INTRODUCTION

1. I use the name flint instead of the more technically accurate term chert because flint is the established name for this stone in Mayan ethnographic and iconographic studies.

2. Bricker (2002) suggests that Mayan kinship systems were not just patrilineal but that at some times and in some areas they may have been more complex. I do not find her evidence convincing.

3. On the Palenque Temple XIX platform, the three secondary lords on the left side of the monument are named in their caption texts as banded-bird officials. The banded-bird title is the final glyph in each caption.

4. The scenes of Lintels 1 and 2 took place a year after the mural battle and illustrate Yajaw Chan Muwaan and Shield Jaguar IV of Yaxchilán capturing foes from the site of Sak Tz’i’ on January 12 and January 8 AD 787, respectively. Yajaw Chan Muwaan’s father, Aj Sak Teles, is depicted on Lintel 3 capturing a foe on July 16, 748.

5. Each prisoner is identified by a caption text placed on his body or adjacent to him. The caption texts are very small and are not included in the drawing. The reader is referred to Stuart and Graham (2003) for illustrations of these caption texts.

CHAPTER 1. CHAHK DEITIES AND FLINT WEAPONS

1. Sapper (1897) recorded that the Q’eqchi’ mountain/valley gods were thought to own lightning and to have snakes
as servants. These gods punished people by killing them with a thunderbolt or having their snakes bite them. The most dreaded snake of the mountain/valley gods was the ic bolya (Bothrops asper) that is known for its lightning-like movements.

2. Ch’orti’ beliefs recorded by Metz reiterate this connection: When the chijchans emerge and cause damage, it is the job of angels (ángeles, ajpatna’r winikob’) to chase them away by hurling jade axe heads (found occasionally in cultivated fields) at them, thus causing lightning. (Metz 2006:106) Metz (personal communication 2017) noted that he referred to these polished axe heads as jade simply because they were greenish in color. It is unlikely that they were actually made from jade.

3. The crocodile has been given a variety of nicknames, like the Two-Headed Dragon, Celestial Monster, Cosmic Monster, Bicephalic Monster, and Starry Deer Alligator (Spinden 1913; Schele 1976; Stuart 2003a; Stuart and Stuart 2008).

4. The Tzotzil believe that “lightning deposits a treasure in the form of a ball of hair where it strikes” (Laughlin 1975:98). It is possible that this belief is related to the bundled hair of Chahk.

5. The T24 affix sign also appears as a main sign under the designation T617.

6. Examples of such celts were recovered from a Cahal Pech tomb (Reents-Budet 1994:349).

7. The Leiden plaque is engraved with a portrait of an Early Classic king on one side and a hieroglyphic text that documents his accession on the other. The two Río Azul effigy celts are also inscribed with illustrations of rulers and with hieroglyphic texts explaining who these rulers are and what they are doing. It is likely that the portraits and hieroglyphic texts on these celts referred to an ancestor rather than the ruler who wore the assemblage.

8. Aj Chak Wayib’K’utiim’s nominal phrase on the side of El Cayo Altar 4 includes a parentage statement. Given that no other male is named in this narrative, it seems likely that the figure Aj Chak Wayib’ K’utiim carries is an effigy of his father. What is interesting is that Aj Chak Wayib’ K’utiim’s ponytail, which designates him as a Ch’ajom, hangs in front of his father’s face. This juxtapositioning might be a subtle reference to the fact that his father was also a Ch’ajom.

9. While there are examples of a single ancestral effigy assemblage worn on a lord’s belt, many depictions indicate that four assemblages were worn: one at the navel, one at the small of the back, and one on each hip. Thematically, this arrangement echoes the depiction of ancestors surrounding the sarcophagus of K’inich Janaab Pakal I.

10. Yax Ha’al Chahk brandishes his axe in one hand and his stone manoplas in the other. The baby jaguar deity is depicted tumbling through the air or lying on his back, while the skeletal god stands with outstretched arms in front of him. The verb in the caption text adjacent to the jaguar deity and skeletal god is yal “to fall” and appears to refer to the action of the skeletal god’s outstretched arms and the somersaulting pose.
of the jaguar deity. Although the baby jaguar shows no obvious signs of harm, most researchers have interpreted these scenes as the sacrifice of the infant jaguar deity at the hands of Yax Ha’al Chahk and the skeletal god or Yax Ha’al Chahk splitting the mountain open and the death god throwing the baby deity into the chasm. Be that as it may, another aspect of lightning needs to be taken into account when interpreting mythological scenes involving thunderbolts. As noted, a red dwarf thunderbolt god strikes lightning into the blood of the K’iche’ by hitting them on their bodies with his stone axe. It is possible that Yax Ha’al Chahk is not sacrificing the baby jaguar but empowering him with a lightning soul.

11. It was first nicknamed the jester god because it resembled images of the pointed caps worn by medieval court jesters.

12. One of the traits of One Ajaw is black spots on his body, and such a spot is frequently depicted on his headband. Such a marking may refer to dark birthmarks that the Maya believe are created by solar and lunar eclipses (Bassie–Sweet 2008:204).

13. What the sign T563 represents is not clear, but it seems likely that it derives from some object used in the new fire ceremony.

14. In Houston and Taube’s (2012:46) discussion of these names, they noted the k’ak’ signs but strangely did not view them as part of the name phrases.

15. Above the portrait of K’inich Janaab Pakal I is a caption text that names him. Preceding his personal name is the title K’ak’? Maan Chahk. How this Chahk title relates to the Chahk deity 6 Yuh K’ak’, who K’inich Janaab Pakal I impersonates in the scene, is unknown, but it surely cannot be a coincidence that both K’ak’? Maan Chahk and 6 Yuh K’ak’ are related to fire.

16. One Ixim’s name literally means “one corn seed.” The Maya used the 260-day cycle of the tzolk’in for prognostication by lots. In this method, the diviner threw down a handful of corn seeds and then sorted and counted these seeds using the units of the tzolk’in (see Bassie–Sweet 2008:92–93 for an overview). As noted, each day in the 13-day cycle of the tzolk’in was ruled by a different god, and One Ixim was the god of the number one.

17. In her review of my 2008 Maya Sacred Geography and the Creator Deities, Stone (2009) stated that I had “invented” the goddess Ixik. However, there is a goddess in the codices whose name consists solely of the portrait glyph of a youthful female. Phonetic complements indicate that this portrait glyph is read ixik “woman,” but it is usually translated as the title “lady” when it is prefixed to the nominal glyphs of females (Stuart 2005b:181). Houston and Martin (2012) noted that portraits of supernatural entities were often employed to represent the word for the class of being to which the entity belongs. For example, the Milky Way Crocodile is used to represent the word ayyin “crocodile.” The same is true for Ixik. There is a gender-biased practice in Maya studies where male supernatural entities are referred to as gods, but female entities are simply
called women or maidens. Hence, the portrait glyph of Ixik is viewed by many epigraphers not as the quintessential young goddess but just as a generic sign for a woman.

18. Taube (1992a:fig 21) identified this vessel as coming from Chipoc (a site on the western outskirts of Cobán), but it is from Seacal, which is 46 km east of Cobán as the crow flies.

19. If the 13 Men 18 Yaxk’in date was in historical time, it would have to be either 29 years before the Period Ending on 9.14.5.11.15 (July 1, AD 717) or 23 years after, on 9.16.18.6.15 (June 18, 769). In his analysis of this monument, Tokovinine (2012) ignored the framing convention and the placement of the Period Ending text (which he characterized as merely the dedication of the monument itself) and concluded that the 13 Men 18 Yaxk’in event of the incised text is the illustrated event. He suggested the earlier Long Count position of 9.14.5.11.15 for the date and speculated that the pictured lord is some unnamed predecessor of Knot-eye Jaguar. The notion that the individual depicted in the scene would go unnamed is highly unlikely.

20. In the parallel scene on Dresden Codex page 25, the headless turkey held by the deity priest still has blood spurting from its neck.

21. In light of this narrative convention, it is quite possible that the grasping of the victim’s hair on Palenque Pier F in concert with the swinging of the axe is a subtle reference to the prior capture of this victim by the lord.

22. The Annals of the Cakchiquels narrative states that Q’aq’awitz and his assistant took “no arrows” and “no shields” with them when they climbed Volcán Santa María but adorned themselves with cattail reeds. The phrase “no arrows” and “no shields” is a statement that Q’aq’awitz and Zakitzunun took no weapons with them.

CHAPTER 2. THE FLINT AND FIRE DEITY GIII

1. Portraits of One Ajaw are used to represent the term ajaw “lord.” A portrait of a vulture wearing the sak huun headband substitutes for One Ajaw’s portrait in accession statements and in the tzolk’in calendar, where the portrait of One Ajaw represents the day name Ajaw. The portrait glyph of an elderly male and a portrait glyph of a vulture with the attributes of the elderly man have been identified as the terms grandfather and grandson (mam) (Stuart 2000b). One has to wonder whether the use of the vulture for the ajaw glyph is a subtle reference to the fact that One Ajaw, as the grandson of Itzamnaaj, was the quintessential grandson.

2. Thompson (1962) assigned two numbers to the k’in sign: T183 and T446.

3. The Popol Vuh describes two birds that are shot by the Hero Twins. One is Seven Macaw, the false deity the Hero Twins defeated by shooting him and taking away his insignia. The second one was the omen bird Wak, who brought the Hero Twins a message. Unlike Seven Macaw, who eventually died from his encounter with
the Hero Twins, the brothers healed Wak and in doing so demonstrated their ability as
great healers in the tradition of their grandfather Xpiyacoc (Itzamnaaj’s parallel). Wak
is the indigenous name for the laughing falcon (a snake-eating bird of prey). In Pre-
classic and Classic period imagery, the Itzamnaaj bird is illustrated as a snake-eating
bird of prey, and several Classic period scenes illustrate the Hero Twins shooting the
Itzamnaaj bird with their blowguns.

4. The Itzamnaaj bird is illustrated five times in the San Bartolo mural. In one
example, the wings of the bird are infixed with k’in and ak’ab signs, indicating that the
bird represented the ideal state of complementary opposition.

5. The alternating flint and sun signs on this sky band form a metonym represent-
ing the heat of lightning and the heat of the sun. In other words, the essential heat of
the world.

6. On the Usumacinta stela, the lord wears a headdress in the form of the Itzam-
naaj bird, and the adjacent caption text names him as Bolon Yokte’.

7. In many examples, the mouths of both the Milky Way Crocodile and the zoo-
morphic bowl are illustrated with liquid pouring from them. While some researchers
interpret this to be blood, the Milky Way is viewed not only as a river but as a source
of water. In the Dresden Codex flood page, blue liquid flows from the Milky Way
Crocodile’s mouth and the creator grandmother’s overturned water jar, flooding the
world and thereby confirming that this liquid is water. On Piedras Negras Stela 11, the
liquid is marked with cross-hatching used in Maya art to include dark colors, surely a
reference to the dark nature of storms.

8. Quiriguá Stela D employs full-figure glyphs for its Initial Series. The math-
ematics of the Long Count dictates that the number of winals of this calendar date
(A9) is four; therefore, the god representing this number should be the Sun God. The
illustrated god has a centipede protruding from his nose, as do a number of other illus-
trations of the Sun God, but his cheek and forehead area is too eroded to see the k’in sign
that one would expect there. He also appears to wear the shell earring of the Chahk
deities. The Sun God also appears to wear a Chahk earring in his role as the patron of
Yaxk’in at A1.

9. The T594 sign has a wa phonetic complement, indicating that the term ends in
“w.” The sign also appears as part of a title found in nominal phrases at Cahal Pech
and Nim li Punit that is composed of k’an bix (yellow jaguar) and the T594 sign (Awe
and Zender 2016).

10. On the Palenque Temple of the Inscriptions panels, the narrative twice describes
the accoutrements of the three gods G1, GII, and GIII, including the names for their
headdresses. It would be expected that GIII’s headdress would be named as a k’ak’huun,
but instead its name is composed of an undeciphered sign and the huun “headdress” sign.
The same undeciphered sign is seen attached to the Quadripartite Badge headdress of
GI. While the meaning of this sign is unknown, it must describe some quality shared by both GI’s Quadripartite Badge headdress and GIII’s Yajawk’ak’headdress.

11. On bones MT-38C and MT-38D, the bow of the canoe is shown sinking below the water as though going through rapids. The stingray god has moved to the center of the canoe, and the order of the passengers has changed.

12. The text on Stela 30 specifically states that the ruler is in the guise of the Jaguar Paddler, and as Martin (1996) has noted, the Jaguar Paddler was a patron god of Naranjo.

13. GIII’s staff also takes on the form of a ceremonial bar. Such objects are commonly held in a horizontal position by Maya rulers and are conduits from which various deities and ancestors are conjured. Some ceremonial bars are clearly stylized femurs, such as the one held by the Caracol ruler on Caracol Stela 6, and allude to the fact that deities and ancestors can be resurrected from their bones.

14. The indigenous names for Volcán Santa María (Xcanul and Q’aq’xanul) indicate that it was considered to be a female mountain. A white flint identified with a female is also found in an episode of the Central Mexican Leyenda de los soles (Bierhorst 1992:152). In this story, the goddess Itzpapalotl was defeated, and her burned body produced five colored flints (presumably one for each direction and one for the center). Mixcoatl (cloud serpent), a god of the north, chose the white flint, and it became his spirit power. Q’aq’awitz’s capture of the white flint stone from Volcán Santa María has been compared to the Itzpapalotl and Mixcoatl episode (Akkeren 2000:160, 165).

Akkeren pointed out a direct relationship between Q’aq’awitz and Mixcoatl. He noted that in a later episode of the Annals of the Cakchiquels, Q’aq’awitz entered the waters of Lake Atitlán and was transformed into Sutz’ukumatz, which translates as “cloud serpent” in Kaqchikel.

CHAPTER 3. CLASSIC MAYA TLALOC DEITIES AND THEIR OBSIDIAN METEOR WEAPONS

1. Wagley (1949:67) noted that Mam co-essences could take the form of comets. However, his description of the comet shooting through the sky indicates that it is likely a meteor.

2. The Chuj term for obsidian is wa cha’anh “sky chips” because the stones are believed to be flakes of the sky, similar to enamel flakes that chip off pots (Hopkins 2012:372).

3. The association of meteors with stone is seen in the Tzeltal term for shooting stars k’anchixalton “yellow stretched out stone” (Pitarch 2010:44).

4. It is possible that the fist-like shape of the T712 sign is a subtle reference to the position the hand is held in when knapping obsidian.
5. Although unverifiable, it is possible that the three knots refer to strips of cloth used to stem the flow of blood once the bloodletting act was completed.

6. Remnants of Tlaloc masks have been recovered during excavations of tombs, and the goggles have been constructed of either white shell or obsidian (Bell et al. 2004).

7. Earlier studies described the Tlaloc bundle as a balloon-like turban (Schele and Miller 1986; Stone 1989; Schele and Freidel 1990:146).

8. Each set of these Waxaklajuun Ub’aah Kan eyes and Lepidoptera wings is attached to an oval shape that has been identified as a drop of water (von Winning 1985; Taube 2000). However, the oval shapes have diagonal lines that do not resemble other depictions of water drops. The juxtaposing of the oval shapes with the Waxaklajuun Ub’aah Kan eyes is surely an indication that these are chrysalises (the pupa form of Lepidoptera), which have the same kind of diagonal lines on their surfaces.

9. Burial 6 of the Teotihuacán Pyramid of the Moon contained an interesting offering of a pyrite slate mirror and two anthropomorphic figures (López Luján and Sugiyama 2017). Radiating out from this offering like the spokes on a wheel were nine pairs of obsidian eccentrics. Each pair consisted of an undulating obsidian blade and a serpent with a rattlesnake tail. The layout is reminiscent of a meteor shower that radiates from one particular area of the sky.

10. The word *ocelot* was coined by the French naturalist Georges Louise Leclerc from the Nahuatl term *ocelotl*. Regrettably, his choice has caused a great deal of confusion because *ocelotl* refers to jaguars. This is clearly seen in Sahagún’s descriptions of Nahuatl four-footed animals, where he begins with the *ocelotl* (*ocelotl*) and explains that it is a fierce feline that roars “like the blowing of trumpets” and was thought to be “the lord, the ruler of the animals” (Sahagún 1959–1963:11:1–2). In their translation of Sahagún, Anderson and Dibble’s glossed *ocelotl* as ocelot despite the fact that the biologist they consulted thought the description clearly indicated a jaguar. They also translated the other occurrences of *ocelotl* in the manuscript as ocelot; hence, the famed pairing of eagle and jaguar warriors became eagle-ocelot warriors. Numerous researchers have incorrectly referred to *ocelotl* as ocelot. I am guilty myself of falling into this trap. In my 2008 volume, I followed Anderson and Dibble and referred to eagle-ocelot warriors. See Saunders (1994) for an overview of researchers who have mistakenly identified the *ocelotl* as an ocelot.

11. While a jaguar’s maximum body weight is about 100 kg., the diminutive ocelot reaches just 15 kg. Unlike jaguars, ocelots have elongated spots that run together and form parallel black stripes on the nape and oblique stripes near the shoulders. They have white fur around the eyes and bordering the ears, as well as white inner ears. Some Mayan terms for the ocelot are descriptive and indicate that it was viewed as a type of jaguar or puma. As an example, the Tzotzil term *tz’ib bolom* “striped jaguar”
refers to the striped pattern of the ocelot’s fur (Laughlin 1975:475, personal communication 2019), while the Yucatec and Itzaj term ajsäk xikin “white ear” refers to the white color of the ocelot ears (Thompson 1930:35; Hofling and Tesucún 1997:80, 129). Redfield (1945:54) recorded the Kaqchikel term saq ba’lom “white jaguar” for a tigrilla that also relates to its white eye and ear color. The term in Chuj for an ocelot is tel choj “forest puma,” while Achi has ch’ut balam “small jaguar” (Hopkins 2012:311).

12. For example, Shield Jaguar III, Kan Bahlam, K’in Bahlam, Unen Bahlam, K’inich Bahlam, Bahlam Chapaat, Bird Jaguar, K’uk’ Bahlam, Yich’aak Bahlam, Yopaat Bahlam, K’ahk’ Hix Muut, K’an Mo’ Hix, K’alturaun Hix, K’elen Hix, and Sak Hix Owl.

13. On Dresden page 8, there is a jaguar complete with spots and water lily motif. The adjacent caption text names this jaguar. The nominal phrase is composed of chak “red” and a portrait glyph that does not resemble a jaguar. What this might represent is unclear, but it does not look anything like the jaguar glyph used to represent the puma on Dresden page 47.

14. It is highly probable that an inscribed jade effigy head that was recovered from the Chichen Itza cenote was the ancestor component of a belt assemblage (Pros-kouriakoff 1972). The piece, which originated from Piedras Negras, illustrates a male wearing a feline headdress. The surviving inscription on the piece refers to the thirteenth tuun anniversary of the Piedras Negras ruler K’inch Yo’nal Ahk II’s accession and the future k’atun anniversary that would occur 7 tuuns later (Grube et al. 2003:II:8; Martin and Grube 2008:145). It names him using his pre-accession name of Koj (pre-accession names for Maya rulers are well attested, and Piedras Negras Stela 8 relates the birth of K’inch Yo’nal Ahk II using this pre-accession name). Given the future tense of the k’atun anniversary, it seems certain that the piece was inscribed on the occasion of the thirteenth tuun accession anniversary. It has been suggested that the jade portrait is that of Koj–K’inich Yo’nal Ahk II (Grube et al. 2003:II:8; Finamore and Houston 2010:275). I think that is unlikely to be the case, given that these ancestral effigy belt assemblages typically portray deceased ancestors. In view of the fact that young lords were frequently named after ancestors, it is more likely that this jade head illustrates the ancestor for whom the young Koj was named.

15. The Akatek of San Miguel Acatán believe a puma near a house is an omen of death (Grollig 1959:184). Among the contemporary K’iche’, puma dancers perform in mythic dances, and there is a constellation near Orion called saq koj “brilliant puma” (Christenson 2003).

16. At the time of the Spanish conquest, the Tzotzil of Zinacantán were merchants, with close interaction with the Aztec empire (Vogt 1969). Like many of the highland Maya groups, they adopted Central Mexican culture traits. Today, there is a belief that the first six Tzotzil ancestors took the form of fog, lightning, whirlwinds, a hawk, a fly, and a butterfly, respectively. Lepidoptera also appear in the Mam area of highland
Guatemala, where the soul of the deceased is thought to take the form of a moth (Oakes 1951:49).

17. The Nahua term itzpapalotl is most often translated as “obsidian butterfly” despite the fact that this goddess has been identified with a moth. However, the word papalotl refers to both butterflies and moths.

18. Redfield and Villa Rojas (1934:209, 211) and Villa Rojas (1945:158) identify the x manhan nai “house borrower” as a black butterfly that is thought to hide in the house to escape the rain, and it is viewed as a sign of rain. Hogue (1993) gives the term x-mahanail “house borrower” for the Black Witch Moth and noted the Black Witch Moth’s inclination to enter the dark interiors of Maya houses at dawn to roost on the walls during the day. Anderson and Tzuc (2005:191) recorded that the term mahannajij is sometimes applied to other large dark moths as well and that the Black Witch Moth does not appear to have ominous connotations among the Yucatec Maya as it does in other parts of Mexico. It is unclear whether this is true or whether it is a result of inadequate ethnographic documentation. Until our fieldwork on the Jolja’ Cave Project, we were not aware of any published accounts of ominous omens related to the Black Witch Moth in the Ch’ol or Tzetzal areas. On the other hand, moths as positive omens are seen in the Yucatec Maya area of Campeche, where large black moths are thought to announce the rain (Faust 1998:5).

19. Not all large moths are associated with death and illness. As an example, the Giant Silk Moth (Arsenura armada), which is of comparable size to the Black Witch, is gathered for food (its caterpillar form is also roasted and eaten) (Beutelspacher 1994; Marceal Mendez and Robert Anderson, personal communication 2010).

20. The Mopán believe there is a supernatural nocturnal bird called a jooch’ that is an omen of death. When it flies over a house and whistles, it is a sign that it will carry away someone’s soul. Sorcerers collaborate with the jooch’ to kill someone. These are the cultural characteristics of an owl. Given that the Proto-Mayan word for a screech owl is *xooch’ and is likely onomatopoeic (Kaufman 2003:613), it is possible that jooch’ is as well and derives from xooch’ “owl.”

21. Some authors have identified the sky variant as an eagle, but some examples are marked with the ak’ab “night, darkness” sign, indicating that it is a nocturnal bird.

22. The identification of owl wings with atlatls is seen on a Teotihuacán-style owl figure housed in the Peabody Museum (T1497, 21-35-20/C9697) (Berrin and Pasztory 1993:cat. 100). The wings of this mold-made figure take the hooked form of the spear thrower.

23. Hull and Fergus (2009:23) noted that Mopán hunters believe the presence of a great horned owl signals that game is in the neighborhood, while the Q’eqchi’ of Belize view its call as an indication that an Agouti paca (a large rodent prized for its meat) is near.
24. It is interesting that the Yucatec term *kuy* “owl” is also used to denote a moth in the nineteenth-century Pío Pérez dictionary (Barrera Vásquez 1980:357).

25. Two years after this Period Ending, Wak Chan K’awiil successfully defeated the Kaanul polity, but just four years later he was defeated by them and a Kaanul prince was placed on the Tikal throne, beginning the so-called hiatus at Tikal (Martin and Grube 2008; Grube 2016). The new *k’atun* period was clearly a disaster for Wak Chan K’awiil.

26. Such associations are seen in the Preclassic San Bartolo murals, where the wings of the laughing falcon form of Itzamnaaj are marked with three triangular dart points. In Classic period imagery, there is a nasty-looking *way* creature that takes the form of a raptor with wing feathers composed of flint and obsidian blades (K1080, K2716).

27. The Proto-Mayan word for a corn tassel (*flor de milpa*) is *tz’utuj* (Kaufman 2003:1153). A colonial Ch’orti’ dictionary lists not only *tz’utuj* but also the term *ban* (*jan*) for the corn tassel (Robertson et al. 2010:320). A Ch’ol dictionary also lists the term *jan* for the *flor de maíz* (*corn tassel*) (Aulie and Aulie 1978:40). However, *jan* in Ch’ol refers to the tassels of many types of grasses, not just corn, and is more accurately translated as spike or tassel (Hopkins et al. 2010).

28. The sign T583 and its owl form also appear in the Supplementary Series as the third variant of Glyph G. In this context, it appears to name a particular type of headdress.

29. The name of the Sacul king has been translated by Carter (2015) as K’i’el Janaab and is composed of the syllabic signs T77, T710 (*ye*), and T188 (*le*) followed by the *janaab* owl. There is some debate about the phonetic value of T77 as *k’i* or *ch’u* (Mora Marin 2000; Stuart 2002; Hopkins 2014). In most contexts, the T77 sign is a single bird wing, but fuller forms show either a small bird or a pair of outstretched wings (Stuart 2002). What is interesting in the context of K’i’el Janaab’s nominal phrase is that the T77 sign is represented by a single bird wing composed of three black-tipped owl feathers. The association of three black-tipped owl feathers with obsidian and Tlaloc has been discussed. It seems plausible that the scribe chose to replace the standard bird wing with these three owl feathers to emphasize the fact that *janaab* was a type of owl associated with Tlaloc and obsidian. Another example of the name *janaab* appears at Piedras Negras. Structure O-13 was built on the slope of a large hill. Panel 3 of the building names the burial location of Piedras Negras Ruler 4 that was situated in front of Structure O-13 as Five *janaab* Witz “five *janaab* mountain” (Stuart and Houston 1994). Whether this mountain name refers to the hill or Structure O-13 or both is unclear. Ruler 4 was intimately associated with the Owl Tlaloc, for he wears this manifestation of Tlaloc on Stela 9.
CHAPTER 4. THE KALOOMTE’ LORDS

1. The back rack of this second figure is decorated with three wolf tails, while the back rack of the Tlaloc figure has four strips of plain white material with black ends. These Museo VICAL figures can be compared to a lidded bowl from Tikal Burial 10 of Structure 34 (the tomb of Yax Nuun Ayiin I). The lid of the vessel depicts two individuals wearing Waxaklajuun Ub’aaah Kan headdresses (Coggins 1975; Martin and Grube 2008:33). One individual wears the goggle eyes of Tlaloc, while the other wears striped face paint. The Tlaloc impersonator has three wolf tails hanging from each side of his headdresses, while the striped-face person simply has strips. The bowl of the vessel also depicts two figures. Both men wear Tlaloc’s goggle eyes and an animal headdress. One figure has the three wolf tails motif hanging from his headdress, while the other has decorated strips.

2. On vessel K3092, a lord dressed as a Black Witch Moth Tlaloc is depicted holding a Waxaklajuun Ub’aaah Kan scepter.

3. The reader is directed to the Mexicon publication where photographs of the vessel are published.

4. In AD 1573 and 1580, Ch’ol Maya led the Spanish expeditions of Feliciano Bravo and Fray Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada into the central Petén using this river route (Bassie-Sweet et al. 2015:18–19).

5. In its fullest form, the 9 Place sign is composed of a zoomorphic head, the glyph for blood, and two footprints, and it is prefixed with the number nine (Kubler 1977). I will refer to it by the nickname “the Nine Place” because of the uncertainty of its decipherment. The Nine Place is often associated with Period Ending events, as on the Copán Margarita panel. The Nine Place is often paired with a second place name that incorporates chiit, k’an, and nal signs and is prefixed with the number seven. This Nine Place and Seven Place couplet likely represents a pair of complementary opposites that function to name either two aspects of one location or two separate locations within a specific larger space. Grube and Stuart (Stuart 2009) have suggested that the Nine Place and Seven Place might refer to the sunrise location of the winter and summer solstice sun; however, the evidence for such an interpretation is at best weak (Bassie-Sweet and Hopkins 2017).

6. K’inich Kan Bahlam II also performed rituals at shrines associated with GI and GII.

7. Such tails also appear on Copán Stela 6 circa AD 682. On this monument, the ruler K’ahk’ Uti’ Witz’ K’awiil is dressed in a Tlaloc costume while conjuring the Waxaklajuun Ub’aaah Kan (see figure 3.5).

8. Stuart (2012) dismissed our evidence that the Palace Tablet caption text that refers to ux yop huun was related to the helmet in the scene, but we have refuted each of his claims (Bassie-Sweet and Hopkins 2017).
9. Inscriptions at La Corona indicate that the Kaanul king was not killed in this exchange (Stuart et al. 2015a).

CHAPTER 5. THE OFFICES AND REGALIA OF THE TLALOC CULT

1. Numerous male and female pottery figurines wear the Waxaklajuun Ub’aah Chan headdress, and an Early Classic vessel from Kaminaljuyú Burial II illustrates a female wearing a Moth Tlaloc headdress and a Tlaloc pendant (Kidder el al. 1946:fig. 207; Berlin 1960:fig. 10b; Berlo 1983; Halperin 2007). Dieseldorff (1926–1933) excavated pottery figurines at his Chajar finca east of Cobán that feature Tlaloc headdresses.

2. A looted tri-figure panel in the style of Palenque names K’inich Kan Bahlam II as a Kaloomte’ lord. Linda Schele and Donald Hales were able to show that various pieces of Palenque-style sculpture now found in different museums and private collections were part of a tri-figure panel that had been hacked up by looters and sold separately (Schaffer 1987). The panel portrays a standing central figure flanked by two kneeling secondary lords. The left figure is dressed as the deity God L and holds a dish that contains a Tlaloc effigy wearing a Moth Tlaloc headdress. The right figure also holds a bowl, but the area above it is too damaged to ascertain what it contained. Only the lower portion of the central figure has been located. It shows a lord dressed in a Tlaloc costume with loincloth and sandals decorated with Waxaklajuun Ub’aah Kan serpents. The borders of his garment are trimmed with the obsidian zigzag design and Moth Tlaloc wings. One of the remaining caption texts makes a reference to the palanquin of K’inich Kan Bahlam II, and the background iconography of scenes suggests it would have a Tlaloc theme. A larger text in the upper right corner of the panel again refers to K’inich Kan Bahlam II and names him as a Kaloomte’. This is the only known example of a K’inich Kan Bahlam II nominal phrase that refers to this title. Given that the central figure is smaller than the flanking figures, this may represent the young K’inich Kan Bahlam II during his induction into the Tlaloc cult.

3. The placement of a very young prince on the throne is documented at Naranjo, where the king K’ahk’ Tiliw Chan Chaak took the throne at the tender age of five. K’inich Janaab Pakal I took the Palenque throne at the age of twelve.

4. The Palenque Temple XIV panel records K’inich Kan Bahlam II performing a ritual just 220 days before K’inich K’an Joy Chitam II received his ux yop huun headdress.

5. The ko’haw helmet is featured on the outside stucco piers of Palenque House A (Robertson 1985). The first pier begins the narrative with the date 9.11.15.15.0 5 Ajaw 8 Tzek (May 23, AD 668) and likely refers to the dedication of the building. The next four piers illustrate a standing lord with the tied hair of a Ch’ajom and wearing the ko’haw helmet with a k’inich glyph attached to it. The meaning of this is unknown. Each lord
carries a GII scepter and incense bag, and they are flanked by two figures who sit at their feet. Regrettably, the caption texts that would have identified these individuals have fallen off the sculpture, although the last figure is considerably shorter than the other three and must illustrate a youth. Robertson (1985:21) attempted to identify the figures based on portraiture, but this has not proven to be an effective method. She identified Pier D as K’inich Kan Bahlam II because the figure has six digits on his hand, which she asserted was an attribute of this ruler, yet his portraits on the Cross Group monuments lack such a deformity.

6. On the Temple of the Sun jamb, K’inich Kan Bahlam II’s nominal phrase includes a parentage statement naming his father as the five k’atun Ajaw K’inich Janaab Pakal I and his mother as Lady Tz’akbu Ajaw. It also states that his maternal grandfather was Yax Itzam Aat from the site of Uxte’k’uh (Stuart 2005b:94). It is highly unusual for genealogical statements to refer to a maternal grandfather, and its appearance in this narrative suggests that Uxte’k’uh lords may have been allies in the defeat of Toniná.

7. The appearance of Ch’ok lords in various narratives is revealing. The Palenque Temple XVIII jambs refer to the birth, first bleeding, Period Ending ceremony, and accession of K’inich Ahkal Mo’ Nahb III and state that he was the son of Tiwol. Although it is almost completely destroyed, the temple scene illustrated an event in AD 679, just four months after K’inich Ahkal Mo’ Nahb III’s birth. The seventy-six-year-old ruler K’inich Janaab Pakal I was flanked by his three sons: K’inich Kan Bahlam II (age 44), K’inich K’an Joy Chitam II (35), and Tiwol (31) (Stuart 2005b:152–153). All three sons are named as Ch’ok lords in the surviving caption texts. Their portraits represented the Palenque descent line of rulership. The capture of a number of foreign Ch’ok lords is recorded on Palenque House C. The east side of House C records the successful war events of K’inich Janaab Pakal I when the Santa Elena ruler Nuun Ujol Chaak and six other lords, including his ally from Pipa’-Pomona’, were captured and brought to Palenque in AD 659. Just three years later, Piedras Negras Stela 35 states that Piedras Negras, in alliance with the Kaanul polity, warred against Santa Elena. The implication is that Palenque lost its control of Santa Elena. On the west side of Palenque House C is a series of seven inscriptions. The right inscription relates the death of a Pipa’ lord in AD 663. The other six inscriptions are the nominal phrases for five lords from Santa Elena and a lord who is named as the Sakun Taaj of one of the lords (Rossi 2015:138–139). The juxtaposing of these names with the death of the Pipa’ lord has been interpreted to mean that the Sakun Taaj and these five lords were also killed. This suggests that the purpose of the west House C narrative was to assert that K’inich Janaab Pakal I was once again in control of Santa Elena. Each of the five lords is specifically named as a Santa Elena Ch’ok. I think they were likely Nuun Ujol Chaak’s direct descendants, that is, the potential heirs to his throne. Commemorating
the capture of high-status foreign Ch’oks suggests that disrupting or controlling the descent line of an enemy lineage was an objective of the war.

8. Tikal Burial 24 of the North Acropolis contained an individual whose teeth were inlaid with jade and amazonite disks, but his identity is unknown (Coe 1990:844).

9. Lacanhá Stela 1 sheds light on the continuation of the Tlaloc cult at Lacanhá. This monument relates the accession of a Lacanhá lord in AD 554 and his subsequent celebration of the 9.8.0.0.0 Period Ending (AD 593) and his second k’atun in office (AD 594). He is thus likely just one generation removed from the Panel 2 Lacanhá youths. The stela illustrates the Period Ending, and the ruler is dressed in Tlaloc regalia (O’Neil 2012:fig. E.6). He holds a rectangular shield emblazoned with a Teotihuacán-style figure. The lord’s ko’haw headdress includes an interesting cartouche that portrays an individual wearing a Teotihuacán-style feline headdress. It is tempting to see these portraits as a reference to his predecessor who may have been one of the Panel 2 youths.

10. During the ten-year interim period (742–752) between the death of Shield Jaguar III and the accession of Bird Jaguar IV, Yaxchilán may have been ruled by a lord named Yopaat Bahlam, who is documented on Piedras Negras Panel 3 (Martin and Grube 2008:127).

11. Both Dos Pilas Stela 2 and Aguateca Stela 2 related a star war event against Seibal in AD 735. Dos Pilas Stela 2 illustrates Ruler 3 standing over the crouching Yich’aak Bahlam, and the text that frames this action refers to an event Yich’aak Bahlam underwent at Dos Pilas six days after his defeat (Bassie-Sweet 1991). Yich’aak Bahlam is again illustrated crouched beneath Ruler 3 on Aguateca Stela 2, but here the text that frames this action refers to the 9.15.5.0.0 Period Ending the following year at Aguateca. It could easily be assumed from this depiction that Yich’aak Bahlam met his end on the Period Ending altar, but inscriptions at Seibal indicate that Yich’aak Bahlam survived both of these ceremonies, and he is named as a vassal of the Dos Pilas-Aguateca polity well into the reign of its next king (Martin and Grube 2008:63).

12. The black cross-hatching on the knife indicates that it is a black stone, that is, obsidian.

CHAPTER 6. WOMEN IN THE TLALOC CULT

1. According to the lintels of Yaxchilán Structure 11, the building was owned by Lady Sak B’iyaan and was dedicated in AD 738 under the auspices of Shield Jaguar III just four years before his death. It has been suggested that Lady Sak B’iyaan might have been his daughter, but it is equally possible that she was the wife of the interim ruler.

2. It is curious that Bird Jaguar IV had two wives from Motul de San José. The last recorded event for Lady Wak Jalam Chan Ajaw was AD 755, and the first event of Lady Wak Tuun was AD 763. Marriage negotiations were time-consuming and costly
affairs but often necessary to form political and economic ties with foreign states. The death of the wife weakens those bonds. A common practice in Maya communities that practice traditional marriage customs is that if a wife dies, the husband marries one of her sisters. This may have been the case with these two women of Motul de San José.

3. Moon Skull is likely mentioned on Hieroglyphic Stairway I, but the section is too badly eroded to provide any information.

4. The name of Moon Skull’s house is composed of the number four and a bat head (Lintel 21 B7a and C6b, respectively). At the time of Moon Skull’s building dedication in AD 454, Calakmul was ruled by a lineage that used a bat head emblem glyph (Martin 2005). It is possible that the name of Moon Skull’s building was related to this polity and that the Kaloomte’ was associated with Calakmul.

5. The Tikal ruler Sihyaj Chan K’awill II was placed in Burial 48, a tomb dedicated a year after his death. The bundled corpse was missing its head and hands. While it is not impossible that he died in battle and the opposing faction made off with his head and hands, it is just as likely that these body parts were retained for conjuring rites.

6. In the upper corner of the scene is another, much smaller incised text giving the date 12 Eb, seating of Pop (AD 724), and naming the carver of the lintel.

7. Following the death of Shield Jaguar III in AD 742, a lord named Yopaat Bahlam II, who is thought to have been the son of Lady K’abal Xook and Shield Jaguar III, ruled Yaxchilán (Martin and Grube 2008:127). Bird Jaguar IV assumed the throne in AD 752, presumably after this lord’s death. A smaller tomb (Tomb 2) was located in the western room of Structure 23 and contained a male (García Moll 2004:270; Miller and Martin 2004:113). The remains of a bundle containing stingray spines and carved bones that are inscribed with the names of either Lady K’abal Xook or her husband, Shield Jaguar III, were discovered in the tomb. Based on these artifacts, Tomb 2 was identified as that of Shield Jaguar III. Lintel 26, which spans the doorway to the western room, focuses on Shield Jaguar III (he is depicted in a frontal pose). Still, it is odd that this great king would have been buried here off to the side in this rather small structure. It is possible that Tomb 2 is actually that of Yopaat Bahlam II (Nicholas Hopkins, personal communication 2015). If this was the case, he was buried with a bundle containing heirloom tools from his parents. On the other hand, if the Tomb 2 occupant was Shield Jaguar III, then he was buried with implements that belonged to his wife. It is possible that these were the specific bloodletters used by Lady K’abal Xook during the death rituals for her husband.

8. Bird Jaguar IV’s wife Lady Great Skull and her brother are seen on Lintel 14 performing conjuring events related to a different type of serpent on this date.

9. The placement of Lady Ohl’s head immediately below and touching the glyph block referring to the fiery spear-torch suggests there is a direct relationship between Lady Ohl and the fiery spear-torch.
10. There is little data to indicate the kind of training royal women undertook to become Kaloomte’. In a unique scene in the Bonampak murals, a young girl hands a bloodletting instrument to a royal woman while adjacent women pull cords through their tongues, much like Lady K’abal Xook on Lintel 24. Using young novices as ritual assistants is a common method of instruction and indoctrination. It is also possible that the training of Maya priestesses was similar to that of the Aztec maidens who served the temple compound of Huitzilopochtli. These young girls (ages 12–13) swept the temples, prepared the foodstuffs used in temple ceremonies, and created the textiles that adorned the idols. They were trained in songs, dances, ceremonial rites, healing, midwifery, divination, and sorcery. After they finished their year of service, they were free to marry.

11. It is likely that one of Bird Jaguar IV’s daughters was married to the king of Bonampak (Martin and Grube 2008:135). This Yaxchilán woman, named Lady Yax Chit Jun Witz’ Nah Kan, appears on Bonampak Stela 2 participating in a bloodletting ritual with her husband and mother-in-law in AD 789. She wears a dress decorated with a quatrefoil and mat motif. On Yaxchilán Lintel 25, Lady K’abal Xook’s dress has the same design. Although Lady Yax Chit Jun Witz’ Nah Kan does not wear a Tlaloc headdress like Lady K’abal Xook, Tlaloc heads decorate the borders of her garment. The implication is that she, too, was a Tlaloc priestess.

12. Lady K’abel was another Kaloomte’ woman whose father was a Kaloomte’ but whose husband was not. The monuments of El Perú indicate that she was a Kaanul polity princess who was married to the El Perú king K’inich Bahlam (Martin and Grube 2008:109).

13. Given that the Naranjo narratives link Lady Six Sky’s arrival with the birth of K’ahk’ Tiliw Chan Chaak five years later, there is little doubt that he was her son.

14. A rattlesnake tail appears between the ruler’s legs. It has been characterized as that of a scorpion (Saturno et al. 2017), but it is nothing like the hooked, segmented tails of scorpions that are illustrated in Maya art.

CHAPTER 7. GOD L: AN OBSIDIAN AND MERCANTILE DEITY

1. Quetzals only inhabit cloud forest with elevations between 1,200 and 3,000 meters. Although such forests existed from southern Mexico to Panama, these birds were particularly abundant in the cloud forests of the Alta Verapaz as far south as the Los Minas region. Quetzal hunters trapped male quetzals when their long tails were at their prime, at the beginning of the mating season in March. After removing the tail feathers, the birds were released to be harvested again the next season. The French naturalist Arthur Morelet (1871:338), who visited the Cobán plateau in 1847, noted that quetzal specimens were highly desired by European collectors and that up to 300 birds
a year were shot and shipped to Guatemala City at that time. In 1875, the adventurer John Boddam-Whetham (1877) noted that fortunately, the demand had diminished. Morelet described the ease with which his Q’eqchi’ guide summoned two male quetzals by imitating the quetzal mating call. A number of tourist facilities in the quetzal sanctuary of Alta Verapaz have planted the fruit trees most favored by the quetzal to attract these birds. It is highly likely that the ancient Maya were adept at these practices as well.

2. There are many mythological stories that explain how a plant or an object first came into being. This first gourd tree is of great importance because the Maya used such gourds as containers for the many types of corn and cacao drinks they consumed. One Hunahpu’s gourd head finds its antecedent in the Classic period One Ixim, who is illustrated with a gourd-shaped head.

3. The second trail left the town of Salamá and proceeded northwest through San Francisco, then climbed the Santa Apolonia ridge and followed that ridge to Santa Ana, at the confluence of the Río Carchelá on the Chixoy. The Pre-Columbian sites at this location (Los Encuentros and Pueblo Viejo-Chixoy) formed one settlement known as Rax Ch’ich’ during the Postclassic. From there the path followed the south side of the Chixoy River and then ascended to San Cristobal Verapaz and the Cobán plateau. Prior to its flooding by the Chixoy dam, merchants traveling by foot between Baja Verapaz and Alta Verapaz still used this route through Rax Ch’ich’ (Akkeren 2000:95–96).

4. The Río Mestelá flows west along the northern base of Xucaneb Mountain but makes an abrupt turn north when it reaches the northeastern slope of Cerro Chich’en and the La Cumbre footpath. The river then descends underground for about 700 meters before emerging out onto the plateau near the site of Chich’en. The name Chich’en refers to a cave, and it is highly likely that the mountain and the adjacent site acquired their name from this dramatic feature. Given that temple pyramids were symbolic mountains, I have argued that Maya ballcourts that feature two parallel sloped walls were likely fashioned after canyons like the Río Mestelá canyon (Bassie-Sweet 2008:229).