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Social Patterns in Pre-Classic Mesoamerica

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Ideology, Material Culture, and Daily Practice in Pre-Classic Mesoamerica: A Pacific Coast Perspective

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The first and second millennia b.c. saw the initial development and subsequent elaboration of social complexity throughout Mesoamerica (Grove 1981). The development of social complexity is marked by a number of features, but chief among these are the emergence of institutions, practices, and beliefs linked to power relationships and the domination of societies by elites (Mann 1986). There is now abundant documentation of such institutions and relationships in Pre-Classic Mesoamerica at the regional, household, and individual levels.

Archaeology has the benefit of viewing change over the long term. We can see the emergence of complexity and civilization in Mesoamerica over the course of a thousand years and select for analysis the salient and enduring relationships. Trajectories of demographic change, economic intensification, environmental relationships, and material culture change all become much more clear with the benefit of long-term perspective. The benefit of such perspective, however, can blind us to the way in which the enduring structures we witness were created and recreated. Social and cultural structures are the emergent properties of daily action, the patterns built from repeated individual actions (Giddens 1979, 1982, 1984). No structure, whether related to social roles and behavior or culturally held ideas, exists outside the way in which it is practiced by individual actors on a daily basis. A theory and model of daily social practice and the transformation of daily routines over time are thus indispensable to understanding change in the past if we are to move beyond simple description and reconstruction.

The structures of prehistoric social practice leave patterned material remains

in the archaeological record. The emergence of social complexity in Mesoamerica and elsewhere is marked by the creation of new material forms: the monuments that transform the landscape, new assemblages of pottery and tools that fill houses, the jewelry, clothes, and other accoutrements that decorate and define people as individuals and members of groups. That such changes in material culture should occur in concert with changing social relations is often taken for granted, in that material culture is frequently used to define complexity or is explained by simple functionalist accounts. This chapter attempts to establish broader links between material culture and the various aspects of social complexity. My approach is interpretative and seeks to understand how dominance, ideology, and material culture are linked at the level of daily practice in Pre-Classic Mesoamerica.

I propose to analyze daily practice in ancient Mesoamerica from two perspectives. The first is spatial and investigates the ways in which various aspects of the built environment and material culture reflect and shape the structures of daily routine and social interaction. The second perspective examines the way in which people interacted when they did come together. At both levels I seek to define and interpret the dynamic and recursive relationships among three artificially bracketed realms of prehistoric life: social structure and practice, ideology, and material culture. I then apply and expand the model via an analysis of the Early and Middle Pre-Classic period, ca. 1700–500 b.c. in the Pacific Coast region of Guatemala and Chiapas.

I will not repeat the arguments outlining the general aspects of structuration and daily practice theory, as those are now well established in the general archaeological literature, though not particularly well known in Mesoamerica (Hodder 1991; Johnson 1989; Shanks and Tilley 1988). Some general remarks regarding how ideology and material culture relate to general theories of practice are needed, however, before addressing the particulars of the case study.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

Ideology and Practice

Ideology is cultural. As such, it is understood differently by individual agents and different groups within a society (Giddens 1984; Hodder 1991). Such a view requires that ideology not be equated simply with religion (compare Demarest 1989) or viewed as an immutable core of Mesoamerican culture in all times and places (compare Coe 1981). While religion and “worldview” are important aspects of ideology, a broader concept of ideology must include how social identity and social relations are conceived and realized. As with other types of cultural structures, ideological structures are reproduced via practice.

They must be seen as dynamically linked to social action, especially to the negotiations and contestations inherent in any context of inequality. This must be all the more true in the Mesoamerican Pre-Classic, when large-scale inequality first emerged and must have been strongly contested.

The analysis of ideological change in Pre-Classic Mesoamerica has, until now, focused primarily on ceremonial ritual and the symbolic expression of dominant ideologies, or what James Scott has called “Official Transcripts” (Scott 1990). Such a limited focus is unfortunate on several counts. First, it gives the impression that the dominant ideologies were supported uniformly throughout society and were uncontested. We are then left with either an incomplete functionalist account of what ideology does (e.g., Drennan 1976) or a just-so story that glosses over the most critical issues of social dynamics (e.g., Schele and Freidel 1990). Second, a focus on ceremonial ritual alone ignores the possible tensions between the “Official Transcripts” and other possible “transcripts” reconstructed from economic and social evidence. Finally, a focus on ceremonial ritual alone portrays ideology as static and ignores the ways in which ideology is practiced and transformed in the act of practice.

Ideology is contested through processes of domination and resistance. Neither domination nor resistance generally takes place through an explicit discussion of ideology. Rather, they are carried out through social action in both overt and covert forms (Scott 1990). There are clear needs, both theoretical and pragmatic, to move the analysis of ideology beyond ceremonial ritual and to conceive of how it was practiced on a wider basis. Ideology as practiced dominance has clear behavioral associations. Primary among these are the practices of inclusion and exclusion by which dominant groups control social discourse. Exclusionary practices may seek to control when and where social interaction takes place between members of various social groups. The maintenance of dominance is in part dependent upon promoting social distance between the elite and other groups (Berreman 1982; Love 1991). A primary mechanism of exclusion is to erect physical or symbolic barriers that discourage interaction between groups. Elites seek to limit interaction to times and places of their choosing, where they control both the agenda and the presentation of discourse.

Material Culture

Material culture has been widely recognized by archaeologists, in Mesoamerica and elsewhere, to have a role in the expression of wealth, power, and status of individuals and groups. Mesoamerican archaeologists in particular have done an excellent job of linking the symbolic dimensions of material

culture to concepts of religion and worldview (e.g., Ashmore 1991; Schele and Freidel 1990).

Material culture must be seen as more than just symbol, however. The place of material culture in social practice is much more pervasive and encompassing (Hodder 1982a, 1982b, 1991). Pierre Bourdieu speaks of material culture representing a “world of objects . . . which is the product of the application of the same schemes to the most diverse domains, a world in which each thing speaks metaphorically of all the others, a meaning in which practices—and particularly rites—have to reckon at all times, whether to evoke or revoke it” (Bourdieu 1977: 91). The world of objects situates and guides social action. Bourdieu conceives of social practice as consisting in large part of habitual action, in which the various parts of the material world serve as mnemonics that shape but do not determine action. As noted by Moore and Hodder (Moore 1986; Hodder 1991), Bourdieu’s concepts of how practical knowledge is applied to the world of objects open a tremendously important avenue for analyzing ideology, social practice, and material culture. Bourdieu’s observations can also be expanded and elaborated by drawing additional theoretical strands from geography, as discussed below.

The world of objects, social practice, and ideology stand in a complex recursive relationship in which each at once makes and is made by the others. In such a framework, the production and use of material culture must be seen as forms of social practice that recursively act back upon social structure and ideology. The material world is created by structured practice and ideology, but it also transforms them via the daily actions of reflective agents.

The ways in which ideology and dominance are both expressed and shaped by the material world of objects are illustrated in the sections that follow. After a brief synopsis of the regional prehistory of Pacific Guatemala and Chiapas, these theoretical points are expanded and clarified.

Pacific Guatemala and Chiapas: A Synopsis of Regional Prehistory

My data are drawn from the Pacific Coast and piedmont region that encompasses southwestern Guatemala and Chiapas (Fig. 1). Over the past two decades the corpus of archaeological data for this region has expanded dramatically and forced a reassessment of standard interpretations of how social complexity first developed in Mesoamerica. We now know that this region witnessed the development of social complexity as early as anywhere else in Mesoamerica and that the scale and complexity of its sites and settlement systems match or surpass those of other regions of Mesoamerica throughout the Pre-Classic epoch (Love 1990, 1991, n.d.a).

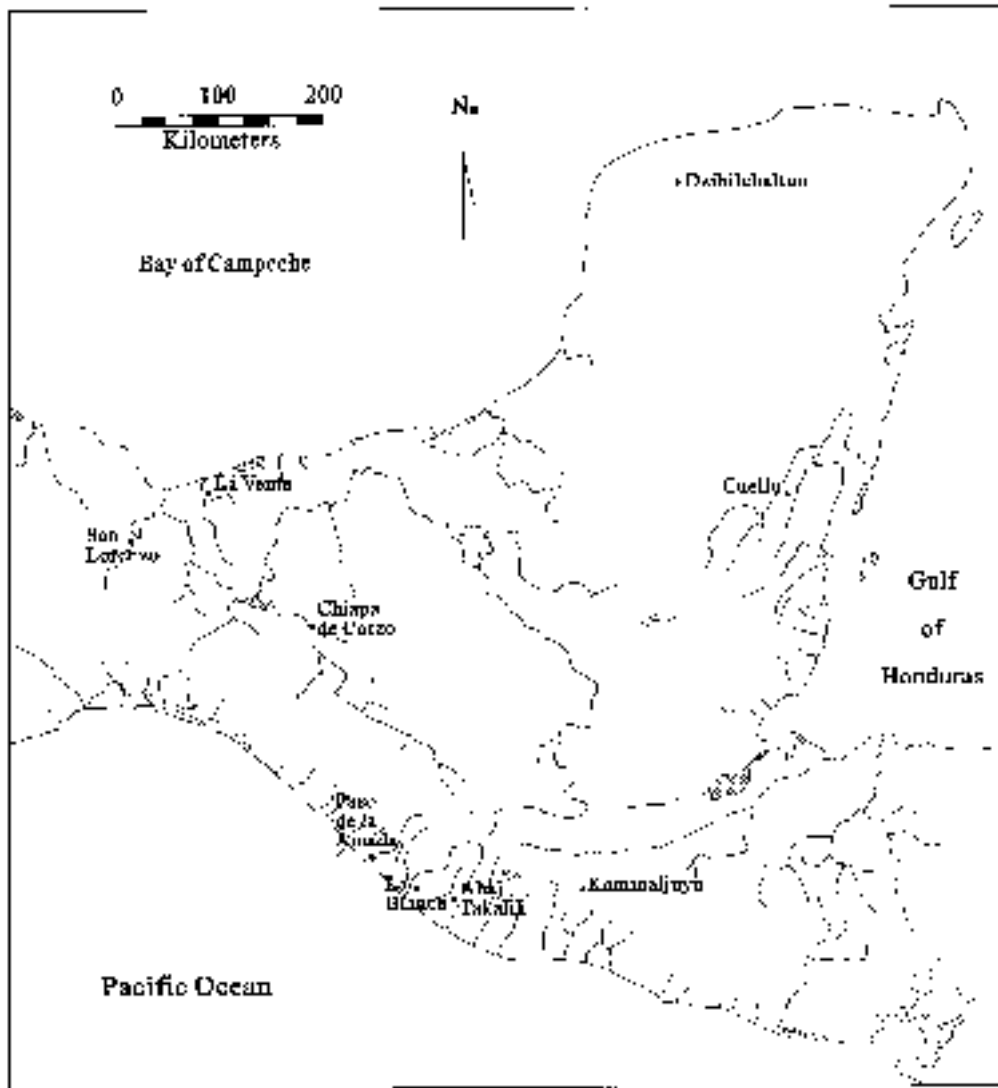


Fig. 1 Map of Mesoamerica showing the study area.

During the Early and Middle Pre-Classic, society in this region was transformed from one with nearly egalitarian social structure to one with much more dramatic social inequality. John Clark and Michael Blake have investigated the initial stages of this transformation in the Mazatan region of Chiapas, especially at the site of Paso de la Amada (Blake 1991; Blake et al. n.d.; Clark 1991; Clark et al. n.d.; Clark, Lesure, and Perez Suarez n.d.). Their data traces

the development of social complexity from the beginnings of sedentism in the Barra phase (ca. 1600 b.c.) through the end of the Early Pre-Classic.

A further stage of social elaboration is reached in the Middle Pre-Classic when larger regional centers emerge. In the Río Naranjo region, where I have worked, this stage of development is seen in the emergence of a multitiered regional settlement hierarchy (Love 1990, 1991, n.d.a). Household level data also indicate the emergence of marked social inequality at this time.

Two major regional centers developed in Pacific Guatemala at the beginning of the Middle Pre-Classic. The Río Naranjo region was dominated by the site of La Blanca, whose sphere of influence probably extended from the Río Suchiate and Izapa in the west to the Río Ocosito in the east (Fig. 2). The second major center was Abaj Takalik, located 45 km east of La Blanca in the piedmont region. Information about Abaj Takalik during the Early and Middle Pre-Classic is limited, but the impressive corpus of Olmec sculpture from the site marks it as one of the most important regional centers of the Pacific Coast at this time (Graham 1977, 1979, 1981, 1989; Graham and Benson 1990; Graham, Heizer, and Shook 1978; Orrego Corzo 1990).

The trajectory of increasing complexity continued into the latter half of the Middle Pre-Classic, but in a greatly changed historical setting. La Blanca declined sharply at about 600 b.c. and became a small village. Sometime after that a Maya group arrived at Abaj Takalik and either conquered or displaced the previous inhabitants, as witnessed by the great corpus of early Maya sculpture (Graham, Heizer, and Shook 1978). These events at Abaj Takalik are not well dated, but the expected publication of the ceramic sequence developed by the Guatemalan national project working at the site will clarify the cultural and chronological relationships.

Related in some way to these two major events was the founding and growth of the settlement of Ujuxte. Ujuxte lies on the coastal plain just 12 km east of La Blanca and 40 km southwest of Abaj Takalik. The ceramics of Ujuxte show that it was founded near the end of the Conchas period, at about 600 b.c., just as La Blanca declined (Love n.d.c; Love and Herrera n.d.). Although Ujuxte has a complex settlement history, it appears that most of the site area was occupied soon after 500 b.c. and occupation continued expanding during the Late Pre-Classic.

The social and political paroxysms outlined above were accompanied by equally dramatic changes in material culture. The world of objects that existed at the end of the Middle Pre-Classic differed vastly from that which existed in the Early Pre-Classic. Large centers had monumental architecture arrayed in formal plans. Many had sculpture, such as the Olmec monuments and colossal

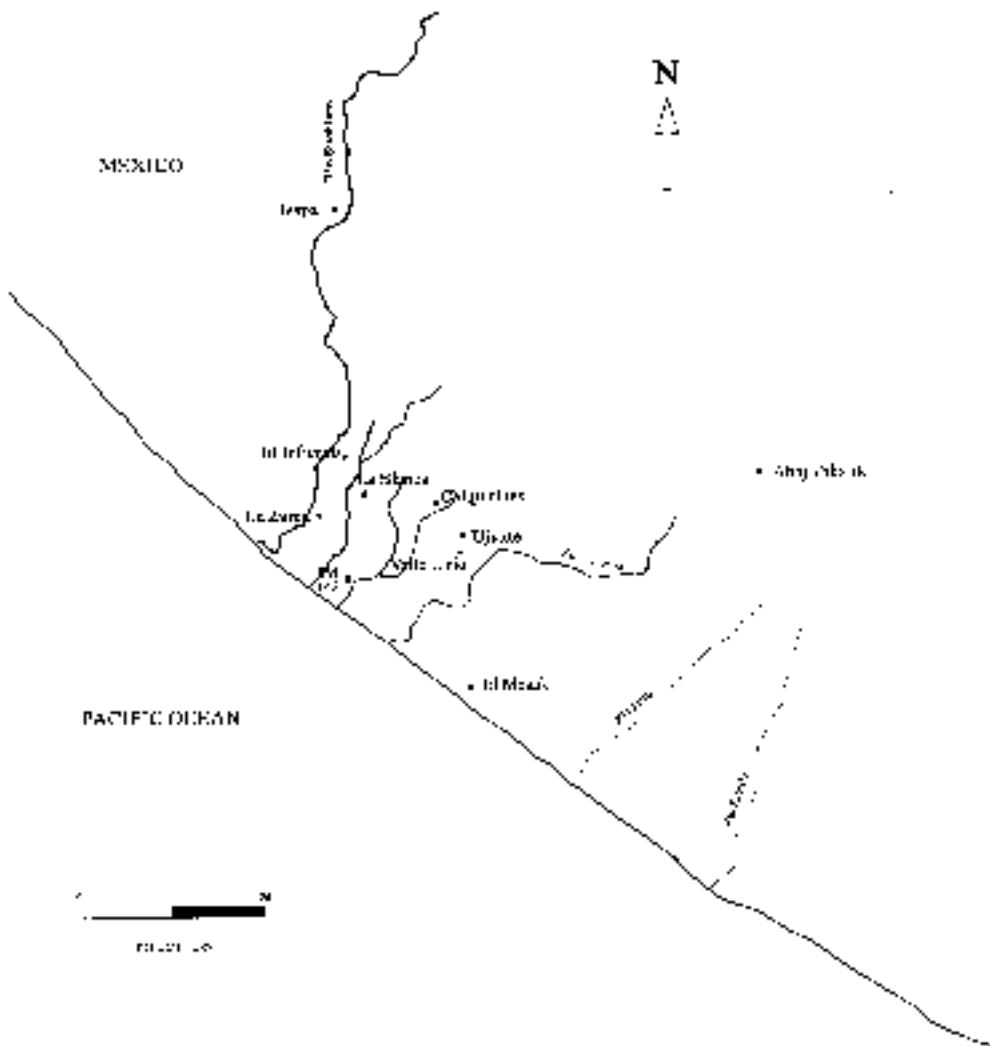


Fig. 2 Detailed map of the Ujuxte-La Blanca area.

heads of Abaj Takalik. The members of some elite households, such as those at La Blanca, used objects such as jade earspools and necklaces, mica pendants, elaborately decorated ceramic earspools, and ceramics decorated with an array of motifs not found in other households. The analysis that follows expands upon both the theoretical and the descriptive framework already presented in order to establish these links more concretely.

MACRO-SCALE: SPACE, MONUMENTS, AND REGIONALIZATION

The study of daily social practice in the Mesoamerican past can begin by examining how practices take place in space. A significant accomplishment in social theory during the past ten years has been to link structuration theory as presented by Giddens (1979, 1984, 1985) and Bourdieu (1977), among others, to a theory of space and time. Time-space geography, derived principally from the work of Hagerstrand (1970, 1975), has opened very productive lines of inquiry into how societies are reproduced and transformed by daily routines of action (Giddens 1985; Pred 1985; Soja 1985, 1989).

At the heart of these studies is a concern with how the practical daily activities of life occur in time and space, especially how face-to-face social action, co-presence, occurs. Hagerstrand attempted to study the webs of interaction constructed by an individual over the course of his or her life. He analyzed the trajectories of interaction over the course of a day, a week, a year, and the life of an individual to study spatial constraints on their conduct (Giddens 1984). Both Anthony Giddens and Allan Pred (1985) further develop Hagerstrand's ideas by linking them to theories of structure, agency, power, and social interactionism. Giddens and Pred both stress the importance of socially created space in interaction. Pred defines such space as "place," while Giddens defines it as "locale." To the concept of locale Giddens adds the idea of regionalization, or the zonation of time-space in relation to routinized social practices. Regionalization takes place at almost all locales, as types of social action and interaction become habitually separated in space and time.

Regionalization is vitally important to establishing power and dominance in that disciplinary power is often based upon enforcing co-presence or separation of social actors. For example, the disciplinary power of institutions such as prisons, asylums, and schools is based upon the routinization of certain patterns of co-presence within the prison and separation from the world at large (Foucault 1977; Giddens 1984).

As these theorists argue, we can interpret the organization of space in complex societies as a means by which dominance is practiced and discipline is enforced. Dominance, as seen in early complex societies, may be characterized as the emergence of regionalized social practices (in Giddens' sense) that shape social interaction between members of different groups. Such spatial segregation serves to reproduce social inequality, dominance, and their linked ideological principles by controlling co-presence and interaction, and, more specifically, by zoning locales and the social practices that occur in them. Regionalization enables the categorization of locales and practices, creating oppositions such as core-periphery, town-country, sacred-profane, elite-

commoner, frontstage-backstage. Dominance can be reproduced only when such distinctions and practices become routinized, and this can occur only when the material world is transformed to fix these practices actively in space.

The nature of dominance relationships consequently can be studied by linking spatial organization to other evidence for social organization within a society. To return to the case study, we can now link changes in the built environment to altered daily routines and examine how daily routines of social action and interaction were shaped, transformed, and habitualized via alterations to the landscape. In the Pacific Coast, this theme links the history of the built environment to evidence of changing social structure.

BUILDING A SOCIAL WORLD

The earliest sedentary villages of the Pacific Coast region are found during the Barra phase at about 1600 b.c. We have no solid evidence of the spatial organization of society for this period, however. For the succeeding periods some very good data on spatial organization are now available. Surveys show evidence of differences between settlements that reflect the development of regional political institutions and nascent social inequality soon after the beginning of the Locona phase. Within one of the larger settlements, Paso de la Amada, Clark and Blake have evidence of early public architecture dating to the Locona and Ocos phases (ca. 1400–1200 b.c.) from Mound 6, representing one of the earliest building sequences in Mesoamerica (Blake 1991; Blake et al. n.d.).

The best-preserved structure in this sequence is Structure 4, a rectangular building with rounded ends whose preserved clay walls stand nearly a meter tall (Fig. 3). The structure is 22 m in length, 10 m in width, and stands on a platform with about 164 cu m of fill. Structure 4 lies in the middle of the Mound 6 architectural sequence, overlying two earlier floors of similar shape and orientation (Blake et al. n.d.).

The floors of other similarly shaped structures dating to the Early Pre-Classic have been found by Clark and Blake in the Mazatan region. Structure 2 at Aquiles Serdan is also apsidal in shape, but only 6 by 4 m in size. The artifact assemblage is also similar to that of other excavated structures, so that Blake et al. (n.d.) believe that all of these structures are residential. In their opinion, Structure 4 in Mound 6 at Paso de la Amada is most likely the residence of a high-ranking person, possibly a chief. The artifacts of this mound contain a large number of decorated serving vessels, leading Blake and his colleagues to suggest that many of the activities at the location were public and possibly ceremonial.

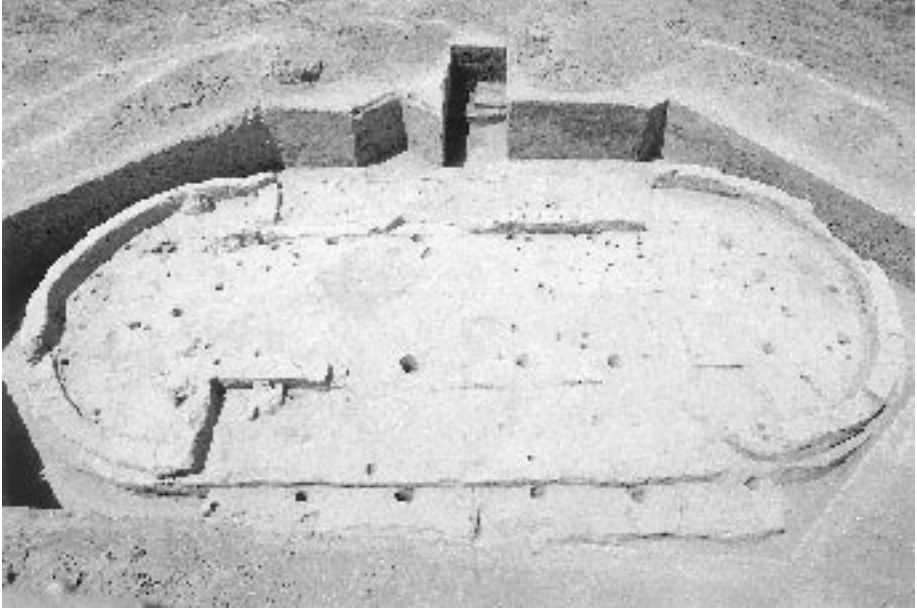


Fig. 3 Paso de la Amada Structure 4, Mound 6. Photograph courtesy of Michael Blake.

Other possible public constructions dating to the Early Pre-Classic may be located at El Mesak in Retalhuleu, Guatemala. Pye and Demarest (1991) report a mound 6.5 m in height located on the edges of the zone. They date the construction to late in the Ocos phase or early in the Cuadros phase. The identification of Mound 3 as ceremonial, and thus public, is based on its height and use of colored sands. Both aspects could, however, be products of the estuarine setting of the mound, and a more careful evaluation of the claim must await publication of details.

Significant alterations to the cultural landscape occur during the Cuadros and Jocotal periods (ca. 1200–900 b.c.). John Clark (personal communication, 1989) reports a 10 m tall mound more than 200 m long at the site of El Silencio on the Coatan River. This and other long mounds dating to the Cuadros and Jocotal periods may be associated with Olmec-style sculpture in the region (John Clark, personal communication, 1989).

By the beginning of the Middle Pre-Classic, there is a clear structure to the ways in which the environment is being modified. Widespread construction of monumental pyramidal mounds comes at 900 b.c., with the beginning of the Conchas phase. At this time, people in several sites in the Río Naranjo region

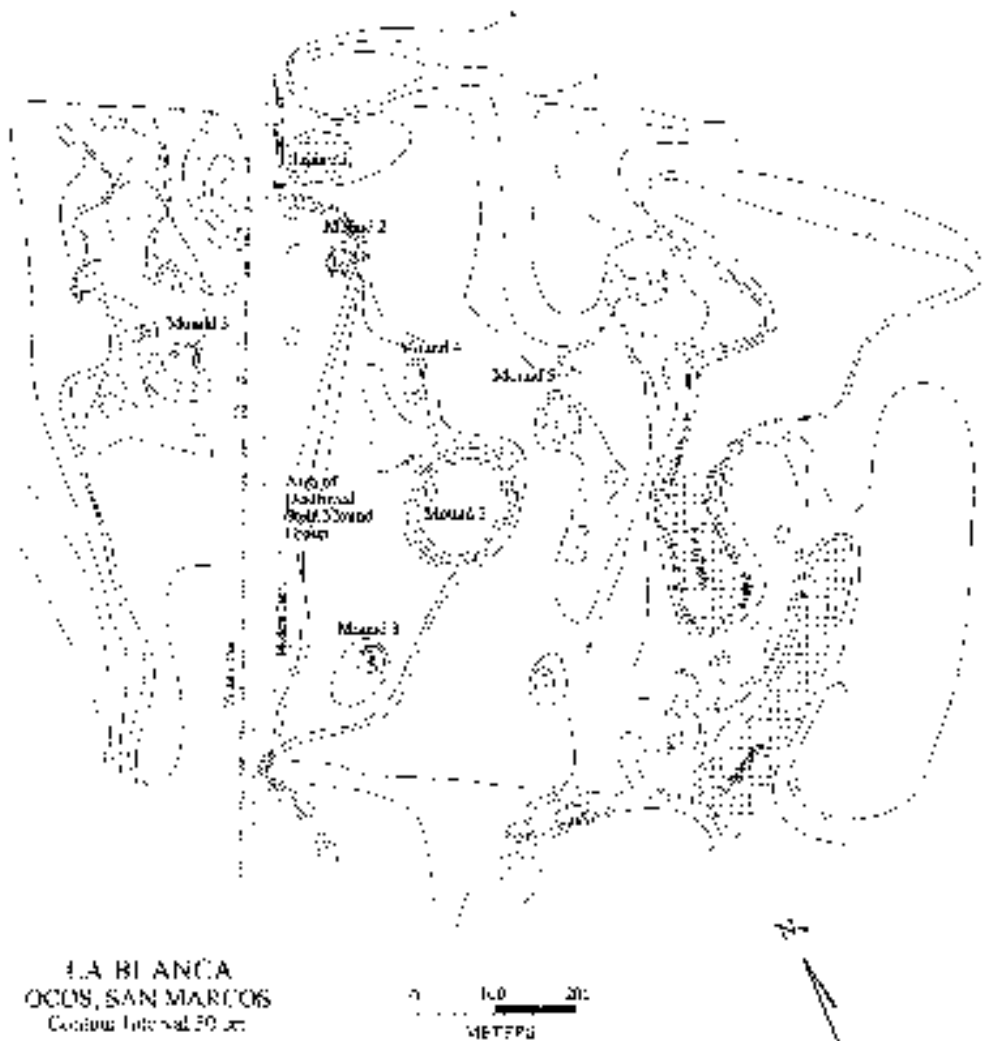


Fig. 4 Map of the northern sector of La Blanca.

constructed pyramidal mounds more than 15 m in height. The sites of La Zarca, Infierno, and Valle Lirio all have single large mounds dating to this phase. Mound 30a at Izapa should perhaps also be included in this group, as Izapa was probably a secondary center within the La Blanca polity (Love n.d.a). La Blanca has several mounds more than 5 m in height that appear to be ceremonial or at



Fig. 5 La Blanca Mound 1. Photograph courtesy of Edwin M. Shook.

least nonresidential (Fig. 4). The largest mound at the site was more than 25 m in height and 100 by 140 m at its base. Mound 1 was the largest construction ever built on the Pacific Coast of Guatemala and one of the largest of its time in Mesoamerica (Fig. 5).

There are some clear spatial correlates of these early monumental mounds. First, the distribution of secondary centers that have monumental architecture coincides fairly well with the limits of the Conchas ceramic complex, stretching from Izapa to the Río Ocosito. It may well be that these mounds mark the periphery of the polity dominated by La Blanca. Second, at La Blanca there may have been attempts to define spatial clusters by use of large mounds.

For La Blanca such spatial reconstructions are speculative. Many of the large mounds at La Blanca were severely damaged by road construction in 1972. Mound 1 was reduced to a stump, and many other large mounds were completely leveled. Given this damage it is difficult to say anything definitive about planning. The regular or formal arrangements of monumental architecture at La Blanca were apparently minimal, however. The relationship between Mound 1 and Mound 2 is the only one showing a significant directional orientation (magnetic north), and it is probable that a large plaza lay between them. The area west of Mound 1 was reported by Edwin Shook (personal communication, 1983) to have had several large mounds, one of which supported a stela.

The relationships between large mounds at La Blanca and the small mounds that surround them appear to me to be more significant, and I would suggest

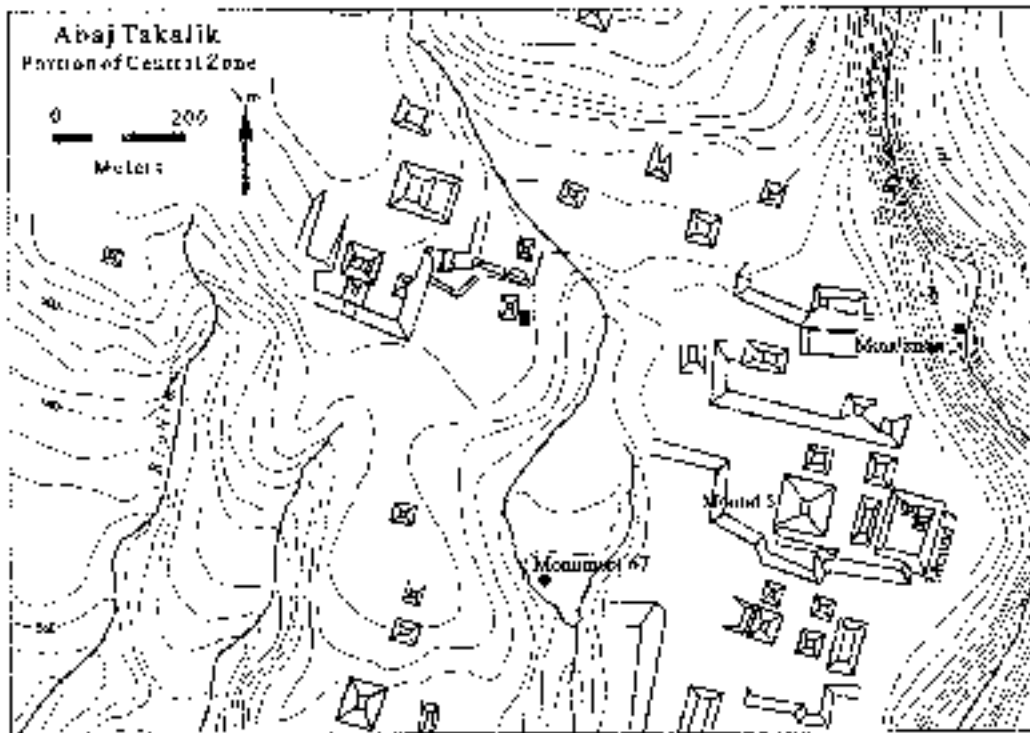


Fig. 6 Central zone of Abaj Takalik (after Graham, Heizer, and Shook 1978; 1984 reprint with new map).

that each of the large mounds is the shrine or temple of a residential group whose houses made up the small mounds around them. There is not enough direct evidence to establish such a pattern conclusively.

Although Mound 1 at La Blanca was the largest construction in Pacific Guatemala, other centers also had large ceremonial constructions. Abaj Takalik, whose Olmec sculpture shows that it was a major center contemporary with La Blanca, probably also had architecture on a grand scale (Fig. 6). No major excavated structure at Abaj Takalik has yet been securely dated to the early portion of the Middle Pre-Classic, but Mound 5 may have been built at that time. My opinion, which is frankly speculative, is based partially on the size of the mound; where excavations provide secure dates, the largest mound constructions in Pacific Guatemala are the earliest. In the Late Pre-Classic and later, monumental constructions combined smaller mounds arranged in formal groups.

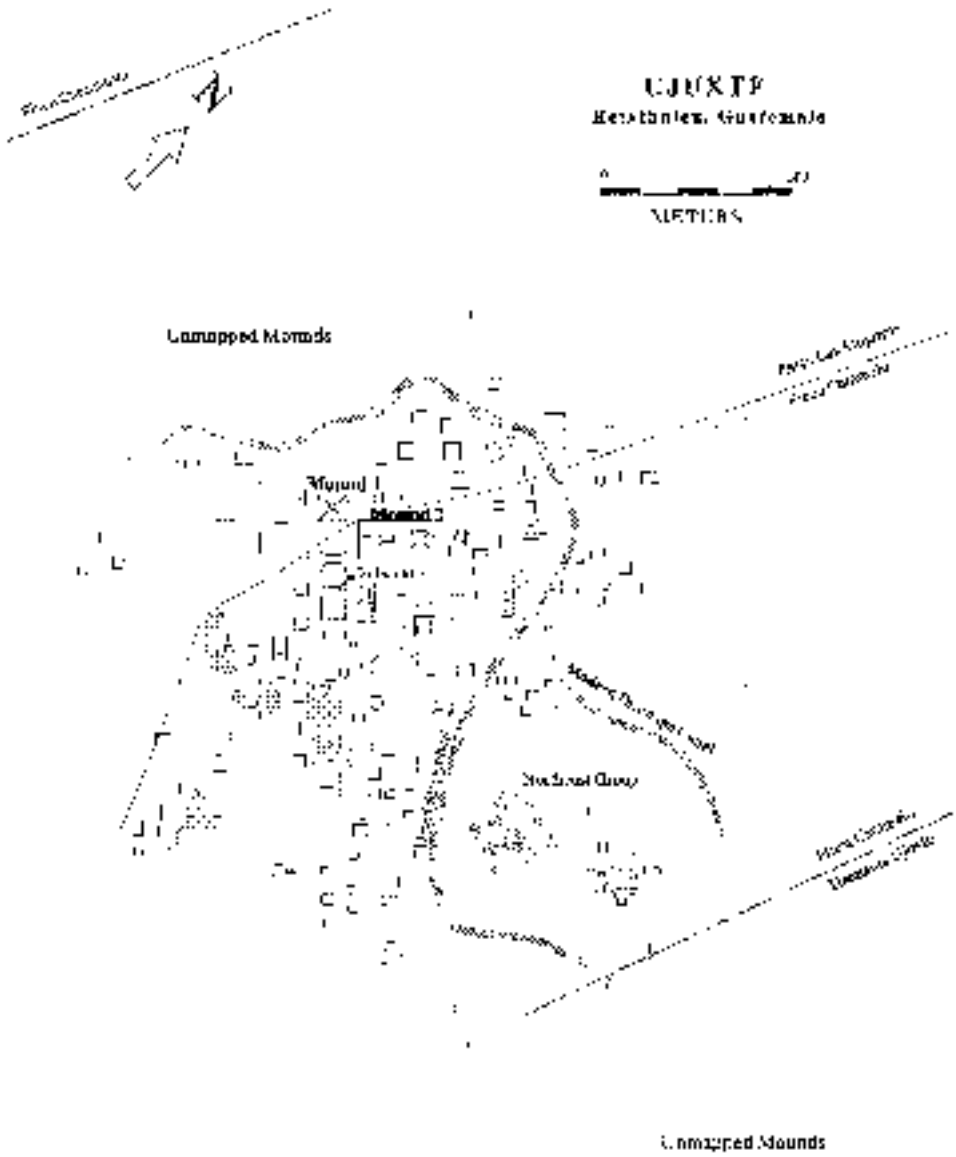


Fig. 7 Preliminary plan of Ujuxte, based on aerial photographs and ground survey.

Support for an early placement of Mound 5 comes from the fact that excavations within 100 m of the mound yielded the only lots of early Middle Pre-Classic material yet found at the site.

By the time of Ujuxte, spatial patterning had reached a zenith (Fig. 7). Ujuxte was in large part a planned city. Most of the city's mounds have an orientation about 35 degrees east of magnetic north. There are also Late Pre-Classic groups within the city whose mounds have an orientation of 55 degrees east of north. Both large mounds and small residential mounds are laid out with regular, nearly gridlike spacing, creating streets and boulevards.

The civic architecture of Ujuxte also follows a formal plan. The heart of Ujuxte's ceremonial center consists of Mound 1 and the Mound 2 Complex. The Mound 2 Complex proper consists of seven mounds on a large platform. Mound 1 is southwest of the group and probably had its stairway on the south side. The plan of the entire complex, including a smaller version of Mound 1, is duplicated at the nearby secondary center of Chiquirines. The largest mound at Chiquirines has its stairway on the west side, however. The plan of the Mound 2 platform is followed at the site of SM-142 as well, but lacks a large mound to the west. The SM-142 site might be classified as a tertiary center (Love n.d.c).

Ujuxte has many spaces with evident restricted access. Other spaces are enclosed in different structured ways. South of Mound 2 lies a massive ballcourt formed by Mounds 3 and 4. Both Mound 4 and the adjacent Mound 5 have enclosed patios on their east sides. An enclosed elite residential area may also be present near the core of ceremonial buildings. The tallest residential mounds within Ujuxte lie in a zone bounded by large ceremonial mounds and a now-dry streambed. These mounds have extremely high densities of ground stone tools and large quantities of decorated ceramics.

THE USE OF SCULPTURE IN STRUCTURED SPACE

Monuments and Space

The creation and use of monumental sculpture may also be usefully analyzed from the perspective of zonation of routine practices (compare Grove, this volume). Much sculpture was created during the Middle Pre-Classic, and most of it is recognizably "Olmec." I use the term *Olmec* solely as a stylistic label, without implying that the style has any geographical or ethnic connotations (see Love 1991). What is significant about Olmec sculpture in Pacific Guatemala is that it is found only at paramount sites such as Abaj Takalik and La Blanca. It thus marks them as distinctive places within their respective regions.

Only two small pieces are known presently from La Blanca (Figs. 8, 9). A



Fig. 8 La Blanca Monument 1.
Photograph courtesy of Edwin M. Shook.



Fig. 9 La Blanca Monument 2.

stela once present at the site was reportedly smashed by local residents in the 1970s. All three sculptural pieces come from a small area just west of Mound 1. The stela was reportedly set on top of a platform mound. The use of these unique features distinguishes this zone from the rest of the site. These facts suggest the use of sculpture to demarcate a restricted area of La Blanca as a ritual or sacred zone.

Abaj Takalik has a large corpus of Olmec sculpture, including two colossal heads (Figs. 10, 11). At Abaj Takalik, sculpture may well have been used as exclusionary markers: Monuments 1 and 68 (Figs. 12, 13) are both located on stream banks that would have been natural approaches to the site. Given the limited distribution of Middle Pre-Classic ceramics at the site, it is possible that the entire settlement lay within these boundaries. Other Middle Pre-Classic sculptures are found within this occupation zone (e.g., Fig. 14), although all were reset in later times, which leaves us without further avenue for investigation of Middle Pre-Classic patterning of sculpture within the site.

There is at present no sculptural corpus from Ujuxte other than two miniature (ca. 15 cm tall) potbellies found in surface collections in 1993. Given Ujuxte's immense size and its proximity to two great centers of sculptural production, Abaj Takalik and Izapa, this finding is strange. Smashed fragments from Chiquirines attest to the presence of sculpture near Ujuxte, and it is possible that Ujuxte once had sculpture that has been looted or destroyed.



Fig. 10 Abaj Takalik Monument 23.



Fig. 11 Abaj Takalik Monument 16/17.

Discussion

It is a long way from Structure 4 at Paso de la Amada to the ceremonial core of Ujuxte. The changes witnessed in architectural forms in the course of a thousand years bear striking witness to the social and cultural elaborations of the time. They also tell us much about the ways in which social interaction was shaped and modified by the world of material things.

In the Early Pre-Classic there were few attempts to shape the landscape. The modification of space was limited to the construction of dwellings on high ground. Some of these dwellings were apparently more elaborate than others and may have served as the scene of special actions or ritual acts. This is an important step, however, in that specific behaviors became fixed in space; they became associated with a locale. It was the first step toward segregating and regularizing activities in space.



Fig. 12 Abaj Takalik Monument 1.

Things changed fundamentally at the beginning of the Middle Pre-Classic. Monumental architecture of the type constructed at La Blanca, Abaj Takalik, and other centers has several effects on social interaction. First, these monuments warp social space much more than earlier constructions; they modify daily routines. Daily action includes space and is constituted in the routine use of certain spatial paths. In the trivial sense, these new monuments occupy space and therefore prevent the continuation of any daily routine that previously included the space upon which they are built. In a more significant sense, they become reference points for regionalization and the social categorization of space. That is, they become pivots for spatial segregation based on direction, distance, or other contingent factors. This referential quality differs from the locales of previous times in the size and durability of these monuments. Giddens maintains that the disciplinary power of locales is based upon their fixity; the ability to transform the novel into the habitual is based in part on durability. The size and durability of these monuments is significantly greater than anything that previously existed in Mesoamerica.



Abaj Takalik Monument
r Orrego Corzo 1990: 19).



Fig. 14 Abaj Takalik Monument 55.

Second, taken together, the monumental architectural constructions of the Middle Pre-Classic transformed and enlarged the concept of place. In the case of the Río Naranjo, the monuments at La Blanca and its secondary centers appear to define the center and peripheries of a polity. If this was true, the effects on daily activities would have been significant. The scale of social interaction would have been enlarged as the entire polity was materially redefined as a single locale. Thus an individual actor's daily routine might take place over a much larger physical and social space, though the space itself is more highly segregated. Such alteration of routine is evident in the spatial segregation of labor, for instance, in the development of special-function sites (Love n.d.b). At the same time, the possibilities for regionalization become much more pronounced as the number of groups and activities within the locale increase. Disciplinary aspects come into play as agents with differing social identities are forced into routinized co-presence and simultaneously restricted in their interaction with individuals and groups outside the locale's boundaries.

The built environment underwent another dramatic transformation during the time of Ujuxte. At this time, site planning was extended beyond the primary regional center into the hinterland. Secondary and tertiary centers became microcosms of the regional capital, extending referential spatial categorization to a more detailed level.

At Ujuxte itself, a very controlled social space was planned and constructed. Ceremonial zones of tightly clustered and precisely oriented mounds stand out clearly at the center of the city. Enclosed spaces, such as ballcourts and framed courtyards, were built within this precinct. Elite residences may be adjacent to the ceremonial core and segregated from the rest of the city.

The gridlike construction of Ujuxte's streets and avenues is especially salient. The grid could serve obviously as a means of spatial classification: every building and house stands in a well-defined relationship to others. But a grid also constructs a very precise spatial path through the city. The routine daily paths of every person at Ujuxte necessarily conformed to the regimen of the grid and thus were disciplined by the layout of the city.

A salient point in the above discussion is that, although much of the regionalization of space that took place in the Middle Pre-Classic was anchored on "ceremonial architecture," the social practices effected by this regionalization went far beyond ritual. Certainly these monuments were more than purely religious; they functioned as symbols of power, wealth, and prestige. More than that, however, their effect was to redefine all sorts of daily activities, including economic practices.

THE MICRO-SCALE: GROUP BOUNDARIES AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

The Middle Pre-Classic in Pacific Guatemala was thus marked by the pronounced regionalization and categorization of space. These processes were linked to dominance in that they affected how and where social interaction occurred. The size and durability of monuments, both architectural and sculptural, served to fix these new routines by indelibly altering the landscape in which interaction occurred.

Many types of space can be specifically linked to elite practices. Ritual precincts were salient as space was carved up, and a key aspect of domination was undoubtedly the ways in which the elite controlled access to and use of these settings. Elite residential zones were also present, both in an urban-rural dichotomy and the creation of elite residential zones within cities. The creation of these types of space had the net effect of constructing nonegalitarian forms of social interaction.

If the nature of when and where social interaction took place became more structured, so too did the quality of face-to-face encounters. In this context it is useful to analyze the material culture of individual households and the accoutrements used by their residents in the course of daily life. The data for this analysis is uneven but does provide some general outlines that complement the picture painted above.

Early Pre-Classic data suggest that there was little restriction on how various classes of material culture were distributed within society. Household assemblages show much less differentiation than in the Middle Pre-Classic. The presence of a ranked society is inferred from other lines of evidence, including settlement patterns, patterns of obsidian exchange, and the presence of craft specialization (Blake 1991; Blake et al. n.d.; Clark 1990, 1991; Clark and Blake 1989; Clark and Salcedo Romero 1989; Clark, Lesure, and Perez Suarez n.d.).

Data for the Middle Pre-Classic are similarly incomplete but nonetheless provide a consistent picture of significant social inequality. In addition to regional settlement data, excavations at La Blanca by Shook, Hatch, and myself, combined with Coe's (1961) excavations at La Victoria and surface collections from 60 Conchas phase sites, provide evidence for the emergence of inequality at the household level (Love 1991, n.d.a). Two households at La Blanca show signs of wealth and high status not present at any other locations in the site or region. These indicators include jade, jewelry of polished mica, and higher percentages of fine white-paste pottery.

These two households also have a unique array of decorative motifs on their pottery, including icons often labeled "Olmec." I have proposed previously that these ceramic motifs, along with items of personal adornment such as jewelry,

were intended to mark social boundaries (Love 1991). They served as exclusionary tools that marked the emergent elite as a distinct group and erected symbolic social boundaries.

The presence of these artifacts in domestic refuse deposits along with domestic pottery, the remains of meals, and broken tools suggests that they were part of daily life. They were used and lost in the course of ordinary practices. Although the precise social context of their use cannot be certain, such artifacts strongly suggest that symbolism of social identity and standing had become an important aspect of social interaction between and within the social groups constituting Río Naranjo society. Such symbolism would have been instrumental in affecting the quality of social interaction, that is, in distinguishing dominator from dominated and in signaling the behaviors appropriate to such social encounters. Rather than shaping the time and place of co-presence, such symbolic expression serves to shape the nature of the encounter. In so doing, it is a vital part of structuration and a means by which dominance reproduces itself.

The data from Ujuxte are still being analyzed. Surface collections from 180 domestic mounds show some evidence for the differential distribution of ceramic motifs and type of ground stone tools. While many ceramic motifs seen at La Blanca continue to be present at Ujuxte, there are also important changes in the domestic assemblages that may reflect a general decline in ritual at the household level and an increased emphasis on public ceremony in explicitly defined ritual settings. Figurines, for instance, are nearly omnipresent at Conchas-phase sites, but by the time of Ujuxte they had nearly ceased to exist.

CONCLUSION

The interpretations and data presented here are intended to do little more than outline some productive lines of inquiry that await exploration. The lines that develop will surely be influenced by fresh bodies of data emerging from ongoing projects on the Pacific piedmont and coastal plain. But while recognizing the importance of new data, we must also explore new theoretical alternatives that offer compelling avenues of interpretation and inspiration for empirical study. For instance, while I have emphasized the spatial aspects of the work flowing from Hagerstrand's time-geography, the temporal aspects also need to be explored. At the same time social space was becoming more highly segregated during the Pre-Classic, the calendrical reckoning of time was also becoming more formalized and more elaborate. The disciplinary dimensions surrounding the control of time by the elite are enormous and had ramifications for every aspect of daily life.

The social world that existed in Pacific Guatemala after the Middle Pre-Classic was vastly different from that which had existed previously. Power relationships,

reproduced and transformed over one thousand years, were more pronounced and more institutionalized than previously. Economic intensification had been achieved through an increased focus on maize agriculture, the rearing of the domestic dog, and specialization of labor (Love n.d.b).

Over that time the world of objects had also changed. Material culture had shaped the situations in which people came into contact with one another, the ways in which they became co-present in space-time. It affected the quality of those interactions as well. Far from being simply symbolic of social change, changing material culture remade the social world.

The elaboration of ritual, ceremony, and official cosmology were without doubt very significant aspects of the newly created social world of the Middle Pre-Classic. But equally important, if not more so, were the transformed daily routines of every member of society. The structures of habitus created and transformed over the course of a thousand years were what constituted the culture and society of Mesoamerican civilization.

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Ideology, Material Culture, and Daily Practice

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Ideology, Material Culture, and Daily Practice

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