THE CLASSIC MAYA

In the first millennium AD, the Classic Maya created courtly societies in and around the Yucatan Peninsula, leaving some of the most striking intellectual and aesthetic achievements of the ancient world, at large settlements like Tikal, Copan, and Palenque. This book is the first in-depth synthesis of the Classic Maya. It is richly informed by new decipherments of hieroglyphs and decades of intensive excavation and survey. Structured by categories of the person in society, it reports on kings, queens, nobles, gods, and ancestors, as well as the many millions of farmers and other figures who lived in societies predicated on sacred kingship and varying political programs. *The Classic Maya* presents a tandem model of societies bound by moral covenants and convulsed by unavoidable tensions between groups, all affected by demographic trends and changing environments. Focusing on the Classic heartland but referring to other zones, it will serve as the basic source for all readers interested in the civilization of the Maya.

Stephen D. Houston is the Dupee Family Professor of Social Sciences at Brown University. The author of numerous books and articles, he is also an archaeologist who has excavated and mapped Classic Maya cities for more than twenty-five years. A MacArthur Fellow, Houston is also the recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation.

Takeshi Inomata is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Arizona. He has conducted archaeological investigations at the Maya Center of Aguateca and at Ceibal in Guatemala. His numerous publications examine Maya political organization, warfare, architecture, households, and social change.
CAMBRIDGE WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY

SERIES EDITOR
NORMAN YOFFEE, University of Michigan

EDITORIAL BOARD
SUSAN ALCOCK, Brown University
TOM DILLEHAY, Vanderbilt University
STEPHEN SHENNAN, University College London
CARLA SINOPOLI, University of Michigan

The Cambridge World Archaeology series is addressed to students and professional archaeologists, and to academics in related disciplines. Most volumes present a survey of the archaeology of a region of the world, providing an up-to-date account of research and integrating recent findings with new concerns of interpretation. Although the focus is on a specific region, broader cultural trends are discussed and the implications of regional findings for cross-cultural interpretations considered. The authors also bring anthropological and historical expertise to bear on archaeological problems and show how both new data and changing intellectual trends in archaeology shape inferences about the past. More recently, the series has expanded to include thematic volumes.

RECENT BOOKS IN THE SERIES
LAWRENCE BARHAM AND PETER MITCHELL, The First Africans
ROBIN DENNELL, The Palaeolithic Settlement of Asia
CHRISTOPHER POOL, Olmec Archaeology and Early Mesoamerica
SAMUEL M. WILSON, The Archaeology of the Caribbean
PHILIP L. KOHL, The Making of Bronze Age Eurasia
RICHARD BRADLEY, The Prehistory of Britain and Ireland
LUDMILA KORYAKOVA AND ANDREJ EPIMAKHOV, The Urals and Western Siberia in the Bronze and Iron Ages
DAVID WENGROW, The Archaeology of Early Egypt
PAUL RAINBIRD, The Archaeology of Micronesia
PETER M. M. AKKERMANSA AND GLENN M. SCHWARTZ, The Archaeology of Syria
TIMOTHY INSOLL, The Archaeology of Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Figures</th>
<th>page ix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PART I  SETTING

1. Introduction ........................................ 3
2. Sociality .......................................... 28
3. Beginnings ........................................ 65
4. The Classic Period .................................. 105

## PART II  SOCIAL ACTORS

5. Kings and Queens, Courts and Palaces .................... 131
6. Nobles .......................................... 163
7. Gods, Supernaturals, and Ancestors ...................... 193
8. Farmers ......................................... 218
9. Craftspeople and Traders ............................. 250
10. End of an Era ..................................... 288
    Epilogue ......................................... 320

References 323
Index 377
LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 Map of Maya region. page 4
1.2 Map of the central southern Maya lowlands. 5
1.3 Mayan languages. 7
1.4 Distribution of Mayan language groups around 1950. 8
1.5 Flora and fauna of the Maya region. 9
1.6 Explorers and archaeologists. 13
1.7 Chronological chart of ceramic phases in the Maya lowlands and adjacent areas. 18
1.8 A Maya date in the fifty-two-year calendar, Tonina stucco jamb. 19
1.9 A Maya Long-Count date, Dos Pilas Stela 8. 21
1.10 Ruler as embodied time, Yuknoom Chi’e’n of Calakmul. 23
1.11 Concentric walls at Aguateca, Guatemala. 25
2.1 Maya roads or sakbhí in Coba, Quintana Roo. 33
2.2 Maya clowns. 35
2.3 Early Classic text relating to 3114 BC, on back of stone mask. 39
2.4 Feasting scene on Panel 3, Piedras Negras. 42
2.5 Degraded captive, Dos Caobas Stela 1. 43
2.6 Winik or “person” in Maya texts. 57
2.7 Day sign in personal names at Palenque. 58
2.8 Day signs on head of figure, Museo Amparo, Puebla. 59
3.1 Distribution of early ceramics in the Maya lowlands. 67
3.2 Reconstruction drawings of Cunil ceramics. 68
3.3 Real-Xe ceramics. 69
3.4 Mamom ceramic vessels. 79
3.5 E-Group complex at Tikal. 81
3.6 Cruciform cache found at Cival. 83
3.7 Jade offerings from Chacsinkin, Yucatan. 85
3.8 Chicanel ceramic vessels. 87
3.9 Tigre Pyramid, El Mirador. 88
3.10 Stucco mask found at Cival. 89
3.11 Stela 2 of Cival, the Late Preclassic period. 90
3.12 Stela 18 of El Mirador. 91
List of Figures

3.13 Maize God depicted on the north wall of the Las Pinturas structure, San Bartolo. 92
3.14 The coronation scene depicted on the west wall of the Las Pinturas structure, San Bartolo. 93
4.1 Dynastic vase from the area of Calakmul, Mexico. 106
4.2 References to Sihyaj K’ahk’, “Born from fire.” 107
4.3 Structure 3C-49 with talud-tablero, Mundo Perdido complex, Tikal. 109
4.4 Dos Pilas Stela 9, showing Bahlaj Chan K’awiil of Dos Pilas. 111
4.5 Map of Chunchucmil, Yucatan. 113
4.6 Reconstruction drawing of Piedras Negras South Group. 114
4.7 Structure L8–8 at Aguateca, an unfinished temple. 115
4.8 Caana Pyramid, Caracol, Belize. 116
4.9 Balamku, Campeche, stucco façade. 117
4.10 Tonina Monument 146. 119
4.11 Tzakol ceramic vessels. 121
4.12 Tepeu ceramic vessels. 121
4.13 Range of lithics from Aguateca. 123
4.14 Use-wear on stone tools. 124
4.15 Chert eccentric. 125
4.16 Wooden box, Tortuguero area, Mexico. 126
5.1 Maya glyphs for ajaw, “lord.” 132
5.2 Hero Twins in Late Classic imagery. 133
5.3 Selection of emblem titles. 135
5.4 Ceibal Stela 10. 139
5.5 Statements of subordination. 141
5.6 Royal accession at Bonampak, Panel 1. 143
5.7 Sak-hu’nal royal diadem from Aguateca. 143
5.8 Royal sight and agency, -ichnal and u-kabjiiy. 145
5.9 Royal lady from unknown site, probably in Chiapas, Mexico. 147
5.10 Queen and princess on Piedras Negras Stela 3. 149
5.11 View of courtly life, Bonampak Murals, Room 1. 151
5.12 Replicative palace at Las Palmitas, near El Zotz, Guatemala. 155
5.13 Principal palace at Calakmul, Mexico. 157
5.14 Palace at Aguateca, Guatemala, Structure M7–32. 159
6.1 Nobleman, “he of 4 captives,” with “Shield-Jaguar,” king of Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico. 165
6.2 Dwarves and court buffoons, Late Classic period, area of Lake Peten Itza. 167
6.3 Noble lady, Room 2, Bonampak murals. 169
6.4 Spatial distribution of noble titles. 170
6.5 Temporal distribution of noble titles. 171
6.6 Titles used by noblemen. 173
6.7 Stone bowl belonging to aj-k’uhuan. 175
6.8 Sajal at Xcalumkin, Campeche, Mexico, Jamb 7. 177
6.9 Possible sajal residence, the “C-Group,” at Piedras Negras, Guatemala. 179
6.10 Sajal palace, Acropolis, El Cayo, Chiapas, Mexico. 180
List of Figures

6.11 Noble palace, Structure D3–1, Tecolote, Guatemala. 181
6.12 Portraits of magnate, 1 May Mo’ Chahk, at various ages. 183
6.13 Noble titles related to objects, Bonampak murals building. 184
6.14 Messenger lord, Bonampak murals, Room 1. 185
6.15 Sculptor loaned to Bonampak by Yaxchilan, Bonampak Stela 1. 187
6.16 Monkey scribes, Late Classic period. 189
6.17 Ballplay against stairway and seated figure with conch, Drawings 21 and 22, Naj Tunich, Guatemala. 191
7.1 Maya gods, Sun Deity and Moon Goddess. 194
7.2 K’uh and k’uhul, for “god” or “holy.” 195
7.3 Yaxchilan Stela 7, showing k’uh energy in blood. 197
7.4 The Principal Bird Deity. 199
7.5 Wa hy i or “deity dwellings” from Copan, Honduras. 201
7.6 Yaxchilan Lintel 39, Structure 16, with summoning of K’awiil. 202
7.7 Impersonation of ancestors by Pakal, Temple XXI Platform, Palenque. 203
7.8 Dance or impersonation mask, Aguateca, Structure M7–22. 205
7.9 Whistles and figurines, Aguateca. 206
7.10 Ixchel, an aged goddess of creation, midwifery, and destruction. 207
7.11 A wa ly ib or “deity dwellings” from Copan, Honduras. 209
7.12 Souls of deceased parents, Yaxchilan Stela 4. 211
7.13 Depiction of ancestors. 213
7.14 Piedras Negras Stela 40, with incensing of royal tomb. 214
7.15 Piedras Negras Burial 45. 215
8.1 Late Classic Maya tamales, on polychrome vessel. 220
8.2 Cacao (kakaw) mentioned on hieroglyphic text from Vessel 15, Río Azul Tomb 19. 221
8.3 Ramón fruits and a tortilla made of ramón. 222
8.4 Tobacco in Maya imagery. 223
8.5 Ceramic painting depicting a peccary and a turkey. 224
8.6 Reconstruction drawing of a patio group at Aguateca, Group M6–3. 225
8.7 Joya de Cerén. 226
8.8 Plaster cast of maize from Joya de Cerén. 226
8.9 Structure 1 of Joya de Cerén. 227
8.10 Patterns of phosphate concentration in Group M6–3 of Aguateca. 231
8.11 Drained fields, Chan Cahal, Belize. 234
8.12 Terracing near Caracol, Belize. 235
8.13 Concave and convex watersheds at Maya sites. 245
8.14 Water-storage pits, Puuc–region, Yucatan, Mexico. 247
9.1 Possible market facilities at Puebloito, Guatemala. 253
9.2 Maya backpack. 254
9.3 Classic Maya canoes. 255
9.4 Sculptor’s signatures, selection from Piedras Negras Stela 12. 258
9.5 Offerings of scribal skill to human pair emerging from stone cavity. 259
9.6 Sculptor’s hand with double-hafted carving tool from Structure 195 in Group 9M–22, Copan, Honduras. 260
9.7 Artist tools from Structure M8–4, Aguateca. 260
### List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>Aguateca Stela 19.</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>Shell artifacts from Structure M8–10, Aguateca.</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>Instruction of supernatural scribes by an elderly god.</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>Sculptor at work, Emiliano Zapata Panel 1.</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>Woman’s clothing, a ceramic vessel from Mundo Perdido, Tikal, Guatemala.</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>Selection of Terminal Classic Maya spindle whorls, Tonina, Mexico.</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.14</td>
<td>Grinding stones from Structure M8–3, Aguateca.</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15</td>
<td>Quarry near the Río Santa Amelia, Guatemala.</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.16</td>
<td>Array of vessels from late ninth-century Aguateca.</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>Supposed “foreigner” at Ceibal, Stela 1.</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>The ruler of La Amelia, Panel 2.</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>Storage chamber in Aguateca Structure M7–22, “the House of the Masks.”</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>Fragments of Piedras Negras Throne 1, when found, Structure J–6.</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>Calakmul Stela 30.</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>Cehpech and Sotuta ceramics.</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>Nunnery Quadrangle, Uxmal.</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>“Chac moool” in the Temple of Warriors at Chichen Itza, Yucatan.</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>Battle scene in the Upper Temple of the Jaguars, Chichen Itza.</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

The Classic Maya are a fiction from which deeper realities emerge. In all probability, indigenous groups of the Yucatán Peninsula and adjacent zones never perceived themselves as a single “people” during the first millennium. Yet, they can be treated as such for a very simple reason: the Classic Maya lived in ways more alike than unlike. Most spoke related languages, including a prestigious form, now extinct, termed “Classic Ch’olti’an.” Some of their thoughts found expression in an elaborate hieroglyphic script, easily the most complex developed in the New World. This script recorded ideas and practices found consistently across the Maya region. Codified symbols, including images freighted with meaning and narrative, reflected much of the same, with conventions and concepts that could be understood from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to the valleys of western Honduras. Regardless of area, the Classic Maya lived in civic communities of semidivine kings, nobles, farmers, and craftspeople, in daily converse with spirits of sundry origin, location, and influence. Their settlements had similar layouts, their crafts and agriculture related technologies. Scholars can be forgiven, then, for treating the Classic Maya as a single phenomenon, albeit one of a diverse and complex nature.

In part, this book is a new story of the Classic Maya. Over the last two decades, with more generous funding and greater numbers of Mayanists, evidence of who the Classic Maya were and what they did has increased. Large sums of money and other resources – although never enough – have been invested into archaeological digs, but not all of the results have been fully published, nor are there signs of their being published in a timely fashion. The decipherment of glyphic texts and more refined studies of iconography disclose new views on the Maya. Other disciplines, from soil science to biological anthropology, reveal tandem information. The Mayanist can now poach valuable and stimulating ideas from gender or cultural studies, geography, political science, psychology, linguistics, art history, and comparative anthropology. The belief that studies of the Classic Maya should be reduced to any one interpretive approach, be it “processual,” “ecological,” or “humanistic” archaeology,
restricts rather than enhances understanding. This book attests to the futility of maintaining rigid disciplinary boundaries or defending the sanctity of "-isms." The Classic Maya will remain elusive without an eclectic and flexible approach from which scholars can paint a portrait in color rather than monochrome.

A work of synthesis cannot, without becoming a tedious encyclopedia, cover all advances or touch on every theme and archaeological site. Nor can it be a chronicle of historical developments, an approach essayed successfully by others (Martin and Grube 2008). But it can and must chart the most important topics, in fair evaluation of the current state of Classic Maya studies. Progress in research has seldom been uniform. Most archaeological projects take place primarily in the lowland areas, from which the richest epigraphic and iconographic data emerge. As a result, our discussions deal mainly with the lowland Maya at the expense of their highland neighbors and target the southern lowlands more than the northern reaches of the Yucatan Peninsula. This is a weakness we attempt to remedy in part, but the uneven emphasis is unavoidable given the range and availability of present knowledge and authorial expertise.

Synthesis walks in steady pace with analysis. The first combines and balances information, the other dissects and scrutinizes it. A useful line of study is to consider opposed themes, since the conflict and friction between these polarities produce insights into the Classic Maya. This book highlights two such themes. The first is the divide between inside and outside perspectives, what the Classic Maya said about their world and what we, from a vastly different vantage, perceive in their actions and artifacts. The second concerns two overlapping domains of the Classic Maya. One domain involves royal courts as forces for cultural conservatism and innovation. In some respects, the courts and the apparatus of ancestor veneration and god cults housed in temples were the Classic Maya city. As collections of palaces, pyramids, plazas, reservoirs, and courtyard residences, the cities served as centers of pilgrimage, worship, and defense; places of patronage for difficult skills; nodes of tribute and redistribution; repositories of the dead; schools for the courtly arts – all features that exerted a powerful attraction to settlement, as part of a continuing spectacle that must have entertained and enthralled Maya communities. In ancient perspective, such activities not only meant spiritual fulfillment but led to material and social consequences. On these hinged the successful continuation of society and the smooth cycling of individual lives. The other domain held the farmers, fishers, hunters, gatherers, and traders who made up the mass of society. Their labor materialized food, shelter, and other substances and objects that made possible the activities of royal courts, as well as the maintenance of society as a whole. These individuals did not merely follow cultural schemes devised by the royal court but actively assisted in the creation of Classic Maya society and worldview. Their value systems assimilated and were assimilated by those of
The story of the Classic Maya concerns the convergence and interplay of the two domains, one courtly, the other not. Loosely speaking, the former contained “elites,” the second “nonelites.” We use these terms with reservations. Our disquiet with a simplistic, two-layered model of Maya society is offset by the need to develop a convincing picture of power relations, one that nonetheless recognizes diverse social roles, statuses, and identities that overlapped and crosscut. The same is true for our categorization of “farmers,” “craftspeople,” and “traders.” Evidence tells us that in most cases these people did not form distinct social groups. A crafts-person who produced exquisite art objects could also engage in royal ceremonies and court intrigue. An artisan who fired large storage vessels might just as easily hold a digging stick in his milpa. Our understanding of courtiers, farmers, and craftspeople is directed more toward activities, formalized as “practices,” that contributed to survival, political achievement, and social fulfillment.

This book came into existence for several reasons. First, we wished to focus on the Classic Maya per se. Many excellent volumes, including those by Coe (1999b) and Sharer and Traxler (2005), give a rich and satisfying account of the Maya as a whole, from archaic lifeways to the agonies of the Guatemalan civil war (other such volumes include Demarest [2004] and McKillop [2006]). But we felt the Classic Maya deserved their own treatment. Why are there no good volumes on the Greeks, from Mycenae to Perikles and from Lord Byron, promulgator of Greek independence, to King Constantine of Greece and the Colonels who overthrew him? Because too much has changed in that small part of the world, and no scholar would willingly write such an expansive work. So too for the Maya. The only other book on the subject, now translated into English, presents the Classic Maya in discrete slices (“art,” “Mayan writing”) that do not, for us, meaningfully describe the civilization (Arellano et al. 1999).

Second, we wished to write a book around kinds of people and, where possible, about specific people, without, however, getting mired in the controversial minutiae of Classic history. Donadoni’s The Egyptians (1997) was a direct inspiration, with its delightful and instructive chapters on “The Dead,” “Women,” and “The Pharaoh.” The congruence of this treatment with “agency theory” or “practice theory” is deliberate and even provocative. In the last decade, it has become perilous to avoid citation of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens — although their sway is diminishing somewhat — just as an earlier generation found it necessary to reference Maurice Godelier and Louis Althusser. To what extent does this literature recycle theological concerns with free will (Herzfeld 2001: 149)? How is our interest in the changing pattern of Maya kingship specifically elucidated by the feedback loops of practice and agency theory? The search for compromise is laudable. Theories of human behavior that emphasize individual action must find a balance against those stressing...
social hedges of the same, just as the physical facts of the human body require conditioning and appraisal by the human mind. This dynamism forms part of the human experience, and no amount of abstract modeling will account for all of its capricious motions.

A third reason stemmed from our wish to present this information in an academic manner. For us, “academic” does not equate to snobbish or showy erudition. Rather, the text is designed for undergraduates, professional colleagues, and other readers who wish to engage the nuances of difficult material, openly acknowledged to be demanding and subject to shifts of interpretation. In our judgment, the undoubted popularity of Maya studies is its own blessing and curse. Mayanists benefit from popular attention that garners jobs, TV spots, and fame, leading even to the recent and, by some lights, lamentable movie *Apocalypto*. That same public distinction can be the scourge of our field. There is an inevitable risk (and temptation) to distort, oversimplify, and sensationalize in a subtle form of marketing that curries yet more attention. At the writing of this book, we are in another such cycle, this one relating to apocalyptic prophecy and the year 2012.

A final motivation for the volume is to allow readers to eavesdrop on a conversation that is only partly resolved. *The Classic Maya* records a dialogue between two very different people who, somehow, have made their way to the Classic Maya. One comes out of art history, epigraphy, and the archaeology of meaning (Houston), the other from settlement analyses, household archaeology, and the study of power relations (Inomata). Both are interested in social science and in deeper stories about people reacting creatively to a stressed but malleable environment. Thus, the book can be said to represent a fusion of two perspectives joined into a whole that is designed not to be seamless but to be sensitive to the contradictions of the Classic Maya. Again, our particular expertise, the southern Maya lowlands, colors the presentation, in part because, with some exceptions, textual data from the northern Yucatan are relatively scarce and problematic.

The narrative we devise also relates to the present, and to the connection between the past and the modern world. In this volume, the explicit focus on people comes from our self-reflection as practitioners of Maya archaeology – a field that, at some points in the past, devoted far more attention to objects than to the individuals and groups who created them. This ought to change. The Classic Maya left cultural and biological heirs who have suffered much over the past few centuries. Writing an account that focuses on people reminds us of the respect due to their descendants. However, this does not imply a blurring of Classic and modern Maya. Classic Maya do not walk on the streets of Santiago Atitlán, in Guatemala, or through the markets of Mérida, Yucatan. They deserve to be seen in context, as beings of their time and place; evidence from them and about them everywhere and always trumps information from later Maya.
Preface

To put this another way, the difference between a sacred king of the Classic Maya and a Yucatec *hmen* is surely greater than their similarity. A delicate and challenging antinomy for the students of the Maya is the strain between the ancient legacy of the modern Maya and the plain fact that they, like any other ethnic group, have recreated and modified their culture and society in response to changing natural and human environments. Nor should compassion and respect for the Maya lead to a utopian view of their society. The Classic Maya had their share of social problems and contradictions. For all our admiration of Classic Maya culture, we, as scientists and humanists, necessarily confront the negative aspects of their world. The purpose of this book is not to provide a final word on the Classic Maya and their culture. That will never be possible, nor can all mysteries be clarified from current data. We need many other perspectives, including those prompted by reactions to *The Classic Maya*.

Readers will want a roadmap through this book. The first section, “Setting,” begins with Chapter 1, which introduces the Classic Maya and their academic study. Chapter 2 sketches a view of social convergences and dissonances among the Maya; Chapter 3 examines the beginnings of the Classic Maya in the Preclassic, when many themes of the Classic period first appear, if obscurely. Chapter 4 presents the arc of Classic Maya development within its environmental setting, as currently understood and as those milieux changed through time. The second section, “Social Actors,” opens with Chapter 5, which turns to the royal courts that served as stages of their interaction, along with their denizens and other features of court-centered settlements. Chapter 6 focuses on the nobles that undergirded and populated the court, and Chapter 7 considers “beings” that the Maya saw as important members of their civic community – deities, supernaturals, and ancestors. Chapter 8 explores the farmers on whom all others depended, and Chapter 9 presents the craftsmen and women who shaped objects of value and utility, trading them on far-flung networks. These people are the most shadowy but crucial to understanding the majority of Classic Maya. The final chapter examines the ruptures within Classic Maya society and, especially, the tumult of the Maya collapse, which sent the Classic Maya into oblivion. Houston was principally responsible for Chapters 2, 5, 6, and 7, along with the Preface, whereas Inomata took the lead for Chapters 3, 4, 8, 9, and 10; they split work on Chapter 1. The spelling of royal names follows Houston’s reading of the relevant glyphs, with input from a magisterial book by Martin and Grube (2008); most dates, where exact, derive from historical texts and from the dominant correlation of the Christian and Maya calendar (Lounsbury 1983). The transcription of day, month, and language names tends also to accord with common practice, with the proviso that alternatives exist, some equally valid.

A book comes from the authors’ minds and fingers but draws on the hidden encouragement and help of many people. Norman Yoffee commissioned the
book for the World Archaeology series and has been most patient with its slow production. His editorial board commented usefully on earlier outlines and drafts, although our idiosyncratic approach may seem out-of-step to some. Kazuo Aoyama, Alfonso Lacadena, Payson Sheets, and David Webster kindly commented on drafts of certain chapters, and Don Rice provided a thoughtful review of our first submitted manuscript. Other input came from Traci Ardren, David Stuart, and Karl Taube; Wyllys Andrews, Kazuo Aoyama, Tim Beach, Michael Coe, Bruce Dahlin, Francisco Estrada-Belli, Barbara Fash, Thomas Garrison, Sue Giles, Charles Golden, Nikolai Grube, Zachary Hruby, Scott Hutson, Sarah Jackson, Justin Kerr, Alfonso Lacadena, Juan Pedro Laporte, Simon Martin, Carlos Pallan, Jorge Pérez de Lara, Werner Rutishauser, Payson Sheets, Joel Skidmore, David Stuart, George Stuart, Karl Taube, Richard Terry, and Mark Zender helped with figures. Bradley Sekedat of Brown University did heroic labors in preparing the manuscript, and at the University of Arizona, Jessica Munson with her superb computer skills improved various illustrations. Our spouses, Nancy Dayton Houston and Daniela Triadan, provided loving homes and partnerships, without which . . . nothing. Financial support for Houston came from the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences at Brigham Young University, and especially from former dean Clayne Pope and the two chairs of his department, formerly John Hawkins and Joel Janetski, who provided collegial support of the kind available in few other institutions. Dean Pope and Professor. Hawkins were instrumental in awarding Houston a University Professorship named after Jesse Knight, an intrepid miner of Utah’s hills and mountains who found gold and gave it to others, especially a struggling university in backwater Provo. More recently, he has benefitted from leaves at Brown University and as the recipient of funds from the Dupee Family Professorship in Social Sciences and fellowships from Dumbarton Oaks, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Philosophical Society, all in the 2007–2008 academic year. At Dumbarton Oaks, Joanne Pillsbury, Emily Gulick, and Bridget Gazzo showed the greatest kindness to Houston, as did the other Pre-Columbian Fellows. For his part, Inomata is grateful for generous leaves from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona during the academic years 2001–2002 and 2006–2007, with thanks particularly to chair John Olsen, the Junior Faculty Professional Development Leave of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.