

CLASSIC MAYAN KINSHIP SYSTEMS: EPIGRAPHIC AND ETHNOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FOR PATRILINEALITY

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Kinship and the Epigraphic Record

For many years, scholars working to decipher Classic period (A.D. 300-900) Mayan hieroglyphic writing suspected that the inscriptions were devoted almost exclusively to esoteric calendrical or astrological concerns. However, progress in Mayan epigraphy over the last 20 years has made it clear that many monumental inscriptions in fact present the dynastic histories of the sites where they are found. We now have at least partial records of rulers at many sites. The longest lists of rulers include mythological founders dating back thousands of years, legendary kings contemporary with Olmec florescence, and historical rulers up to the end of the Classic in the tenth century A.D.

Several elements of the information recorded in the hieroglyphic inscriptions have to do with the kinship system, which played a major role in Classic Maya social organization. At some sites, it was common for monuments to identify a ruler by including the names of one or both of his or her parents. These "parentage statements" were made using glyphs known as "relationship glyphs" (preceding the names of the parents), which have been interpreted as kin terms; this is a clear indication that kinship was relevant to rulership. And there are still other indications of the importance of kinship. Some of the titles which accompany rulers' names apparently refer to positions within a kin group. The rulers' names themselves may contain elements that are related to kin groups, and the so called "emblem glyphs" may relate as much to kin groups as to the sites they are associated with.

In order to increase our understanding of what these glyphs mean—the relationship glyphs, the titles, the names, the emblem glyphs—we need to know more about the social and cultural contexts within which they were used. Specifically, we need to know more about the social organization of the populations which inhabited these Mayan sites and the Mayan region in general during the Classic period, and about the role played by kin groups and kinship relations in that organization. We need to know what type of kinship system characterized Classic Mayan society, since if we can establish the type or types of kinship systems we are dealing with, we can draw upon our knowledge of how such systems function elsewhere to shed light on the Mayan case.

The sources that are available to us in this research are epigraphic, archaeological, ethnohistorical, ethnographic, and linguistic. But no one of these lines of evidence is sufficient by itself; each must be interpreted in light of the others. If we are to limit ourselves not only on the possible but to the likely, we must explore models which are coherent with each and every line of evidence, and be cautious of models based on single lines of evidence, however attractive.

Our assumptions must be made explicit in order to facilitate communication across disciplines. We should keep these assumptions to a minimum, and assume nothing that we are not forced to assume by the evidence. For little reason, many authors have assumed that it was the rule that the eldest son of a ruler would be the next ruler.¹ It then became necessary to explain all the exceptions to this "rule": why, in so many cases, did authority pass to a younger son, a daughter, or a son-in law? Attempts to remedy the effects of this unnecessary assumption have led to considerable gymnastics in the construction of models of Classic society.

There has been a tremendous amount of confusion between

¹ This assumption is based on a statement by Landa that may express only a preferred option. But Coe (1965:108, note 4), for instance, takes it to be prescriptive. On the other hand, Coe (1965:103) cites Roys' investigation of Yucatec social organization to the effect that the office of provincial ruler (*halach uinic*) and that of town heads (*batab*) were "hereditary within the patrilineage", while the *batab's* chief executive (*hol pop*) was "the head of the most important patrilineage in the town". Landa said of the hereditary office of high priest that "his sons or his nearest relatives succeeded him in office" (Tozzer 1941:27). Thus there seems to be clear evidence for the importance of the patrilineage in succession, but no strong evidence of primogeniture.

the concepts of rules of descent, rules of inheritance, and rules of succession. It has often been assumed that patterns perceived in one of these domains can be projected onto the others. But rules of descent determine to which kinbased social group one will belong. Rules of inheritance establish norms for the transmission of goods and property. And rules of succession deal with the transfer of political power. The three are not necessarily the same. Only in a society where kinship was the *only* principle of social organization could we expect them to be *identical*. The precise relationship between these three domains must be established for a particular society on the basis of the evidence, and cannot safely be assumed.

Finally, in discovering the rules of descent, inheritance and succession, it is useful to distinguish between the obligatory, the preferred, and the statistically most frequent. The last does not necessarily imply the first. While it may be very common for the ruler's eldest son to succeed, we need not *assume* prescriptive or even preferential primogenital succession. We should, rather, *discover* it, if it exists, through an examination of the evidence.

Ethnohistorical Sources and Their Interpretation

Discussions of prehispanic Mayan kinship have relied heavily on the 16th century sources on the Maya of Yucatán, principally Landa's *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán*, published in the middle of the 19th century. Landa devotes several paragraphs to a discussion of kinship and the family, naming practices, inheritance, and other related concerns. While Landa's statements have been interpreted differently by different investigators, most scholars have made use of Tozzer's translation (Tozzer, 1941: 98-99). The principal points mentioned by Landa are the following:

On kinship and the family:

1. Genealogy and family history was one of the Maya sciences.
2. The names of the fathers were passed down to the sons and not to the daughters. But both sons and daughters were called by the name of the father and the mother. The child of a man Chel and a woman Chan was known as Na Chan Chel. (The name taken from the mother is known as a *naal*-name in the literature).
3. Persons having the same name were considered to be all of one family, and aid was due to strangers who shared one's name.

4. Marriage was forbidden between persons having the same surname.

5. There were many who never took more than one wife (implying polygyny). There were prohibitions against marrying the wife of one's brother, the sisters of one's wives, one's step-mother, or maternal aunts. But matrilineal kin other than aunts were eligible marriage partners, including first cousins.

On inheritance:

6. Daughters did not normally inherit with their brothers, who divided the inheritance equally, with certain adjustments.

7. If there were no sons, then cousins or other nearest relatives inherited. A minor's inheritance was entrusted to the nearest relative, who administered funds to the minor's mother, as she received nothing directly.

On succession:

8. If a ruler's sons were not fit to govern, one of his brothers ruled, and if there were no brothers, the priests and important people elected a man capable of ruling.

Patrilineal Exogamous Clans

Ralph Beals concluded that Landa's text "only makes sense if we assume a sib system" (Beals, 1932: 472), that is, a system of nonlocalized, exogamous, patrilineal clans. In fact, in the earliest field study of Mayan kinship by an anthropologist, Tozzer (1907) found that the Lacandón, the Yucatec Mayas nearest relatives, had "totemic, nonlocalized, patrilineal, exogamous clans" (Nutini, 1961: 65).

In 1934, Fred Eggan (1934) published a detailed study of the Yucatec kinship terminology, using the newly-published Motul dictionary, the Beltrán dictionary, and Landa's commentary, and taking into account Tozzer's work and other ethnohistorical and ethnographic studies. Eggan concluded that the terminology "strongly indicates a marriage system of the bilateral cross-cousin type (Eggan, 1934: 189).² As possible alternative hypotheses to account

² "Cross-cousins" are father's sister's children and mother's brother's children, i.e., those cousins (of either sex) related to Ego through a chain of different-sex relatives. Father's brother's children and mother's sister's children

for the terminology, Eggan suggested "1. Cross-cousin marriage; 2. Exogamous moieties (or clans); 3. Daughter exchange by households", and remarked that "these three possibilities are not mutually exclusive or incompatible with one another, in fact the three are often found together" (1934: 197-198). Noting the naming patterns and the marriage prohibitions, Eggan concluded that the terminology indicated preferential cross-cousin marriage, and that "Landa's information seems to indicate patrilineal, named groups which had duties in regard to marriage, inheritance, and assistance, and which were not localized" (1934: 200). Eggan supported this hypothesis by citing ethnohistorical material on other Mayan and non-Mayan Mesoamerican groups, as well as Mayan ethnographic sources.

Some 25 years later, Hugo Nutini again surveyed the evidence for kinship systems in the aboriginal Mayan area, and judged Landa's statements to be "sufficient evidence for ascribing nonlocalized, patrilineal, exogamous clans to the ancient Maya" (Nutini, 1961: 64), noting that Eggan's (1934) analysis of the terminology strengthens this conclusion. Furthermore, Nutini added that south of the Yucatec Maya, but still within the territory where [Cholan] Mayan languages were spoken, there is "clear evidence of nonlocalized, patrilineal, exogamous clans among the Indians of pre-Conquest Verapaz and surrounding regions" (Nutini, 1961: 64). This evidence is contained in the writings of Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, who recorded his observations of these southern Mayans less than 25 years after the arrival of the Spaniards. Las Casas is worth quoting at length (1909: 624-625, as translated and quoted by Nutini, 1961: 64).

"As concerns marriages and weddings they had the following customs. First, they never under any circumstance married within the tribe, kindred, or family, according to their own way of reckoning kinship relationship, for they did not count as belonging to the family or kindred the children born in another tribe or lineage, even though the woman belonged to their own tribe or lineage. The reason for this was that such a kinship relationship was attributed only to men, in such a way that, if a man gives his daughter in marriage to a

are "parallel-cousins", "Bilateral cross-cousins" include both father's sister's and mother's brother's children, One's "matrilateral cross-cousins" are the children of mother's brother, and one's "patrilateral cross-cousins" are the children of father's sister.

man from another village, and then finds himself with no heirs but the sons of that daughter, they would not have any part of the inheritance, because they are in another village and they are sons of that man. . .

"... These women, after they were paid for by presents and donations given to their families, never returned to their parents, but after the death of the husband they remarried his brother, or some of his bachelor relatives, as it was said before. The sons of these women did not consider themselves related to their mothers' relatives, because they counted kinship relationship through men and not through women, as we have already said, and thus, nothing stopped them from marrying such relatives. I say that it was only with respect to marriage that they did not consider themselves related to their mothers' relatives, but in all other respects they loved them and honored them as such. They married, within all degrees of consanguinity in the already mentioned manner, for they considered more as a sister anyone within their own lineage, even though her degree of relationship be forgotten and sometimes very remote, than the daughter of their mother as long as it was with another husband, and because of this error they married their mother's sisters, but not those of their father, although this did not take place very often".

Nutini supports this model of nonlocalized, patrilineal, exogamous clans for the aboriginal Maya by citing ethnographic evidence from Tzotzil and Tzeltal (Guiteras Holmes, 1951, Villa Rojas, 1947) and Lacandón (Tozzer, 1907), as well as other sources. Nutini concludes that "although all vestiges of unilateral organizations have disappeared among the Maya of Yucatán, some type of unilateral organization similar to those described by Landa and Las Casas was general throughout the southern part of Mesoamerica before the Conquest" (Nutini, 1961: 66).

William Haviland has continued this line of argument, bringing into play archaeological data as well (1968, 1972, 1973, 1977). Haviland (1972) posits an early system of patrilocal extended families, a hereditary elite with patrilineal succession, and localized lineages or clans. He postulates that economic developments throughout the Classic weakened the corporate nature of the lineages and dispersed their members, resulting in the non-localized lineages or *ch'ibal* reported in the 16th century (Haviland, 1972: 8, 1973; see below for definitions of *ch'ibal*). Population reductions following European contact led to ambilocal residence and further modified social organization. Haviland supports his model with a study of 16th century Yucatec rules of descent (1977), and

has also used it to analyze the dynastic genealogy from Tikal (as given by Coggins, 1975).³

The afore-mentioned anthropologists have concluded from their study of the ethnohistorical, ethnographic and archaeological record that the pre-Conquest Classic-area Mayans had named, patrilineal, exogamous nonlocalized clans (or sibs). Nonetheless, in marked contrast, another line of anthropologists has insisted that in pre-Conquest Mayan society there were *matrilineal* descent groups as well, coexistent with the patrilineal descent groups. While this position has been put forth by several scholars, the evidence on which it is based is largely illusory. The idea that there is matrilineal descent in Mayan society originates with the work of Ralph Roys, and it is necessary to examine his statements critically.

Matrilineal and Double Descent: Roys' Analysis

Roys' position on Mayan kinship is derived mainly from his studies of the Titles of Ebtun (1939) and personal names of the Maya (1940). The points on which he bases his belief in matrilineal descent in Mayan society are the following (quoted from Roys, 1940 by Tozzer [1941: 98-99, notes 441-443], numbers and paragraph breaks added for clarity):

"We also find in the Maya language some indications that a matrilineal reckoning of descent paralleled the socially more important patrilineal system in Yucatán.

"[1] Just as in the male line a man designated both his son and his brother's son by the same term, *mehen*, so in the female line a woman employed a single term *al*, to indicate both her own child and the child of her sister.

"[2] Consequently the word *almehen*, which means noble, appears to refer to descent in both the maternal and paternal line.

"[3] Furthermore, we find in Maya two terms for lineage; one is *chibal* [*ch'ibal*], defined as descent in the direct line through the father, and the other is *dzacab* [*tzakab*], which means descent in direct line through the mother".

It is essential to understand that while Roys' comments have been taken without question as support for the idea of matrili-

³ At Tikal, according to Coggins (1975), rule passed patrilineally through 11 generations, with a few exceptions: rule passed from father to son in 7 cases, and from the ruler to his daughter's husband in 4 cases. These exceptions required Haviland to offer explanations, to which we will return later.

neality in Mayan society, none of the evidence cited by Roys does in fact imply matrilineal organization or descent:

1. The merger of Ego's children with the children of Ego's same-sex sibling (*mehen* for male speakers, *al* for female speakers) is not limited to matrilineal systems, but is equally common in patrilineal systems (e.g., Omaha), and thus is not in itself evidence of matrilineality.

2. *Almehen* 'noble' is composed of *al* 'child of woman' and *mehen* 'child of man', but the term does not in itself imply "descent in both the maternal and paternal line". In Mayan languages the juxtaposition of two nouns in the same paradigm indicates a super-ordinate category. For instance, Tzotzil *totil-me'il* juxtaposes 'fathers' and 'mothers', but does not mean persons who are both father and mother. Rather, it means 'ancestor (gods)', i.e., persons who are either 'fathers' or 'mothers' (Laughlin, 1975). Colonial Yucatec Maya *al-mehen* juxtaposes 'child of woman' and 'child of man', and simply means 'children' in general (Barrera Vázquez et al. 1980).⁴ Its use as 'noble' provides an example of a widespread Mesoamerican metaphor: see Nahuatl *pilli* 'child, noble', Mixtec *iya* 'child, noble, and perhaps many others. Note that the 'child of man' glyph in many Classic Mayan parentage statements is based on the glyph *Ahau* 'lord'.⁵ The Colonial term for 'noble', *almehen*, is not evidence for the recognition of descent in both maternal and paternal lines.

3. Various Colonial dictionaries contain terms glossed as 'lineage'. The two terms mentioned by Roys are *ch'ibal* and *tz'akab*. The definitions of *tz'akab* include "descendiente por vía recta de parte de la madre, descendiente en linaje" (see below). But while allowing room for speculation, the "mother's side" referred to here is not necessarily a reference to a line of matrilineal descent. Such an institution might have called for more comment from the Spanish chroniclers. It is not unlikely that "mother's side" is a reference to mother's *patriline*, since mother's patrilineage is often a recognized social entity in a patrilineal society.

The definitions for *ch'ibal* and *tz'akab* cited below are taken from the Cordemex Dictionary (Barrera Vázquez et al., 1980).

⁴ Chol has *al-p'enel-ob* 'children', composed of 'child of woman', 'child of man', and 'plural' (Aulie and Aulie 1978:29). Note that Chol *p'enel* and Maya *mehen* both also mean 'semen, sperm'.

⁵ This association of 'child' and 'noble' may go back to Olmec times, and perhaps explains the Mayan borrowing of Mixe-Zoquean 'child' terms *unin*, *une*, etc. (Hopkins, 1986; Campbell and Kaufman, 1976).

Ch'ibal

1. Diccionario de Motul (maya-español): "casta, linaje, genealogía por línea recta".
2. Diccionario de Motul (español-maya): "casta, linaje o nación".
3. Viena: "generación o linaje por parte de padre; casta, por linaje generalmente"; (*Ah*) *ch'ibal* "noble por linaje o fama".
4. San Francisco (Pío Pérez): "abolorio [abolengo] o linaje por vía recta masculina; generación por vía de varón".

Other sources repeat these entries, except that source 10 (Roys) adds "el grupo de todas las personas que llevan el mismo patronímico".

*Tz'akab*⁶

1. Diccionario de Motul (maya-español): "abolorio, casta, linaje o generación".
2. Diccionario de Motul (español-maya): "generación por vía recta de parte de la madre, descendiente en linaje".
3. Viena: "descendiente así en linaje, orden de generación".

Other sources repeat these entries, except that source 10 (Roys) adds, "descendiente por el lado de la mujer".

The closest any of these definitions come to matrilineality is "generación por vía recta de parte de la madre", from the Spanish-Maya inversion of the Motul. This cannot be taken unambiguously to indicate "a matrilineal reckoning of descent... descent in direct line through the mother" (Roys, 1940), since a literal translation says only that it is "direct descent on the mother's side".

In summary, Roys' evidence for matrilineality is either (1) incorrect, as in the etymology of *almehen*, (2) not convincing, as in the argument that *tz'akab* is a term for matrilineage, or (3) simply irrelevant to the question of lineality, as the merging of same-sex siblings in the kinship terminology. Thus, even though Roys was the initiator of the hypothesis of matrilineal descent and organization, there is no real support for such a hypothesis in the evidence he cites.

⁶ There are apparently two roots *tz'ak*, one of which means 'medicine' and seems unrelated to kinship. The other root appears in numeral classifier and verb stems, and may be the base of the noun *tz'akab*: *tz'ak* "grados de parentesco"; *tz-ak* "cuenta de grados y escalones y otras cosas que van unas encima de otras"; *tz'ak* "aumentar, añadir; *tz'ak* "contar" (= *xok*).

Other Postulations of Matrilineal and Double Descent

Michael Coe, reconstructing Classic Maya social organization, repeats Roys' arguments for the existence of matrilineal organization point for point, adding only that an analysis of the kinship terminology in the Motul dictionary made by Floyd Lounsbury (which remains unpublished) "provides confirmation of double unilineal descent", i.e., the existence of both patrilineal and matrilineal reckoning (Coe, 1965: 104). Haviland (1973) has responded adequately to Coe's argument by noting that a terminological structure by itself (in this case, Kariera terminology, according to Lounsbury) is not sufficient evidence to establish double descent, since other systems of social organization—e.g., Eggan's symmetrical cross-cousin marriage with daughter-exchange—generate equivalent terminology.

Rosemary Joyce's (1981) discussion of Classic Mayan kinship is based on similar terminological grounds, and she proposes the model of the Mundugumor of Papua New Guinea, involving alternating cross and parallel transmission of membership in the kin-based social group, creating kin groups called "ropes",... composed of lineal kin of alternating sex in each generation, i.e., a woman, her son, her son's daughter, etc." (Joyce, 1981: 46). As support for this model Joyce offers her interpretation of statements from Tikal (Coggins, 1975) and Palenque (Lounsbury, 1974, Schele, 1976). Joyce also cites as epigraphic evidence for her argument the glyph *le* (in Landa's alphabet), which appears in Classic inscriptions related to succession (Schele, 1976, 1980). Since glosses of *le* in the Motul dictionary include 'rope used for hunting', she concludes that Maya succession is like Mundugumor descent: "like the Mundugumor ropes, the Maya noose links generations in a cycle..." (Joyce, 1981: 50-51). As further support for her hypothesis, Joyce (1981: 50, 52) repeats all of Roys' arguments.

The metaphor "rope" for descent groups is used much nearer the Mayan area than New Guinea. In Classical Nahuatl, the rope metaphor refers to the *cognatic* descent group. Its use is thus not evidence for Mundugumorian cross/parallel transmission, and it is ludicrous to argue that because two cultures use the same metaphor for their descent groups, their rules of descent must be identical.

Philip C. Thompson (1982) also contests the claim of patrilineal descent for Classic Maya. He suggests that "the Classic Maya

at Tikal practiced bilateral cross cousin marriage, traced descent in both the male and female lines (double descent) and recognized both matrilineages and patrilineages" and that "the Classic Maya may have intended political office to pass alternately to matrilineal and patrilineal heirs" (Thompson 1982: 261). The first part of this suggestion is based on Roys' statements and on Lounsbury's characterization of the Yucatec kin terminology as *Kariera*. The second part derives from Thompson's (1978) analysis of 18th and 19th century Yucatec Maya wills, where there is a "relatively high (9.0%)" frequency of bequests to daughter's sons and to daughter's husband (3.8%), which "suggest that there was something special about these relationships" (1982: 264).

However, roughly half of the bequests go to patrilineal heirs, more than 20% go to other kin (including wife), and almost 15% go to non-kin, leaving only 12.8% as support for the *Kariera* hypothesis. Besides the rather weak statistical support for the proposed pattern of inheritance, the danger of inferring descent from inheritance patterns should also be kept in mind, along with the possibility of other explanations.⁷

Fox and Justeson (1986) use epigraphic data as evidence for still another interpretation of the Classic Mayan kinship system. They argue that a relationship glyph used at Piedras Negras which often connects rulers and their successors, and which has been read 'child' by other epigraphers, likely means 'nephew'. Therefore, they infer, succession is not always father to son. Their analysis of the Piedras Negras data leads them to the conclusion that the rule at Piedras Negras was held by the husbands of the women of a ruling matriline. Thus, rule passed from a man who was ruler by virtue of being husband to a woman of this matriline, to the ruler's daughter's husband, likewise a husband to the matriline. The successor is 'nephew' to the ruler because of a rule of cousin marriage.

But while succession was determined by a matriline, the rest of the society was organized patrilineally. Fox and Justeson (1986: 7) propose "that systematic matrilineal parallel-cousin and/or patrilineal cross-cousin marriage joined ruling families, with a ruler's son-in-law the heir to his throne and fraternal nephew the heir at a politically affiliated site". Rule thus passed from one patri-

7 If patrilineal descendants normally inherit, other relationships may figure prominently in wills, which are among other things a mechanism for directing inheritance to otherwise forgotten relations.

line to another, satisfying the competing interests of these descent groups. But they further argue that rule remained tied to a single royal matriline, which managed these marriage alliances with the patriline in such a way as to retain power.

As support for this extraordinary model, Fox and Justeson cite Roys' (1940) statements as evidence for the existence of matriline in Classic Mayan society, Thompson's (1978) study as support for the institution of matrilineal inheritance of office, and the analyses of Yucatec kinship terminology presented by Eggan (1934), Thompson (1978) and Riss (1977), which indicate cross cousin marriage, a pattern required by their model. A critical factor in the analysis is their own unpublished reconstruction of the Mayan kinship system and terminology, which is said to indicate that certain major changes occurred in the kinship system during the Classic period, with consequent shifts in the meaning of kin terms.

The system of interlocking matriline and patriline which Fox and Justeson propose has no antecedent in Mesoamerica, and certainly no parallels in Mayan ethnohistorical or ethnographic reports—excepting Roys' misunderstandings and the studies which use his statements uncritically. Furthermore, their argument relies on their own reconstruction of Mayan kinship, and there is no evidence that they have reconstructed more than isolated terms and parts of a system. Even a superficial examination of lowland (and highland) Mayan kinship terminologies reveals that a great deal of scrambling has gone on since Classic times, in both terminology and relationships. Unraveling this tagged history will require a much more systematic reconstruction which treats whole systems, not selected subsets.

Finally, their analysis is based on a novel reading of one of the standard relationship glyphs; unless this glyph means 'nephew' rather than 'child', their analysis fails. On this point, their arguments are not compelling. They interpret a compound glyph, T I.606:23, as 'one' (T I) plus a kin term, although there is no attested Classic kin term written T 606:23, and no phonetically and semantically appropriate term known from modern Mayan kinship terminologies. (The term written T I.606:23 should end in *n*, since T 23 has been shown to be phonetic *-n(a)*.) They then argue that by analogy with Tzotzil and Tzeltal compound kin terms composed of 'one' plus another kin term (e.g., Tzotzil *hun-tot*, 'one-father', meaning 'uncle'), the T I.606:23 glyph must indicate a collateral relative rather than a direct relative. Therefore succes-

sion is to nephews rather than to children. But as I have argued elsewhere (Hopkins, 1986) the compound glyph T I.606:23 can be shown to be a phonetic rendering of a widespread term for 'child', *unen*, where the glyph T I, 'one' is used for its *phonetic* value, not as the morpheme 'one'. This argument is supported by a pattern of substitutions which do not involve the numeral 'one', but which do utilize other elements having similar phonetic value. Furthermore, this interpretation does not invoke unattested kin terms nor does it imply a wholesale restructuring of models of Classic Maya kinship and/or succession patterns.

There is thus no real ethnohistorical, ethnographic, linguistic or epigraphic support for the Fox and Justeson model of Classic Maya kinship and succession.

Ethnographic Evidence

Any reconstruction of Mayan kinship must ultimately take into account the ethnographic reports of the kinship systems and social organization of historically recorded Mayan societies. A reconstruction that failed to do so would violate one of the basic principles of culture historical research. Ethnographic evidence presented so far (by Tozzer, Beals, Eggan, Nutini and Haviland, among others) has been correctly evaluated as support for a model of patrilineal exogamous descent groups. There is very little real evidence to support any other hypothesis.

It is therefore prudent to examine the ethnographic reports. In an isolated and demonstrably conservative highland zone just above the Chol lowlands, the Chalchihuitán Tzotzil have a system of named, exogamous patrilineages and demonstrate many of the characteristics which were described for the Maya in the ethnohistorical sources. Furthermore, other Tzotzil and Tzeltal kinship systems show evidence of having been similar, making it likely that a systematic reconstruction of earlier Tzeltalan kinship would yield a system like that of the Chalchihuitán Tzotzil.

The Chol kinship system and terminology itself, which is that of a modern Mayan population directly descended from Classic-area Mayan populations, also has indications of patrilineal organization. Together, these Mayan systems give strong support to the model of patrilineal organization suggested by other evidence.

Chalchihuitán Tzotzil Kinship

The Tzotzil Indians of the *municipio*⁸ of Chalchihuitán (Guiteras Holmes, 1946) have named, exogamous, patrilineal, localized lineages, which have the corporate function of controlling access to land, which is "owned" by the community and/or its patron saint. Within the endogamous *municipio* of Chalchihuitán, there are five territorial divisions called *parajes* (Spanish) or *calpul* (Tzotzil; the term is borrowed from Nahuatl). Within each *calpul* a number of patrilineal families reside and have usufruct rights to land.

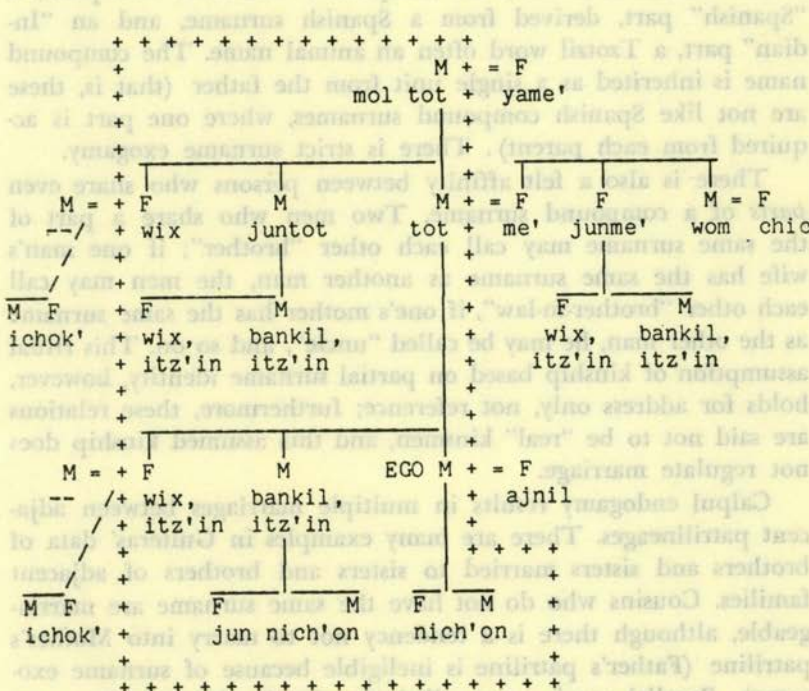
The kinship terminology is of a type known as Omaha (Guiteras Holmes, 1951, Romney, 1967: 225, Hopkin, 1969), in which parallel cousins are merged with sibling, and cross cousins are divided into distinct patrilineal and matrilineal classes (see Fig. 1). This system is not the only patrilineal system known from Mesoamerica (see Nutini, 1961), but it has the only attested Omaha terminology. However, the surrounding Tzotzil and Tzeltal systems have been analyzed by Guiteras as Omaha systems which have acculturated in varying degrees to Spanish. Neighboring Highland Tzeltal systems have various kinds of clan and phratry organizations, as well as surname exogamy and other indications of a patrilineal past. Chalchihuitán may thus be said to be conservative rather than innovative.

Some of the characteristics of Chalchihuitán social organization are community endogamy, *calpul*-endogamous first marriage, surname exogamy, and an affinity between persons who have the same surname (or parts of a compound surname).

Each patrilineage has control of defined parcels of land within its *calpul*, and land use rights are inherited only by males of the controlling patrilineage. No one owns land outright, because land cannot be bought or sold, but only used, since it belongs to San Pablo, the patron saint of Chalchihuitán. The community as a whole is endogamous, marriage outside Chalchihuitán being rare and negatively sanctioned. In addition, an individual's first marriage must be contracted within his or her own *calpul*, although later marriages may cross *calpuls* boundaries. A man and his wife are buried near his father's grave site; a widow may return to her

⁸ A *municipio* is a political subdivision of the state; in the case of Chalchihuitán its boundaries coincide roughly with those of the territory occupied and controlled by the Indian community. At the time Guiteras made her investigation, there were virtually no non-Indians resident in the *municipio*.

Fig. 1. Tzotzil Terminology (Chalchihuitán)
[Selected Terms]



+ + + + encloses the patriline

M	male
F	female
=	marriage

sibling link

or | descent

own patrilineage, and in fact will have to do so unless she has sons old enough to claim and work her husband's lineage lands.

All surnames (*holsbi*) are compound, and have two parts, a "Spanish" part, derived from a Spanish surname, and an "Indian" part, a Tzotzil word often an animal name. The compound name is inherited as a single unit from the father (that is, these are not like Spanish compound surnames, where one part is acquired from each parent). There is strict surname exogamy.

There is also a felt affinity between persons who share even parts of a compound surname. Two men who share a part of the same surname may call each other "brother"; if one man's wife has the same surname as another man, the men may call each other "brother-in-law", if one's mother has the same surname as the other man, he may be called "uncle", and so on. This ritual assumption of kinship based on partial surname identity, however, holds for address only, not reference; furthermore, these relations are said not to be "real" kinsmen, and this assumed kinship does not regulate marriage.

Calpul endogamy results in multiple marriages between adjacent patrilineages. There are many examples in Guiteras' data of brothers and sisters married to sisters and brothers of adjacent families. Cousins who do not have the same surname are marriageable, although there is a tendency not to marry into Mother's patriline (Father's patriline is ineligible because of surname exogamy). Parallel cousins are called "brothers", although there are indications in the data that Ego calls a parallel cousin "our brother" rather than "my brother", and they are said not to be "real" brothers (Hopkins, 1969).

There is a series of petitions for the bride brought by the groom's family, and the last of these is made by the groom, his parents, and his brothers. Likewise, the petition is made to the bride's father if he is alive, otherwise to her mother, and then to her brother (in that order of preference). A widower prefers to marry his deceased wife's sister; i.e., there is a principle of sororate marriage.

Relations between a woman and her brothers are strong, as they are the primary link between her and her patrilineage. A woman's brother may receive her bride-wealth if the father is deceased. The brother is the only man who can enter a woman's house after her marriage when her husband is not present. A widow's brother may bring in the harvest from the crop planted

by her deceased husband if her sons are not old enough to harvest the crop. And, a divorced or widowed woman may be taken in by her brother if her parents are deceased.

Thus, Chalchihuitán nuclear families are parts of patriline, each patriline being tied by male inheritance of rights of usufruct to a limited area. Marriage must be outside the patriline; names are an easy index of membership. First wives must be from within the calpul. As a result, there are numerous marriages between siblings of adjacent patrilines in successive generations, although there is no formalization of preferential cross-cousin marriage (Hopkins, 1967).

As far as authority is concerned, children are taught to obey and respect older siblings. Fathers scold and punish sons, mothers scold and punish daughters. Grandparents are respected and obeyed but do not punish their grandchildren. Parents' siblings have no authority over children. It is said that in earlier times, authority was manifested in the elders of each patrilineage, i.e., the oldest men with each surname, but this function has now been taken over by the older men who have passed through the full round of ceremonial and civil offices (the cargo system).

If we compare the elements of Chalchihuitán Tzotzil kinship and social organization to the reported characteristics of Pre-Conquest Yucatec Maya and Alta Verapaz social organization, we may note as common features that (1) names are inherited from the father; these patronyms are compound; (2) all those who share a name are assumed to be related; (3) there is surname exogamy; (4) daughters do not normally inherit; (5) a mother left widowed receives no inheritance from her husband's family to support her children; (6) there is a clear tendency not to marry into mother's patriline, although; (7) even cousins in mother's patriline are potential spouses. In the terminology; (8) a male's brother's children and a female's sister's children are merged with Ego's children, and (9) kin classes and terms are consistent with institutions of cross-cousin marriage and/or sibling exchange.

An observer describing the Chalchihuitán system might use much the same language as was employed by Las Casas to describe Colonial Alta Verapaz society, or by Landa to describe the affairs of Colonial Yucatán. It is clearly appropriate to use the Chalchihuitán Tzotzil kinship system as an ethnographic model in the interpretation of the ethnohistorical and archaeological data.

Chol Kinship

Chol kinship terminology recorded in the Tulijá Valley in northern Chiapas,⁹ together with Chol data from the Aulie and Aulie dictionary (1978) and the Warkentin and Scott grammar (1980: 114-115), can be interpreted as evidence of the prior existence of the kinship system outlined in Fig. 2. Villa Rojas (1969: 236) reports that in Chol Mayan groups, "within the family organization there are traces of the old clan and patrilineage system. Patrilineal surnames define the clan group". Aulie and Aulie (1953: 157) record the terminology and note that kinship terms are extended to persons with the same patronym, and that hospitality is extended to them as if they were known to be kin.

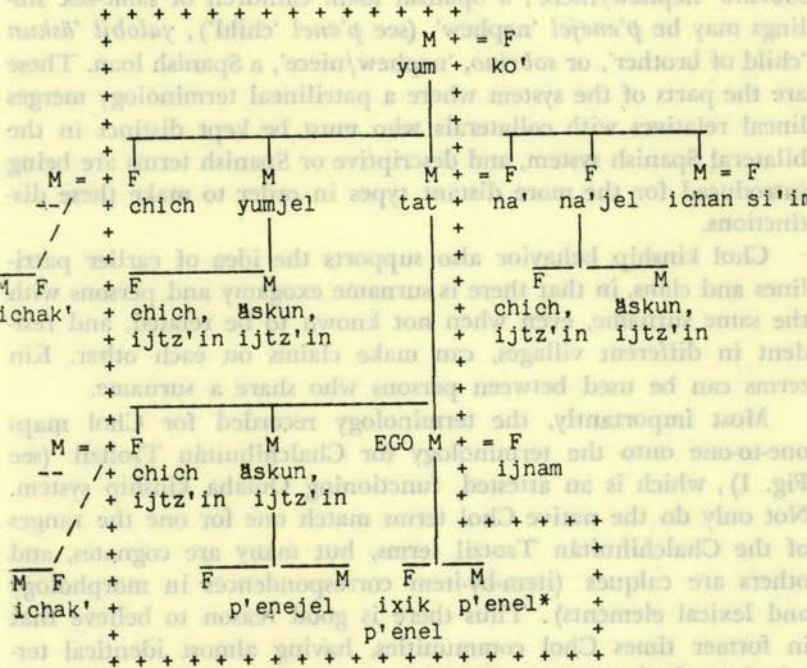
The Chol terminology indicates an Omaha system in transition. The principal features of the system are: (a) the merger of parallel cousins with siblings [parent's sibling's child = brother or sister], (b) the merger of the women of the patriline [father's sister = sister] and (c) a distinction between patrilineal and matrilineal collaterals [different terms for cross-aunts and -uncles on the father's and mother's sides].

There is considerable local variation in the kin terms used, and there are marked differences between individuals as well. This variation is especially true in terminology for cousins, where Spanish terms are often used. But the places in the system where Spanish terms have been introduced are consistent with the idea of a formerly more patrilineal system. Spanish is intrusive in just those places where native Chol terms are inadequate to represent a set of categories which are acculturating to a dominant kinship system of foreign origin. Where the reconstructed kinship system is like Spanish, Chol terms are used. But where the two systems are different, Spanish terms have been introduced to represent the new kin types.

Spanish is most prominent in terminology for collaterals rather than for lineal relatives. For instance, a parallel cousin may be

⁹ Data on Chol kinship and kinship terminologies were collected in association with field training of undergraduate Anthropology majors, under my direction, at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa, september to december, 1981. Luis Miguel Rionda Ramírez collected the most significant sample of terminological data, including the variants commented on here, in the *ejido* of León Brindis, municipio of Palenque. Other data which confirm the same patterns were collected in the municipio of Salto de Agua by Angélica Navarro Flores in Tronconada and Rodrigo Díaz Cruz in Tiempopá.

Fig. 2. Chol Terminology and System
[Selected Terms]



* Alternate term for Child
(of either sex): alobil

+ + + + encloses the patriline

M male

F female

= marriage

sibling link

/ or | descent

'*äskun* 'elder brother', *yalobil chich* 'child of aunt', or *primo* 'cousin', the latter a Spanish loan. Children of cross-sex siblings may be '*ichak* 'nephew/niece', *yalobil chich* 'child of sister', or *sobrino* 'nephew/niece', a Spanish loan. Children of same-sex siblings may be *p'enejel* 'nephew' (see *p'enel* 'child'), *yalobil* '*äskun* 'child of brother', or *sobrino*, 'nephew/niece', a Spanish loan. These are the parts of the system where a patrilineal terminology merges lineal relatives with collaterals who must be kept distinct in the bilateral Spanish system, and descriptive or Spanish terms are being introduced for the more distant types in order to make these distinctions.

Chol kinship behavior also supports the idea of earlier patrilineal and clans, in that there is surname exogamy and persons with the same surname, even when not known to be related, and resident in different villages, can make claims on each other. Kin terms can be used between persons who share a surname.

Most importantly, the terminology recorded for Chol maps one-to-one onto the terminology for Chalchihuitán Tzoltzil (see Fig. 1), which is an attested, functioning Omaha kinship system. Not only do the native Chol terms match one for one the ranges of the Chalchihuitán Tzoltzil terms, but many are cognates, and others are calques (item-by-item correspondences in morphology and lexical elements). Thus there is good reason to believe that in former times Chol communities, having almost identical terminology, had a system of social organization similar to that of Chalchihuitán.

It should be noted that the Chol populations are the cultural and linguistic descendants of a population which was removed from the Classic lowlands by the Spaniards in the Colonial period and resettled in the adjacent highlands (de Vos, 1980a,b). The ethnohistorical evidence for patrilineal organization from part of their former homeland (Las Casas on Verapaz) has already been mentioned. The modern ethnographic evidence from the eastern reaches of this region (Wisdom, 1940 on Chortí) is also consistent with the patrilineal hypothesis. Wisdom (1940: 266) also notes that sibling exchange would explain the terminology. Furthermore, Fash (1983: 281) has observed that the archaeological settlement patterns of the Copán valley are consistent with Wisdom's description of Chortí organization.

Epigraphic Evidence

The patrilineal model of Classic Mayan kinship and social organization, with nonlocalized, patrilineal sibs, fits with the relevant data from archaeology, ethnohistory, ethnography and linguistics. The final test of such a model should be whether or not it makes sense out of the epigraphic record.

It is apparent that there is diversity between sites with regard to the presentation of (and presumably the significance of) kinship data, and there seem to be striking regional differences in Classic period social organization, as implied by current interpretations of the inscriptions. No women are thought to have ruled at Tikal, although rule was transmitted through them to their children in some cases. Female rulers are prominent at Palenque and Usumacinta sites. Palenque inscriptions regularly give complete parentage statements (mother as well as father) for all rulers, but Copán lists only the fathers (with a notable exception, a woman from Palenque). Naranjo and Piedras Negras record marriages. But even if it is the case that the elite at each site developed its own style of governing, all of these phenomena, including the varied rules of *succession*, are consistent with a single rule or *descent*: patrilineal.

Tikal Successions

Coggins (1975) reports 11 successions of rulership at Tikal, according to the inscriptional evidence. Successive rulers and the inferred relationship of each to the previous ruler are shown in Fig. 3. Haviland (1977), while arguing for patrilineality, judged 4 of the 11 successions to be "exceptions" to a system of patrilineal succession. In these four cases, the ruler's daughter's husband succeeded to rule, rather than a son of the ruler. Thus, rule passed from the early ruler Jaguar Paw to his daughter's husband, Curl Nose. Kan Boar's successor was Ruler of Burial 160, the husband of Kan's Boar's daughter, Woman of Tikal. Ruler of Burial 195 and Ruler of Burial 23 are both succeeded by their daughter's husbands (Man from Southeast and Ruler A, respectively).

Three issues have been raised which must be analyzed separately. The first is the relationship of descent to succession—is the succession patrilineal, matrilineal, ambilineal, or not related to kinship? The second is the importance of primogeniture or birth

Fig. 3. Tikal Successions (Coggins, 1975)

<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Successor</i>	<i>Relationship of successor to ruler</i>
Jaguar Paw	Curl Nose	Daughter's husband
Curl Nose	Stormy Sky	Son
Stormy Sky	Kan Boar	Son
Kan Boar	Ruler of Burial 160	Daughter's husband
Ruler of Burial 160	Jaguar Paw	Son
Jaguar Paw	Ruler of Burial 195	Son
Ruler of Burial 195	Man from Southeast	Daughter's husband
Man from Southeast	Ruler of Burial 23	Son
Ruler of Burial 23	Ruler A	Daughter's husband
Ruler A	Ruler B	Son
Ruler B	Ruler C	Son

order—does the eldest heir inherit? The third is the relationship of jural authority to sex—do both males and females rule? At Tikal, the answer to the last question appears clear: no women are named as rulers. As to the second question, there are known exceptions to primogeniture (see below). And as far as principles of succession are concerned, in all cases succession is best explained by appeals to a patrilineal principle.

However, attempts to explain this pattern of succession have been hampered by the assumption that the rule implied was succession by the eldest male heir, and that any deviation from this pattern was an exception that had to be explained by special circumstances, i.e., that in these cases no elder male heir was available. Thus Haviland (1977) speculates that Kan Boar had no sons, and so his daughter's husband succeeded to rule. But Ruler of Burial 195 did have sons, one of whom was probably the ruler of another site; Haviland speculates that this son may have reached maturity before his father was ready to pass the rule, and established himself elsewhere, and that this may have been the case with the early Jaguar Paw as well (Haviland, 1977).

Of course, if there is no rule of primogeniture, then there is no need to account for the fact that rule sometimes passed to a younger son, rather than to the eldest son. As we have seen, the ethnohistorical evidence supports the role of the patriline in political succession, but does not argue for a rule of primogeniture (see note 1).

Likewise, there is no compelling reason to assume, as Haviland does, that the stated successions through daughters (whose husbands are displayed as rulers) are a violation of any rule of patrilineal succession. Daughters as well as sons are members of the patriline. The question of why these daughters do not rule (as women apparently do at other sites) is a separate matter. However Haviland raises the valid question of how rule may be passed through a female heir to her husband and still be retained by the same patriline (assuming that it is).

The mechanisms Haviland (1977: 64-65) requires for rule to pass to a daughter's husband without violating patrilineal succession are (a) the adoption of daughter's husband into her lineage (i.e., that of her father), or (b) regarding a female's sons as heirs of her (her father's) patrilineage rather than that of her husband. These are precisely the mechanisms employed in Chalchihuitán in the transmission of land rights by a man with no sons. The daughter's husband is recognized as effectively a member of his father-in-law's patrilineal descent group, resides in his father-in-law's house rather than patrilocally, and his children are considered to be the heirs to the father-in-law's land rights. Similar institutions are reported from other Mayan groups, e.g., Tzeltal and Chuj, where 'following the woman' is a recognized form of marriage. Thus, the "exceptions" in the Tikal successions are not, in fact, exceptions to a patrilineal principle; they are examples of the way things actually work in attested patrilineal systems.

On the other hand, it is entirely possible, even probable, that in these cases rule *did* pass from one patrilineage to another. While we may think it likely that attempts would be made to keep rule within the same patrilineage, we have no evidence that this goal was in fact achieved. On the contrary, there is evidence from other sites (see Palenque, below) that following patrilineal succession by a female, one patrilineage replaced another in rule.

At Tikal, granting the premise that women cannot rule, but their husbands must rule in their stead, the most striking aspect of the successions is not the frequent exceptions to an imagined rule of patrilineal primogeniture, but the fact that in each and every case, the next ruler is either a child of the former ruler or the husband of such a person, generation after generation.

The Role of Women

It is to be hoped that the patrilineal model will shed light on one of the most misunderstood topics in Mayan social organization: the role of women. The waters have been muddied considerably by a failure to distinguish between descent, inheritance and succession. Joyce (1981) is correct in pointing out that Western anthropologists, like Spanish chroniclers, have biases. But Joyce herself incorrectly assumes that patrilineal descent means that women cannot hold political office: she states that one of the problems with the hypothesis of patrilineal descent is that at Palenque "not only does succession pass via females but the title 'Lord' is actually held by women (1981: 48).

Haviland likewise seems to assume that women are not even members of a descent group in a patrilineal society; he speaks of a putative shift away from unilineal organization as a change towards the "unimportance of sex as a criterion for descent group membership" (1968: 113, emphasis added). Later he speaks of a shift to patrilineal descent, after which "membership in descent groups becomes restricted on the basis of this unilineal rule".

But membership in a patrilineage is not restricted to men. Women are members of patrilineal descent groups, since they too have fathers from whom they take social identity. Women may thus be patrilineal heirs to office. It may be statistically unlikely that they hold office, but here we do not have to rely on statistics. At least at Palenque we have definite statements that women rule. And if the rule of political succession is that a child of the previous ruler should succeed, as first option, then there is no reason why a female should not inherit the rule, or why a female ruler should not be succeeded by her child. Of course, unless special arrangements have been made, that child will not be of her patrilineage, but of that her husband.

If patrilineages were important in the social organization of Classic Mayan society, then it is at the point at which a female ruler is succeeded by her child (as at Palenque), or when a ruler's daughter's husband and then the latter's son succeeds (as at Tikal), that the patrilineal model would predict special effects. With the shift in ruling patrilineage, we might expect special parentage statements, changes in the name glyphs, new titles, and perhaps changes in other iconographic elements.

The Palenque Lineages

Kathryn Josserand has called to my attention that the patrilineal model helps to explain affairs at Palenque (whose ruler list is sketched in Schele, 1983). Assuming the model of patrilineal descent, the successive rulers can be grouped in terms of their patrilineages as follow (see also Fig. 4):

Fig. 4. Palenque Successions

Ruler	Successor	Relationship of sucesor to ruler	Type (see Fig. 5)
(1) Kuk I	Caspar	Son (?)	1
Caspar	Manik	Son	1
Manik	Chaacal I	Brother	2
Chaacal I	Kan Xul I	Son	1
Kan Xul I	Chaacal II	Son	1
Chaacal II	Chan Bahlum I	Brother	2
Chan Bahlum I	Lady Kanal Ikal	Daughter	5
Lady Kanal Ikal	Ac Can	Son	3
(2) Ac Can	Lady Zac Kuk	Brother's daughter	6
Lady Zac Kuk	Pacal II	Son	3
(3) Pacal II	Chan Bahlum II	Son	1
Chan Bahlum II	Kan Xul II	Brother	2
Kan Xul II	Xoc	Brother	2
Xoc	Chaacal III	Brother's son?	4?
(4) Chaacal III	Kuk II	Son	1
Kuk II	?	?	—

(1) Kuk I, the earliest recorded Classic period ruler; Kuk's son "Casper"; Casper's two sons Manik and Chacaal I; Chacaal's son Kan Xul I; Kan Xul's sons Chaacal II and Chan Bahlum I, and Chan Bahlum's daughter Lady Kanal Ikal.¹⁰ These rulers would all be members of the same patrilineage.

¹⁰ Schele (1983:122) assumes that Kuk I and "Casper" are the immediate patrilineal ancestors of Manik and Chacaal I, although no parentage statements connect them. The dates for Kuk I are not specifically tied either to the earlier, presumably mythological and legendary, dates of Lady Beastie and U Kix Chan, or to the later, presumably historical, dates for Manik and Chacaal I; the dates for Casper are tied to a Period Ending that places him just before Manik.

(2) Lady Kanal Ikal's son, Ac Kan, who rules next, is of his father's patrilineage, so he begins a new dynastic line. Successive rulers in this patriline include only Ac Kan and Lady Zac Kuk, the daughter of Ac Kans' brother Pacal I (this Pacal never ruled; he died several months before Ac Kan).

(3) Lady Zac Kuk's son, Pacal II (Pacal the Great), who rules next, is of his father's patriline; his father was Kan Bahlum Mo', not himself a ruler of Palenque. Successive rulers in this dynasty, all belonging to the same patriline, include Pacal II and his sons Chan Bahlum II, Kan Xul II, and Xoc.

(4) Finally, rule passes to Chaacal III and his son Kuk II; Chaacal III is the son of a Batz Chan and a woman who is mentioned on several monuments, but their relation to previous rulers has not been established, and there may be gaps in the record at this point.

Disregarding (4), the weakly documented final rulers (Chaacal III and Kuk II), there are no more than three patrilineages present in the Palenque dynastic history: (1) Kuk I through Lady Kanal Ikal; (2) Ac Kan through Lady Zac Kuk, and (3) Pacal II through Xoc.

Josserand notes that in the inscriptions of the Temple of the Cross, Chan Bahlum II (of the third patriline) records the ceremonies by which many (but not all) of his predecessors had been made "*zac uinic* of the succession" (as the titles are read by Schele, 1983). The same events are recorded elsewhere with a glyph read "seated as *ahau le*", i.e. seated as 'lord of the succession'. The term for "succession" is the glyph *le*, which surely has lineage implications; this title is probably a lineage title. In these statements, Chan Bahlum II mentions only the rulers in the patriline 1 and 3. He does not mention Ac Kan and Lady Zac Kuk (and his father Pacal the Great is mentioned only in Chan Bah-

In the case of the floating dates for Kuk I, Schele has opted for the later of the possibilities, placing Kuk I just before Casper; Josserand used this interpretation in her analysis of the Palenque lineages, and it is adopted here. However, Bassie (1986) argues from the point of view of text structure and chronological conventions that an earlier date is more likely, and she places Kuk I further in the past. In either case (and the latter appears more likely) Kuk I is treated as a revered ancestor of the ruling lineage, to whom no specific genealogical ties are stated.

Bassie (1986) also argues that Lady Zac Kuk, in lineage 2, was Ac Kan's sister rather than his brother's daughter. This interesting possibility has not been incorporated here since the model is not affected by the difference in interpretation (in either case, Lady Zak Kuk of the same patrilineage).

lum II's parentage expressions, not in the list of births and accessions). Josserand suggests that these facts indicate there are only two patrilineages involved, one being that of Ac Kan and Lady Zac Kuk (2 above) and the other including the patriline of Kuk I through Lady Kanal Ikal as well that of Pacal II through Xoc (patrilines 1 and 3 in Fig. 4). Thus, Chan Bahlum is recording the history of *his own lineage ancestors* who have taken the *zac uinic* title.¹¹

The Palenque ruler list and the patterns of political succession it manifests provide further support for the patrilineal hypothesis. In terms of stated or inferred kinship relations, there are six types of succession at Palenque (Fig. 5 shows the types, ordered by number of occurrences). We may refer to these as Type 1, Male ruler to ruler's son; Type 2, Male ruler to ruler's brother; Type 3, Female ruler to ruler's son; Type 4, Male ruler to ruler's brother's son; Type 5, Male ruler to ruler's daughter; Type 6, Male ruler to ruler's brother's daughter. There are 6 examples of Type 1, 4 examples of Type 2, 2 examples of Type 3, and 1 example each of Types 4, 5 and 6.

Fig. 5. Types of Succession at Palenque

Type 1, Male ruler to ruler's son	6 cases	40%
Type 2, Male ruler to ruler's brother	4 cases	27%
Type 3, Female ruler to ruler's son	2 cases	13%
Type 4, Male ruler to ruler's brother's son	1 case	7%
Type 5, Male ruler to ruler's daughter	1 case	7%
Type 6, Male ruler to ruler's brother's daughter	1 case	7%

All of the 15 successions are either to the child of the ruler (9 cases) or to a close relative who is a member of the ruler's patrilineage (6 cases), but these two strategies are sometimes in conflict. If the ruler is female (2 cases) succession is to her son, but passes to a different patrilineage, since her son is a member of her husband's patrilineage. Change in ruling patrilineage is thus

¹¹ Josserand further notes the repetition of names within the larger patrilineage, and the tendency for one patrilineage to have names of land animals, including birds (Chan, Bahlum, Xul, Kuk; snake, jaguar, small animal, trogon) while the other patrilineage takes names of aquatic animals of water birds (Ac, Zac Kuk; turtle, heron). Similar name patterns can be observed at other sites, and the patrilineal model would predict that these patterns would be intelligible from a lineage point of view.

an ultimate consequence of rule passing to a female of the patriline, i.e., to the ruler's daughter, or ruler's brother's daughter, who, as members of the ruling patrilineage, are legitimate candidates for patrilineal succession. Eleven of the 15 Palenque successions assure that rule in the *following* generation will be retained by the same patriline (Types 1, 2 and 4, where rule passes to a son, a brother, or a brother's son). In only two cases does rule pass to women (Types 5 and 6) and then to their children (Type 3); rule is retained temporarily within the same patrilineage (while the woman rules), but passes to a different patrilineage in the following generation since the sons of the female ruler, her heirs, are of her husband's patrilineage.

The frequencies with which these possibilities are realized suggest a hierarchy of options which compose the rules of succession. Only two of the 15 successors (13%) are female; we should infer that female successors rank low in the hierarchy. On the other hand, with the exception of the children of these two female rulers, all successors are members of the ruler's patrilineage, with the ruler's son an apparent preference (40%), followed by the ruler's brother (27%), i.e., by another son of the preceding ruler.

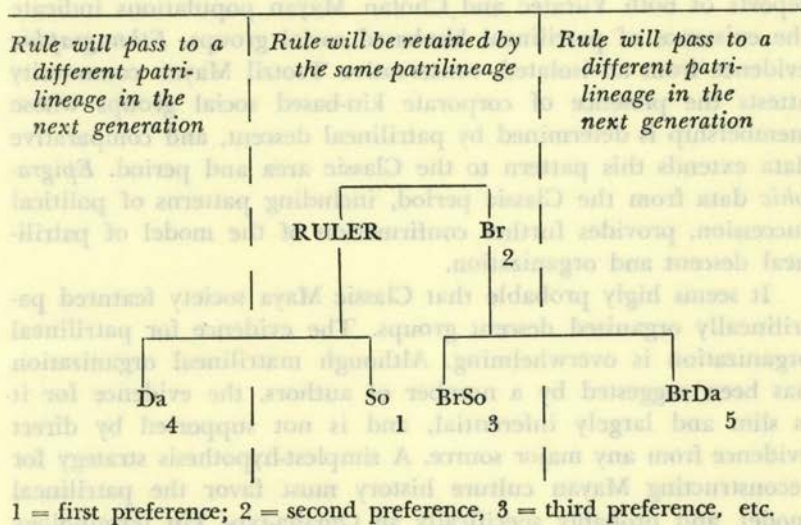
Judging from the Palenque data as currently understood, the hierarchy of preferences may be the following: succession is obligatorily to a son if the ruler is female (13%); if the ruler is male, a son is preferable as successor (40%), but succession by a brother is a frequent option (27%). Succession by brother's son (7%) has the same presumably desired effect of retaining rule within the same patrilineage. The least exercised options are succession by a ruler's daughter (7%) or by the ruler's brother's daughter (7%). This hierarchy is consistent with a kinship model of patrilineages combined with a political strategy of retaining rule within the patrilineage (Fig. 6).

If Josserand's analysis of the Cross Group inscriptions is correct, then the two cases of female rule at Palenque may be seen as cancelling each other out as far as changing the ruling patrilineage is concerned. Rule passes out of lineage 1 after Lady Kanak Ikal succeeds Chan Bahlum I, and her son Ac Kan (of lineage 2) follows her as ruler. But Ac Kan is succeeded by his brother's daughter Lady Zac Kuk (see note 10), and she apparently marries back into lineage 1, since her son Pacal II, who succeeds her, appears to be of lineage 1 [= lineage 3 in Fig. 4].

Interpretation of the data in terms of decision models must

Fig. 6

Hierarchy of Preferences in Succession and Relation to Patrilineages
(Male Rulers Only)



be done with full knowledge that the data are strongly biased. We do not have full genealogies for the ruling families and thus cannot know the full range of options available when decisions were made about succession. Specifically, we do not know enough about possible siblings (of either sex) who may have been passed over in the choice of a successor to be able to formulate rules of primogeniture, for example. We do not know if sons have been passed over when succession is to a ruler's brother. Nor do we know absolutely that when a female succeeds it is because she has no brothers. If historical and ethnographic examples are any guide, many, many factors may come into play in choosing successors, and we may have no data on some critical domains.

However, many separately recorded pieces of information may be brought together to give us a reasonable data base. At Palenque, for instance, different monuments record the dates of birth, lineage ceremonies, accession to rule, and death to rule, and death of rulers, along with their parentage statements and dynastic histories. These data have only begun to be analyzed in terms of a coherent model of kinship and social organization.

Summary and Conclusions

At least three lines of evidence suggest that the Classic Maya had patrilineal social organization. Sixteenth-century *ethnohistorical* reports of both Yucatec and Cholan Mayan populations indicate the existence of patrilineal kin-based social groups. *Ethnographic* evidence from an isolated, conservative Tzotzil Mayan community attests the presence of corporate kin-based social groups whose membership is determined by patrilineal descent, and comparative data extends this pattern to the Classic area and period. *Epigraphic* data from the Classic period, including patterns of political succession, provides further confirmation of the model of patrilineal descent and organization.

It seems highly probable that Classic Maya society featured patrilineally organized descent groups. The evidence for patrilineal organization is overwhelming. Although matrilineal organization has been suggested by a number of authors, the evidence for it is slim and largely inferential, and is not supported by direct evidence from any major source. A simplest-hypothesis strategy for reconstructing Mayan culture history must favor the patrilineal model, and probably specifically an Omaha-type kin terminology with named, exogamous, nonlocalized patrilineal clans.

Chalchihuitán Tzotzil patrilineages are localized, each being restricted to a small geographical area, the *paraje*. Evidence indicates that the Classic Maya patrilineages were non-localized, i.e., each had members in a number of different communities, and that this is related to the extension of political control and influence beyond the individual site to a regional level.

Tzotzil exogamy and Chol hospitality manifest an assumption of kinship on the basis of surname identity, in the absence of known genealogical ties. Technically, this is characteristic of *clan* organization, where kin ties are traced beyond known ancestors, rather than *lineage* organization, where kinship is recognized only if the connecting ancestors are known. Classic evidence also indicates clans rather than simply lineages. For instance, the inscriptions of the Cross Group and the Tablet of the 96 Glyphs at Palenque refer to apparent lineage ancestors (e.g., Kuk I and a much earlier ruler, U Kix Chan) whose dates indicate they lived in the distant past, and who are not connected to later rulers by specific genealogical statements.

When applied to the analysis of Classic Maya dynastic history,

as derived from inscriptional material, this patrilineal model of Classic elite organization accounts for observed patterns of political succession. It should also help explain many other phenomena which have been noted but not fully understood. It is possible that not only patterns of succession, but emblem glyphs, names, titles, ceremonies performed, and many elements of royal iconography may in part be determined by membership in social groups organized in terms of a principle of patrilineal descent.

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