocs, Angular Yearsigns, and Other Mexican Motifs in the Late Classic Monumental Sculpture of Piedras Negras, Yaxchilan and Bonampak. Society for American Archaeology 35th Annual Meeting. (Mexico City).

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1972a Report on first season explorations and excavations at Yaxha, El Petén, Guatemala. *Katunob*, vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 24-38, Greeley.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1972b Preliminary Report on Second Season Excavations at Yaxha, Guatemala: 1971. *Katunob*, vol. 7, No. 4, pp. 39-49, 92-99, Greeley.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas M.

1972c Excavations Begin at Maya Site in Guatemala. *Archaeology*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 148-149.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1975 The Escuintla Hoards: Teotihuacan Art in Guatemala. *F.L.A.A.R. Progress Reports*, Vol. I, No.2, Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1976 Diplomacy and Conquest in Pre Columbian Mesoamerica. *Americas*, Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 5-12, Organization of Arnerican States, OAS.

Shows photograph of both segments, joined, of Yaxha Stela 11 on page 7. Shows a Goggle eyed, profile view of a Teotihuacan as sociated warrior on page 8.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1977 Iconography of Escuintla and Peten Tzakol 3 Ceramic Art. paper read at the the *International Symposium on Maya Art, Architecture, Archaeology, and Hieroglyphic Writing*, June 25 July 2, 1977, Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research, Guatemala City.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1978a A General Introduction to Maya Art, Architecture & Archaeology, Tikal Copan travel guide: a complete guide to all the Maya ruins of Central America. Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research. 214 pages. There are two editions, this is the 2nd edition.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

1978b Teotihuacan Art in the Escuintla, Guatemala Region. Pages 71 85 in *Middle Classic Mesoamerica: A.D 400 700*, (Esther Pasztory, editor, Columbia University Press.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas M.

1985 Maya Cylinder Tripods and Related Early Classic Art: Iconography and Form. 2nd edition, Vol. II, *Corpus of Maya Art in Site Reports and in Museums and Private Collections, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, USA, Canada, Europe, and Asia* . F.L.A.A.R.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas M.

1992 Yaxha Stela 11, An Iconography of the Petén Adaption of Teotihuacan Features, A field report on research at Yaxha, Petén prepared for IDAEH Guatemala, Central America, First Draft, unedited. Manuscript, not yet on-line as download. 39 pages text plus 29 pages of illustrations to form PDF of 68 pages.

The present FLAAR Reports for the SIAG simposio at MUNAE was completely written without knowing about this report on Stela 11 from the previous century, since I had no physical copy of a report that old, and it was never published. But when I saw it cited by other Yaxha project staff (such as Pru and Don Rice) then I looked through my e-library and found it. The difference is that today in 2026 there are hundreds more articles and books on the “Entrada” and on Teotihuacan itself. Plus tons of research material are available on-line, so you don’t have to hike to a library or search through your own physical library on another floor of your research office facility.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas M.

1993 A report for IDAEH on research accomplished at the Maya ruins of Yaxha, Peten, Guatemala, Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

2024a Yaxha Stela 11, The largest Tlaloc Warrior King Image in the Maya Areas. Part I, Horizontal. FLAAR Reports, FLAAR (USA), and FLAAR Mesoamerica (Guatemala).

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

2024b Yaxha Stela 11, the largest Tlaloc Warrior King Image in the Maya Areas. Part II, Vertical. FLAAR Reports, FLAAR (USA), and FLAAR Mesoamerica (Guatemala). 14 pages in the downloadable PDF.

[https://flaar-mesoamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Yaxha Stela 11 corpus vertical Apr 2024 NH.pdf](https://flaar-mesoamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Yaxha-Stela-11-corpus-vertical-Apr-2024-NH.pdf)

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

2024c Full-Figure Personified Maya Hieroglyphs (many with Tlaloc), Copan Temple 26. 108 pages in downloadable PDF.

<https://flaar-mesoamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Copan-Temple-26-full-figure-hieroglyphs-Nicholas-Hellmuth-FLAAR-English-.pdf>

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

2026 Cacao, Botany, Ethnobotany, Iconography and Epigraphy. Eight chapters for a lecture in person at MUNAG, Antigua Guatemala, May 13, 2026.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

2024c Tlaloc, Yearsign and other Teotihuacan Motifs in Classic Maya Art at Copan, Honduras. FLAAR Reports, FLAAR (USA), and FLAAR Mesoamerica (Guatemala).

Some photos show more detail when the page is in vertical format; some photos show more detail when the page is wide (in horizontal format). Since Yaxha Stela 11 is THE largest frontal Tlaloc in the Maya Lowlands, it helps to see as many details as possible, because none of the published drawings or rubbings actually show the details that are cross lit photography helped to document.

HELLMUTH, Nicholas

2026 Archaeology and Iconography of *Theobroma cacao* and Faux Cacao (cacao look-alikes) in Classic Maya Art. Lecture at MUNAG, Antigua Guatemala, 13 May, 2026, 11 am, Museo Nacional de Arte de Guatemala. FLAAR (USA) and FLAAR-Mesoamerica (Guatemala). 87 pages.

HELMKE, Christophe; NIELSEN. Jesper and Ángel Iván RIVERA Guzmán

2019 The Origins and Development of the Cartographic Tradition in the Central Mexican Highlands. *Contributions in New World Archaeology* 12: 55 100.

Download on Research Gate (I prefer this plus Academia.edu—I avoid all the others—the ones that ask for more money for academic reports—academic reports should be for education, not for profit making).

HIRTH, Kenneth G.; CARBALLO, David M. and Barbara ARROYO

2020 Teotihuacan, The World Beyond the City. [Dumbarton Oaks Research Library And Collection.](#)

IGLESIAS Ponce de León, María Josefa

2008 Actualizando la controversia: el Clásico Temprano en Petén, Guatemala. *Mayab* 20 (2008): pp. 125-144

Shows La Sufricaya Stela 10 plus Tikal Stelae 4, 18, 32 and text on the Marcador de Juego de Pelota. Does not show Tikal Stela 31 probably because everyone already knows it. As usual, the giant frontal Teotihuacan-affiliated military warlord Tlaloc of Yaxha Stela 11 is not pictured whatsoever. <file:///Volumes/Library/Downloads/Actualizando la controversia el Clasico.pdf>

JONES, Christopher and **Linton SATTERTHWAITE** (drawings by William Coe)

1982 The Monuments and Inscriptions of Tikal: The Carved Monuments. *Tikal Report 33A. University Monograph 44*. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.

KELLY, Joyce

1996 An Archaeological Guide to Northern Central America: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. University of Oklahoma Press.

No download, but you can read it on line at <https://archive.org/details/archaeologicalgu0000kell>

KIDDER, Alfred V.; JENNINGS, Jessie D. and **Edwin M. SHOOK**

1946 Excavations at Kaminaljuyu, Guatemala. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 561. 284 pages.

Reprinted as: Excavations at Kaminaljuyu. *Monograph Series on Kaminaljuyu*. Pennsylvania State University Press. No download, but on line you can read the entire book: <https://archive.org/details/excavationsatkam0000kidd/page/420/mode/2up>

KUBLER, George

1967 The Iconography of the Art of Teotihuacán. Dumbarton Oaks. Dumbarton Oaks Studies in Pre Columbian Art and Archaeology. 40 pages.

LANGLEY, James C.

1986 Symbolic Notation of Teotihuacan: Elements of Writing in a Mesoamerican Culture of the Classic Period. B.A.R. International Series. 313.

Not available as a download.

LANGLEY, James C.

1991 The Forms and Usage of Notation at Teotihuacan. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 2(1991): 285-298.

LANGLEY, James C.

1992 Teotihuacan Sign Clusters: Emblem or Articulation? In *Art, Ideology, and the City of Teotihuacan*, editor Janet C. Berlo, 247-280. Dumbarton Oaks.

LANGLEY, James C.

1993 Symbols, Signs, and Writing Systems. Chapter, pages 129-139 in exhibit catalog *Teotihuacan, Art from the City of the Gods*, edited by Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory. Thames and Hudson, The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

Available on line as a download.

LAPORTE, Juan. Pedro and María Josefa IGLESIAS Ponce de León

1999 Más allá de Mundo Perdido: investigación en grupos residenciales de Tikal. MAYAB 12, Pages 32-57.

<file:///Volumes/Library/Downloads/Dialnet-MasAllaDeMundoPerdido-2774807.pdf> and probably elsewhere.

LATSANOPOULOS, Nicolas

2005 Standing Stones, Knives-Holders and Flying Felines: an Overview of Ritual Paraphernalia and Actors of Cardiectomy at Teotih uacan, Mexico. In: Giorgi, Cyril (editor): *De l’Altiplano Mexicain à la Patagonie. Travaux et recherches á l’Université de Paris I*, pp. 175-188. BAR International Series 1389; Paris Monographs in American Archaeology (Eric Taladoire, series editor), 16. Oxford: Archaeopress, pp. 175-188.

LINCOLN, William

1932a Map of Yaxha. The original map as drawn by Lincoln has different stelae numbers than used by Morley for the published 1937 version of this map.

LINCOLN, William

1932b Appendix C, Report for the Carnegie Institution Year Book 1931 32, The Yaxha Expedition. 5 typed, double spaced pages and reduction of 1932a map.

LINCOLN, William

1932c Appendix B, Expense Account, expedition to Yaxha, Peten, Guatemala... 2 pages typewritten mss.

LINCOLN, William

1932d Untitled, typed version of personal diary, 4 pages, numbered 182-185.

LINCOLN, William

1932e Untitled, personal account, handwritten, 50 pages.

LINCOLN, William

1932f Untitled, notes for official expense account, and other notes, 30 pages, handwritten.

LINCOLN, William

1937 Map of Yaxha, Plate 212 in *The Inscriptions of Peten*, S. G. Morley, C.I.W. Pub, 437, Vol. V, Part 2. Same as 1932a except for the numeration of the monuments.

William Lincoln studied architecture at Washington University (in St. Louis, Missouri) and was in the same class as my father, architect George Hellmuth, founder of HOK Architects. So we were able to contact Lincoln and he came all the way to Yaxha to visit the FLAAR team—what a kind and considerate person. But all the notes that he sent us after his visit were lost after the 1976 earthquake—everything we put into storage (since the building where the FLAAR office was located was severely damaged by the 1976 earthquake)—so we had to move everything to storage—but rats and mice chewed up all the paper to build their nests. We also lost most of our Yaxha field work notes.

LINNE Sigvald

1934 Archaeological Researches at Teotihuacan, Mexico. The Ethnographical Museum of Sweden, New Series, Publication No. 1.

LÓPEZ PÉREZ, Claudia María

2009 Cerámica. Chapter, pages 131 192 in: *Teotihuacan. Ciudad de los dioses, Catálogo exposición, México*, INAH. 252 pages

Have not yet found this available as a download.

MALER, Teobert

1908 Explorations in the Department of Peten, Guatemala and adjacent Region: Topoxte; Yaxha, Benque Viejo, Naranjo. Reports of Explorations for the Museum. *Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Harvard University, Vol. IV, No. 2, pages 56-127.

Very helpful download from PMAE, Harvard. Maler evidently never saw Stela 11—he reports only on Stelae 1 through 10.

MANZANILLA, Linda R.

1993 Daily Life in the Teotihuacan Apartment Compounds. Chapter, pages 91 -99 in exhibit catalog *Teotihuacan, Art from the City of the Gods*, edited by Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory. Thames and Hudson, The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

Downloadable on line.

MANZANILLA, Linda R. (director and editor)

2018 Proyecto “Teotihuacan. Elite y gobierno. Excavaciones en Xalla y Teopancazco”. Teopancazco como centro de Barrio Multiétnico de Teotihuacan. Los Sectores Funcionales y el Intercambio a larga Distancia. Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, UNAM. 806 pages.

Available as a helpful download.

MAYER, Karl-Herbert

1991 Maya Monuments: Sculptures of Unknown Provenance, Supplement 3. Verlag Von Fleming, Berlin.

MILLER, Arthur G.

1973 The Mural Painting of Teotihuacan. Dumbarton Oaks.

So far I have not found a download but you can read the entire book on-line:

<https://archive.org/details/muralpaintingoft0000mill/page/n7/mode/2up>

MILLER, Mary and Karl TAUBE

1997 An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya. Thames and Hudson. 216 pages.

You can read this on line, and also you can download it.

MILLON, Clara

1973 Painting, Writing, and Polity in Teotihuacan, Mexico. *American Antiquity* 38(3): 294-314.

MILLON, Clara

1988 A reexamination of the Teotihuacan Tassel Headdress Insignia. Pages 114-134 in *Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees: Reconstructing the Murals of Teotihuacan*, edited by Kathleen Berrin. The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

MOHOLY Nagy, Hattula

1962 A Tlaloc Stela from Tikal. *Expedition Magazine*, Volume 4, Number 2, Winter, 1962, page 27.

The Tlaloc and Teotihuacan military features of Tikal Stela 31 had not yet been discovered in 1961 or 1962. And clearly the enormous Tlaloc from Yaxha was not yet known to the Tikal Project staff in 1961.

[https://www.penn.museum/documents/publications/expedition/4 2/A%20Tlaloc.pdf](https://www.penn.museum/documents/publications/expedition/4%20A%20Tlaloc.pdf)

MORALES, Paulino I. and Erwin Franciné VALIENTE

2006 Secuencia de construcción y presentación del Edificio 218 en la Acrópolis Este de Yaxha [Construction sequence and appearance of Structure 218 in the East Acropolis of Yaxha]. *Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala* (in Spanish), XIX, 2005: 1010–1017. J. P. Laporte; Barbara Arroyo and H. Mejía (editors). Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala City, Guatemala.

MORLEY, Sylvanus Griswold

1938 The Inscriptions of Peten. Volume 5. Carnegie Institution of Washington, *Publication 437*, Washington, D.C.

Yaxha Stela 11 is pictured in Plate 161,b.

NAVARRETE, Carlos

1976 El Complejo escultórico del Cerro Bernal en la costa de Chiapas, Mexico. *Anales de Antropología*, Vol. 13, Núm. 1, 1976, pages 23-45. Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, UNAM.

Available as an easy download. But the English edition is not an easy simple download of the entire PDF.

NAVARRETE, Carlos

1986 The Sculptural Complex at Cerro Bernal on the Coast of Chiapas, *Notes of the New World Archaeological Foundation*, Number 1. NWAf, Brigham Young University. Same title as the Spanish report 10 years earlier.

NAVARRO Farr, Olivia; PÉREZ, Juan Carlos; PÉREZ Robles, Griselda; FREIDEL, David and Mary Kate KELLY

2021 Operación WK01. Estructura M13 1. Capitulo I, pages 11-33 in: *Informe No. 19, Temporada 2021*, Juan Carlos Pérez, Damien Marken and Griselda Pérez Robles, Editors. Proyecto Arqueológico Waka’, Waka’ Foundation/

Shows a nice photogrammetric photo of Stela 51 where you can see the mixture of pure Maya style hieroglyphic inscription but clothing filled with Maya adaptations of obvious Teotihuacan motifs. Instead of having the face chiseled off (damage deliberately done by the ancient Maya), the Maya at El Peru Waka’ smashed off the entire head, so we don’t yet know whether the face was in full frontal view (thus Teotihuacan style) or the head was turned to the left (Maya style when the body itself is frontal).

NIELSEN, Jesper

2003 Art of the Empire: Teotihuacan Iconography and Style in Early Classic Maya Society (A.D. 380-500). PhD dissertation. 2 vols. Helpful download.

NIELSEN, Jesper and Christophe HELMKE

2011 Reinterpreting the Plaza de los Glifos, La Ventilla, Teotihuacan. *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 22(2), 345-370. Download available on-line.

NIELSEN, Jesper and Christophe HELMKE

2019 Crowning Rulers and Years: Interpreting the Year Sign Headdress at Teotihuacan. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 31(2):1-16, June 2019.

NIELSEN, Jesper; JIMÉNEZ García, Elizabeth and Iván RIVERA

2019 Across the Hills, toward the Ocean: Teotihuacan Style Monuments in Guerrero, Mexico. Chapter 6, pages 176-209 in: *Interregional Interaction in Ancient Mesoamerica*, Joshua D. Englehardt, Michael D. Carrasco, editors. University Press of Colorado.

Available as a download on-line.

NONDÉDÉO, Philippe; PATIÑO, Alejandro; LACADENA García-Gallo, Alfonso; CASES Martín, Juan Ignacio; HIQUET, Julien; MICHELET, Dominique ANDRIEU, Chloé and Lilian GARRIDO

2016 El papel de Teotihuacan en la formación de una capital regional maya: el caso de Naachtun, Petén. In *XXIX Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala, 2015* (edited by B. Arroyo, L. Méndez Salinas and G. Ajú Álvarez), pp. 91-101. Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala.

Available as a download on-line.

NONDÉDÉO, Philippe; LACADENA García-Gallo, Alfonso and Juan Ignacio CASES Martín

2019 Teotihuacanos y mayas en la “entrada” de 11 Eb’ (378 d.C.): Nuevos datos de Naachtun, Petén, Guatemala. *Revista Española de Antropología Americana* 49:53–75.

O’NEIL, Megan. E.

2009 Ancient Maya sculptures of Tikal, seen and unseen. *RES* 55/56 Spring/Autumn 2009, Pages 119-134.

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Fig. 12, Map of Yaxha redrawn from “98” (98 being simplified map in Quintana, Wurster and Hermes). The Hellmuth/FLAAR project documented that Yaxha has TWO Group E complexes with Plaza F being a gigantic example.

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WILLIAMS, Eduardo

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Shows Tikal Stela 32 (Fig. 61) but not Tikal Stela 31 and absolutely not Yaxha Stela 11, plus Yaxha is not on his map (Figure 69. Schematic map of Teotihuacan’s interaction with the Mesoamerican ecumene, showing (from west to east): Querétaro (northwest of Tula); the Lake Cuitzeo Basin (Michoacán); Monte Albán (Oaxaca); Matcacapan (Veracruz); Kaminaljuyú (southern Guatemala); Tikal (Petén, Guatemala); and Copán (Honduras). Base map after Porter Weaver 1981: Map 8)..

Helpful and easy download: file:///Volumes/Library/Downloads/Pots_Pans_and_People_CH_III_B.pdf

The absence of the HUNDREDS of Teotihuacan incensarios from the Costa Sur and “Thousands” of cylindrical tripods and figurines with Teotihuacan features from the same Costa Sur is precisely why I was dedicated to salvaging documentation across the Costa Sur. The map by Williams shows a “route” from Teotihuacan to Kaminaljuyu and from there to Peten. That route was indeed THE RULE, THE LAW—no archaeologist was accepted unless they featured this route. Tiquisate style ceramics were not widely known in publications until Hellmuth 1975 but still not widely comprehended by most scholars until later decades.

Now epigraphers document that the “route” from Teotihuacan to Tikal, Uaxactun, and Yaxha was from Chiapas or Tabasco.

Surely there was indeed a route for Teotihuacan influence from Lake Amatitlan and Kaminaljuyu to Peten—but that route is not documented in between the Highlands and the Lowlands—so far only between the Costa Sur and Lake Amatitlan—aminaljuyu.

WILLIAMS, Eduardo

2023b Pots, Pans, and People: Material Culture and Nature in Mesoamerican Ceramics. Impressive number of pages: 1020 pages.

Helpful download but “not allowed to cite”, thus I greatly appreciate him sending me the final edition that can be cited.

WILLIAMS, Eduardo

2024 Pots, Pans, and People: Material Culture and Nature in Mesoamerican Ceramics. Archaeopress PreColumbian Archaeology 20. 492 pages.

XIRAU, Ramon

1973 Arte Prehispanico de Mexico: Coleccion Rufino Tamayo. Ediciones Galeria de Arte Misrachi, Mexico City. 159 pages.

So far I have not found this book available as a download on-line.



This photo is two decades ago, Dec. 28, 2006. Every Christmas week for many decades Hellmuth is somewhere in Peten or elsewhere in Guatemala accomplishing field work.

The original position of this stela surprised us when our excavations uncovered the missing lower part in situ. It was about a meter above the level of the plaza—facing the stairway—so, not facing the plaza as the replica was understandably placed so visitors can see it every day. What if Tlaloc was facing the burial of this Maya individual? A great future project.