

IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG THE ANCIENT MAYA
AS RECONSTRUCTED FROM LATE PRECLASSIC TO EARLY CLASSIC DOMESTIC
CONTEXTS AT THE SITE OF ACTUNCAN, BELIZE

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the visual properties of household ceramics to gain an understanding of domestic ritual construction and the diacritics of kinship, socio-economic status, and polity at the site of Actuncan, Belize. Ritual deposits associated with dedications, terminations, and burials are considered to be the remains of performances in which material markers of identity may have been deployed to foreground social identities including kin, status, and polity affiliations. In the absence of clear iconological emblems, more subtle variations in the physical appearance of ceramic vessels, including vessel size, surface finish, and color, are explored as potential markers of social identity. Comparisons of these variables are made between households and across socio-economic status categories and time periods.

The evidence presented here provides a better understanding of ritual and the selective use of ceramic bowls, dishes, and plates during its enactment. Two categories of domestic ritual, dedications and terminations, were found to follow distinct patterns in their display of shared cosmological constructs, particularly in the use of surface color, luster, and style (as measured by ceramic type). Additionally, these types of rituals are considerably different in their degree of malleability over time. Termination rituals, in particular, were more flexibly constructed and stood out as venues for demonstrating social differentiation among Actuncan households as the site underwent political and ideological shifts in the Early Classic period. Differences in the use of surface color and luster in open vessel forms, rather than closed forms, speak to internalized cosmological and social orders. Exploring these further will assist archaeologists in identifying emic categories of social identification.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, whose strength has been an inspiration to me all my life. Her patented mix of praise, encouragement, and nagging has helped me achieve more than I ever thought I could.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

n	Frequency
p	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
t	Computed value of t test
df	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
$<$	Less than
$=$	Equal to
χ^2	Computation of Chi-Square Test of Homogeneity
r	Pearson Correlation Coefficient
ρ	Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This study explores the role of ceramics found in domestic settings, particularly in ritual settings, in the active construction of ancient Maya identity through the Late Preclassic and Early Classic periods at the site of Actuncan, Belize. Archaeologists assume that the Classic Maya followed social conventions similar to those found in many stratified societies, with differences in descent, occupation, socio-economic status, and political ties contributing to the construction of social identities. While differences in Maya social organization can be discerned in the archaeological record, it is not always clear to what extent they structured daily interaction or contributed to the reckoning of affiliation within and between social groups. One way to understand social differentiation and ethnogenesis is to identify daily practices that cross-cut contexts and structure social life. As Sewell (1992:17-18) notes, people's ability to transpose schema (dispositions, practices, values, perceptions, etc.) across contexts is the real test of knowing and shaping the rules of social life, and consequently of internalizing social position. Differentiation achieved in one context can be understood to have larger social implications when transposed or superimposed over a multitude of activities and objects. Ceramics, a class of artifacts ubiquitous in a variety of public, private, ritual, and domestic contexts, are often associated with archeological identity, but questions remain as to the level of congruence between stylistic differences in material culture and recognized social difference. Maya domestic ritual is incorporated into this study as a potential mediator between idiosyncratic

differences in material distributions and active signaling of social differentiation in material culture.

The style and appearance of household ceramics is examined in order to discern the nature of identity signaling and group affiliation in Actuncan. Household assemblages are compared in order to assess whether identity at the household level at Actuncan was viewed in terms of descent, status, political affiliation, or a combination of the above. However, for such differences to be internalized as distinct social identities, they must be associated with collective social practice (Gabbert 2004:xii). In examining household ceramics, I attempt to discover if they functioned as *diacritics*, or overt signals or signs of identity (Barth 1969:14).

Social identity arises from an internalized understanding of social difference, but it is not directly tied to a bounded and self-perpetuating entity. As Barth (1969:9-10) asserts, “social boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them” and yet “entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained *despite* changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories.” Therefore, simple enumeration of differences in age, sex, descent, or wealth is insufficient in discerning social identity. What is necessary is an understanding of where the boundaries are drawn within a social system and how they are maintained, because if differences are not enacted, proliferated, and recognized by those involved, they do not contribute to social identity formation. Identity formation in itself constitutes the internalization of these externally established and maintained boundaries, to the point where material differences become naturalized extensions of value orientations (Barth 1969:14). This idea is elaborated in the notions of *habitus* and structuration (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984) where the physical conditions and materiality of daily life give order to the dispositions, skills, and activities of individuals and signal an underlying

commonality. Goodenough (1965) contributed to this anthropological understanding of identity the notion of the individual as capable of assuming multiple social identities and selecting among them to appropriately behave in any one social interaction, through the concept of the “social persona.” The materiality of social boundaries then garners a greater role in providing the appropriate cues in shifting settings and interactions.

Domestic space and ritual practices are evaluated as potential places of identity negotiation while seeking the diacritics of social identity. They are at once private and communal, allowing participants greater choice in deploying traditional categories of group membership or adopting new ones into daily practice. In other areas of the world, social identity and group cohesion has been shown to primarily find material expression in ritual (e.g., DeCorse 1994). This pattern suggests that domestic ritual could serve to mediate existing differences within social groups while bringing attention to pertinent distinctions in group identity. However, the materiality of ritual is a complicated matter of investigation, especially among the Maya, since it is often seen as representing deeply rooted and widely shared beliefs, essentially emphasizing similarity rather than difference. Because of this, it is important to investigate the construction of the ritual assemblages in relation to non-ritual household deposits to parse out shared concepts and processes of ritualization before searching out the diacritics of identity. The properties of ceramic vessels are especially of interest here since much ethnographic work has revealed that size, surface finish, and color of pottery can express differentiation, cosmological constructs, and identity.

In this thesis, I test four hypotheses in order to untangle how ceramics marked identity at Actuncan through the Late Preclassic (300 BC to AD 250) to Early Classic (AD 250 to 600) periods when state-level society arose in the Maya lowlands. First, I hypothesize that the

paraphernalia of ritual was actively selected to differentiate ritual enactment from domestic contexts. By incorporating a different subset of generally available material, ritual settings can more clearly mark pertinent social boundaries rather than simply reflect socio-economic and idiosyncratic variation. Something that must also be taken into consideration is that a distinctly patterned ritual assemblage can also serve to erase or minimize social distinction. The patterning of ritual must then be compared across households to determine if sufficient variability exists to signal social differentiation.

Second, the ceramic assemblages of individual households are compared in order to assess household identity and affinity based on descent. This orientation could entail displays of family emblems, or crests, and greater insistence on distinctly crafted ceramic vessels, whether produced within the household or acquired through trade networks specific to the household. If identity was structured by descent, I hypothesize that households, or groups of residential structures, will exhibit statistically significant differences in ceramic styles in both ritual and non-ritual assemblages.

Third, ceramic assemblages are compared across households grouped by socio-economic status. Mayanists consistently use the size, configuration, and location of residential mounds to determine socio-economic status because these variables signal resource availability and proximity to economic and political activities. Generally, higher status, or elite, households are expected to have better finished ceramic vessels. However, if socio-economic status is foundational to identify formation, I hypothesize that elite ceramic assemblages will be differentiated not just by better versions of common wares, but by distinct ceramic styles. Additionally, a statistical comparison among ceramic styles and forms across household ritual

deposits will show greater emphasis on finer quality wares in households that have larger and more complex architecture.

Fourth, if politics and polity membership become a major part of ancient Maya identity, then a diachronic comparison of household deposits may demonstrate the adoption of a shared symbol across all households as they coalesce into the Actuncan polity during the Late Preclassic to Early Classic transition. This may constitute a glyph or motif for the polity or king, or perhaps a color associated with a polity banner.

Evaluation of these hypotheses led to a better understanding of the construction of household ritual and social signaling at the site of Actuncan. Serving wares, such as bowls, dishes, and plates, emerged as instrumental to understanding both shared ritual practice and social differentiation. The surface color, and to some extent surface finish, of these forms proved to be important considerations in the selection of ritual assemblages. In this thesis, I suggest that the nature of the ritual performed influenced the selection of material both in terms of broad symbolic systems and in terms of group action in constructing social boundaries. Actuncan households consistently incorporated red and black pottery into their ritual deposits, colors which figure prominently in Maya cosmology, suggesting certain shared models of behavior. However, a subset of ritual enactment appears to allow for differential practice. Furthermore, the emergence of state-level organization appears to promote social differentiation based on socio-economic status.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background and Significance

The Archaeology of Ancient Maya Social Organization and Identity

Within archaeological studies, ancient Maya social organization is structured along multiple axes by archaeologists. Sex, age, descent group, class, occupation, and community create the basic social alignments along which activity and interactions are described. Researchers have proposed various models to describe the nature of group membership, or more broadly, of social organization, on the basis of a few recognizable and patterned aspects of Maya society. These models attempt to describe the rules of social behavior, often in a monolithic way. However, Robert Sharer (1993:93) reminds us that as with many aspects of Maya civilization, “variation rather than uniformity characterized Classic society.” Social organization manifested in various ways over time, across space and groups, and according to societal scale (Sharer 1993). Even regionally and temporally appropriate rules in themselves do not describe behavior in its totality, as deviations are always to be expected. Nonetheless, social models are valuable for the identification of the values and power relations which organize social life (Watanabe 2004). These models gain further analytical clout when archaeologically identified patterns in architecture and artifacts approximate emic social identities. Yet, herein resides the difficulty in addressing ancient identity construction. As Barth (1969:14) noted in relation to ethnic groups, the features that are taken into account in identity construction are “not the sum of ‘objective’ differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant.” As stated earlier,

social identity is an internalized understanding of social difference, which is not necessarily amenable to quantification.

In approaching social identity, Barth (1969) moves away from drawing arbitrary boundaries along a continuum of cultural traits and instead focused on the signs and symbols, the *diacritics*, which signal a dichotomized understanding of group identity. That is to say, the ways in which people indicate their allegiance to a group, thus consenting to be judged by the standards and morals of group insiders rather than outsiders, even if their physical characteristics makes them more similar to outsiders. This in-group “basic value orientation” (Barth 1969) is an important component contributing to the internalization of externally established differences. Once a few physical markers are accepted to signal distinction, the category they arbitrarily create can take on the “appearance of being an autonomous factor in the ordering of the social world” (Comaroff 1987:313). More than that, the material markers differentiating insiders from outsiders begin conditioning thought and behavior to exaggerate boundaries and underlying commonalities, as is proposed by Bourdieu’s (1977) notion of *habitus* and Giddens’ (1984) notion of structuration.

There are some general aspects of Maya social organization to which archaeologists agree. These include recognition of the household as an important physical and social unit, of a social hierarchy with broad divisions into elite and non-elite classes at minimum, and of strong regional and political differentiation. The particulars of these three axes of social organization are often strongly debated. In the following sections, I provide a brief overview of current understandings of kinship, status, and political organization among the Maya. In the next section, I consider the potential *diacritics* that may exist for each category, specifically within ceramic

assemblages, that would serve to confirm that these categories pertain to actively displayed and potentially internalized identity.

Although treated separately, it is important to remember that kinship, status, and political allegiance do not provide us with the means to neatly circumscribe groups of people at various levels of specificity. These are not layers of a social persona that can be precisely pulled back in accordance with the unit of analysis; rather they contribute to a complex topography of identity comprised of interlocking and modulating social dimensions. Schortman (2010:375) observes that within a single household of the Late Classic Maya provincial polity of Xunantunich “there were divisions in wealth, identity, and possibly power that must have been obvious to all concerned.” The three potential aspects of social affinity of interest in this research are not constructed independently of one another or of other social categories. A multitude of axes of affinity intersect within a single household, within an individual even, and contribute to the structuring of daily interactions.

Kinship. Kinship is a basic social unit, defined in terms of biological descent and cultural affinity, most easily understood as a family. Often, residential units house one or two generations of genetically related individuals and culturally sanctioned pairings, forming a kin group. At the site of Actuncan, like many other Maya sites, residential units manifested themselves in multiple architectural configurations that persist on the landscape for long periods of time. The main architectural distinction drawn for this project is between single house mounds, consisting of tall pyramidal platforms with one or two summit structures, and *plazuela* groups, or patio-focused groupings of multiple residential structures organized around a common yard. In each case, ethnographic analogy suggests that the residential unit housed multiple generations of individuals with shared descent (Wanatabe 2004). *Plazuela* groups most closely relate to family

developmental models discussed by Haviland (1988) and Tourelot (1988), in which the residential unit begins as a single structure housing the founding family and expands through remodeling and construction of additional structures to accommodate the descendants and their families. Thus the *plazuela* group can be viewed as a residential unit housing one kin group.

Most often, the ancient Maya are presumed to have had a lineage based social organization, with descent potentially forming a strong sociopolitical identity (Hendon 1991, Schele and Freidel 1990). In this model, descent from a founding family would have been carefully tracked and evoked by all, not just the elite, and the rights and independence of all lineages would have been protected (Schele and Freidel 1990). Ranking among descent groups was thus based on the privileged status of the kin group and ranking within descent groups may have occurred on the basis of birth order, gender, or other genealogical traits, producing a stratified society (Hendon 1991). Even prior to the institutionalization of kingship, kin groups would have represented the loci of power, wielded through control of land, labor, and ancestral religious authority (LeCount 2011:1; McAnany 1993, 1998). Ancestor worship provides some of the strongest evidence for lineage organization among nobles, elites and commoners alike. While nobles charted genealogies and royal successions in hieroglyphics inscribed in stone, all classes emphasized lineage through the “continued physical presence of buried ancestors in domestic complexes” (McAnany 1995:8). Cross-culturally, the house functions to physically circumscribe a family unit composed of multiple generations related by blood. For the Maya, the generations stretched further back in time, as revered ancestors became part of the house construction.

Among the historic Maya, descent-based identity was a complex multi-scalar phenomenon, intimately entwined with social status and political affinity. Ethnohistoric evidence suggests that lineage contributed to the formation of macro-identities among Colonial period

Maya via the patronym (Restall 2004). In a discussion of the emergence of the “Maya” ethnic identity, Restall (2004) suggests that the native Colonial period Maya identity was structured around the *cah*, municipal community, and the *chibal*, or the patronym-group. While modern Maya ethnicity emerged in relation to the Spaniards, traditional Maya macro-identities emerged at the nexus of the *cah* and *chibal*, uniting the extended family within a village under the banner of shared family name. Since members of the *chibalob* were generally exogamous and scattered in various *cahob*, they tended to form alliances with other lineages, closely adhering to class-based and political factions (Restall 2004). Consequently, lineage, even outside of Classic royal dynasties, could serve to organize social relations across large regions, as well as within the household. Within a community, descent can function as a micro-identity in the way that age, gender, and occupation provide a means for differentiation (Restall 2004). The extended family also recognizes a shared identity, forming a larger clan and thus a larger unit of social organization.

In recent years, Levi-Strauss’s house model has gained popularity as an alternative to lineage organization among the Classic Maya. This model places greater emphasis on the physical house, or estate, and on affinity based corporate groups (Gillespie 2000). It is proposed that houses are more manifest in the elite and noble echelons, with some common households forming attachments to the estates of elites without recourse to genetic descent (Gillespie 2000, 2001). Evidence supporting the house model has been reported at sites such as Caracol (Chase and Chase 2004). Where in the descent model one would expect only a few founding lineages with corresponding ancestral originators around which ranking and rights were constructed, in the house model there can be a proliferation of ancestral heads of household. In Caracol, as at many Maya sites, the two basic residential units, single platforms and *plazuela* groups, contained

eastern ritual structures. Each contained human burials presumed to represent revered ancestors. These are far too great in number to represent separate descent groups, thus, the proposed unit of organization for ancestral worship was the household (Chase and Chase 2004). Furthermore, skeletal analyses of these burials suggest marked differences in diet between neighboring structures and little spatial clustering of related individuals (Chase and Chase 2004).

Additional support for the house model comes from the use of the Mayan term for “house” (*na* and *otot/otoch*) and the attribution of proper names to these houses in dedication and termination inscriptions (Gillespie 2001). The acts of house dedication and termination in themselves demonstrate the ritual and social significance of the physical residence (Gillespie 2001; Mock 1998). Gillespie (2001:93) describes houses and persons as having a “co-identity,” with houses “which were named and whose social births and deaths were ritually marked, overlapped in these qualities with the people who occupied them.” This co-identity suggests that the concepts of lineage and house are not far removed from each other, perhaps contributing to the debated nature of this aspect of Maya social organization. Ultimately, Levi-Strauss’s (1982) definition of *sociétés à maison* does not preclude a lineage organization, but merely allows for estates to be passed down the line in accordance with kinship, affinity, or both.

Given the ritual and material significance of single house mounds and *plazuela* structures for the ancient Maya, the house model does prove to have some relevance, though clearly it needs to be better refined. For this research, the house model serves as a convenient starting point, since it places emphasis on the physical manifestation of the household, the residential structure, and assumes independence between houses. The genetic relations among members of a given household sampled in the course of the research are unknown, thus the house structure provides the primary method for approaching kinship-based organization and identity. The house

model allows for each house in the sample to be treated as independent for the time being, representing an estate into which distinct corporate groups had vested interests.

Status. Socio-economic status may constitute another dimension of ancient Maya social identity. Among the Classic Maya, socio-economic status is linked to the three social classes commonly identified by archaeologists: common, noble, and royal. For the purpose of this research, noble and royal classes will be referred to as elites and assumed to have a higher socio-economic status.

Access to material wealth is the most common marker of socio-economic status, visible in house assemblages and architectural complexity. Following the Saxe-Binford research program, socio-economic status is also often gauged in the differential mortuary treatments and assemblages (Gillespie 2001). Though easy to perceive archaeologically, socio-economic status is not easily translated into social status categories pertinent to ancient Maya organization. That the Classic Maya were a hierarchically organized and stratified society is well understood. However, where social classes of elites and commoners once were seen as clearly differentiated, researchers now believe that individuals fell along a less clear-cut gradient (Sharer 1993). Many believe that the elite classes are internally stratified, as evidenced in architectural and burial gradations, but fewer see the non-elite class as similarly organized (Sharer 1993). Part of the problem is that the commoners have received less archaeological attention and are less visible in the material record.

Polity. Allegiance to a polity was another potential dimension of Classic Maya identity. Although there is a sense of the Maya as representing a single cultural entity, Schele and Miller (1986:3) describe the Classic period Maya as comprised of “rival and very aggressive city-states, no one of which ever managed to dominate all of the others.” In such a climate, one would

expect a sense of loyalty to the king, dominion, or territory to be pervasive in the various polities, helping to organize them in collective action.

Political allegiance has been described as a transcendent feature, overriding other markers of difference, necessary in ensuring the propagation of the system of rulership beyond the life-span of individual rulers (Schortman, Urban, and Ausec 2001). In stratified societies, promotion of kingship involves a balancing act on the part of rulers in which they must propagate and naturalize differential access to authority and wealth while inspiring equal participation and commitment to the stratified order (Schortman, Urban, and Ausec 2001). In achieving the latter goal, rulers promote a new, unified identity through public displays, communal ritual, and deployment of new symbols of identity. Polities were identified as such through the use of emblem glyphs derived from rulers' family names or toponyms. It is these practices and symbols serve to differentiate a community from a polity. A community, like that identified as the Late Classic site of Caracol, can be established through shared ritual practice and the generalized layout, construction, and use of residential groups (Chase and Chase 2004). These traits describe a shared identity not explicitly linked to centralized authority and one that is likely passively maintained. A polity based identity, conversely is actively constructed and suggests a value orientation built in opposition to other polities.

Ceramics and Social Identity

One of the foundational assumptions of this research is that social identity is encoded in material culture. Within the domestic context, many of the items encountered serve a practical role or function which provides some restrictions to overall form. Thus roles and group membership find expression in stylistic variation among the accoutrements encountered in

household ritual and non-ritual contexts. Style has been an important component of archaeological investigations as a means for reconstructing histories of and relations among various cultural groups. Ceramic styles in particular were a cornerstone of Culture-Historical archaeology and were used to trace cultural boundaries in space and diffusion through time (Trigger 1996). The underlying assumptions about the relationship between people and pots have since been challenged. Decades of research on style (i.e., Wobst 1977; Braun 1991; Hegemon 1992; Washburn 1989; Wiessner 1983) suggest that, although style is not isomorphic with cultural groups, there is a strong association between material culture and social units, ranging from the level of the individual to the level of ethnic group (Hegemon 1992).

Wobst (1977) has described style as a communicative medium, enhancing human interaction and benefiting from the human ability to symbol. Whether stylistic differences occur as the result of accidental alterations, diverging development due to communicative barriers, or purposeful manipulation, they can be maintained within an interacting group and evolve to symbolize its distinctive regional or social milieu. The assignment and assessment of symbolic meaning, however, does not negate the formal properties of how things work. LeCount (2010) has argued that the use of plain wares in domestic and community contexts was not a symbol of an imagined community, but rather that through the use of these vessels in daily activity, an existing interactive community was reaffirmed. This is not identical to the social interaction hypothesis which proposes that the “communication role of style is incidental: styles reflect group affiliations, but there is little presumption of deliberate intent by the manufacturers of pottery to send overt messages to those who see it in use” (Rice 2005:266). Rather it is a more nuanced approach that emphasizes the context of vessel use in understanding the communicative value of the style. The relationship between context and stylistic signaling or communication has

been explored by many (e.g., Bowser 2000, Braun 1991, Mills 2007). Stylistic signaling is thus necessarily linked to the phenomenological properties of shared experience.

Simple, invariant and recurrent messages, such as class affinity and social group affiliation, are best suited for stylistic transmission because of the durable properties of material culture (Wobst 1977). Wobst (1977) proposed that the communicative value of style is derived from the added cost of time and labor involved in producing an aesthetically pleasing pot as opposed to a simply utilitarian vessel. In his model, the “information exchange” occurring through style necessarily took place outside of the home and of the social in-group. The model itself has been roundly criticized as based on an ethnocentric economic argument (Deitler and Herbich 1998), but beyond that, a slew of more recent ethnoarchaeological research has demonstrated that the communicative role of style is not restricted to items used in public venues or boundary interactions nor those exhibiting a single visual scale. Since one of the interests of this study is the signaling of identity in household ritual, in the sections below I specifically relate categories of ritual in which ceramics may be used to actively differentiate groups based on kinship and status. Polity is approached in a slightly different manner, since ritual practice may prove more resistant to political influence. Nevertheless, this aspect of differentiation, if actively signaled, should enter households in some manner.

Diacritics of Kinship. As discussed earlier, kin groups are equated with the physical residences, whether *plazuela* groups or single house mounds, in this study. Therefore, material found within a single residence is presumed to reflect the activity of a single kin group. Potentially, these houses could be adequately distinguished through comparisons of the total ceramic assemblage. However, the house is a nexus in which all aspects of social organization and identity can intersect, not simply kinship. As units within a highly complex and stratified

society, Maya houses can be differentially categorized based on status or even occupation. Furthermore, even in houses of similar socio-economic strata, as within egalitarian societies, some degree of idiosyncratic variation still exists in the material culture. To better address kinship signaling as a factor contributing to differences between household ceramic assemblages, I analyzed ritual deposits understood as pertaining to the construction and maintenance of the house. These include dedication and termination rituals, which are discussed in more detail in the section on Maya ritual. Again leaning on the house model and the notion of person-house “co-identity” (Gillespie 2001), I assume these will provide the best venue for kinship identity construction since they represent some of the main ways residents invest themselves into the structure, differentiating their estate from those of other kin groups and promoting the interests of the household.

Ideally, I expect to encounter a household micro-style within the pottery assemblages that is perhaps showcased in ritual settings. The household can already be viewed as a primary economic unit, organizing labor and resources, and by extension ceramic manufacture, trade, and consumption. Regardless of differences in initial acquisition of pottery making and decorating knowledge, members of the household can be expected to produce similar wares. DeBoer (1990) observed that among the Shipibo-Conibo of the Ucayali Basin, women tracing their descent outside of the ethnic group adopted local styles of pottery decoration upon acceptance into the community, but maintained distinct styles of resistance when met with difficult or unhappy family circumstances. If the household constitutes a primary unit of identity, a household micro-style may be developed and maintained even as individuals with different genetic descent are incorporated into the family. This may involve unique motifs and patterns, serving as house emblems, or be more subtly manifested by a lack of overlap in present forms and styles between

households of an interacting community. Additionally, households seeking to differentiate themselves from others within the community may seek out distinct trade relations and trade items that again contribute to a distinct, household-specific style.

Diacritics of Status. For this research, socio-economic status categories were based on residence type. House mounds, requiring greater labor investment in the erection of high single platforms and creating a more imposing appearance, are assumed to belong to wealthier kin groups of higher social status, broadly referred to as elites. *Plazuela* groups, built in a more piecemeal fashion and with a modest elevation, are assumed to belong to less wealthy, lower status kin groups, or commoners. The obvious variation in residential construction likely in itself acts as a diacritic of socio-economic status rather than a function of variation in resource availability. If architectural layout is found to co-vary with other material symbols serving to differentiate households, the assumption that socio-economic status was a recognized and enacted facet of social identity would be strengthened.

The difference in wealth contributing to differential house construction would presumably translate into differences in household assemblages as well. However, if my assumption that ritual performances enact and amplify social differentiation, it might be that in certain contexts conspicuous displays of wealth were to some extent sublimated to those practices deemed appropriate to the family's position, particularly into specific symbols of social status division and identification. The category of ritual deposits most suitable for this investigation pertains to the disposal of human remains: burials. Burials have traditionally been the focal point of archaeological research on ancient individual identity, based on the belief that a person's status and accomplishments in life are referenced in the ritualized transition to the next world (Chase and Chase 1992). The assumption was that wealthy, high status individuals were

interred with more material wealth and items reflecting their position in life. This was challenged in postprocessual research, most strikingly by Ian Hodder and his students' finding that religious customs, hygiene, and social ideals of egalitarianism, in addition to status rivalry, influenced burial constructions (Trigger 1996).

Given this new research, multiple scenarios are possible for the construction of Actuncan burials and the use of status *diacritics*. Religious custom may promote homogeneous practice and an ideal of equality in burials, but wealth displays may also prevail. Socio-economic status, if contributing to a static and internalized social distinction, may be reflected in burials through items and symbols characteristic of the echelon to which the person belonged. However, if socio-economic status is a more fluid category of differentiation, burials may serve as venues for status striving behavior, relying more on wealth displays than succinct symbols of status.

These ideas map onto two threads found in studies of Classic Maya burials. In discussions of ancestor worship, McAnany (1998:271) has suggested that, in death, rituals served as a way to reestablish order in a chaotic time and also offered an opportunity for families to promote their line. For McAnany, this form of ancestor worship was a selective process consistent with the primogenitor family structure, where only a subset of the ancestors, those who legitimate power and access to resources, were recalled and venerated. Thus burials provide a more direct access to the main mechanism through which social status was constructed against the background of kin identity and serve as venues for status striving behavior with emphasis on wealth displays. More recent research by Schwake (2008) has focused on the promotion of larger social goals appropriate to social position, rather than wealth displays. Schwake's (2008) research has provided a basis on which status-related concerns can be accessed through burials. She has found that in the Late and Terminal Classic periods, royals, nobles, and commoners used

death rituals to legitimize rule, emphasize specialization, and maintain regional traditions respectively. For royals, there was a greater emphasis on long-term caching within mortuary shrines, indicative of attempts to tap into previous structures of local power. Nobles tended to bolster status in ritual by referencing their unique position and connections outside of the region to individuals of the same position. One of the ways this was achieved was through inclusion of specialized assemblages signaling occupational specialization, such as artisan pigment vessels. Perhaps because commoners stood to gain less through ritual elaboration, they perpetuated long-established ritual behaviors, such as the inclusion of lip-to-lip vessels in burials (Schwabe 2008).

There is sufficient reason to suspect that Actuncan burials served as a medium for reaffirming the social status of the family in a more marked manner than is called for in daily practice. This promotion may have been especially pronounced in the Early Classic period, once the pyramidal elite residences took their terminal form, providing a visible means of differentiation among households. Since investigations at the site have focused on the transitional period between corporate leadership and exclusive kingship, there is a possibility that socio-economic status and social status categories were extensively reconfigured and with them burial practices. In the earlier Late Preclassic period, the display of socio-economic wealth may not have been preferred at burials, given the corporate organization. During the transition, in periods of particular upheaval, status striving may have become more prominent and wealth displays entered the burial assemblage. These possibilities were kept in mind as analysis progressed, but my main interest remained the identification of the *diacritics* of status.

If status is actively signaled in ritual, I expect that the two class categories under study here will exhibit divergent patterns in ritual behavior. Looking at ceramics, this may involve the use of divergent vessel forms or styles by the two groups, or even the adoption of painted

symbols. Wealth displays, involving larger volumes of vessels or use of vessels with higher quality surface finishes, is not in itself a *diacritic*. A *diacritic* should index membership to a certain echelon despite potential deficiencies or excesses in actual wealth.

Diacritics of Polity. The sampled households in this research are located within the urban core of Actuncan. Their proximity suggests that a sense of community likely existed between the residents. Consistency in architectural styles and patterning in ritual deposits suggest that the households shared a pan-Maya identity with great time depth. Beyond that, households may have organized into corporate groups, possibly with deep political fissions, and additionally organized as a single Actuncan polity in opposition to nearby sites. The Actuncan Archaeological Project has explored the nature of organization at the site and potential shifts occurring through the adoption of kingship during the Late Preclassic and Early Classic periods. In the earlier periods, power was likely held by kin well-established groups with control over land and labor. In the transition to kingship, such kin-based authority would have been usurped through the fragmentation of powerful households. LeCount (2012) suggested two developmental trajectories: 1) successful usurpation of kin-based authority marked by fragmentation of large households and rapid establishment of new large households for proponents of the new regime, or 2) unsuccessful consolidation of authority over social groups, marked by consistent access to wealth and development of households over time. After the 2011 excavation season, it appeared that the households under investigation were all constructed as part of the institutionalization of kingship and that they each exhibit variations in development not easily subsumed into one model (LeCount 2012). The creation of a state-level society was a long-term and complex undertaking. In achieving this, rulers could have promoted a new, unified identity through public displays, communal ritual, and through deployment of new symbols of identity. Schortman,

Urban, and Ausec (2001) were able to identify such markers of political identity in decorated serving wares. They found that in the Naco Valley of Honduras, political identity was expressed using simple naturalistic designs painted on bowls and cylinder vases. This ware makes up roughly two percent of household assemblages (Schortman et al. 2001:321). These objects were portable, allowing easy access and circulation, and displayed a remarkable regularity in motifs.

Ethnographic research confirms the use of painted pottery designs as emblematic of political identity (Bowser 2000). In Bowser's research domestic pottery produced by women displayed some ethnic, and possibly passive, elements of style that were more strongly and recognizably overlaid with elements indicating the political affiliations of the maker. The elements of style that signaled political affiliation in this case were not specific symbols but rather variations in the use of symmetry, framing lines, and color: aspects independent of individual execution abilities that structure the overall perception of the decorative pattern. Within this modern Amazonian example, ethnic and political markers of style do not occupy exclusive categories and were only teased apart through ethnographic knowledge of individual descent and chosen group alignment. However, this study can help inform our understanding of the negotiation of between kin-based identities and coalitions in a politically dynamic environment, like that likely present at Actuncan at the Late Preclassic to Early Classic periods. The study also suggests that whatever role public displays of power may have played, such as in the case of the institutionalization of kingship, much renegotiation could have been domestically situated. Thus the physical signaling of identity and affiliation should be present within the household.

For this potential identity orientation, I hesitate to look for a heightened display of affinity in domestic ritual. Marcus (2007:47) cautions that "one goal of ritual is to maintain the

appearance of unchanging tradition in the face of upheaval and change.” While public ritual may have promoted new order, domestic ritual may have retained old patterns as a form of resistance or a source of comfort in uncertain times. Therefore, in seeking out the diacritics of polity affiliation, I am adopting a diachronic approach, comparing assemblages at the onset of kingship in the Late Preclassic to assemblages at its height as the paramount power in the upper Belize River valley in the Early Classic period.

As the research mentioned above suggests, markers of political affinity, denoting a shared identity, may be found on serving wares in domestic (non-ritual) contexts. They likely will not display involved decorative patterns or complex symbols and writing requiring specialized knowledge. Rather, they may make use of simple motifs, framing patterns, or distinct designs that immediately impact the perception of the decorated vessels as different from similarly decorated prestige items from nearby centers. The expectation is that these items will increasingly permeate domestic practice in a manner consistent with the adoption of an overriding sense of political community through time. Even if such telltale motifs and stylizations are absent, I expect that a growing sense of political unity would manifest itself at some level in households through increased homogeneity in ceramic assemblages. Perhaps certain existing wares became more prevalent as they are coopted into denoting the Actuncan identity.

In sum, for kin-based identity, here assumed to correspond to household-based identity, the favored ritual contexts are those pertaining to the life-cycle of the residence, mainly dedication and termination rituals. For status-based identity, the favored ritual contexts are those commemorating individuals, mainly burials. Polity based identity, while potentially expressed in some household ritual practices, is addressed through a diachronic comparison of household

assemblages across the periods in which the institutionalization of kingship is known to have occurred. Symbols of an emerging shared political identity are presumed to enter into household ritual contexts more gradually than other household contexts. If household affiliations represent a potent marker of identity, I suspect that assemblages from house groups may exhibit certain micro-styles, or even motifs emblematic of the households, which are highlighted in ritual. If status, often isomorphic with access to wealth, is actively constructed as an important facet of identity, I expect that households classified into the same social class using other markers of wealth will develop symbols and practices similar to each other, but divergent from those used by other classes. Finally, if community identification with the Actuncan polity becomes more prominent than household or corporate identity with the rise of kingship over time, I expect symbols in the form of widely spread, simplistic motifs, or the adoption of homogenized wares will become more prevalent in the Early Classic period.

To determine if kinship ties, social status, and political affiliation constituted emicly relevant categories of social differentiation among the residents of Actuncan, I examine both household occupation contexts and household contexts that exhibit the strongest evidence of ritual practice to search for overt symbols or patterns demarcating distinct groups constructed along these lines. Ritual contexts are targeted as venues for heightened expressions of social identity, potentially providing a greater sense of social differentiation than general household assemblages which are presumed to show a great deal of idiosyncratic variation and represent amalgamations of various levels of affinity intersecting within the households. In the following section, I present some current understandings on ancient Maya ritual practice and the material patterning that signals ritual practice in archaeological contexts.

Maya Ritual

Sharer (1993:96) notes that “the life of every individual among the contemporary Maya is intimately intertwined with the immediate family, kin groups, community, and the supernatural.” No true division existed between physical reality of existence and the religious principles that made Maya culture unique. “The Maya lived in a world that defined the physical world as the material manifestation of the spiritual and the spiritual as the essence of the material” (Schele and Freidel 1990:65). Ritual, which can be understood as interaction with the supernatural or Otherworld beings, was an important means of affecting change in the physical world, bringing health, victory or prosperity, and a means of maintaining the well-being of Otherworld beings (Schele and Freidel 1990). It permeated all aspects of Maya life and served as a means for encoding a shared reality (Schele and Freidel 1990). Ritual would have been ever present in the daily lives of the Maya, providing continuity as well as a means for effecting change. For this reason, it provides a poignant and powerful context for identity construction and enactment. In this section, I provide a brief overview of the three Maya ritual practices of interest in this research to provide a sense of their significance and to specify the manner in which they are recognized and classified by archaeologists for the purpose of analysis.

Archaeologists often project practices of post-contact communities into the past to facilitate interpretation of archaeological remains (Schele and Freidel 1990:42). This approach is in many ways problematic and requires careful and conscious evaluation. The assumption of religious continuity provides a means for identifying ancient ritual remains, but can also lead to the grafting of modern beliefs and assumptions onto past cultures (Fogelin 2007). It should not be assumed that Maya beliefs and actions held the same significance for each individual belonging to the cultural group across three millenniums of ancient and modern history. A great

deal of material continuity, nevertheless, should not be ignored. An emphasis on continuity provides the starting point for identifying and contextualizing ritual deposits and with this initial understanding, we can proceed to take a deeper look at meaningful variations encountered across time and space.

Much of what we know of ritual practice and spiritual beliefs among the prehistoric Maya comes from the material remains of royalty. It comes from elaborately painted bowls and vases with scenes of supernaturals and their interactions with humans, and the elaborate architecture of temples and carved monuments which served to animate the sacred geography with visual metaphors. Schele and Freidel (1990) cite modern shamanistic practices in Yucatecan villages that rely on the same metaphors seen in the images on ancient carved and sculptured monuments. Further, modern rituals performed at cave mouths or home alters are contextually analogous to those performed in front of ancient temple doors and on stone alters. Given this great similarity between royal practices of the past and contemporary peasant ritual, it is assumed that rural ancient Maya villagers relied on similar practices to “activate the sacred energies just as effectively as their counterparts in the great urban centers” (Schele and Freidel 1990:72).

The interest in domestic ritual of this project stems from its integral role in Maya identity and from its potential to encode a great deal of information about not only cosmological structures and principles, but social structure and organization. As Thompson (1970:170) notes “essentially, Maya religion is a contract between man and his gods. The gods help man in his work and provide him with his food; in return they expect payment, and much of the time that payment should be made in advance.” He also notes a tendency in ritual to reproduce like with like, as in the use of black copal smoke to attract black rain clouds (Thompson 1970:166).

Perhaps in the requests aimed at maintaining ones' place in the world, the participants employed the material symbols of their family, status, and political allegiances.

The following section attempts a review of current archaeological understandings of Maya rituals, which simultaneously incorporates current views on “poorly understood material phenomena recovered by archaeologists” (Mock 1998:3). Ritual practice was often documented by the Maya and has been the subject of much iconographic and epigraphic work. The material richness of elite burials has also contributed to our understanding of Maya world views and the material assemblage of ritual. However, a focus on deposited material has led to a rather limited understanding of the details of practice and variation across the entire spectrum of Maya society (Kunen et al. 2002:197). In approaching domestic ritual among commoners, researchers rely first and foremost on material remains. In their interpretations of these remains, they rely on parallels and analogies derived from ethnohistoric accounts and from observed similarities with the more grandiose and overt remains of elite ritual. Kunen (2002:197) suggests that comparisons in mortuary treatment, architectural features, and assemblages can provide insights into shared practices and beliefs, such as ancestor veneration and the conceptualization of the underworld.

Three categories of domestic ritual, related to the cycle of life and death, are more easily approached archaeologically and are of great interest to this research. These include dedications, terminations, and burials. All three involve the physical manipulation of the built environment and the more-or-less permanent deposition of offerings. An additional category of ceremonial trash, of kratophanous deposits, is also briefly considered for comparative purposes. Dedications and terminations are rituals implicated in the life-cycle of the house. Dedications inaugurate the construction of a residence and even some public buildings and monumental objects (Mock 1998). From modern Maya practice and Classic inscriptions, we also know that they served to

animate the structure by symbolically giving it a soul and providing it with nourishment (Stross 1998). As mentioned earlier, houses often had a co-identity with their residents, so when founding lines relocated or ended, it was necessary to ritually kill, or put to rest the soul of their residences. This break was accomplished through termination rituals. According to Stross (1998), living things had power and required nourishment, encouragement, protection, and respect. Dedication rituals ensured that the life-force was properly secured to a residence, while termination rituals released it to ensure that its influence, and perhaps that of the departing residents, was properly released. Burials, like terminations, deal with the proper transition of the soul, in this case specifically into the other world, in a way that protects souls remaining in this world (Vogt 1998). They can also serve a commemorative function and promote group interest, as indicated by Schwake's research cited above.

In distinguishing ritual deposits from general household deposits, structural features are often the most telling. The ancient Maya appear to have followed a standardized spatial template in which the central axis of buildings, stairways, benches, and floors determined the preferred locations for deposits. In ethnohistoric accounts, the centers of house floors, where the horizontal and vertical axis of the house met, served as a portal to the underworld, or at least as a communication channel to the underworld (Kunen 2002: 200). The ritual significance of these locations and deposits placed there is reinforced archaeologically by the tendency for deposits to be revisited and referenced in a vertical column over the span of the residential structure's history. Another structural component of ritualized deposits involves the preparation of the space. In dedicatory caches, the offering pit is often cleared, leveled, and occasionally lined with white marl (Garber et al. 1998, Freidel et al. 1993). Marl is also incorporated into termination deposits, potentially as a reference to the regeneration or rebirth that follows the ritual

destruction. Schele and Freidel (1990) suggest that in those cases, terminations can be part of the act of reestablishment, as well as abandonment. Burials are often found in eastern structures of residential compounds, sometimes referred to as residential shrines (e.g. Helmke 2000, 2003; Chase and Chase 1998) but can also occupy the same spaces within domestic structures as other deposits. Prepared spaces for the deposition of bodies can vary from elaborate tombs to simple crypts and cysts.

In terms of content, ritual deposits may be recognized by special or exotic items, such as jade jewelry or eccentrics, obsidian eccentrics, stingray spines, *incensario* fragments, pigments or mineral crystals. In more humble domestic deposits, such items may be entirely absent from the domestic deposit. However, Mock (1998) recalls J. Eric Thompson's lament that fine offerings of feather ornaments, textiles, and carved wood may have turned to dust since the dedication or renovation of Maya houses. Another suggestive feature of deposits incorporates patterning, often along two axis forming four quadrants, or in layers referencing cosmological layers. References to sacred numbers, such as 4, 9, or 13 (Kunen 2002, Joyce 1992, Mock 1998) related to the Maya cosmogram are also often found. Ceramics, ubiquitous in domestic contexts, are also an important component of the ritual assemblage, and the one most often encountered. As in domestic contexts, they serve as vessels, carrying the nourishment offered in dedication or other important ritual items, or they are themselves constitute important objects offered in ritual.



Figure 2.1. Example of lip-to-lip cache recovered at Actuncan, Belize.

Dedications and terminations can often incorporate similar types of material making the task of separating them difficult for the archaeologist. Therefore, they are often distinguished not by their component artifacts, but rather by the state of the artifacts and their location in relation to construction episodes. Dedications are generally believed to comprise whole vessels and precious items concealed under the foundations of structures, either newly built or renovated (Walker 1998). They are said to reflect conceptual cosmological maps of the Maya sacred geography and work to activate the portal between worlds. Terminations involve more fragmentary artifacts, ceramics and broken precious items, deposited over and around structures. They are not as localized as dedicatory offerings and involve a greater volume of ceramics and other artifacts. Additionally, at sites like Cerros, there are material subcomplexes consistently related to the abandonment or interment and subsequent renovation of public architecture (Walker 1998). Robertson (1983) also notes the use of poorly smoothed, inadequately slipped and fired vessels in terminations, suggesting that they were created for rites involving destruction. This relationship to structure lifecycles also provides an important means of

differentiating termination deposits from kratophanous deposits, which similarly involve broken precious and spiritually charged items (Kunen 2002). The difference is that these deposits and associated ritual processes are focused on the items themselves, intending to properly dispose of charged items, channeling their souls in a safe manner.

This distinction between dedications and terminations quickly becomes problematic when we consider that Maya households often represent multiple construction episodes, potentially involving overlapping dedicatory and termination ritual deposits. In such cases, caches between construction episodes require further consideration. Are they dedicatory to a new construction? Are they a product of other domestic ritualized behavior? To complicate this further, although the expectation is that dedications will contain whole objects, some have proposed that fragmentary artifacts in votive deposits can symbolize renewal by referencing the complete cycle of creation and destruction (Mock 1998, Kunen 2002).

The presence or absence of human remains and the amount of skeletal material has served in many cases to differentiate burials from the other categories of ritual deposits (e.g. W. Coe 1959:77). When a considerable amount of bone is encountered, a deposit is considered to be a burial, but scatterings of human bone found in isolation or within other deposits may be designated as caches or votive deposits. However, this characterization has been effectively challenged by Becker (1992), who questioned if caches and burials formed distinct cognitive categories among the Maya. Deposits of fragmentary human remains provide an interesting and complex domain of investigation because of frequent instances of curation and redeposition. Becker (1992) has suggested that burials, in addition to representing the life-death transition, may represent a specific category of ritual offerings. In cases where skeletal fragments are incomplete and/or associated with traditional dedicatory offerings, the human remains may

constitute a type of “earth offering” rather than the distinct entity of “burial” (Becker 1992:187). To differentiate commemorative burials from offerings featuring human remains, it may again be useful to consider their location in relation to construction episodes, the manner of interment, and inclusion of other ritual objects. Burials in eastern structures, for instance, appear fairly independent of construction and renovation episodes and may more properly be considered as commemorative. Isolated burials in house foundations and over interred structures may still be commemorative, but may also serve as dedicatory offerings, lending power to the ensouling of a structure. This latter category of burials would still be an appropriate venue for seeking the diacritics of status, regardless if the burial was of an important person or sacrificial victim, since the manner of their interment would have been dictated by the needs of the social group attached to the structure and their ability to make an appropriate offering. It is likely also appropriate for seeking symbols of kinship since it is so intimately related to the residential structure into which presumably the kin group is greatly invested.

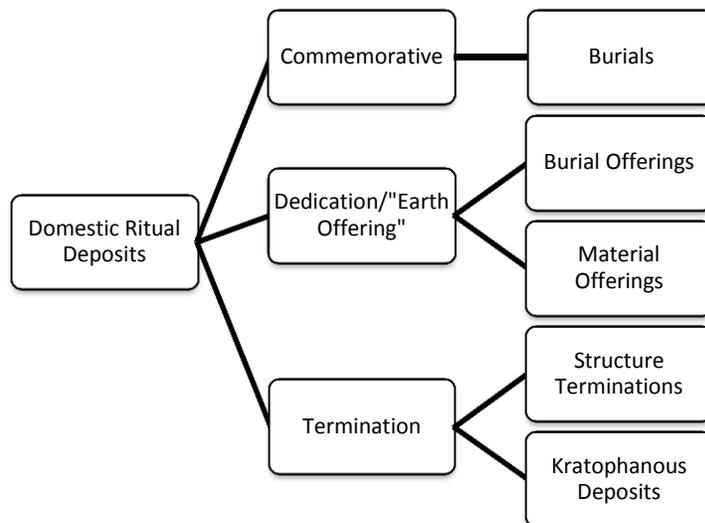


Figure 2.2. Chart of ritual deposit types.

Therefore, my initially stated interest in dedications, terminations, and burials is more appropriately stated as an interest in dedicatory “earth offering” (per Becker 1998), termination, and commemorative deposits (Figure 2.2). Dedicatory offerings are understood as those found beneath constructions, on prepared, cleaned surfaces, with whole, or partial, vessels. Human remains, complete or incomplete, may also be considered as dedicatory offerings when linked to new construction episodes and incorporating similar artifacts. Dedicatory deposits are likely more spatially contained and patterned given the intent to focus and fix spiritual forces, to ensoul the structure. Terminations are meant to scatter or neutralize ritual energy and are understood to consist of fragmented and scattered ceramics and other items. The type of termination of interest here is that of structures, so the deposits of interest will be those found in association with destroyed, abandoned, or interred and later renovated structures. Commemorative burials are accepted as those occupying a distinct place in the structure or house group, found apart from construction episodes.

The working definitions of ritual deposits presented here was used in combination with excavator observations to classify the analyzed deposits. Having established material and patterning differences between dedications, termination, and commemorative deposits, the focus of analysis shifts to the style or variations in the physical appearance of incorporated ceramic vessels. The set of hypotheses examined here suggest that ritual assemblages on the whole are carefully selected from generally available material to reflect a distinct enactment and to variously communicate social affinity. Therefore, all three categories of ritual should share some patterning that sets them apart from non-ritual domestic contexts. Potential differentiating features are discussed below in the section on the materiality of ritualization. Additionally dedication and termination ceramics, as deposits pertaining to the household, should incorporate

a different set of features than commemorative burials, which often reflect broader status concerns. The former may exhibit greater variation, as individual households emphasize a distinct existence, while the latter may exhibit greater consistency within social status.

The Materiality of Ritualization

While Richard Bradley (2005) has argued that “common” domestic and subsistence activities may have overlooked ritualized dimensions, Catherine Bell (1992) has cautioned that ritual loses its analytic utility when it is an ever present aspect of all human activity. Rather, certain social acts can be strategically set apart and privileged through the process of “ritualization” (Bell 1992:74). Thus ritual can be understood as a marked form of activity, with distinct behavioral and sensory components setting it apart from everyday circumstances.

As discussed above, for Maya archaeologists, marked behavior is most accessible in dedication, termination, and burial practices, which require preparation of ritual spaces through permanent physical manipulation. The sensory distinctiveness of domestic ritual contexts is not well understood apart from sumptuous elite and royal shrines and tombs. For common contexts, it is generally assumed that individuals will use the best available material and items of importance, however, the formal qualities and values of these items are often considered secondary to their function within the ritual (e.g., Garber et al. 1998). The idea that ritual materials contribute to a marked sensory experience, implying that the formal qualities are of greater significance than functional requirements, should be explored further. Selection of unusual forms, lustrous surfaces, or overly large or extremely small objects could have greatly impacted the general experience of the ritual acts. From the phenomenological perspective, the

object themselves, due to factors of their form and appearance, structure the way they are used and how people react to them. Objects act on people in subtle ways, “predicated upon... the anticipated responses of their users” (Robb 2012:4). There are some conventional expectations of user response, for example attraction to patterns on objects and awe of intricate decorations (Robb 2012). Selective use of objects based on formal qualities would thus capitalize on and contribute to the creation of a shared experience within ritual, enhancing the perception of community and identity.

While seeking the diacritics of kinship, status, and polity identity, I am also seeking to confirm my assumption that ritual is a heightened, self-aware form of identity enactment set apart from certain daily practices. I propose that one of the ways it is set apart from general domestic deposits, besides the patterning discussed in the previous section, is through the selective use of objects based on their physical appearance, with variations in size, color, and luster contributing to the ritualization of domestic activity. Consequently, in my thesis research I compare ritual and domestic ceramics on the basis of vessel size, color, and luster. These attributes are also ones that can be manipulated to symbolize distinct social groups, so failing to identify *discreet* symbols of identity, such as standardized emblems or icons, I relied on them to parse out assemblage differences based on household, social status, and shifting political affiliation.

The variable of size is most often employed in defining public ritual assemblages, such as the residues of feasting (e.g. Blitz 1993) or in discussions of figurine and votive offerings (Osborne 2004). Blitz’s (1993) investigations of the Mississippian site, Lubdub Creek, revealed that the ritual assemblage formed by mound feasting activity was differentiated from non-mound contexts not by the type of incorporated wares, whether fine shell tempered or course, whether

serving ware or cooking ware, but by the size of the vessels. Although this pattern is related to functional needs related to group size and food preparation related to feasting (Blitz 1993), it is telling of a propensity for vessel size to differentiate ritual contexts from other domestic contexts. Diminution in size is also often noted directly or indirectly in ritual contexts. Osborne (2004) suggests that the creation of dedicatory items, including the creation of miniatures, redirects crafting energies in a new way and serves to transform the object into an appropriate commodity for exchange with supernatural powers. The ritual consumption of ceramic wares therefore may require the production of a distinct size category to satisfy the needs of human and supernatural participants.

Chapman (2002:49) summarizes key points about the social use of color originally proposed by Sahlins by stating that it “signifies objective differences in nature and communicates the significant differences of culture.” Color, the focal point of a Jones and MacGregor (2002:9) edited volume, is endowed with significance through “experiential engagement with the environment.” Research on African ritual has been widely cited in efforts to illustrate the vast symbolic significance of color. In Yoruba culture, color classification is based on association with the living and spiritual world, even incorporating the liminal states. It encodes notions of heat and temperament and can be used in the physical manifestation of cosmological ideas. It even provides structure to social situations by enforcing differences in terms of status, age, and gender (Keats 2002). Most significantly to the process of ritualization, in Yoruba thought “certain colors make manifest the tangible Otherworldly entities such as ancestors, deities and spirits” (Keats 2002:116). Color plays an important role in the Mesoamerican world view as well, though this is generally treated in relation to the cosmological

realm. This is discussed further in the following section on The Maya Cosmos and the Color of Ritual.

Luster is the quality of shininess produced through the reflection of light. It refers to the polish, glossiness or sheen of the surface finish of an object. This quality has been explored in ritual objects in prehistoric Europe (e.g., Keates 2002, Bradley 1990) and is often related to color symbolism. Keates (2002) examines the materiality of copper objects in terms of luminosity and color, drawing on previous research indicating that the arsenic content in copper can be used to regulate color and distinguish between cult and utilitarian objects. Copper fits into a wider system of color symbolism which endows it with a certain amount of power. This power is enhanced by the luster of the metal as it glares, reflects, “dazzles, repels, looks beyond” (Herbert 1984:280 in Keates 2002). But the luster in itself does more than create a dazzling effect, as flat and well-polished surfaces in themselves tap into solar symbolism and notions of virility. Additionally, Keates proposes that the luminous copper objects, used in contexts that enhance this reflective quality, are meant to transfer the property of luminescence onto other objects, particularly human bodies undergoing transformation into ancestors. The transformative power of light is also explored by Saunders (1999) in relation to the materiality of objects and the bridging of mental and physical worlds. He argues that in the Amerindian world view, natural phenomena and objects are infused with a “spiritual brilliance” and “an inner sacredness displayed as surface gleaming” (Saunders 1999:245). Though acknowledging cultural and temporal variation in the perception of brilliance, in terms of materials and spiritual meaning, Saunders finds a great amount of cohesion in prehistoric American world views in that “light, dazzling colours and shiny matter indicated the presence of supernatural beings and essences” (Saunders 1999:245).

Using these observations as a guide, I expect that Maya domestic ritual would involve the use of highly polished pots to simultaneously offer the finest objects available and to enhance the sacred properties of the enactment. To my knowledge, no previous studies explore the use of luster in ritual in relation to social identification. Additionally, no Maya studies explicitly attempt to link ritual use of color to social groups.

The Maya Cosmos and the Color of Ritual

The Maya cosmos consisted of three basic domains: the arch of heaven, the earthly yet sacred Middleworld, and the watery Underworld below. These were not thought of as distinct regions on a map, but were rather interrelated, alive, and powerful. The human world was imagined as floating on a primordial sea, at times on the back of a caiman, at times on the back of a turtle. This world was charted out in accordance with the four cardinal directions, but the principal axis was “the path of the sun as it moved from east to west on its daily journey” (Schele and Freidel 1990: 66). The center and each direction of this quadripartite, yet concentric model is associated with a set of gods and rituals as well as a special tree, bird, and color (Schele and Freidel 1990; Thompson 1970). The tree at the center stood as an axis, integrating the three vertical domains of the cosmos, known as the world tree or *Wacah Chan* (“six sky” or “raised up sky”) (Schele and Freidel 1990:66). Ritual was used to conjure up this axis and associated sacred geography, which was not tied to any one location, and as previously discussed was often replicated in public and domestic architecture. Thompson (1970) notes that contemporary Maya groups believe the tree at the center, the *yaxche*, had roots that penetrated into the underworld and branches that pierced into the sky domains. “Some Maya groups hold that by its roots their

ancestors ascended into the world, and by its trunk and branches the dead climb to the highest sky” (Thompson 1970:195).

To the north was the “side of heaven,” signified by the color white. To the south was the great side of the sun, signified by the color yellow. Perhaps the most important direction was the direction of the rising sun: the east (Schele and Freidel 1990). This direction was signified by the color red. According to Thompson (1970) the personified sun in Maya myth wears red trousers and it is capped with a red hat. Opposite it, in the direction of the dying sun, was West and the color black. The burning of copal and the painting of the face and body in ritual are mentioned by Thompson (1970) as important components of affecting weather and performing penance during periods of fasting. Red and black also carry notions of beginnings and ends. All four colors may have been expressed in ritual performance through attire and offerings, both perishable and permanent. The ceramic surfaces examined in this research also provided a medium on which concepts of the Maya cosmos may have been realized through the selection of pastes, slips, and paints.

Chapter 3: The Site of Actuncan

Actuncan and the Actuncan Archaeological Project

The ridge top site of Actuncan is located in west central Belize, along the Mopan River. Initial occupation of the site began in the Middle Preclassic period (1000 to 300 B.C.), at the time of initial colonization of the Belize valley, and continued through the Terminal Classic period (A.D. 800 to 1000) (McGovern 2004; LeCount and Blitz 2001, 2012; LeCount and Keller 2011; LeCount, Blitz, and Kelso 2005; LeCount 2013). Sometime between the Terminal Preclassic and Early Classic periods, Actuncan developed into a state-level society, wielding a significant amount of regional power (LeCount 2012:1). However, its influence waned in the Late Classic (A.D. 600 to 850), as larger centers outside of the river valley began exerting greater control over the region. More recent research at the site has indicated that substantial populations continued to inhabit Actuncan following the fall of Maya divine kingship, into the Terminal Classic and Post Classic periods (Mixer 2012).

James McGovern (1993) divided the site into two sections: Actuncan North and Actuncan South. The latter is a Preclassic temple complex, dominated by a triadic structure rising 32 m above the surroundings. A wide causeway, or *sacbe*, connects the Preclassic complex to Actuncan North. This section consists of a residential area with house mounds and patio groups, referred to as the “North Neighborhood,” and a civic center with ball court, range structures, pyramids ringed by elite houses (LeCount and Blitz 2012:3).

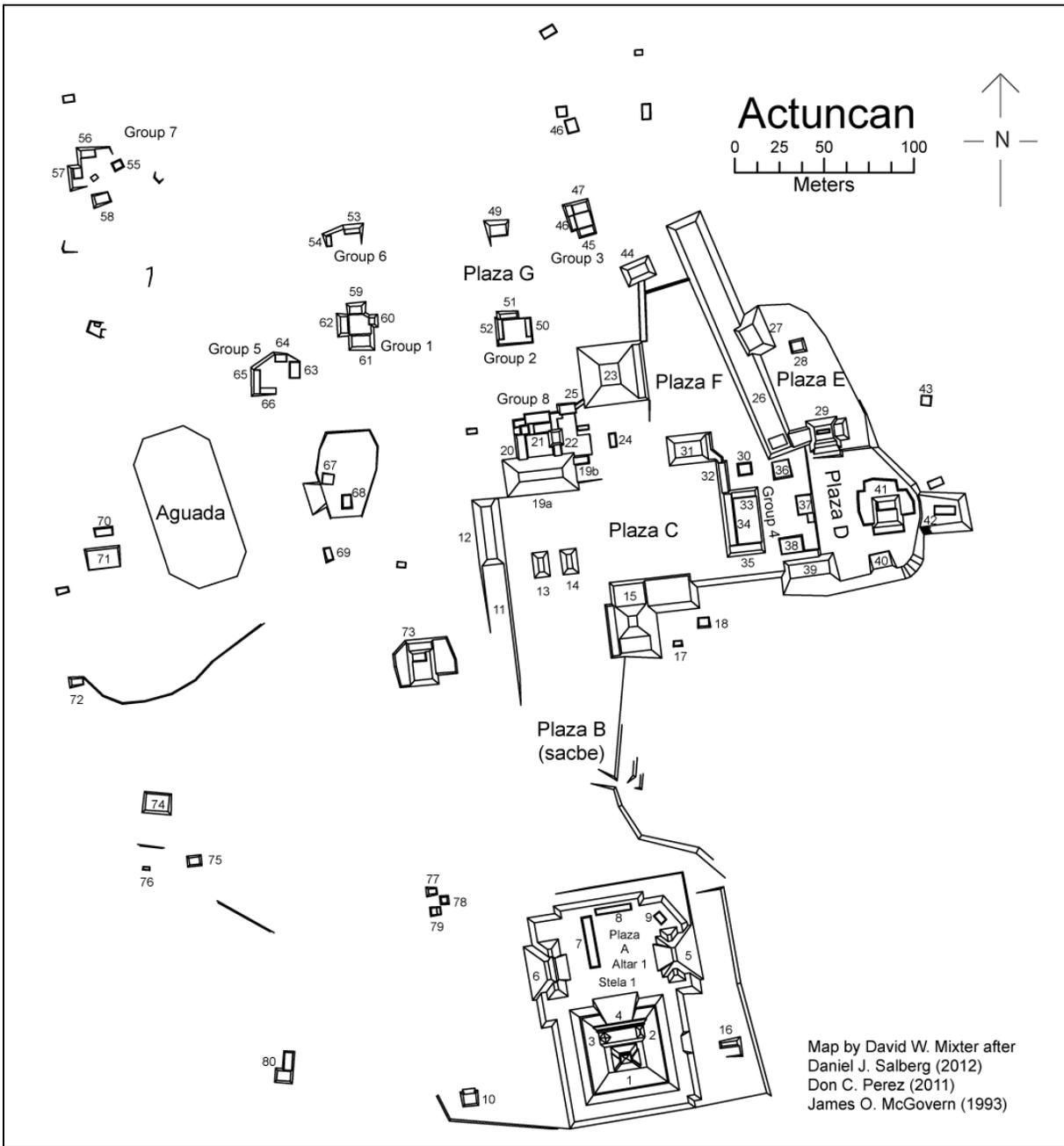


Figure 3.1. Map of Actuncan.

Since 2001, the Actuncan Archaeological Project (AAP), under the direction of Dr. Lisa LeCount, has sought to understand the institutionalization of kingship through the examination of households (LeCount and Blitz 2002; LeCount, Blitz, and Kelso 2005; LeCount and Keller 2011; LeCount and Blitz 2012; LeCount 2013). The development of state-level societies

constituted a political reorganization as well as a reorganization of kinship relations, which resulted in ideological stratification and the development of a class system. These changes reverberated throughout society, affecting the organization of domestic activity and domestic space as well as access to wealth (LeCount and Keller 2011:2). In order to understand the roles of households in this transition, 18 residences have been excavated or tested in the course of five field seasons. Of these, one structure is a Late Classic noble complex (Structure 19), five structures belong to three elite households (Structures 73, 41, 40, 29, and 20), and the rest belong to six common *plazuela*, or patio-focused groupings (Structures 45, 46, 47, 51, 56, 57, 58, 59, 61, 62, 64, 65) (See Figure 3.1). The AAP intends to ascertain if the Actuncan households signal fragmentation and shifting patterns in wealth associated with the new political organization, or if long established kin-based authority prevailed, largely unaffected by the Classic period institutionalization of divine kingship.

Sampled Households

In the scope of this research, ceramic samples are analyzed from four elite structures representing three separate households (29, 40, 41, and 73) and four common structures from two distinct *plazuela* groups (56, 57, 61, and 62). The noble complex, Structure 19, was not well understood at the time of data collection, and since it is the only representative structure of this social echelon, it is not included in the analysis. The three elite households consist of large pyramidal constructions, flanked by terraces and smaller platform structures. The common *plazuela* groups consist of multiple low platforms constructed around a raised patio. While these

common households lack the monumentality of the elite households, they are by no means representative of poor families given their position within the site.

Table 3.1. List of Sampled Residential Units

Status	Group	Structure
Common	1	61, 62
	7	56, 57
Elite		29
		40, 41
		73

Some of the household samples come from 2 x 1 m test excavation pits placed along the centerlines of structures so as to intersect exterior walls. The samples from Group 1 and Structures 40 and 41 come from more extensive excavations in 2 m wide trenches spanning the width of the structures. These axial trenches were also placed along centerlines. Besides assuring that all construction episodes are architecturally represented and allowing us to examine the way architectural features articulate, the placement of the test pits and axial trenches approximates the placement of caches within households.

In the following sections, I provide a brief description of the sampled households and of the sampled contexts from each. A list of sampled lots by household can be found in Appendix A.

Group 1. Group 1 consists of four platform structures (Structures 59, 60, 61, 62) arranged around a raised patio. The occupation sequence spans over a thousand years, beginning in the Preclassic period and continuing into the Terminal Classic period. However, it is unlikely that the occupation was uninterrupted or that the occupants were direct descendants of the founding

group. The proximity of the household to the site core and a number of burials recovered from this *plazuela* group suggest that the residents wielded significant influence and wealth during the Late Preclassic to Early Classic periods. The later use of the *plazuela* as a mass burial ground suggests a ritual significance of the location, but also contributes to a great amount of disturbance, which impacts our understanding of the patio construction.

The north platform, Structure 59, is a later addition to the patio group that appears to have been in use and intensively renovated over a short period of time. The terminal structure consists of a central platform with ancillary wings to the east and west. Material recovered within it dates to the Late Classic period, strangely lacking traces of Terminal Classic occupation found elsewhere on the group. Excavations in Structure 59 yielded a diverse artifact assemblage, which together with the architectural layout suggest that it functioned as a multi-use workshop area (LeCount and Blitz 2012; Antonelli and Rothenberg 2011).

Structure 60 is a platform located in the eastern portion of Group 1. The last construction event of Structure 60 dates to the Late Classic and Terminal Classic periods. A number of burials were encountered below the platform and immediately to the west of it (LeCount and Blitz 2012). Some of these burials were interred under large boulders while others were associated with more formal crypt architecture. Chemical patterning in soil samples from boulders located on the Group 1 patio suggest that more burials may be present through the middle of the patio (Rothenberg 2012). The platform construction directly above the burials dates to the Terminal Classic, though it contains some Early Classic material. The burials themselves were placed within the fill of the Early Classic platform in unsealed contexts which are difficult to date. Furthermore, each successive interment appears to have disturbed existing ones to the point where nearly every grave included elements from other individuals and/or was missing elements

(Freiwald 2012). Because of these confounding conditions for dating and delineating graves, I found it imprudent to attempt analyzing any of the material from Structure 60.

Structure 61 is the southern platform of the *plazuela* group. Its final construction episode dates to the Terminal Classic period. It overlies a Late Classic stratum of fill, though a clear structure floor is lacking. Portions of the Late Classic architecture may have been dismantled and appropriated in the Terminal Classic period for the construction of a larger platform in that location. An Early Classic structure floor and platform (Structure 61-2nd) stands as the earliest stone structure in this portion of the patio, though it is suspected that a perishable structure may have stood on the Terminal Late Preclassic Edwin's Second Patio Floor. Two ritual deposits were identified within this structure in the course of excavations. The first of the two lip-to-lip caches was found 20 cm below the northern platform wall of Structure 61-2nd (Wall #7). The second was found below Glen's Floor (Structure 61-3rd). This latter cache dates to the Early Classic period and was examined for this research. It is described in somewhat greater detail below.

Structure 62 is the second largest structure in Group 1, located to the west. It shows little evidence of Terminal Classic occupation. The terminal structure was likely used in the Late Classic period, at which point a few small additions to the earlier architecture were made. The samples examined from this structure are located within the patio floors and represent two separate construction events.

Group 7. This group consists of at least four structures (Structures 55, 56, 57, 58) informally arranged around a wide patio. It is located in the northwest end of the site, approximately 180 m from Group 1, at a low ridge top. Surface mapping suggests that the south and east structures, Structures 58 and 55 respectively, differ in orientation from the north and

west Structures 57 and 56. This discordance points to a difference in function, temporal distance in construction, and perhaps even difference in the social entities responsible for the construction (Simova 2012). Only three of the platforms were sampled in the 2011 field season, with no excavations taking place on the eastern Structure 55. The ceramic quicksort carried out by Dr. LeCount supports the temporal distance of Structure 58 from Structure 56 and 57.

This research additionally revealed that Structure 57 is more complex in construction than originally perceived, with multiple platforms or multiple footings for perishable structures comprising the terminal construction. This portion of the *plazuela* group has a longer construction history than is evident in the other two sampled structures. It is here that I found evidence of early occupation, with a Terminal Late Preclassic (TLP) platform visible below the western structures. This earlier platform is positioned further within the patio than the later far-flung constructions. At that time, the patio appears to have consisted of a dirt floor, with no significant architectural modification of the ridge top.

A more substantial construction episode and likely reorganization of the *plazuela* group took place in the Early Classic (EC) period. This construction is marked by a building up of the patio, using dirt and larger cobbles. No other architectural features were identified for this time period. The next patio construction even dates to the Late Classic period, at which point the flanking structures took their terminal form.

For this research, ceramic samples from Group 7 were taken from the TLP platform of Structure 57, from the TLP patio fill around this early platform, below the terminal platform of Structure 56, and from the EC patio fill below Structure 57's multiple terminal architectural features. No samples from Structure 58 were analyzed for this research, since this construction and associated patio build-up appeared to date to the Late and Terminal Classic periods. This

was unfortunate, as two of the ritual deposits identified within the group were found in association with Structure 58. The remaining ritual deposit comes from the TLP platform of Structure 57 and is discussed in more detail below.

Structure 29. Single large houses such as 29, 41, and 73 are sometimes viewed as “big houses,” functioning to integrate corporate groups and anchor rural elite into the urban political and economic center (Mixter 2012). All three structures are oriented toward Actuncan South. Structure 29 and 41 are located within close proximity of each other along the eastern edge of the urban center. The substructure of Structure 29 is a low platform placed on the natural rise of a hill, creating the illusion of a monumental façade. Three areas across the structure were sampled in 2004; Suboperation 7A located north of the eastern terrace, Suboperations 7B, C, and D located along the eastern medial terrace, and Suboperation 7E located directly under the highest platform. The latter of these locations was excavated downward to understand the structure construction sequence and it is from this location that I derived my ceramic sample.

The terrace was constructed in the Early Classic period out of massive river cobbles. Underneath this fill is a cut-limestone block platform with a distinct orientation, possibly representing the Preclassic period occupation of the structure (LeCount, Blitz, Kelso 2005). The Early Classic construction of the pyramidal structure stands in opposition to the long-term renovations of *plazuela* groups. LeCount, Blitz, and Kelso (2005) interpreted such dwellings as Structure 29 and 41 as representing upstart families, lacking archaeological antecedents at the site, but flourishing with the institutionalization of kingship.

Sampled contexts from Structure 29 date to the Early Classic period and are located within the medial terrace. They consist of floor ballast and two fill episodes, one of which is described as in situ refuse used as fill and is located just above a burnt occupation surface. This

latter deposit does contain larger sherds possibly packed against a wall, but was not considered to be a ritual deposit because of the rocky matrix (LeCount and Blitz 2005).

Structures 41 and 40. As an elite residence, the Structure 41 household consists of a single residential structure constructed on top of a large mound. The monumentality of its size is augmented by its placement at the eastern edge of the urban core, at the top of a ridge facing the Mopan River. Excavations at Structure 41 revealed a series of construction episodes and occupation debris beginning in the Terminal Early Preclassic and continuing through the Post Classic period. The Terminal Early Preclassic construction was distinct in location and form, so the structure did not take on its principal shape until the Terminal Late Preclassic period. Renovations in subsequent periods consisted of modifications to the Southern Terrace and reorganization of the residential superstructure (Mixer 2012).

Structure 40 is located just south of Structure 41, across a small section of plaza. It is believed to be associated with the Structure 41 household, though the two differ slightly in alignment. The 11 m by 7 m, two-tiered mound may have served a variety of public and private functions for the elite occupants; however it is clear that it did not serve as an ancestral shire as no burials were recovered within it (Mixer 2012). A more public function is hypothesized on the basis of ceramic assemblages. The structure was in place by the Early Classic period and in use into the Terminal Classic period. Unlike Structure 41, it was heavily modified in the Early Classic period.

Both structures appear to have undergone a hiatus following the Early Classic period, with construction resuming in the Late Classic II period. At that time, the masonry residential structure at the top of the mound was dismantled and replaced with a perishable construction, possibly shifting orientation from east to south.

All samples from Structure 40 date to the Early Classic (EC) period and only two from Structure 41 date the Late Preclassic (LP) or Terminal Late Preclassic (TLP) periods. Both ritual and domestic contexts are represented in each structure. Sampled contexts from Structure 40 include an EC ritual wall termination, two EC floor fill episodes, and an EC wall fill. Early Classic contexts sampled from Structure 41 include Melon Fill, Melon Floor Termination, Burial 11, and a Wall Cut. Earlier deposits include two fill episodes of Joey's Plaza, Joey's Plaza Floor, Gorilla Fill, and Burial 5.

Structure 73. This structure is similar in layout to Structures 41 and 29 in that it consists of a central pyramidal platform surrounded by lower terraces. It mainly differs in its position within the site. Whereas Structures 29 and 41 are located on the eastern edge of the site, Structure 73 is directly west of the *sacbe* connecting the Preclassic temple complex to the northern civic core. This central position of the household in relation to the ceremonial and civic precincts may have afforded the residents substantial privilege.

Material available for analysis from this structure came from three 2 x 1 m test units placed at the top and base of the structure. The nature of the initial occupation and construction of the structure could not be determined, since the units were not excavated to sterile soil in the 2011 field season. Since the architecture of the structure is not yet well understood, it is difficult to contextualize the quicksort *terminus post quem* (TPQ) dates and provide a detailed construction narrative for this structure. The plaza at the base of the structure appears to have been last elaborated in the Terminal Late Preclassic period, while the core platform evidenced a later Early Classic elaboration. Interestingly, a ritual termination deposit recovered at the base of the top most residential structure suggests that the structure was abandoned in this period as well.

However, occupation debris found above these final constructions dating into the Post Classic period, suggests that Structure 73 was at least occasionally revisited by later populations.

Samples from this structure come from the Terminal Late Preclassic patio fill, Late Preclassic structure fill and floor constructions, and Early Classic floor constructions. The single ritual deposit identified was the Early Classic termination at the top of the mound, discussed in more detail below.

Overview of Sampled Contexts

A preliminary tally of current Actuncan artifact databases suggested that Late Preclassic to Early Classic household materials were available from 18 structures, totaling over 2,000 pounds of artifacts. The initial strategy of examining a preselected purposive sample of Late Preclassic through Early Classic lots from each household had to be fine-tuned first, because it proved misleading to select artifact samples based on bag TPQ designations without reference to the Harris matrices created by the structure excavators, and second, because artifact storage strategies made it difficult to easily locate specific bags. It is not out of the ordinary to find early diagnostics in households established in the Late Classic period, for example, or to have one artifact bag with only Early Classic diagnostics out of a large analytic unit dating to the Late Classic period. Consequently, it was more useful to compose a list of each analytic unit from the appropriate time periods by consulting both Harris matrices and the AAP database, narrowing the sample frame to the eight structures discussed in previous sections and 42 distinct contexts, or analytical units (Table A.2). I decided to sample each of these contexts, relying on a sort of convenience sample of artifact bags from each. A list was composed of all constituent lots and

artifact bag numbers per lot for the analytical units. For ritual and fairly small deposits, I attempted to recover and analyze all constituent bags. For other household deposits, bags were pulled from storage as they were encountered, taking care to have at least one bag from at least 4 lots for larger analytic units. Analysis began with ritual deposits, allowing for nearly complete representation of these contexts. As the end of the field season drew near, many analytical units were represented in analysis by only a bag or two of artifacts. In such cases, bags appearing to contain larger and better preserved sherds were given priority, as they yielded more aesthetic information.

Ritual Deposits

Group 1, Structure 6. This deposit consists of a lip-to-lip ceramic cache (lot 1DD/6) and dates to the Early Classic period. It was located between two structure floors, seemingly surrounded by fill. It dates to the Early Classic period. The lower floor is Edwin's Second Patio Floor and the above structure floor is known as Glen's Floor (Rothenberg 2011). It is located along the north edge of the structure, approximately at the centerline. A second lip-to-lip cache was also recovered in this region, though more clearly in association with a structure wall. Interestingly it was located to the outside (the north side) of the structure wall, at a lower elevation. The bowls from the cache between floors are approximately 14 cm in diameter with flattened bases and direct lips. They are of the Hewett Bank Group, ware unspecified. The interior and exterior surfaces have an orangey-brown appearance, falling within the red category (2.5YR 4/6) in the *Munsell Soil Color Charts*. Luster could not be judged as the vessels remained

unwashed for residue analysis purposes. This cache contained a bird skeleton, a greenstone bead, and two additional greenstone pebbles (Rothenberg 2011).

Structure 57, Group 7. The single ritual deposit from Group 7 consists of a Terminal Late Preclassic period juvenile interment within the house foundations, referred to as Burial 12 (lots 16D/10 and 16C/12). The juvenile was buried under the large chert and limestone rocks of the initial platform construction of Structure 57. Only a small portion of the platform was excavated in the test units, but it appears that the burial occurs near the southwest corner of the platform. The bones were greatly decomposed and fragmented under the weight of the platform cobbles. The skull was oriented to the south, with the location of the teeth indicating that the face was oriented to the east, though the bones could have migrated. No obvious grave goods were observed with the infant, but there were many ceramic and lithic fragments in the platform fill surrounding the burial. Because of the presence of the child, the deposit is considered to be of a ritual nature, likely acting as a dedicatory offering rather than commemorative interment. The initial interpretation of the burial as occurring in a cyst caused much of the platform fill to be collected as a single analytical unit, thus potentially overestimating the amount of associated material. The construction of the platform clearly involved ritual practices, however it is not practical to view the entirety of the material found within the architecture as serving a ritual purpose.

About 92 percent of the 336 ceramic sherds recovered in this platform were vessel body fragments. Of those, only 34 show evidence of slip. The represented colors include red, golden brown, brown, black, orange, and one sherd had a cream surface. Only one sherd in the sample was polychromatic. The majority of sherds are plain or striated. There are 24 rim fragments in the sample, half of which are clearly from bowls. Three of the bowls are of the Aguacate Type,

Aguacate Orange Variety, one of which is a z-angle bowl. One bowl was typed as a Sierra Red Type and one was broadly identified as a Golden Brown. Of the seven identified jars in the sample, one was identified as Old River Unslipped Ware, one as Gale Creek Red Ware, and one as Monkey Falls Striated Type. One additional jar appeared to be red slipped, but could not be securely typed. Other diagnostic forms in the sample included two fragments of mammiform feet and two lid fragments.

Table 3.2. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Burial 12.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Gale Creek Red			1
Holmul Orange	Aguacate	Aguacate Orange	3
Holmul Orange	Aguacate		1
Old River Unslipped			1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Mateo Red-on-Cream	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red	2
Paso Caballo Waxy	Polvero		1
Uaxactun Unslipped	Monkey Falls	Monkey Falls Striated	1
Black Slip			8
Brown Slip			2
Golden Brown			6
Orange Slip			2
Red Slip			9
Slipped			5
Plain Striated			46
Plain			94
Unknown			153

Structure 40. The Cheetah Wall Termination (lots 10K/5 and 10L/6) is the only ritual context examined from Structure 40. Portions of lots 10K/5, 10L/6 are analyzed for this research. It is associated with the northern face of Structure 40-3rd, referred to as Cheetah Wall. Based on ceramic analysis, the deposit was dated to the Early Classic period, suggesting that the structure was terminated and renovated in that period. It consists of a dense deposit of burned, broken ceramics along the top of the Cheetah Wall. Eight hundred and twenty six ceramic sherds were analyzed from this deposit. About 87 percent (n = 717) are body sherds for which vessel form could not be determined. Among the sherds with discernible rim forms, there are bowls (n = 42), dishes (n = 3), jars (n = 20), lids (n = 7), vases (n = 2), and one possible plate. Two effigy pot fragments were also identified in the assemblage; one is typed as Pucte Brown Type, and one as a Mars Orange Savana Group. The variety in represented forms is similar to Structure 73, though they differ in style. The deposit is also distinct from the Structure 73 termination in preservation. Many slipped and painted sherds were recovered, indicating that the deposit was not exposed to the elements for a long period of time, though some erosion is evident.

Five sherds were recognized as imports due to a light colored fine paste, three could not be typed but two had the characteristically hard Peten Gloss and belong to the Aguila Group. Few jars and body sherds were observed with micaceous flecks (n = 41) or striations (n = 76). Painted and polychrome sherds were fairly common compared with other sampled contexts (n = 18).

Overall, there were 82 sherds with black slipped surfaces, 19 with brown slips, 63 with red or orange slip, and 15 with polychrome designs. Vast majority, 409, were unslipped sherds.

Table 3.3. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Cheetah Wall Termination Deposit.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Mars Orange	Savana		4
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sarteneja		1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red	12
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Mateo Red-on-Cream	1
Peten Gloss	Balanza		12
Peten Gloss	Pucte	Pucte Brown	9
Peten Gloss	Aguila		9
Peten Gloss	Dos Hermanos	Dos Hermanos Red	3
Peten Gloss	Dos Arroyos	Caldero Buff-Polychrome	1
Peten Gloss	Dos Arroyos	Dos Arroyos Orange-Polychrome	14
Peten Gloss	Dos Arroyos		1
Pine Ridge Carbonate	Mount Maloney	Mount Maloney Black	4
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond		5
Black Slip			61
Black Waxy			5
Brown Slip			10
Orange Slip			2
Red Slip			30
Plain Striated			76
Plain			328

Structure 41. Four ritual deposits were examined from structure 41, including Melon Floor Termination (lots 6OO/4, 6PP/4), Burial 11 (lot 6WW/5), Tapir Wall Cut (lots 6XX/5), and Burial 5 (lots 6XXXX/9 and 6YYYY/10). The first ritual deposit, the Melon Floor Termination, is an Early Classic period deposit consisting of a layer of broken ceramics, including many polychrome sherds, seven of which are included in the current research. These

were found scattered across the floor of Structure 41-2nd in the south façade (Mixter 2011). It underlies a Late Classic II cobble fill, which points to Early Classic abandonment and later reoccupation. The examined sherds (n = 380) are generally large, which is typical of primary deposits rather than redeposited waste, and fragmented, as is typical of termination deposits. About 40 percent of the sherds could not be assigned to a ware category because of erosion, and another 40 percent are unslipped. Of the remaining sherds, 48 have black slip, among them are eight Balanza Group and two Mount Maloney Group sherds, with red slips represented in only nine sherds, five of which are Savana Group. In terms of form, there is little diversity among the classifiable rim sherds, predominantly belonging to bowls and jars, however two body sherds are identified as censor and effigy pot fragments.

The second deposit, consists of the artifacts in this analytical unit are associated with a seated adult burial, Burial 11, in the south façade of Structure 41-1st. It is interpreted as a termination deposit rather than a commemorative burial, ending Structure 41-2nd and inaugurating the new construction, 41-1st. The individual was placed with his back resting on an informal cobble wall, his erect body facing to the southeast. A great paucity of grave goods was observed. Two chert flakes and four body sherds were identified in the field and lab excavation. The body was seated on top of a large *metate* fragment. Additionally, it was observed that the body was coated with numerous thin plaster flakes, no more than 3 mm in diameter.

The excavator, David Mixter, observed that this burial event was likely related to the termination activities taking place on Melon Floor. Following this assumption, the burial is given an Early Classic date, despite the lack of diagnostic ceramics. The ceramic material collected as part of this analytic unit is sparse. Only four sherds were identified, all plain ware. One sherd with eroded surface appeared to be striated and two more has micaceous flakes; all three are

likely from jars, though this could not be determined with certainty without the rim. The vessel exteriors are varied in color, but primarily dark (black, brown, dark gray). Lot 6NN/5, containing several mendable polychrome sherds, may also belong to this ritual deposit, as it was found near the seated individual

The third deposit, dating to the Early Classic period deposit, referred to as Tapir Wall Cut, consists of material placed in a cut in the Melon floor, located south of the Tapir Wall and extending to the base of the wall. It appears to be associated with Burial 11 and the Melon Floor Termination, and thus implicated in the termination of Structure 41-2nd. Over two hundred sherds are examined from this context, displaying considerable similarity with the Melon Floor Termination. Of the sherds with preserved surfaces, 33 percent are plain. Black slips are common (n = 42) and include nine Balanza sherds. Five Savana Group and 2 Sierra Group sherds contribute to an overall count of 11 red and orange slipped sherds. Polychromes are relatively common, with five represented. Few of the rims could be classified by form, but one vase fragment was identified along with three jars and 12 bowls.

The final ritual deposit examined from Structure 41 is Burial 5: a juvenile burial associated with a small (14.5 cm in diameter) Sierra Red bowl. The excavator interpreted this deposit as part of a simultaneous termination event related to the architectural feature on which it rests and dedicatory offering to the construction of the new floor above it. The deposit likely dates to the Terminal Late Preclassic construction of Joey's floor in the southern plaza. The remains occupied a small oval area roughly 35 cm in length and 30 cm in width. It was located directly above Toby's Floor and covered by the fill of Joey's Plaza floor (Joey's Plaza Fill #2). The head of the child was oriented to the south and it was found face down into the associated Sierra Red bowl. Other non-ceramic items found with the burial include 18 shell beads and four

greenstone beads, possibly strung together into a necklace. Although classified as a burial because of the relative completeness of the skeletal material, this interment likely acted as a dedicatory offering or “earth offering.” The complete vessel and greenstone beads are also more suggestive of a dedication than a termination. This deposition event also included the construction of a line of five upright stones with flat faces facing south east, toward the child burial (AU40) and an accumulation of bone below a burned limestone rock (AU39) just to the north of the child.

Structure 73. The ritual material discussed here (lots 18F/3, 18F/5, and 18E/5) dates to the Early Classic period and was deposited at the summit of the house mound, at the southwest corner of a superstructure located to the north of the excavated units. It is referred to as a termination deposit. The extent of the deposit is unknown, since it was discovered in the course of limited structure testing. It is interpreted as a termination deposit for the elite residence, which unlike Structure 41, was not renovated or likely even occupied in the Late Classic period. The sherds are large in size, often comprising large portions of irregularly shaped rims and vessel bodies. These features suggest that the deposit was primary, meaning not redeposited refuse, and that it served as a house termination. The irregular forms suggest that the ceramics were created explicitly for the ritual. Their surfaces are highly eroded, indicating long exposure to the elements. The rims and body forms are irregular and uneven, suggesting that they are of low quality, though manufactured in diverse and intricate styles. Among the forms encountered are basal flange bowls, short cylinder vases with Teotihuacan style feet, and striated jars.

Of the 362 sherds examined from this deposit, 92 percent are body sherds. Only seventeen jar, ten bowl and one dish fragments could be confidently classified by vessel shape. The majority of preserved surfaces are plain, lacking slip or decoration. Many are striated or had

micaceous flecks over the surface, suggesting they are jar fragments. Fewer than twenty of these body sherds had some trace of red or black slip. Of the typed material, seven jar fragments belong to the Chan Pond ceramic group, three of them Negroman Punctate-Incised variety, and three of the Chan Pond Unslipped variety. One jar was typed as belonging to the Mopan Striated Group, Mopan Type. Presence of punctated designs facilitated the identification of these fragments. One polychrome rim was identified in this deposit, though it could not be typed. At best, we are only able to say that it is not of the Dos Arroyos Group. One Sierra Red bowl fragment with a bright red interior and exterior was identified, though a couple other bowl fragments were also red slipped. The rest of the slipped bowl fragments were mainly brown in color, some with extensive fire clouding.

Domestic Occupation Deposits

Domestic occupation is represented by the debris found within the fill of construction episodes from Late Preclassic and Early Classic components. Ceramics coming from these contexts, while plentiful, tend to be smaller in size than in situ deposits and more eroded compared to Late and Terminal Classic ceramics from deposits above them. Often their surfaces are coated with organic residues from other refuse incorporated into the structure fill. Over 3,000 of the sherds recovered from these contexts could not be typed to a specific ware or given a generalized ware category. Nevertheless, to provide a brief description of domestic occupation contexts, I have included tables of typed wares by household below.

Table 3.4. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Group 1 Non-Ritual Contexts.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Holmul Orange	Aguacate	Gavilan Black-on-Orange	11
Mars Orange	Savana		23
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Flor Cream	3
Paso Caballo Waxy	Polvero		2
Paso Caballo Waxy	Quacco Creek	Quacco Creek Red: Quacco Creek Variety	2
Paso Caballo Waxy	San Felipe	San Felipe Brown	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sarteneja	Sarteneja Usulután	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red: Society Hall Variety	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra		13
Paso Caballo Waxy			2
Peten Gloss	Aguila		1
Peten Gloss	Balanza		3
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond		27
Uaxactun Unslipped	Mopan	Mopan Striated	1
Cunil			1
Polychrome			4
Black Slip			16
Black Waxy			12
Brown Slip			9
Brown Waxy			16
Orange Slip			1
Red Slip			17
Red Waxy			100
Slipped			6
Plain Striated			69
Plain			276
Unknown			401

Table 3.5. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Group 7 Non-Ritual Contexts.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Gale Creek Red			2
Holmul Orange	Aguacate	Aguacate Orange	31
Holmul Orange	Aguacate	Gavilan Black-on-Orange	7
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sarteneja	Sarteneja Usulután	3
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Flor Cream	3
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red: Society Hall	1
Peten Gloss	Aguila		1
Peten Gloss	Balanza		1
Peten Gloss			1
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond	Negroman Punctate-Incised	1
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond		26
Polychrome			1
Black Slip			18
Brown Slip			24
Brown Waxy			5
Golden Brown			9
Orange Slip			6
Red Gloss			1
Red Slip			54
Red Waxy			5
Slipped			16
Waxy			8
Plain Striated			211
Plain			288
Unknown			456

Table 3.6. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Structure 29 Non-Ritual Contexts.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Gale Creek Red	Hillbank	Starkey Incised	1
Gale Creek Red	Hillbank		1
Mars Orange	Savana		5
Paso Caballo Waxy	Polvero		1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Flor Cream	1
Peten Gloss	Aguila		1
Peten Gloss	Dos Arroyos	Dos Arroyos Orange-Polychrome	1
Peten Gloss	Dos Hermanos	Dos Hermanos Red	1
Peten Gloss	Pucte	Pucte Brown	2
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond		39
Polychrome			1
Black Slip			4
Black Waxy			6
Brown Slip			5
Brown Waxy			2
Red Slip			7
Red Waxy			11
Ash			1
Plain Striated			13
Plain			136
Unknown			161

Table 3.7. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Structure 40 and 41 Non-Ritual Contexts.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Holmul Orange	Aguacate		1
Mars Orange	Savana		25
Paso Caballo	Sierra		21
Peten Gloss	Aguila		3
Peten Gloss	Balanza		2
Peten Gloss	Dos Arroyos	Dos Arroyos Orange-Polychrome	13
Peten Gloss	Dos Arroyos		16
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond		28
Cunil			2
Polychrome			1
Black Slip			53
Black Waxy			19
Brown Slip			13
Brown Waxy			17
Cream Waxy			11
Orange Slip			1
Red Gloss			1
Red Slip			68
Red Waxy			46
Slipped			5
Plain Striated			101
Plain			374
Unknown			503

Table 3.8. Ceramic Wares, Groups, and Types in Structure 73 Non-Ritual Contexts.

Ware	Group	Type	n
Gale Creek Red	Hillbank		1
Mars Orange	Savana		1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Polvero		1
Paso Caballo Waxy	San Felipe	San Antonio Golden-Brown	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra	Sierra Red: Society Hall Variety	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Sierra		1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Flor Cream	1
Paso Caballo Waxy	Flor	Mateo Red-on-Cream	1
Peten Gloss	Balanza		1
Peten Gloss	Pucte	Pucte Brown	1
Peten Gloss	Teakettle Bank	Teakettle Bank Black	1
Pine Ridge Carbonate	Mount Maloney	Mount Maloney Black	1
Tumbac Unslipped	Chan Pond		1
Polychrome			1
Bichrome			1
Double Slipped			1
TLP diagnostic			1
Black Slip			2
Black Waxy			1
Brown Slip			1
Brown Waxy			1
Golden Brown			1
Orange Slip			2
Red Slip			1
Red Waxy			1
Slipped			1
Plain Striated			1
Plain			2
Unknown			2

Chapter 4: Methods

Variable Recording

Before analyzing the ceramics, I began by recording basic provenience information. This included structure number and lot designation notated by operation number, unit letter, and lot number (e.g., Operation 1, Unit HH and Lot 4 or 1hh4 for short). Using the excavation reports, I also recorded the analytical unit name (AU), and cultural context code (CC, see Appendix B for codes), TPQ designation, household status category, and whether or not the deposit is more of a ritual or domestic nature.

Sherds from each sampled bag were then sorted into piles based on diagnostic properties. Sherds with non-diagnostic forms, which were recorded as generic body fragments, were sorted based on slip and color similarity. No Munsell number was assigned to these roughly sorted piles, instead they were identified by a Munsell name, which allows for some variation in hue and tint.

Sherds with diagnostic formal attributes, such as rims, feet, and handles, were recorded in more detail and given a precise Munsell color designation. Rims, defined as the portions closest to the orifice of a vessel (per Banning 2000), were sorted by vessel form and ceramic type where possible. Since the vast majority of the sampled ceramics were fragments, and rather small ones at that, vessel form was determined from rims based on an estimated ratio of height to rim diameter. For plates, the height should be equal to or less than 1/5th of the maximum diameter

(Rice 2005). Dishes have a height of more than $1/5^{\text{th}}$ but less than $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of the diameter. Bowls have a height above $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of the diameter, up to equal to diameter. In some cases, the form could only be narrowed down to generic categories, creating such designations as “dish/plate” or “dish/bowl.” Another hybrid category found to be necessary was that of “lid/plate.” Jar forms, though defined as taller than they are wide, were in practice identified by characteristic restricted orifices and outcurved or outflared rims. In some cases, it was necessary to record secondary formal attributes for vessels such as basal flange bowls because these attributes are temporally diagnostic.

Vessel type for diagnostic sherds was recorded using James C. Gifford's (1976) typology. In this endeavor, I was extensively assisted by Dr. LeCount. To facilitate broader comparisons and allow for partial identifications, the vessel types were recorded into three separate columns: ware, group, and type. Wares represent the most generalized ceramic groupings and are generally based on paste qualities and surface treatment, or gross technological characteristics (Gifford 1976:14). In my analysis, many non-diagnostic sherds were assigned generalized ware categories, such as plain ware or red slip ware. Groups are more descriptive categories based on stylistic similarities in form. The ceramics within a group are generally roughly contemporaneous (Gifford 1976:17). A Type is determined by a clustering of attributes with distinct tactile and visual characteristics, so that no one vessel can represent the entire type (Gifford 1976:9). This classification system is sensitive to chronology, with certain types acting as diagnostics for specific or limited time periods. For instance, the Sierra Red Type is generally diagnostic of the Late Preclassic and Terminal Preclassic periods.

A measurement of rim diameter was attempted for all rims with sufficiently preserved lips, defined as the point most distant from the base as measured along the vessel walls (Banning

2000). This variable was measured by aligning the outermost portions of the vessel lips of properly oriented rims against the charted lines of a rim board. Two additional measurements of neck radius and rim length were recorded for jar rims where possible. Neck radius was measured at the most restricted portion of the interior surface of a jar rim properly oriented and aligned on a rim measurement board. Rim length is a vertical measurement from the lip to the base of the most restricted portion of the neck, with the rim once again properly oriented. These measurements provide an index for the size of the vessel.

The presence or absence of slip was noted for sherds with sufficiently preserved surfaces. Interior and exterior surfaces were coded separately for this variable, as were color designations. Presence and type of surface decoration were also noted. Larger sherds with more extensive decorative elaboration were either sketched or photographed.

The categories of the ordinal variable of surface finish, in this case referring to luster, were largely developed in the field. The intention was to categorize sherds as very glossy, glossy, or matte. However, as more sherds were examined, additional categories were developed to take into consideration a variety of finishing techniques which produce different light reflecting effects. The “Peten Gloss” designation was mainly applied to the Dos Arroyos ceramic group. These tend to be double slipped and very well polished (Gifford 1976:174), which gives the surface a mirror-like appearance. As such, a “Peten Gloss” surface finish is the highest category of luster. The “Waxy high gloss,” applied to waxy wares, was deemed to be less lustrous than the “High gloss” category used for slipped wares. The diminished luster of waxy wares is due to their characteristic retention of wiping marks and thick application of slip producing a waxy feel (Gifford 1976). However, the “Waxy low gloss” often appeared more reflective than the “Low gloss” slipped or non-slipped polished surfaces, perhaps also because of the thick application of

slip. The “matte” category was applied to both rough textured and smoothed fragments which showed no light reflecting properties. As such, they represented the lowest category of surface luster. An additional category of “gloss” was added for sherds which did reflect light, but also showed significant surface erosion. In such cases, I could not be certain that they would have been glossier in their more preserved states, but it was evident that they at least had a low gloss.

Variable Manipulation

Only three variables were modified from their original notational categories to facilitate statistical analysis of the data: structure, deposit TPQ, and color. Structures were grouped into households based on architectural proximity. Structures within the same *plazuela* group or on the same pyramidal mound were considered to be part of the same household. The Late Preclassic and Terminal Late Preclassic periods were combined into one Preclassic TPQ group for analysis because of sparse representation and difficult precise differentiation of the two. In the analysis, the two are often referred to as the Preclassic periods.

Color, in general, is a difficult trait to record and manipulate in anthropological analysis and was one that presented difficulty in combining into fewer categories. In archaeology, one of the well-established methods of standardizing color recording and reporting involves the use of the *Munsell Soil Color Charts*. In this handy field companion, one finds hue, chroma, and value neatly broken down, arranged, and labeled with a series of numbers and letters. As discussed elsewhere, this was the chosen standard by which color data was gathered for this research. While providing some consistency, the Munsell color charts are not immune to subjectivity in perception, particularly when correlation to common color terminology is attempted in analysis.

Color is a vast continuum, but languages have been shown to draw on, at most, 11 core color categories (Berlin and Kay 1969). Cross-culturally, there is a great amount of consistency in the identification of color category cores, with variation occurring at the placement of color boundaries along the continuum. It is here that problems are encountered when trying to reduce the continuum into easily comparable categories. Additionally, the Munsell system has been criticized for including a limited number of features of color appearance, excluding information on texture and luster among other conditions of experience (Chapman 2002). At some point during analysis, it became evident that the color name suggested by the Munsell charts did not match my own perceptions of the color, particularly when it came to reds, browns, and oranges, which are entirely absent in the chart names. The texture of the vessel surface appeared to impact this deviation. Fairly early in the course of the research, I added the variable of “perceived color” to my data collection table.

During analysis, I constructed various groupings based on Munsell classifications of hue, chroma, and value as well as Munsell names and my personal colloquial notations of color. I initially sorted Munsell notations and where possible Munsell color names into light, dark and medium nominal categories. The categories were delimited by the Munsell value scale, visible on the left hand of the swatch page (Figure 4.1). Values of 2, 2.5, and 3, located at the lower edge of the page placed colors into the dark category. Values between 4 and 6 were in the medium category and higher values were in the light category.

The creation of broader categories incorporating hue and chroma information proved more difficult. Rather than defining arbitrary boundaries within the Munsell pages, I attempted to use Munsell color names, which are more inclusive than the notations. The names were assigned three digit numbers, with the hundred's place representing the base color (grey, black, brown, red, yellow), the ten's place representing secondary tints (i.e., greyish, brownish, yellowish) and the one's place representing values (i.e., pale, light, dark). See code book in Appendix B for full notation system. I then attempted to further collapse the categories in various ways, beginning with the removal of the ten's place. Eventually, I settled on collapsing the notations to the hundred's place with a few modifications that take into consideration the impact of dark and light values on perception. Colors referred to as "very light" were lumped with light grays to form what I call the Light Gray/Beige category, consisting of light color neutral tones. Colors referred to as "very dark" I often perceived as black and accordingly placed in a Black category. The yellow Munsell colors were largely absorbed into these categories, with the remaining reddish yellow and brownish yellows moved into the Red/Orange category, because they appeared as oranges to me. The resulting color categories were Light Gray/Beige, Black, Brown, and Red/Orange.

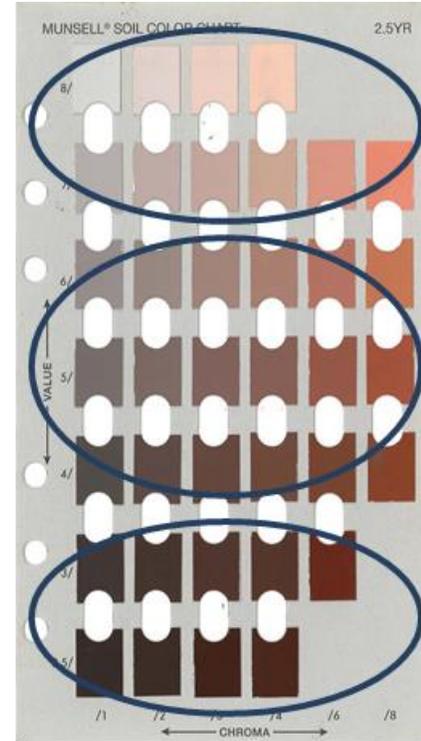


Figure 4.1. Classification of color Values based on *Munsell Soil Color Charts* (Munsell Color 1975). Light values are circled at the top, medium below, and dark at the bottom of the image.

Chapter 5: Analysis

To statistically explore the selective use of vessels based on appearance, I focus on the variables of vessel size, surface finish in terms of both slip and luster, and surface color, previously discussed in the section on the materiality of ritual. Vessel size can speak to differences in storage and consumption needs between various settings, groups, or time periods. Deviations in size, with abnormally large or small vessels, can also serve to set apart ritual deposits and emphasize social distinction. The presence or absence of slip and level of surface luster can effect perception of the vessel quality, indicate time investment in manufacture, and variations in use between contexts, groups and time periods. Vessel color can tap into ritual symbolism and potentially act as emblematic of social groups. The Sample Description section is organized by variable, with corresponding sections on size, surface finish, and color providing descriptive statistics of the overall ceramic sample. The Hypothesis Testing section is organized by the four general questions regarding 1) the construction of ritual, 2) enactment of identity based on household and 3) socio-economic class, and 3) the shifting politics of identity signaling through time.

Sample Description

Size. Of the over 7,600 sherds examined, only 252 are rim sherds of sufficient size to obtain radius measurements at the vessel lip. These measurements follow a normal distribution,

with slight skewing toward the smaller end of the scale (See Appendix A). The mean radius measurement is 11.2 cm centimeters with a variance of 25.7 cm. The skewness is likely due to the large number of jar rims in the sample, which tend to be smaller in size than bowl, dish, and plate measurements. To account for differences in morphology, analysis involving vessel size is carried out only on sherds with known shape. Additionally, jars, along with the few, ollas, and *tecomates* in the sample, are combined into a closed form category, while bowls, dishes, and plates are combined into an open form category. This latter grouping makes it easier to deal with the generalized categories of bowl/ dish and dish/plate. Radius measurements for open forms follow a normal distribution, with a mean radius of 13.9 cm and a variance of 29.8 cm (see Appendix A). Closed form radius measurements taken at the lip also has a normal distribution with a mean radius measurement at lip of 9.0 cm and a variance of 8.8 cm.

Although multiple measurements were taken on jar rims, the radius at the lip was determined to be the best proxy for vessel size for the purposes of this analysis. For one, it is the most commonly available for sherds, which might lack sufficient portions of the neck to measure the orifice at the point where the rim meets the body. Lip radius and neck radius, when examined using a Pearson correlation, have a statistically significant strong correlation ($r(91) = .911, p < .001$), suggesting that the two could be used alternatively as proxies for vessel size. Rim height very weakly correlates with each of the radius measurements, but only significantly so with lip radius ($r(92) = .318, p < .01$). The rim heights are not normally distributed, so their relationship to the other measurements is tested using the Spearman correlation coefficient. It correlates weakly with both, but only the relationship to the radius at lip is statistically significant ($\rho(92) = .219, p < .05$). It is likely that rim height is more indicative of vessel style than size variation.

Although informative, the additional jar orifice measurements are not necessary for examining vessel size variations in various household contexts.

Surface Finish. Surface treatment is known to differ by vessel form, with serving wares such as bowl and plates more commonly slipped than storage wares such as jars. To provide a better description of the presence of slip in the sample, I focus on open and closed forms individually. Presence of exterior slip is recorded for 181 of the 254 open forms with sufficiently preserved exterior surfaces present in the sample, while interior slip is recorded for 213 of the 275 open forms with well-preserved interior surfaces. In the analysis, the two measures are strongly correlated, particularly in open forms, and are patterned in nearly identical ways. In later sections, I focus on exterior slip to simplify the discussion. For closed forms, slipped surfaces are fairly rare. Of the 199 closed forms with well-preserved exterior surfaces, 29 have slip, while of the 178 closed forms with well-preserved interior surfaces, 23 have slip.

There are 3,486 sherds with recorded luster (Table A.6). Of these, the majority are matte, which is not surprising given the low incidence of slip on closed forms. The most common lustrous finish is a waxy low gloss, represented in ten percent of the sample. Peten Gloss finish is the rarest, at just below 2 percent of the sample.

When treated separately, open and closed forms again display divergent trends (Table 5.1). For the open forms, the percentage of matte finish is significantly lower, at 28.5 percent, than for closed forms, at 91.3 percent. Waxy low glosses are the most common lustrous finish in open forms, while they are absent from the closed forms. The Peten Gloss is exclusively found in open forms.

Table 5.1. Luster by Vessel Form.

Luster	Open Form		Closed Form	
	n	%	n	%
Peten Gloss	20	7.4	0	0
High Gloss	40	14.8	4	2.3
Waxy High Gloss	0	0	0	0
Waxy Low Gloss	69	25.6	0	0
Gloss	38	14.1	6	3.5
Low Gloss	26	9.6	5	2.9
Matte	77	28.5	157	91.3
Total	270	100	172	100

Color. Color was categorized in two ways during analysis, first into three value categories then into generalized, common use hue categories. When classified by value, most vessel exteriors fall within the medium value category (Table 5.2). Medium values comprise 64 percent of the total assemblage; dark values follow at 35 percent, with light values comprising only one percent. These trends are repeated with only slight fluctuation when vessels are examined by form (Table A.7). The value categories failed to yield any statistically significant differences in proportions when compared between ritual and non-ritual contexts, households, elite and common socio-economic classes, or across time. Because of this, no further discussion of color value will be found in the following sections.

Table 5.2 Ceramic Sample Color Values.

Color Value	n	%
Light	43	1.1
Medium	2512	64.3
Dark	1354	34.6

When classified by hue, the overall ceramic sample has predominantly dark brown and black exteriors, representing 33 and 24 percent of the assemblage respectively. Light gray and pale beige exteriors are also fairly common, at 21 percent, followed by red, at 15 percent. Bright brown and orange exteriors are fairly rare, together comprising less than 8 percent of the assemblage (Table 5.3). As with other variables, open and closed forms exhibit different frequency distributions in hue categories.

Table 5.3. Ceramic Sample Exterior Color.

Color	n	%
Gray/Beige	803	21.3
Black	904	24.0
Brown	1223	32.5
Bright Brown	136	3.6
Orange	154	4.1
Red	547	14.5
Total	3767	100.0

When examining hue classifications, I noticed a slight divergence between open form interior and exteriors. Occasionally, results from both exterior and interior surfaces are presented. Open forms mainly fall within the red hue category with 64 percent of interiors and 58 percent of exteriors exhibiting this color. Brown interiors and exteriors are the next most common, accounting for 26 percent of interiors and 30 percent of exteriors. Black interiors are found in seven percent of open forms and black exteriors in 9 percent of open forms. Light finishes in beiges and grays are fairly rare with 2 percent of interiors and 3 percent of exteriors. (Table A.8). Closed forms have predominantly brown and black exteriors, comprising 43 percent

and 29 percent of the assemblage respectively. Light colored gray to beige exteriors are fairly uncommon, at 16 percent, followed by red and orange exteriors at 13 percent (Table A.9).

Hypothesis Testing

The variables given in the above descriptive section are all used in analysis to test the four hypotheses of this research. However, since not all statistical tests yielded significant results or even possible trends, the below discussion focuses only on a subset of these variables. Vessel size measurements are particularly problematic. Multiple ANOVA tests for normally distributed measurements and Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests for non-normally distributed measurements failed to yield significant results. What is instead consistently significant is the difference in variance between the analyzed groups. I hesitate to read much into this because of differences in excavation volume and to extent of sampling of various analytical units.

The identification of discreet symbols of identity in the form of painted emblems is not possible from the available sample. Painted designs are very few in number due to the poor state of preservation and the overall low frequencies polychrome painting in the Terminal Preclassic and Early Classic assemblages. Nevertheless, by focusing on the variables of size, surface finish, and color, I am able to parse out some practices contributing to social group boundary creation as well as some evidence of cohesion among Actuncan Households.

Ritual and Non-Ritual Differentiation. My assumption is that domestic ritual, rather than emphasizing a shared Maya identity, acts as a venue in which social divisions are actively signaled and internalized, perhaps even more so than domestic contexts. I assume this to be the case because the selection of ritual assemblages often involves more considerations than functional properties of artifacts, as indicated in my discussion on the materiality of ritualization.

In addition to creating a more potent ritual experience, the selective process could also incorporate the symbols and practices that serve to differentiate the practitioners as members of a certain social group. For these assumptions to be sustained, ritual deposits should incorporate a different subset or different proportions of ceramic categories than do other domestic deposits. My analysis, presented in part here, shows that the construction of domestic ritual assemblages among the ancient Maya of Actuncan did not appear to involve a manipulation vessel size, but rather a consideration of surface treatment and color. The materiality of ritual is indeed differentiated from domestic contexts in a patterned way. In this and the next sections, I attempt to detangle to what extent this difference is due to the requirements of ritual practice and to what extent and when notions of status appropriate action influence the selection of the ritual assemblage.

Examinations of the proportions of slipped and unslipped wares in ritual and non-ritual contexts support a distinct construction of ritual. Slipped wares of all forms comprise 27 percent of the overall assemblage. The proportion of slipped wares is lower in ritual contexts (25 percent) than in non-ritual contexts (29 percent). Although small, this difference is significant ($\chi^2 = 7.61, p = .003$). (Table A.10). This statistically significant pattern indicates that notions of light reflecting properties and luminescence do not necessarily enter into consideration during the creation of ritual assemblages and may have little to do with the material properties of Maya sacredness associated with ceramic vessels.

When open and closed forms are treated separately, it becomes evident that open forms undergo more selection than do closed forms in ritual. Slipped closed forms are found in ritual and non-ritual contexts in nearly identical proportions, albeit slightly higher in non-ritual settings. However, slipped open forms are found in lower than expected proportions in ritual

settings, given their overall proportion in the assemblage. A little less than a third of all slipped open forms are found in ritual contexts, contributing to 61 percent of the ritual assemblage and 78 percent of the non-ritual assemblage. This difference is significant ($\chi^2 = 8.91, p = .004$).

Table 5.4. Proportions of Slipped Open Form Sherds in Ritual and Non-Ritual Settings.

Context	Unslipped		Slipped	
	n	%	n	%
Non-Ritual	35	21.9	125	78.1
Ritual	37	39.4	57	60.6
Total	72	28.3	182	71.7

Fisher's Exact Test $p = .004$

Luster is examined by comparing the proportions of various finishes between ritual and non-ritual contexts with the same expectation that more reflective surfaces would have been incorporated in greater quantity in ritual contexts to materially differentiate the act. As with presence and absence of slip, while ritual and non-ritual contexts can be distinguished by their proportions of luster categories, ritual settings did not incorporate more highly reflective finishes. Matte finishes form a larger proportion of ritual contexts than expected, with 82 percent of the ritual assemblage and 73 percent of the non-ritual assemblage. The low gloss, gloss, and high gloss finishes are found in equal proportions in both contexts, reflecting their general availability. However, waxy finishes and Peten Gloss finishes show some interesting deviations. Waxy low glosses are found in lower than expected quantities in ritual settings while Peten Glosses are found in higher than expected quantities, given their proportion in the overall assemblage. Presented in a different manner, 59 percent of Peten Glosses are found in ritual

settings while only 7 percent of all waxy finishes are used and deposited in the same manner. These differences between contexts are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 171.6, p < .001$). The implication here is that the selection of wares for use in ritual has less to do with the reflective properties of the surface finish than with the specific finish, as Peten Gloss and waxy finishes are highly diagnostic characteristics.

Table 5.5. Proportions of Sherd Luster Categories in Ritual and Non-Ritual Settings.

Context	Peten Gloss		High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Non-ritual	31	1.0	130	4.0	424	13.1	125	3.9	165	5.1	2358	72.9
Ritual	44	3.0	61	4.1	31	2.1	37	2.5	93	6.3	1204	81.9
Total	75	1.6	191	4.1	455	9.7	162	3.4	258	5.5	3562	75.7

$$\chi^2 = 171.62, p < .001$$

With respect to luster, open forms are once again used more selectively in ritual settings than closed forms. Differences in luster category proportions are significant ($\chi^2 = 45.4, p < .001$). Forty-five percent of the open forms found in ritual settings are matte, which is surprising considering that matte finishes are only found on 30 percent of all open forms. Similarly, 13 percent of open forms in ritual settings had Peten Gloss finish, which is on only seven percent of all open forms. Conversely, while waxy low gloss finishes are found on 26 percent of the open forms, it constitutes only seven percent of the ritual assemblage (Table 5.6). It appears that bowls, dishes, and plates with matte and Peten Gloss finishes are preferentially incorporated into rituals, while ones with waxy finishes are only seldom selected.

Table 5.6. Proportions of Open Form Luster Categories in Ritual and Non-Ritual Settings.

Context	Petén Gloss		High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Non-Ritual	6	3.6	225	15.0	61	36.5	28	16.8	14	8.4	33	19.8
Ritual	13	13.3	14	14.3	7	7.1	9	9.2	11	11.2	44	44.9
Total	19	7.2	39	14.7	68	25.7	37	14.0	25	9.4	77	29.1

$$\chi^2 = 45.36, p < .001$$

There is no statistically significant difference between closed form exterior colors in ritual contexts and non-ritual contexts. However, there are some interesting deviations in the proportions of orange, black, and gray/beige exteriors. The former two are present in higher proportions in ritual setting than expected given the overall percentages, while the light gray/beige exteriors are in lower proportions than expected. Again, these trends are not statistically significant, but perhaps informative when considered in relation to open forms.

For the analysis of open forms bright brown and dark brown, and orange and red surfaces are combined into two categories due to low sample numbers. When comparing ritual and non-ritual contexts, there is a strong statistically significant difference in the proportions of exterior colors ($\chi^2 = 24.0, p < .001$). Black and brown exteriors form a larger proportion of ritual assemblages than expected while red exteriors form a much smaller than expected proportion of ritual assemblage. Two thirds of all black bowl exteriors are found in ritual contexts while only about twenty percent of all red exteriors are found in ritual contexts. Nearly half of all brown exteriors are also incorporated into ritual which is more than expected given the smaller ritual sample size.

Table 5.7. Proportions of Open Form Exterior Color Categories
in Ritual and Non-Ritual Settings.

Context	Gray/Beige		Black		Brown		Red/Orange	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Non-Ritual	4	3.0	6	4.5	31	23.1	93	69.4
Ritual	2	3.1	12	18.5	28	43.1	23	35.4
Total	6	3.0	18	9.0	59	29.6	116	58.3

$$\chi^2 = 24.02, p < .001$$

Table 5.8 Proportions of Open Form Interior Color Categories
in Ritual and Non-Ritual Settings.

Context	Gray/Beige		Black		Brown		Red/Orange	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Non-Ritual	3	1.6	9	4.7	43	22.6	135	71.1
Ritual	4	4.1	13	13.4	30	30.9	50	51.5
Total	7	2.4	22	7.7	73	25.4	185	64.5

$$\chi^2 = 13.52, p = .004$$

These trends are also found in the distribution of the open form interiors, albeit with lower statistical strength ($\chi^2 = 13.5, p = .004$). It should be noted that red interiors are the most common in open forms recovered from ritual contexts (32 percent) closely followed by brown interiors (30 percent). Brown exteriors however are more common, 43 percent, than red exteriors 32 percent. Interestingly black surfaces appear to comprise a small portion of the ritual assemblage (13 to 19 percent). These trends however must be evaluated in light of the makeup of the entire assemblage. Although smaller than the frequency of red open forms in ritual

assemblages, the frequency of black surfaces is much *higher than expected* given the low proportion of black surfaces in the overall open form assemblage and red surfaces are underrepresented, given their high frequency in the open form assemblage. This trend in overrepresentation of black and underrepresentation of red in ritual assemblages as compared to their frequencies in domestic assemblages is maintained even when cross-tabulated across all forms and fragments examined. Red exteriors comprise only 8 percent of the overall ritual assemblage, but 17 percent of the non-ritual assemblage. Black exteriors are 30 percent of the ritual assemblage and 21 percent of the non-ritual assemblage. This deviation is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 88.9, p < .001$).

The results suggest that considerations of color were important in the Mayas' selection of ritual assemblages, particularly in the selection of bowls, dishes, and plates. Use of red and black surfaces is particularly interesting. Given their ritual and cosmological importance, one would expect that vessels of both colors would be commonly incorporated in ritual assemblages. I suspect that the underrepresentation of common red vessels and overrepresentation of less common black vessels in the ritual assemblages is related to the number and types of rituals represented.

Table 5.9. Color of Bowls, Dishes, and Plates in Ritual Contexts.

Color	Interior		Exterior	
	n	%	n	%
Gray/Beige	4	4.1	2	3.1
Black	13	13.4	12	18.5
Brown	30	30.9	28	43.1
Red/Orange	50	51.6	23	35.4

The ritual sample comes from at least three distinct termination events, each yielding a few hundred ceramic fragments, one lip-to-lip dedicatory cache, and three burials which may more properly be classified as offerings in dedications or terminations, rather than commemorative interments. Two of the three likely dedicatory offerings have little material other than red ceramics. The use of red in dedication rituals aimed at ensouling a new construction seems fitting given its association with the rising sun and life. This ritual likely did not call for the permanent deposition of large amounts of material, contributing to a lower than expected proportion of red vessels in ritual settings. Retaining some red vessels in domestic use may also have been necessary for the performance of ritual not requiring material offerings, such as feasting. Waxy finishes may be underrepresented in the ritual assemblage for the same reason, since waxy types such as Sierra Group ceramics are commonly red. Terminations, on the other hand, appear to call for the destruction and deposition of large amounts of material. In these cases, although some red ceramics were used, they were used in smaller quantities than black vessels. Instead, it seems that an effort was made to incorporate more of the sparse black colored ceramics, which recall the color of the dying sun to the west. Additionally, I suspect that a demand for a high volume of ceramics in termination ritual leads to the underrepresentation of slipped wares in the ritual sample. Apparently, commonly available plain wares and, possibly, poorly-made plain wares produced especially for destruction, were used in termination rituals. The high demand for pottery to be broken in termination rituals also seems to allow for greater flexibility in ritual construction not seen in dedicatory offerings. For this reason, termination ritual may have been a preferred venue for identity signaling.

Household Differentiation. My second hypothesis is that if kinship-based identity formed a significant facet of identity differentiation, deposits tied to the household will exhibit greater

differentiation through micro-styles identified by distinct motifs, patterning in stylistic elements, or emphasis on distinct trade wares. Further, statistical comparisons between household dedication and termination deposits is not feasible because 1) not all households have examples of both and 2) ritual material with all measurable variables of interest is not available in sufficiently large numbers. Additionally, when initial measures of significance were attempted using chi-squared test of homogeneity, it was found that significant attributes were either difficult to pinpoint because of the larger number of categories under comparison or that there were too many cells with low expected counts to be properly interpreted.

Given these difficulties and the findings about the selective use of open forms in ritual described above, I explore if households could be distinguished by formal attributes. In terms of size, a Kruskal Wallis test comparing the rim measurements by form of the five households shows a significant difference in open form sizes ($\chi^2 = 26.0$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$), but not closed forms ($\chi^2 = 1.4$, $df = 4$, $p > .05$). When comparing household open form means, Group 1 and Structure 29 are fairly distinct from Group 7 and Structure 41, their neighbors, and from Structure 73, located at some distance away from these household clusters. Given the differences in sample size, I am hesitant to read too much into this, although it is interesting and informative that no significance was found for closed forms. This trend is repeated across all three chi-squared tests for homogeneity. Significant differences are found in the distributions for open forms, but not closed forms. Here too some of the chi-squared tests are suspect because of low expected counts, but nevertheless there some differences that should be evaluated further in the future. The remainder of the discussion accordingly focuses on differentiation of household through open forms, discussed in terms of differences in assemblage proportions.

Structure 29 has a much lower than expected percentage of slipped open forms compared to overall proportions and other household assemblages (Table 5.10). Structure 73 and Group 1 assemblages have the highest proportions of slipped open forms, at 83.3 percent and 82.8 percent respectively. The difference between households is significant ($\chi^2 = 29.3, p < .001$). Interestingly, those households with the highest proportion of slipped open forms are not solely elite; therefore, status is not driving this patterning.

Table 5.10. Proportion of Slipped Open Form Exteriors by Household.

Household	Unslipped		Slipped	
	n	%	n	%
Group 1	10	17.2	48	82.8
Group 7	9	23.1	30	76.9
Structure 29	12	85.7	2	14.3
Structure 41	36	30.8	81	69.2
Structure 73	5	16.7	25	83.3
Total	72	27.9	186	72.1

$\chi^2 = 29.35, p < .001$

In terms of luster, Structures 40 and 41 have the majority of Peten Gloss finishes, contributing to the largest assemblage proportion of that luster category. Group 1 and Structure 73 assemblages are both dominated by waxy low gloss finishes, while Group 7 and Structure 29 have very low proportions of waxy low gloss finishes. Group 1 has a low proportion of matte open forms, while Structure 29 has a very high proportion of matte open forms, dominating the household assemblage. Although significance is found, 40 percent of the cells have low expected

counts, making it questionable. In the future, this finding can be checked with a larger sample size.

Table 5.11. Proportion of Open Form Luster Categories within Households.

Household	Petten Gloss		High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Group 1	1	1.5	10	14.9	35	52.2	14	20.9	0	0	7	10.4
Group 7	0	0	10	23.8	2	4.8	5	11.9	12	28.6	13	31.0
Str. 29	0	0	2	7.7	1	7.7	0	0	2	15.4	9	69.2
Str. 41	18	15.9	12	10.6	15	13.3	18	15.9	10	8.8	40	35.4
Str. 73	0	0	7	20.6	16	47.1	1	2.9	2	5.9	8	23.5
Total	19	7.0	41	15.2	69	25.6	38	14.1	26	9.6	77	28.5

$\chi^2 = 114.59, p < .001$

Household assemblages are also found to significantly vary in their percentages of surface color groups ($\chi^2 = 28.1, p = .005$), but again this finding should be checked with a larger sample size. Although all households have a large percentage of red surfaces, contributing to approximately 50 percent of the open form assemblage, Group 1 and Structure 73 assemblages are dominated by red open forms. Structure 73 has a lower proportion of brown surfaces than is seen in other households. Brown and the light gray and beige color open forms are fairly rare in the overall assemblage, but Structure 29 and 40/41 have higher percentages of black surfaces in their assemblages, with Structure 40/41 holding two thirds of all black open forms. Group 7 has a higher percentage of gray/beige surfaces, but these light colored open forms are only found in Group 7 (n = 4) and Structure 40/41 (n = 2). With a larger sample, households could be

compared by color within time periods to account for differences resulting from occupation histories.

Table 5.12. Proportions of Open Form Exterior Color Categories within Households.

Household	Gray/Beige		Black		Brown		Red/Orange	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Group 1	0	0	2	4.5	14	31.8	28	63.6
Group 7	4	17.4	0	0	8	34.8	11	47.8
Str. 29	0	0	2	20.0	3	30.0	5	50.0
Str. 41	2	2.2	12	13.0	28	30.4	50	54.3
Str. 73	0	0	2	6.7	6	20.0	22	73.3
Total	6	3.0	18	9.0	59	29.6	116	58.3

$$\chi^2 = 28.132, p = .005$$

Status Differentiation. To test the hypothesis that socio-economic status is foundational to identify formation, I again focus on a comparison of open forms rather than complete ceramic assemblages. Although I had hoped to examine the materiality of commemorative burials in order to identify symbol of status differentiation, these samples are simply not available. Deposits recovered from Structure 29, 40, 41, and 73 are considered to represent elite contexts, while deposits recovered from Structures 56, 57, 61, and 62 are considered to represent common contexts. Again, each comparison is carried out within vessel shape, since open forms and closed form assemblages differ significantly.

The first comparison looks at proportions of slipped and unslipped wares by status. For open forms, elite assemblages are comprised of 67 percent slipped and 33 percent unslipped wares. Common assemblages are comprised of 80 percent slipped and 20 percent unslipped

wares. This difference is significant rather than representing a minor deviation in proportions ($\chi^2 = 5.0, p < .05$). For closed forms, elites assemblages are comprised of 15 percent slipped and 85 percent unslipped wares. Common assemblages are comprised of 20 percent slipped and 80 percent unslipped wares. Here again commoners appear to possess more, better finished vessels. However, the difference is not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = .57, p > .05$). The finding suggests that vessel surface finish, as measured by presence or absence of slip, may not have been an indicator of higher status during the Terminal Preclassic and Early Classic period, unlike later time periods (LeCount 1999). Sufficient sample size allowed me to unpack class differences in slip between status categories further by examining the Preclassic (including both Late Preclassic and Terminal Late Preclassic periods) and Early Classic assemblages separately. Chi-square tests of homogeneity are performed on categories formed by grouping vessels by time period in addition to form. In the Preclassic period, elite open forms are exclusively slipped while common open forms are 76 percent slipped and 24 percent unslipped ($\chi^2 = 8.1, p < .05$). When slip is viewed as an indicator of greater value, this relationship seems straight forward, with elites possessing exclusively slipped open forms. However, this alone does not show that slipped open forms acted as a diacritic of status.

In the Early Classic period, proportions of slipped wares in elite open form assemblages drop significantly to just 41 percent of the elite assemblage. Early Classic common assemblages also differ from the Preclassic periods, with slipped forms accounting for 89 percent of the assemblage. The differences in proportions between the status groups are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 9.2, p < .05$). The relationship between social status and surface finish changes over time in a manner that suggests the adoption of status symbols rather than straightforward display of wealth.

Surface finish is also examined through luster categories. The proportion of the various lusters is compared across elite and common contexts to see if the quality of the surface finish, the glossiness, correlates with status. Like with slip, the assumption is that glossier surfaces would be more valued again because they reflect more work investment and higher skill in manufacture. A chi-square test of homogeneity does not reflect this in a straightforward way, but does show some interesting trends within specific luster categories.

Common assemblages are 75 percent matte and elite assemblages are 76 percent matte, which contradicts the expectation that commoners would have a larger percentage of less finely finished vessels (Table 5.13). Common assemblages have a higher percentage of gloss, low, gloss, and high gloss surfaces. The one category in which elite assemblages clearly dominate is in Peten Gloss finishes (2.5 percent vs. 0.2 percent in common assemblages). The differences in proportions are statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 47.6, p < .001$). Peten Gloss finishes will be discussed further in the diachronic comparison, but already in this analysis open forms with this finish are seen to be emerging as a strong marker of elite status. Consideration of surface finish shows that elite households are not simply differentiated by greater quantities of better finished vessels, but by greater quantities of very specific, rare vessels, in this case Peten Gloss finish open forms.

Table 5.13. Proportion of Luster Categories within Socio-Economic Status.

Status	Petén Gloss		High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Elite	71	2.5	110	3.8	282	9.7	85	2.9	143	4.9	2206	76.1
Common	4	.2	84	4.6	178	9.7	78	4.3	118	6.5	1367	74.7
Total	75	1.6	194	4.1	460	9.7	163	3.4	261	5.5	3573	75.6

$$\chi^2 = 47.639, p < .001$$

Elite and common assemblages are also compared in proportions of surface color categories. Significance is not found at a 95 percent confidence interval, but there are some deviations in proportions. Elite assemblages have a lower proportion of Gray/Beige surfaces and higher proportion of Black surfaces than do common assemblages. This difference is not very informative when we consider that the majority of black surfaces come from Structure 41 with its extensive termination deposits, and that Gray/Beige surfaces are only found in two households. So far, color differences appear to be strongly implicated in the construction of ritual and in part in household differentiation, but not necessarily status.

Table 5.14. Proportions of Open Form Exterior Color Categories within Socio-Economic Status.

Status	Gray/Beige		Black		Brown		Red/Orange	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Elite	2	1.5	16	12.1	37	28.0	77	58.3
Common	4	6.0	2	3.0	22	32.8	39	58.2
Total	6	3.0	18	9.0	59	29.6	116	58.3

$$\chi^2 = 7.37, p = .061$$

Polity Identity. The diachronic comparison of ceramic forms also focuses on open forms to test the hypothesis that with the rise of divine kingship in the Early Classic period, distinct wares, surface or styles are adopted to symbolize a cohesive polity identity. A comparison of open form lip radius measurements does not find significant differences between the Preclassic periods and the Early Classic period. Preclassic open forms have a mean radius of 13.1 cm and a standard deviation of 4.8 cm. Early Classic open forms tend to be slightly larger, and with a greater range of sizes represented. For this time period, the mean radius is 14.6 cm, with a standard deviation of 5.8 cm. Although open vessel forms appear to be trending upward in size in the Early Classic period, an independent samples t-Test showed that the difference between the two time periods is not statistically significant ($t(108) = -1.4, p > .05$). This suggests that there are no dramatically distinct vessel sizes introduced in the Early Classic period and no increased emphasis on a single size category.

A temporal comparison in the distribution of slipped wares is also carried out. Of the slipped open forms, 46 percent are early (Preclassic periods) and 54 percent are later (Early Classic period). Of the unslipped open forms, 24 percent are early and 76 percent are later. These trends account for a significantly lower proportion of slipped bowls, dishes and plates in the Early Classic period (65 percent slipped, 35 percent unslipped) than in the Late Preclassic and Terminal Preclassic (83 percent slipped, 17 percent unslipped), ($\chi^2 = 10.0, p < .05$). No such shift is detected in closed slipped and unslipped wares. This confirms that the surface finish of bowls, dishes, and plates is more sensitive to temporal shifts than is the surface finish of jars and other closed forms. A consideration and comparison of the luster categories by time period elucidates why this is the case.

In Table 5.15, I present the frequencies of luster categories for the two time period categories for the whole assemblage. It can be seen that Peten Gloss finishes are virtually absent in the Late Preclassic and Terminal Late Preclassic period and Waxy low gloss finish is present in decreased numbers in the Early Classic period, while all other categories are relatively unchanged. The Peten Gloss finish, corresponding most closely to the Peten Gloss Ware, is diagnostic of the Early Classic period. Waxy wares, such as Sierra Group, are diagnostic of the earlier periods (Late Preclassic and Terminal Late Preclassic), but remain in use through the later Early Preclassic period, albeit in much lower frequency.

Table 5.15. Proportion of Luster Categories within the Preclassic and Early Classic Periods.

Period	Peten Gloss		High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Preclassic	2	.1	94	4.2	327	14.6	77	3.4	145	6.5	1594	71.2
Early Classic	73	3.1	92	3.9	127	5.3	80	3.4	109	4.6	1905	79.8

As with analysis of slip and status categories, it proved possible and more informative to look at temporal differences in relation to other categories. The most informative is a comparison of open forms within time period between elite and common assemblages. Common and elite open forms are consistently different in proportions of luster categories through time. In the earlier periods, elite assemblages are differentiated by the fact that they contained no matte finishes and a higher proportion of waxy finishes than common assemblages. Commoners, interestingly, had a higher portion of high gloss finishes in their assemblages than did elites

during the Late Preclassic and Terminal Late Preclassic periods. Differences in the early assemblages are significant ($\chi^2 = 17.1, p = .002$).

Table 5.16. Proportion of Open Form Luster Categories in the Preclassic by Socio-economic Status.

Status	High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Elite	3	10.3	19	65.5	6	20.7	1	3.4	0	0
Common	16	20.8	26	33.8	7	9.1	12	15.6	16	20.8
Total	19	17.9	45	42.5	13	12.3	13	12.3	16	15.1

$\chi^2 = 17.15, p = .002$

In the later Early Classic period, the elite and common assemblages are again differentiated, but in a different manner. Most significantly, elite assemblages demonstrate the adoption of Peten Gloss finishes and an increase in matte finishes. Common assemblages in the Early Classic period have a much smaller percentage of matte finishes than in earlier periods, favoring instead glossy finishes. Interestingly, the proportion of waxy finishes in common assemblages remains the same as in the earlier periods, signaling conservatism in the use of this early ware. The Early Classic elite and common assemblages are significantly different in finish proportions ($\chi^2 = 38.7, p < .001$), but the finding could be strengthened with larger sample sizes.

Table 5.17. Proportion of Open Form Luster Categories in the Early Classic Period by Socio-economic Status.

Status	Peten Gloss		High Gloss		Waxy Low Gloss		Gloss		Low Gloss		Matte	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Elite	18	14.5	16	12.9	11	8.9	11	8.9	11	8.9	57	46.0
Common	1	3.1	4	12.5	11	34.4	12	37.5	0	0	4	12.5
Total	19	12.2	20	12.8	22	14.1	23	14.7	11	7.1	61	39.1

$$\chi^2 = 38.71, p < .001$$

A comparison of Preclassic and Early Classic open form assemblages demonstrated a significant shift in the proportions of surface colors ($\chi^2 = 21.2, p < .001$). Red exteriors comprise two thirds of the earlier assemblage and less than half of the later assemblage. This reduction in red surfaces is balanced by an increase in the proportions of black and brown surfaces in the Early Classic period. This comparison, while informative is not ideal for detecting adoption of new emblematic colors given the construction of the color categories, which eliminates a great deal of variation.

Table 5.18. Proportions of Open Form Exterior Color Categories within Time Period.

Period	Gray/Beige		Black		Brown		Red/Orange	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Preclassic	4	5.9	1	1.5	11	16.2	52	76.5
Early Classic	2	1.6	17	13.8	44	35.8	60	48.8
Total	6	3.1	18	9.4	55	28.8	112	58.6

$$\chi^2 = 21.18, p < .001$$

In sum, Actuncan households exhibit a distinct change in ceramic attributes through time, particularly in proportions of surface finish and color properties. However, as far as I can judge from my analysis, these shifts do not demonstrate the emergence of a cohesive identity. In fact, the adoption of a new ware, represented by the highly lustrous Peten Gloss finish, more strongly suggest greater social division within the polity.

Chapter 6: Conclusion: Ritual and Identity Construction in Actuncan Households

The analysis of Actuncan ceramic assemblages from Late and Terminal Preclassic and Early Classic contexts demonstrates that the materiality of household ritual is distinguishable from domestic non-ritual assemblages. I find that open ceramic forms such as bowls, dishes, and plates encode a great deal of cultural information, both in terms of ritual understanding and social affinity. The color and luster of these forms are especially indicative of ritual deposit construction in relation to context, status, and temporal shifts. As the institutionalization of kingship took place in the Early Classic period, a subset of ritual underwent a restructuring among certain social groups indexed in the selection of open ceramic forms. However, in the course of this research, I was unable to identify discreet emblems of identity and fell short in some respects of analyzing my initial hypotheses regarding identity signaling in specific ritual contexts. Part of the problem is that the number of households and ritual deposits fitting the research criteria is too small for statistical comparisons. This greatly impacted my ability to target specific categories of ritual as demonstrative of various levels of affinity. Additionally, painted designs are relatively rare and poorly preserved, making it difficult to isolate emblems pertaining to households, socio-economic statuses, or political identity.

One important observation arising in the course of the research is that dedication and termination rituals are differentiated in that dedications involved discreet deposits with material fairly indicative of household assemblages and cosmological constructs, while terminations

involved a greater volume of ceramics and appear to have been more flexibly and selectively constructed through time and across social classes. Considerations of color figure prominently in the construction of both rituals. Red surfaced bowls and plates form a smaller than expected proportion of the ritual assemblage, given their ubiquity in the non-ritual assemblage, while brown and black surfaces form a higher than expected proportion of the ritual assemblage. Black surfaced open forms especially are more common in ritual contexts than non-ritual contexts. Although I am not able to show this statistically, I suspect that these trends relate to the nature of ritual performed and to the significance of red and black in Maya cosmology. Examination of dedication rituals suggest that red figures prominently in ritual, but these deposits tend to be represented by discrete caches of very few whole vessels, such as lip-to-lip caches, while terminations yield high volumes of diverse sherds. The ritual sample is clearly dominated by the high volume of material from termination rituals, so it is telling that so few of the common red surfaced bowls but so many of the sparse black slipped bowls were incorporated in the ritual sample. This patterning suggests that red's association with the east and beginnings may have been downplayed in terminations by using less of it or by mixing it with black, which stands in opposition to red and the west. The use of red and black open forms in rituals settings, consisting of the apparent restricted use of red surfaces in terminations and frequent inclusion of black surfaces, suggests that both were patterned to some extent by shared cosmological beliefs.

The use of new wares, distinguished by a highly lustrous Peten Gloss finish, in ritual settings in the Early Classic period points to a flexible construction of ritual. This malleability however was not seen to extend to dedications, with their modest ceramic assemblages. Structure ensouling may have involved a more precise and exacting set of behaviors. On the other hand, structure terminations may have involved a different set of behaviors, perhaps involving a much

larger numbers of individuals, which allowed for greater variation in enactment. Notions of private and public enactments seem pertinent to understanding the differences between the two rituals. Rituals requiring larger numbers of human and supernatural participants and observers presented an ideal setting for demonstrations of group affinity. These observations should be explored further with a greater ritual sample and in future research on the *diacritics* of social groups, it may be more informative to examine terminations alongside commemorative burials rather than grouping them with dedication offerings.

No concrete emblems of identity are identified, but the open form attributes of surface finish and color, previously implicated in elaborate symbol systems and the process of ritualization, do point to active social differentiation in terms of household identity and status. Polity-based identity is not signaled in open form attributes, but the Early Classic period social reorganization is accompanied by a greater emphasis on status differentiation in termination rituals.

For household-based identity, open form surface color stand out as the most promising differentiating attribute. It does not necessarily act as a banner or emblem with an explicit meaning, since multiple households emphasized the same color category, but it does differentiate neighboring households in a way that suggests emphasis on different exchange relations or manufacturing practices. Peten Gloss Ware, normally used in chronology building, proves valuable to understanding differentiation based on socio-economic status and political processes at Actuncan. This ware is found primarily in elite structures, and a large proportion is found in elite termination deposits. The rapid incorporation of Peten Gloss Ware in ritual practice in the Early Classic period suggests that socio-economic status, if not already so, became a prominent category of identity, as centralized rule promoted a more hierarchical rather than corporate social

order. The use of Peten Gloss Ware seems compatible with collective social practice leading to boundary construction and internalized social identity, but at this point I would be hesitant to view the ware itself as a *diacritic* of status. The specialized high luster finish and frequently painted surfaces of Peten Gloss types also make them wealth items. Their use in termination rituals, in turn, suggests that these may be large public events well suited to status competition and wealth displays.

Although failing to identify specific *diacritics* of household, status, and polity based identity, the research presented here contributes groundwork for future research into this topic, as well as improved understanding of ritual construction at the site of Actuncan. My focus on ceramics as potential symbols of identity and as malleable symbolic devices in ritual was not unfounded given my findings on the differential use of open and closed forms in ritual and non-ritual contexts and across status groups.

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Appendix A

Table A.1. Sampled Lots

Status	Household	Structure	Sampled Lots	
Common	Group 1	61	1DD/6	
			1EE/4	
			1HH/4	
			1HH/8	
			1PPP/8	
	Group 7	62	1C/22	
			1C/27	
		56	16G/7	
			57	16B/6
			16C/10	
			16C/11	
			16C/12	
16D/10				
16K/8				
Elite	Structure 29	29	7E/4	
			7E/6	
			7E/7	
	Structure 41	40	10A/6	
			10E/3	
			10I/5	
			10J/4	
			10K/5	
			10L/6	
			41	6EEEE/6

		6EEEE/7
		6NN/5
		6OO/4
		6PP/4
		6WW/5
		6X/7
		6XX/5
		6XXXX/9
Structure 73	73	18C/5
		18C/6
		18C/8
		18D/11
		18D/6
		18D/7
		18D/9
		18E/5
		18E/7
		18E/8
		18F/10
		18F/11
		18F/13
		18F/14
		18F/3
		18F/5
		18F/6
		18F/7
		18F/8
		18F/9

Table A.2. Sampled Contexts.

Status	Household	Structure	Analytical Unit	Sherd Count	
Common	Group 1	61	Fill Between Glen's Floor and Edwin's 2nd Patio Floor	360	
			Fill for Edwin's 1 st Patio	131	
			Lip-to-lip	2	
			Material on Edwin's 2 nd Patio Floor	160	
			Structure Fill Below Wall #16	96	
			Total	749	
	62	Edwin's 3 rd Patio Floor	334		
		Fill for Edwin's 2 nd Patio Floor	298		
		Total	632		
	Group 7	56	Natural Soil with Artifacts	149	
			57	Burial 12	337
				Patio Fill II	338
				Patio Fill III	63
				Platform Fill VI	629
Total				1516	
Elite	Structure 29	29	Ballast	125	
			In Situ Trash Used as Fill	87	
			Terrace Fill	188	
			Total	400	
	Structure 41	40	Between Apricot and Cashew Floor	177	
			Cheetah Wall Termination	826	
			Chimp Fill	165	
			Giraffe Wall	24	
			Likely Bench	34	
	Total	1226			
41	Burial 11	4			

		Burial 5	1
		Gorilla Fill	238
		Joey's Plaza Fill 1	574
		Joey's Plaza Fill 2 (Near Burial 5)	1
		Joey's Plaza Floor	26
		Melon Fill	120
		Melon Floor Termination	380
		Wall Cut	222
		<hr/>	
		Total	1566
<hr/>			
Structure 73	73	Base Accumulated Soil	42
		Base Floor I	71
		Fill with Cut Stone	9
		Indeterminate Fill	24
		Material on Summit Floor I	12
		Patio Fill I	180
		Rock Accumulation	274
		Small to Large Rock Fill	85
		Subfloor I	181
		Subfloor II	42
		Summit Accumulated Soil	62
		Summit Floor I	99
		Summit Floor II	67
		Termination	364
		<hr/>	
		Total	1512
<hr/>			

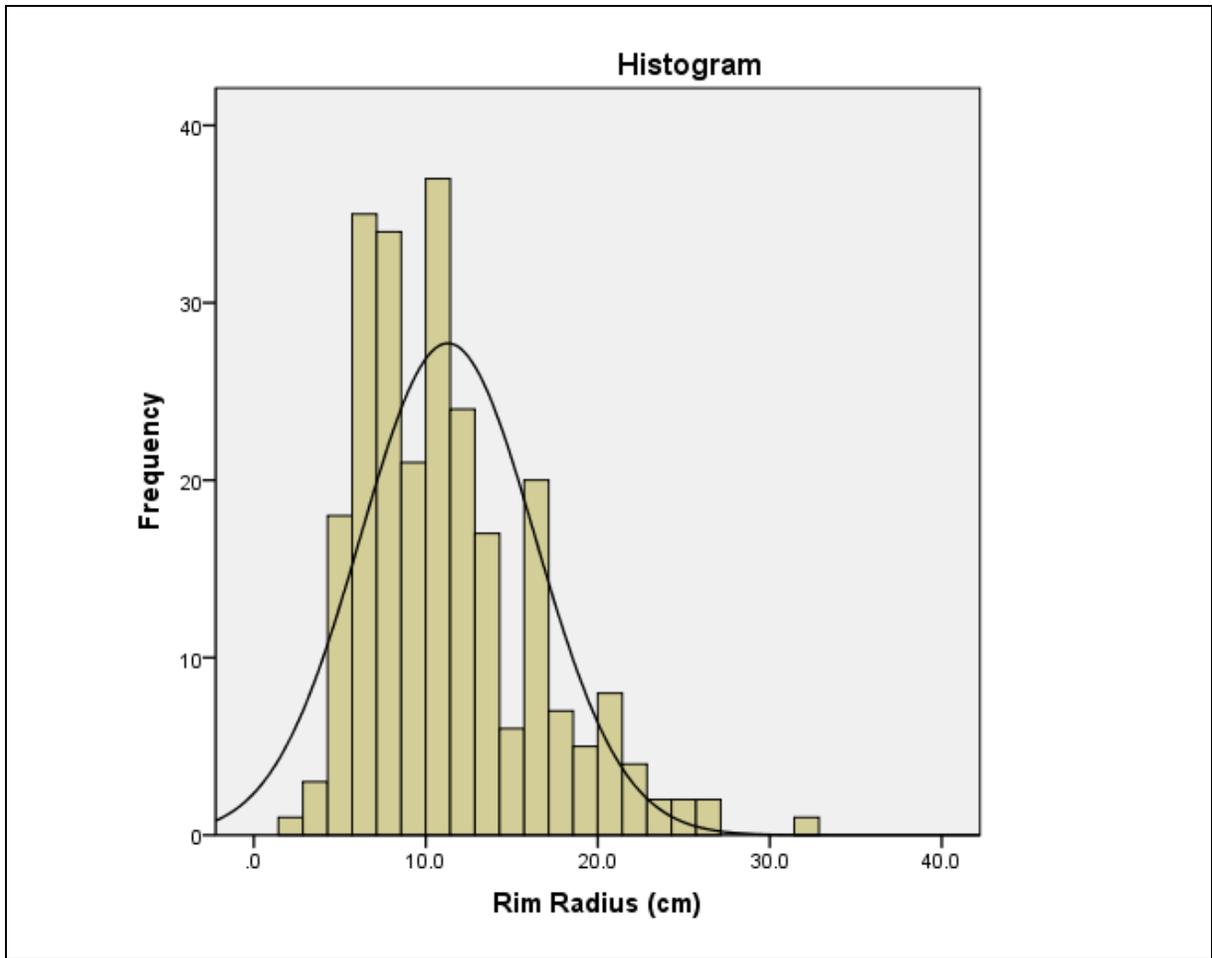


Figure A.1. Histogram of sample rim radius measurements with normal distribution curve.

Table A.3. Central Tendencies of Sample Rim
Radius Measurements.

Measure	Statistics
n	247
Mean	11.28
Median	10.50
Mode	10.50
Std. Deviation	5.08
Variance	25.79
Skewness	1.06
Std. Error of Skewness	.16
Kurtosis	1.17
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.31
Range	30.90
Percentiles	
25	7.50
50	10.50
75	14.00

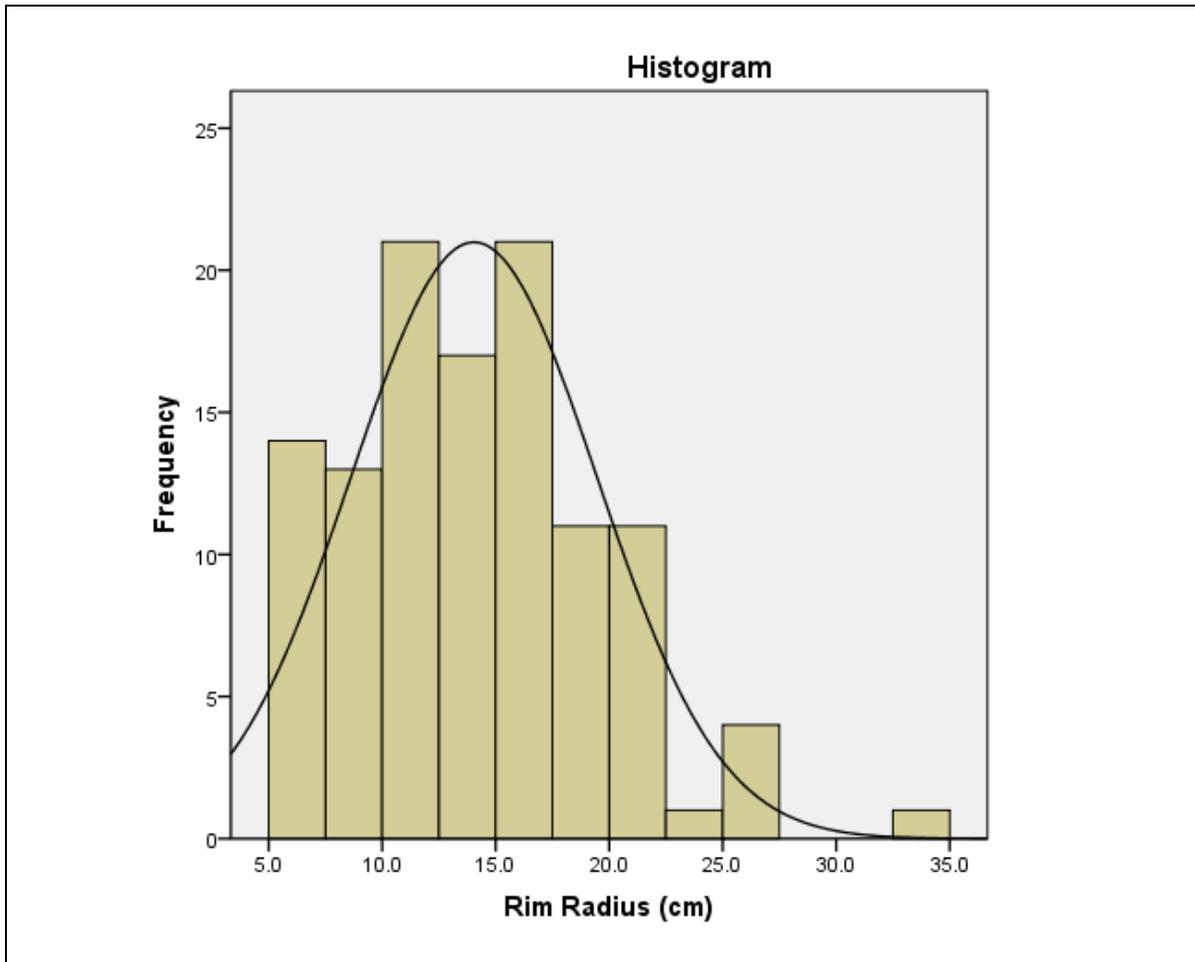


Figure A.2. Histogram of open form rim radius measurements with normal distribution curve.

Table A.4. Central Tendencies of Open Form
Rim Radius Measurements.

Measure	Statistics
n	114
Mean	14.04
Median	14.00
Mode	17.00
Std. Deviation	5.41
Variance	29.25
Skewness	.59
Std. Error of Skewness	.23
Kurtosis	.27
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.45
Range	27.50
Percentiles	
25	10.00
50	14.00
75	17.20

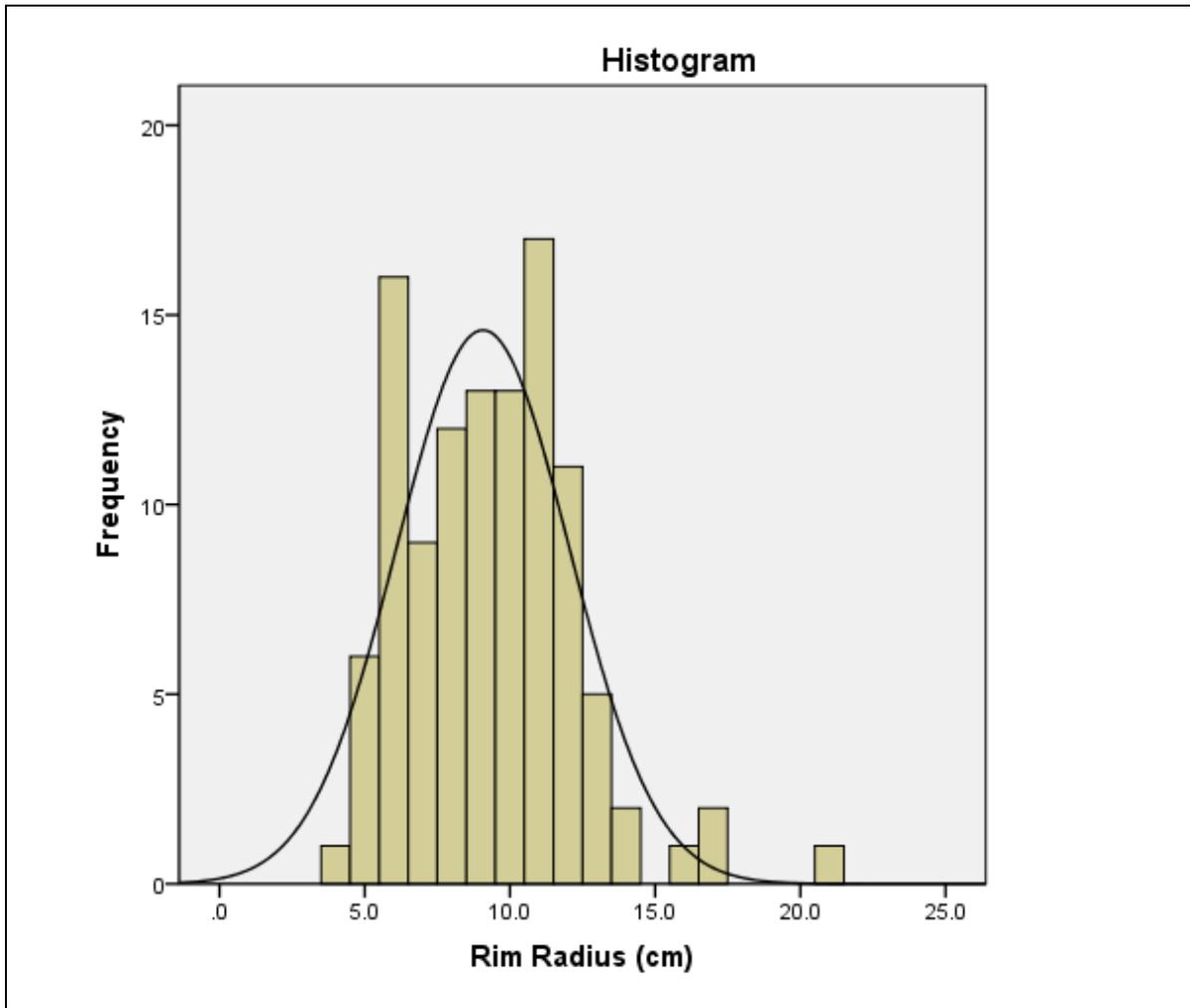


Figure A.3. Histogram of closed form rim radius measurements with normal distribution curve.

Table A.5. Central Tendencies of Closed Form
Rim Radius Measurements.

Measure	Statistic
n	109
Mean	9.07
Median	9.00
Mode	10.50
Std. Deviation	2.98
Variance	8.87
Skewness	.84
Std. Error of Skewness	.23
Kurtosis	1.69
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.46
Range	17.00
Percentiles	
25	6.50
50	9.00
75	10.75

Table A.6. Sample Proportions of Luster Categories.

	n	%
Peten Gloss	75	1.6
High Gloss	194	4.2
Waxy Low Gloss	460	10.0
Gloss	150	3.2
Low Gloss	258	5.6
Matte	3486	75.4

Table A.7. Open and Closed Form Exterior Color Values.

Value	Open		Closed	
	n	%	n	%
Light	3	1.4	5	3.1
Medium	154	71.6	124	76.5
Dark	58	27.0	33	20.4

Table A.8. Interior and Exterior Surface Color of Open Forms.

Color	Interior		Exterior	
	n	%	n	%
Beige/Gray	7	2.4	6	3.0
Black	21	7.3	18	9.0
Brown	73	25.5	59	29.6
Red/Orange	184	64.3	116	58.3

Table A.9. Exterior Color of Closed Forms.

Color	n	%
Beige/Gray	29	16.3
Black	52	29.2
Brown	74	42.6
Red/Orange	23	12.9

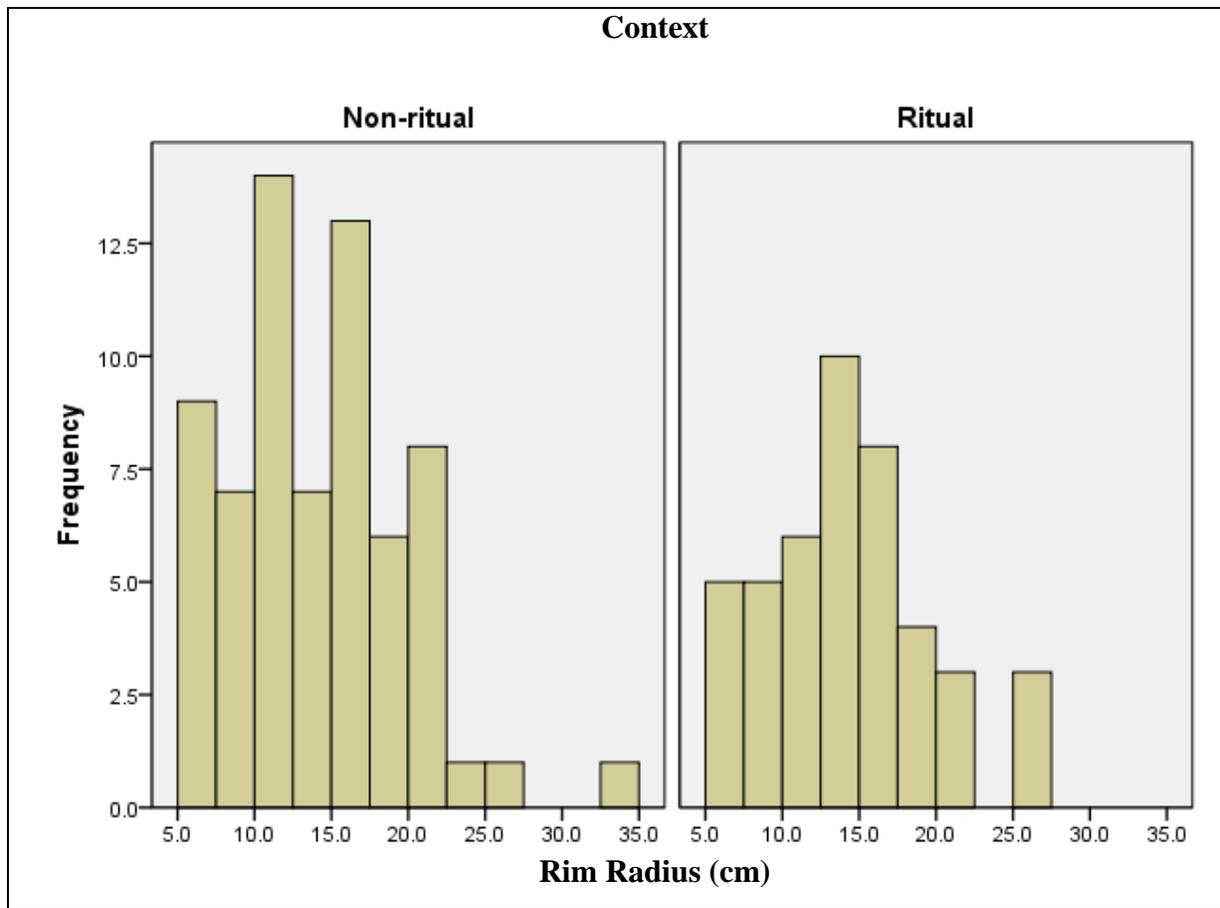


Figure A.4. Comparison of open form radius measurements between ritual and non-ritual contexts.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Open Form Rim Radius

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.386	1	109	.242

ANOVA

Open Form Rim Radius

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.384	1	.384	.013	.910
Within Groups	3263.645	109	29.942		
Total	3264.030	110			

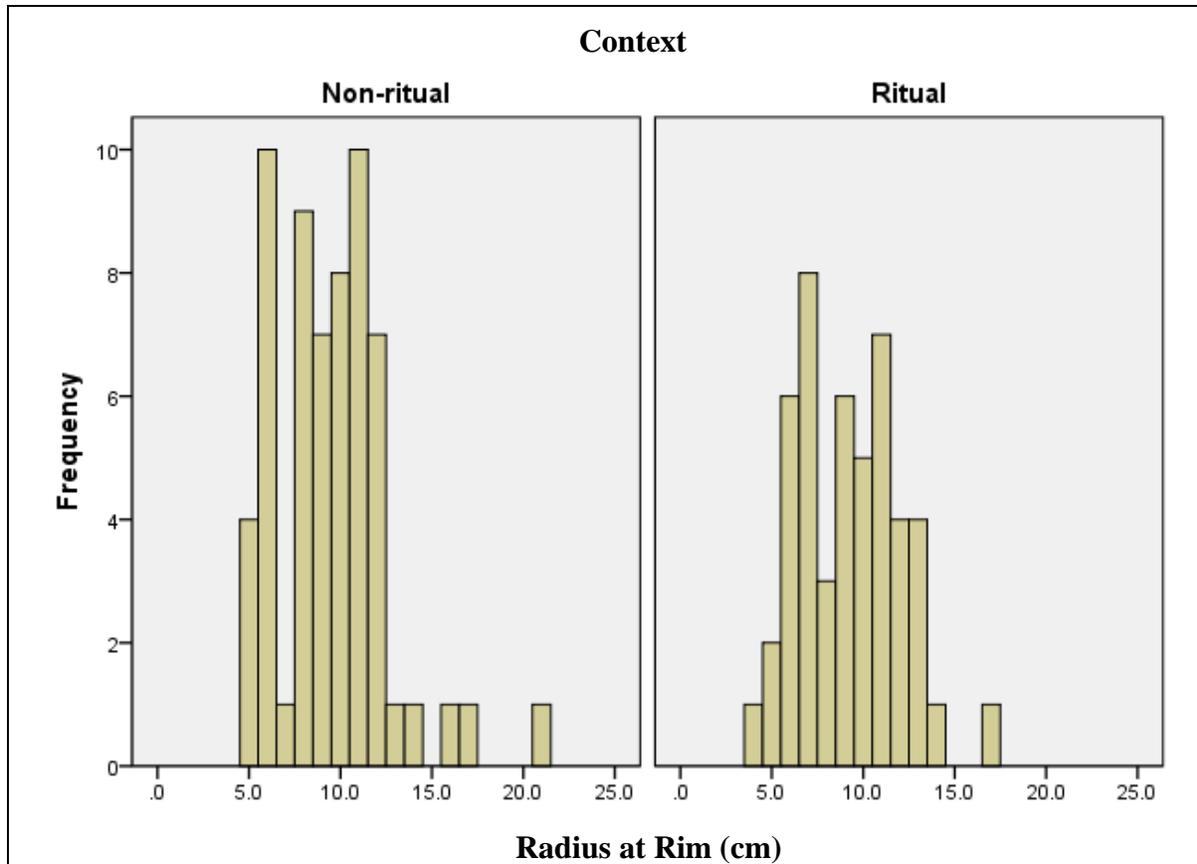


Figure A.5. Comparison of closed form radius measurements between ritual and non-ritual contexts.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Closed Form Radius at Rim

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.076	1	107	.784

ANOVA

Closed Form Radius at Rim

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.985	1	1.985	.222	.638
Within Groups	955.749	107	8.932		
Total	957.734	108			

Table A.10. Proportions of Slipped Sherd Exterior in Ritual and Non-Ritual Settings.

Context	Unslipped		Slipped	
	n	%	n	%
Non-Ritual	2093	71.3	843	28.7
Ritual	1054	75.3	346	24.7
Total	3147	72.6	1189	27.4

Fisher's Exact Test $p = .006$

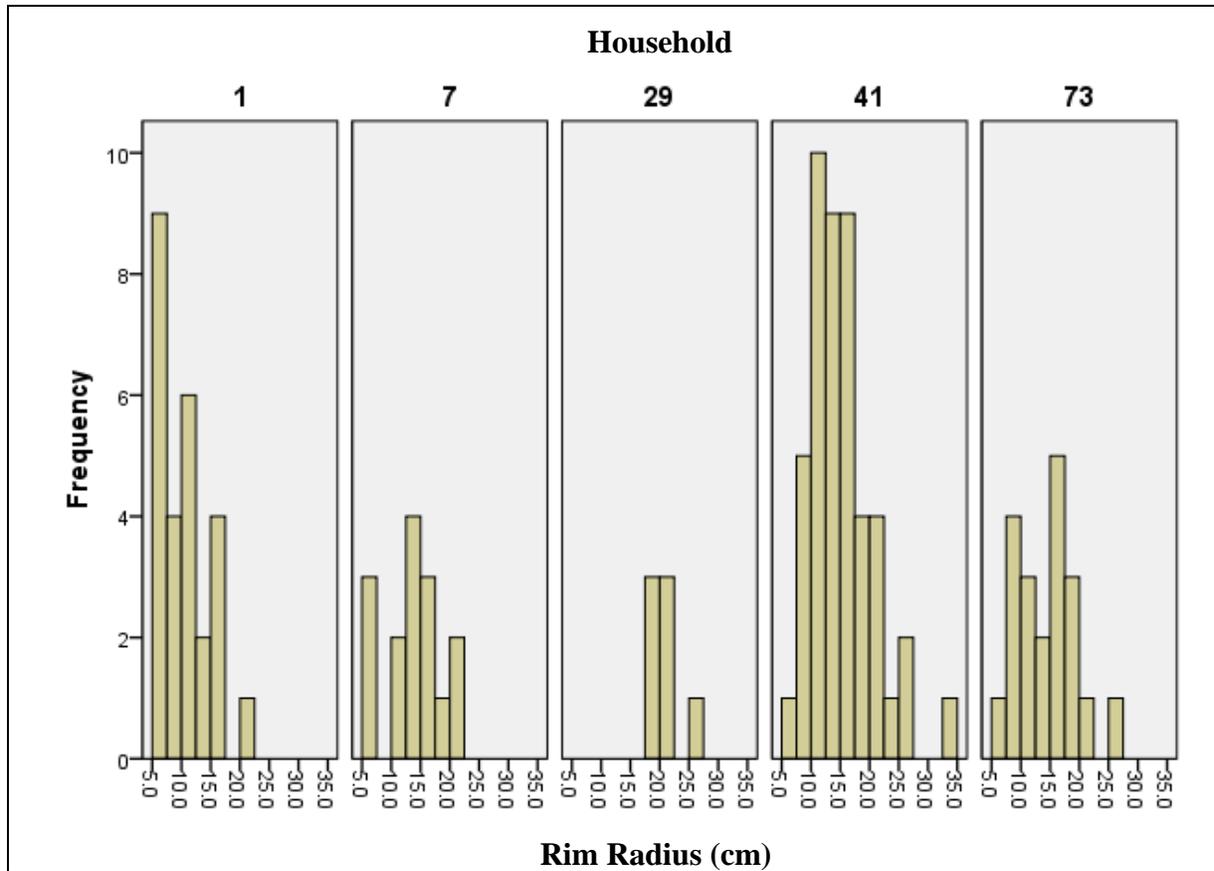


Figure A.6. Comparison of open form rim measurements across households.

Ranks^a

	House	N	Mean Rank
Radius at Lip	1.00	26	34.35
	7.00	15	56.87
	29.00	7	100.29
	41.00	46	63.26
	73.00	20	59.85
	Total	114	

Test Statistics^a

	Radius at Lip
Chi-Square	26.030
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

Appendix B

Table B.1. Code Book.

Variable Name	Variable Description	Values
CASEID	Case ID, or unique identifier number for each sherd type	Continuous
PROV	Provenience, denoted by operation number, unit letter, and lot number	String
STR	Structure number	See Figure 3.1
HOUSE	Household, designating a residential unit	1 = Group 1 7 = Group 7 29 = Structure 29 41 = Structures 41 and 40 73 = Structure 72
TPQ	<i>Terminus Post Quem</i> (TPQ) date for the deposit	1 = Late Preclassic 2 = Terminal Late Preclassic 3 = Early Classic
TPQ2	<i>TPQ</i> group, combining the Late Preclassic and Terminal Preclassic into one Preclassic period	2 = Preclassic 3 = Early Classic
STATUS	Household Status	1 = Elite 2 = Common
AU	Analytical Unit, name of deposit provided by excavators	String
CC	Cultural Context code	see Table B.2.
RITUAL	Ritual Deposit	0 = Non-ritual 1 = Ritual
FORM	Vessel form as extrapolated from sherds	1 = Body Fragment 2 = Bowl 3 = Dish 4 = Plate 5 = Dish/Plate 6 = Lid/Plate 7 = Lid 8 = Jar 9 = Vase 10 = Drum 11 = Censor 12 = Applique 13 = Rim 14 = Foot

		15 = Handle 16 = Effigy pot 17 = Olla 18 = Pedestal 19 = Tecomate 20 = Base 21 = Ear Spool
FORM2	Vessel form category, grouping bowls, dishes, and plates into an open form category, and jars, ollas, and tecomates into a closed form category	1 = Open 2 = Closed
RIM	Radius measured at vessel lip	Measured in centimeters (cm)
NECK	Radius measured at vessel neck (for jars)	Measured in centimeters (cm)
LENGTH	Measurement of neck length (for jars)	Measured in centimeters (cm)
WARE	Assessment of ceramic Ware, based on Gifford (1976).	String
GROUP	Assessment of ceramic Group, based on Gifford (1976).	String
TYPE	Assessment of ceramic Type, based on Gifford (1976).	String
intSLIP/ extSLIP	Presence of slip on sherd interior or exterior	0 = Unslipped 1 = Slipped
LUSTER	Surface Treatment	1 = Peten Gloss 2 = High gloss 3 = Waxy high gloss 4 = Waxy 5 = Gloss 6 = Low Gloss 7 = Matte
intMUNSELL/ extMUNSELL	Color designation based on <i>Munsell Soil Color Charts</i> (Munsell Color 1975)	String
intCOLOR/ extCOLOR	Coded Munsell color name for sherd interior or exterior	100 = gray 200 = black 300 = brown 400 = red 500 = yellow 00 = no tint 10 = grayish 20 = blackish 30 = brownish 40 = reddish

		50 = yellowish 70 = pinkish 80 = olive 1 = very pale 2 = pale 3 = light 4 = plain 5 = strong 6 = dark 7 = very dark 8 = "dusky"
intHUE/ extHUE	Hue Category for sherd interior or exterior	1 = gray/beige 2 = black 3 = brown 7 = red/orange
FREQ	Number of sherds in bag showing same physical characteristics	Continuous

Table B.2. Cultural Context Codes for the
Actuncan Archaeological Project
(rev. 04 June 2011)

<i>0. Unknown/Mixed</i>	
000	unknown context
010	mixed context
020	archaeological backdirt
030	modern overburden
<i>1. Surface</i>	
100	unknown surface
110	recently disturbed surface
120	undisturbed surface
<i>2. Occupation</i>	
200	unknown occupation
210	material on unknown prepared surface
211	material on prepared structure surface
212	material on prepared plaza surface
213	material on prepared patio surface
214	material on prepared bench surface
215	material on prepared causeway surface
216	material on prepared terrace surface
219	material on other prepared surface
220	material on unknown plastered surface
221	material on plastered structure surface
222	material on plastered plaza surface
223	material on plastered patio surface
224	material on plastered bench surface
225	material on plastered causeway surface
226	material on plastered terrace surface
229	material on other plastered surface
230	material on unknown accumulated surface
231	material on accumulated structure surface
232	material on accumulated plaza surface
233	material on accumulated patio surface
234	material on accumulated bench surface
235	material on accumulated causeway surface
236	material on accumulated terrace surface
239	material on other accumulated surface
240	terminal use debris
250	collapse debris
251	sheet wash
<i>3. Floor</i>	
300	unknown floor
310	prepared surface

311	prepared structure surface
312	prepared plaza surface
313	prepared patio surface
314	prepared bench surface
315	prepared causeway surface
316	prepared terrace surface
318	probably prepared surface
319	other prepared surface
320	plastered surface
321	plastered structure surface
322	plastered plaza surface
323	plastered patio surface
324	plastered bench surface
325	plastered causeway surface
326	plastered terrace surface
328	probably plastered surface
329	other plastered surface
330	accumulated surface
331	accumulated structure surface
332	accumulated plaza surface
333	accumulated patio surface
334	accumulated bench surface
335	accumulated causeway surface
336	accumulated terrace surface
338	probably accumulated surface
339	other accumulated surface
340	floor ballast
341	structure floor ballast
342	plaza floor ballast
343	patio floor ballast
344	bench floor ballast
345	causeway floor ballast
346	terrace floor ballast
348	probably floor ballast
349	other floor ballast
<i>4. Fill</i>	
400	fill
401	probably fill
410	structure fill
420	plaza fill
430	patio fill
440	bench fill
450	causeway fill
460	terrace fill
470	wall fill
490	other location fill

<i>5. Refuse</i>	
500	unknown refuse/midden
510	primary refuse
520	primary midden
530	secondary refuse
540	secondary midden
<i>6. Burial</i>	
600	unknown burial
610	pit without stone lining
620	crypt
621	cist
630	tomb
640	secondary burial
690	other burial
<i>7. Feature</i>	
700	unknown feature
710	cache
720	smashed materials
730	burning event
740	pit
750	hearth
790	other feature
<i>8. Natural</i>	
800	unknown natural soil
810	natural soil without artifacts
820	natural soil with artifacts
830	buried A-horizon