

WINGED WARRIORS:
THE PREVALENCE OF THE BIRD-UNIT THEME ON
CYLINDRICAL TRIPOD VESSELS FROM TEOTIHUACAN

by

AMANDA RUTH MCCATHERINE

Submitted to the Faculty
Graduate Division College of Fine Arts
Texas Christian University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
May 2017

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Thesis Approved:

Committee Chair, Dr. Lori Boornazian Diel, Associate Professor of Art History

Dr. Jessica Fripp, Assistant Professor of Art History

Dr. Kimberly L. Jones, The Ellen and Harry S. Parker III Assistant Curator of the Arts of
the Americas, Dallas Museum of Art

Dr. Joseph Butler, Associate Dean for the College of Fine Arts

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis advisor and committee chair, Dr. Lori Boornazian Diel for her knowledge, guidance, support, and patience throughout the process of writing this thesis. I am also very grateful for the advice and support of thesis committee members Dr. Jessica Fripp and Dr. Kimberly Jones. Their insight and comments allowed me to expand and refine the thesis.

To the remainder of the art history faculty – Dr. Babette Bohn, Dr. Mark Thistlethwaite, and Dr. Frances Colpitt – thank you for your mentorship and support. I have learned so much from each of the art history professors at Texas Christian University, and I feel grateful to have had the chance to get to know each professor individually.

I wish to thank my classmates and friends, Janelle Montgomery and Candace Carlisle Vilas, for their insight, knowledge, and perhaps most importantly, their moral support. I am greatly indebted to Taylor Day for her friendship, guidance, and unfailing support throughout my time at TCU. I owe my pursuit of art history solely to Dr. Carolyn Tate. She was the first to spark my interest in Mesoamerican art history, and her encouragement and support led me to this graduate program. Dr. Tate's passion for the field continues to inspire me, and I hope to pursue art history further in the future.

My sincerest gratitude goes to my family, immediate and extended, for their love and support in everything I do. This journey would have been impossible without their unfailing love.

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Introduction

Nestled in the mountains surrounding what is today Mexico City, Teotihuacan (figure 1) is often noted for its status as the first urban city in the Americas, due to its city center, grid layout, and residential structures. Occupied from about 100 B.C. until its collapse at around A.D. 650, Teotihuacan was a thriving city whose culture, lifestyle, implementation of power, language, and artistic expression differed from the contemporaneous Maya, who lived far to the east, and other closer, surrounding cities.¹ Today tourists are attracted to Teotihuacan's massive pyramids, but Teotihuacan was once much more than monumental architecture. Teotihuacan was a painted city. The surfaces of many of its stepped pyramids gleamed with white and red painted plaster while the interiors of buildings were often decorated with ferocious animals and fertile landscapes. Teotihuacan's art objects came in many sizes and media. Colossal stone sculptures adorned pyramid façades and Teotihuacanos carried ceramic vessels, many of them decorated, and sculpted incense burners that were used in rituals.²

One of the most significant traditions at Teotihuacan was the cylindrical tripod vessel tradition, which lasted several centuries and influenced regions near and far. Tripod vessels ranged in size between 3 to 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height, excluding feet, and 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 8 inches

¹ George Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan Early Urbanism in Central Mexico*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 11.

² See Kathleen Berrin's "Unknown Treasures," essay in *Teotihuacan: Art from the City of the Gods*, edited by Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory, (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994) for a discussion on a broad array of art types at Teotihuacan.

in diameter.³ Most of the tripod vessels exhibited in museums today are decorated with incisions, painted stucco, and mold-made impressions. However, there are also many undecorated tripod vessels. The vessels with incised or carved decoration are called plano-relief. These wares have shallow or deep incisions that make up the positive pictorial space, whereas the negative space is frequently filled with red pigment. Stuccoed-and-painted wares are decorated with a thin, base layer of limestone stucco that is painted with a stucco-pigment mixture.⁴

Archaeologists have determined phases that mark Teotihuacan's changes and growth over time. These phases are defined by shifts in ceramic production at the site. Evelyn Childs Rattray, through an extensive examination of Teotihuacan ceramics, has proposed the most recent date ranges that encompass phases for ceramic production at the site.⁵ In the beginning phases, Tzacualli (AD 1 – 100) and Miccaotli (AD 100 – 170), intact ceramic vessels are rare, denoting a small population, who predominantly used utilitarian wares, and perhaps even decorated objects in perishable media.⁶ In the Tlamimilolpa Phase (AD 170 – 350), however, the quantity and quality of decorated ceramics increase, denoting a rise in population and development in decorated objects in the city. The Xolalpan phase (AD 350 – 550) marks Teotihuacan's apogee, a time when the production and use of ceramics were at their height in quality and quantity. The Metepec phase (AD 550 – 650)

³ Evelyn Childs Rattray, *Teotihuacan: Ceramics, Chronology and Cultural Trends* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2001): 199, 219, 223, 263. For early examinations of ceramics at Teotihuacan, see Laurette Sejourne's *Archaeologia de Teotihuacan: La Ceramica*, (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 117-119

⁵ *Ibid.*, 29 – 31, Figure 1b, page 435.

⁶ *Ibid.*; George Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 11; Esther Pasztory, *Teotihuacan: An Experiment in Living*, 161.

marks the city's decline – an era that is reflected especially in the reduction of craft production and quality.⁷ Cylindrical tripod vessels appeared in the Early Tlamimilolpa phase (AD 170 – 250) and persisted until Teotihuacan's decline in the Metepec phase (AD 550 – 650).⁸ While the phases denote the ceramic production at Teotihuacan, the phases and time periods are also used to date monumental architecture sequences at the site.⁹

Teotihuacan's iconography is often fluid and inconsistent, making interpretations difficult. In her study of Teotihuacan, art historian Annabeth Headrick commented that the Teotihuacan pantheon of gods is “notoriously slippery, accumulating diverse attributes depending on the particular message being delivered,” a statement that can also be applied to the iconography of the vessels and murals.¹⁰ While iconographical elements appear in different contexts throughout the art, it is possible to find correlations and diagnostic elements through close analysis of trends, a point I hope to demonstrate in my study.

In this paper, I focus on a range of cylindrical tripod vessels that were made in the Tlamimilolpa, Xolalpan, and Metepec phases. These vessels are decorated in three different modes: plano-relief, stuccoed-and-painted, and mold-impressed. Each form also characterizes each phase as follows: plano-relief wares are most prevalent form during the Tlamimilolpa phase (AD 170 – 350), stuccoed-and-painted wares proliferate in the Xolalpan phase (AD 350 – 550), and mold-impressed wares define the Metepec phase (AD 550 – 650). Here, I spotlight a recurring theme that appears on these cylindrical tripod

⁷ Rattray, *Teotihuacan: Ceramics*, 43-48. Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 11.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 43-48.

⁹ Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 11-13.

¹⁰ Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity*, 21. An early attempt at deciphering iconography is George Kubler's “The Iconography of the Art of Teotihuacan,” in *Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology* 4 (1967) 1-40.

vessels – one that transcended style boundaries between phases of ceramic production. I identify this theme as the bird-warrior theme.

Bird-warriors are designated by avian accoutrements that either appear on the headdress of the warrior, as the wings and tail-feather of the warrior, or as a bird on which the warrior rides. Most wear and carry other accoutrements such as circular eye ornaments, nosebars, darts, shields, and torches. Recently scholars have identified four different warrior groups at Teotihuacan: avian, canine, feline, and ophidian.¹¹ However, the bird-warrior theme in particular exhibits more longevity at Teotihuacan than other warrior themes, and it is one of the only themes to be expressed in both stuccoed and plano-relief tripod vessels. Recent advances in Teotihuacan studies and archaeological investigations have revealed the dominance and importance of the military at the city, and I show that the imagery on tripod vessels speaks to the city's militarism by exemplifying the high status of its bird-warriors over the other warrior groups.¹²

The discussions in this essay are built around a corpus of sixty-five decorated cylindrical tripod vessels that I have compiled for analysis. All of these tripod vessels are easily accessed on museum websites and displayed at museums for visual analysis. The

¹¹ George Cowgill, "Toward a Political History of Teotihuacan," in *Ideology and Pre-Columbian Civilizations*, ed. A. Demarest and G. Conrad, (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1992), 106; Nawa Sugiyama, Andrew D. Somerville, and Margaret J. Shoeninger, "Stable Isotopes and Zooarchaeology at Teotihuacan, Mexico Reveal Earliest Evidence of Wild Carnivore Management in Mesoamerica," in *PLOS ONE* 10(9): 2015, 1-14; In S. Sugiyama and L. López Luján, "Dedicatory Burial/Offering Complexes at the Moon Pyramid, Teotihuacan: A Preliminary Report of 1998-2004," in *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 18 (2007).

¹² For examples of such studies, see Annabeth Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity: The Sociopolitical Structure of an Ancient Mesoamerican City* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); Saburo Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership: Materialization of State Ideology at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid, Teotihuacan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 2015.

corpus consists of twenty plano-relief and incised vessels, forty stuccoed-and-painted vessels, and five mold-impressed vessels. The purpose of this study is to analyze, classify, and separate imagery on tripod vessels in order to highlight the bird-warrior theme as a case study and to link this theme to an important facet of Teotihuacan society, the power of this facet of Teotihuacan's military.

My examination of this corpus reveals the dominance of the bird-warrior theme through all forms of tripod vessel. As I argue, the bird-warrior theme must have had such endurance on these vessels because of the elite status bird-warriors held at Teotihuacan. I believe that birds were chosen to symbolize the military power of the city due to birds' long distance traveling capabilities and carnivorous habits as birds of prey. Thus, Teotihuacan's militaristic missions and forays into far-away territories may have been executed through the emulation of eagles and owls.

A good example of this theme is reflected on a stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessel displayed at the Dallas Museum of Art (figure 2), dated to the Xolalpan phase (AD 350 – 550). Its painted exterior shows two figures in profile, facing the viewer's left, that have the same attributes and are identical apart from the inexactitudes made by the artist's hand. The individual has avian features, such as an upward-extending bird wing and a tail feather. Its lack of human feet and the addition of a thin, blue line that cuts across the body of the individual, suggests the figure may be in flight. Similar imagery can be seen on plano-relief and incised vessels from the earlier Tlamimilolpa phase (AD 200 – 350) (figure 3), stuccoed-and-painted vessels throughout the Xolalpan phase (figure 4), and on mold-impressed tripods from the later Metepec phase (550 – 650) (figure 5).

While no two bird-warrior vessels are identical, a cohesive theme can be supported through the analysis of iconographical patterns on vessels with bird imagery. However, not all of the tripods in this corpus have images of humans, or even bird-warriors. Instead, many contain images of emblems, animals, and humans carrying out various activities unrelated to the military (see Appendix I for entire corpus). While seemingly irrelevant, these vessels aid in noting the kinds of changes in style and iconography the tripod tradition experienced over time because we are able to track increases and declines in subject matter between phases. Incorporating vessels with non-bird related imagery has allowed me to highlight the prevalence of the bird-warrior theme among the corpus.

The data from analyzing this sample of vessels shows that the depiction of bird-warriors on tripod vessels was a more popular subject in comparison to the other animal units that scholars have also associated with the Teotihuacan military: the canine, feline, and ophidian.¹³ The prominence of bird imagery suggests that the bird-warrior unit held a more elite status within the military and Teotihuacan society, a claim that can be supported with archaeological evidence as well as comparisons with other art objects.

¹³ George Cowgill, "Toward a Political History of Teotihuacan," 106; N. Sugiyama, A. Somerville, and M. Shoening, "Stable Isotopes and Zooarchaeology at Teotihuacan, Mexico Reveal Earliest Evidence of Wild Carnivore Management in Mesoamerica," 1-14; In S. Sugiyama and L. López Luján, "Dedicatory Burial/Offering Complexes at the Moon Pyramid, Teotihuacan," 132-138.

Cylindrical Tripod Vessels

Central to the idiosyncratic nature of the city are its decorated objects, walls, and buildings. Cynthia Conides wrote her dissertation on her exhaustive study of stuccoed-and-painted ceramics at Teotihuacan. She studied a corpus of 142 objects, many of which were tripod vessels. Through her analysis, Conides found that stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels have less in common technically and iconographically with mural programs than with other portable art traditions, like plano-relief vessels.¹⁴ Murals on apartment compound walls were typically executed in the *buon fresco* technique wherein pigments were applied to the wet stuccoed wall. By contrast, the vessels were decorated with a *fresco-secco* technique, where the base layer of stucco was dried before painted.¹⁵ According to Conides, this suggests that the vessels and murals were likely not created by the same workshops, due to the difference in technique and subject matter. Stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels are more comparable to plano-relief vessels because the painted vessels began to proliferate at the time plano-relief vessels began to decline in popularity. Therefore, as Conides argues, stuccoed-and-painted vessels replaced the plano-relief wares, which warrants a closer comparison with the two types of tripod vessels in terms of imagery and function.¹⁶

¹⁴ Cynthia Conides, “Stuccoed and Painted Ceramics from Teotihuacan, Mexico: A Study of Authorship and Function of Works of Art from an Ancient Mesoamerican City,” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2000).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

Through my analysis of the corpus, I noted similarities between the stuccoed-and-painted and plano-relief vessels. In contrast to Conides, however, I also noted similarities between the murals and the painted tripods, especially in the prominence of the bird-warrior theme on both. Conides separates the murals and tripod vessels as if they are mutually exclusive because she finds clearer comparisons within the tripod vessel tradition. For example, Conides argues that a theme that appears on a number of stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels, the butterfly personage, is not at all represented in mural programs.¹⁷ She uses this discovery as support for her stance that the imagery on the tripod vessels is different from the imagery on the murals. In contrast, unlike the butterfly theme, my study reveals that the bird-warrior theme does appear in both mural programs and stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels. I suspect this speaks to the significance of bird-warriors in Teotihuacan society.

Though the bird-warriors that appear on murals are more animal-like in varied form in comparison to those on the vessels, the same theme must be signified. For example, bird-warriors are represented on the Atetelco White Patio Portico 3 mural (figure 6). The warrior in this painting is more animal than it is human, but the militaristic associations are the same, as the warrior holds darts and an atlatl. Bird-warriors on tripod vessels have human faces and hands while those on apartment compound walls only have human hands and walk upright. Annabeth Headrick discusses the ritually symbolic connotations of the Atetelco White Patio because of its orientation to the west.¹⁸ If this space were used for

¹⁷ Ibid., 157-185; Cynthia Conides, “Figures in Action: Contextualizing the Butterfly Personage at Teotihuacan, Mexico,” in *Visual Culture of the Ancient Americas: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Andrew Finegold and Ellen Hoobler, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017), 103-118.

¹⁸ Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity*, 27-29.

ritual purposes, one could see how the bird-warriors depicted within it may have spiritual or supernatural connotations. The humanized bird-warriors depicted on vessels may speak to the everyday use of these objects by humans. The bird is the only animal represented on both murals and tripods whereas other animals such as canines and felines are not well-represented on the tripods but frequently appear in the murals. It also seems that stuccoed-and-painted ceramics came into fruition simultaneously with the murals in the Late Tlamimilolpa phase (AD 250 – 350), together making Teotihuacan a painted city.¹⁹

The specific use of the vessels is still debated. Though some vessels have been archaeologically excavated, the vast majority of known vessels reside today in museum and private collections, and they lack provenience. The vessels that have been recovered archaeologically have almost exclusively been found in apartment compounds, both on the floor of apartment rooms or included in burials as offerings, which were typically placed beneath apartment floors.²⁰ Conides argues that the vessels were used as storage containers for dry goods, as personal belongings, indirect markers of social standings, and ultimately included in burials.²¹ Regarding their potential use as containers, Conides mentions an example of a tripod vessel that was excavated with a single human bone

¹⁹ Stuccoed and painted tripods appear in the Late Tlamimilolpa phase and increase drastically in the Xolalpan phase, as do mural programs (Cowgill *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 140-153) although the dates of the murals proposed by scholars in the past were in the Metepec phase, or 600-750, which means that they would have existed after the stuccoed and painted tripod tradition (Pasztor *Teotihuacan*, 125-137). Those dates have recently been re-examined and altered.

²⁰ Conides, “Stuccoed and Painted Ceramics from Teotihuacan,” 27-38. See also Sigvald Linne’s *Archaeological Researches at Teotihuacan, Mexico*, (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2003).

²¹ Conides points out that many scholars before her only noted the mortuary contexts of tripods, but she makes an argument for their daily use in life evident in “wounds” of the vessels. Conides, “Stuccoed and painted Ceramics from Teotihuacan,” 39-42.

stored in it, while two other tripod vessels contained cacao residue.²² Unfortunately, residue tests on museum examples are challenging and therefore uncommon, but not obsolete.²³ Regardless, Conides's designation of utilitarian function by the owner, as storage containers and social signifiers, and in death, as burial goods, seems probable.

Though Esther Pasztory has noted the lack of pictorial narrative at Teotihuacan, the imagery still has communicative functions and can, in fact, be "read."²⁴ Claudia Brittenham recently noted the ways in which Maya vessels are "read" by rotating the vessel in one's hand and proposed that this tradition grew from the dissemination of tripod vessels from Teotihuacan to the Maya area.²⁵ If we are to view tripod vessels as modes of communication, the concept of reading the vessel holds much weight. Maya vases are typically read from left to right by turning the vessel clockwise in one's hand. If one were to rotate a vessel from Teotihuacan representing figures in profile clockwise, the figures appear to travel in the pictorial space and create processional movement like murals (figure 2). Action quickly halts when figures are rendered frontally; however, messages of importance can be relayed by frontally facing figures. The rotating of vessels with frontal figures may also have a panoramic effect, giving both the user and his or her guest information on setting and space (figure 7).

When comparing the vessels to mural paintings, it is important to note the difference between vessels and murals in terms of movement. For example, profile bird-

²² Conides, "Stuccoed and Painted Ceramics from Teotihuacan," 122.

²³ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁴ Pasztory, "An Interpretation of Teotihuacan Ceramics," in *Arte de Mexico*, no. 88, 2008, 79-80.

²⁵ Claudia Brittenham, "Setting the Story in Motion: Text and Image on Fourth – Sixth Century Maya Vases" (presented at College Art Association conference, February 2017).

warriors on tripods appear to be in flight, which is enhanced by rotating the vessel. By contrast, figures in the Atetelco (figure 8) murals have feet but are confined within their netted allotment of space that effectively stifles any movement. As Susan Toby Evans has shown, processional imagery is common in Teotihuacan murals, indicating the importance of processions across the city as a whole.²⁶ Nevertheless, mural programs on apartment compound walls themselves are immobile, while images on vessels are able to be read as if the figures are traveling through space and time while the vessel itself is portable. These concepts are important to keep in mind when considering the imagery on tripod vessels.

²⁶ Susan Toby Evans, "Location and Orientation of Teotihuacan, Mexico: Water Worship and Processional Space," in *Occasional Papers in Anthropology (Penn State University)*, *Processions in the Ancient Americas*, 33 (2016): 52-121.

The Corpus

The corpus of sixty-five cylindrical tripod vessels I have compiled is based largely on what is available online and on display in museum collections in the United States, Mexico, and Europe. The purpose of my analysis of this corpus is to gather data in each media group – plano-relief, stuccoed-and-painted, and mold-impressed vessels – on pictorial themes and patterns and to mark changes over time. I will emphasize the theme of bird-warriors on cylindrical tripod vessels and iconographical differences between them.

The analysis compares readily with that taken by Conides, who has highlighted and discussed the butterfly personage theme across stuccoed-and-painted vessels.²⁷ Her analysis revealed that butterfly personages appear only on stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels and never appear on apartment compound murals. Conides argues that butterfly personages were related to a supernatural or religious institution that was popular at Teotihuacan. Variations in elements like headdresses on these individuals denote status within the butterfly cult and that more elaborate headdresses signify high-status.²⁸ In a similar manner, I will bring to light the prevalence of the bird-warrior theme on cylindrical tripod vessels. In contrast to Conides's observation on the sole representation of the butterfly personage on stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels, bird-warriors appear on

²⁷ Conides, "Figures in Action: Contextualizing the Butterfly Personage at Teotihuacan, Mexico," in *Visual Culture of the Ancient Americas: Contemporary Perspectives* ed. Andrew Finegold and Ellen Hoobler (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017), 103-118.

²⁸ Conides, "Figures in Action," 113-116.

plano-relief, stuccoed-and-painted, and mold-impressed tripod vessels as well as apartment compound mural programs.

Many of the vessels in my corpus do not have bird-warriors or related imagery. The purpose of including these vessels is to measure the density of bird-warrior imagery and the growth of this subject over time against other themes. In order to measure such density, I have placed every vessel in the following thematic categories: emblems, animals, and humans, with a human sub-category of warriors with human/animal conflation. These categories and the data associated with each will be described below, but are also available in Table 1.

Emblems

I define emblems as symbols that stand alone and do not interact with other pictorial imagery, if any, on the vessels. The emblem category is comprised of vessels with non-figural imagery. These “emblems” include signs and symbols such as headdresses, shields, temples (figures 9 and 10), and animal heads accompanied by floating symbols (figure 11). Many symbols are now considered written language, in the form of emblems or glyphs, and often appear on plano-relief wares in isolated form.²⁹ For instance, a vessel from the British Museum (figure 10) depicts what Hasso von Winning called the “reptile’s eye” glyph, which he argues connotes fertility and creation.³⁰

In plano-relief wares, 65% of the vessels contain emblems. The density of emblems decreases on stuccoed-and-painted wares, accounting for just 35%. Emblems still exist

²⁹ James C. Langley, “Symbols, Signs, and Writing Systems,” In *Teotihuacan: Art from the City of the Gods*, ed. Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory, (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1994), 129-136.

³⁰ Hasso von Winning, “Teotihuacan Symbols: The Reptile’s Eye Glyph,” in *Ethnos* 26.3 (1961): 126.

within imagery on stuccoed-and-painted wares in the Xolalpan phase, but their existence is less conspicuous than in plano-relief, where they had primacy. For instance, a link can be made between an emblem on a plano-relief vessel from the Museo Nacional de Antropología in Mexico City (figure 12) and the shield of the warrior on the DMA vessel (figure 2). Both contain the hand-shield emblem, but on the plano-relief vessel, the emblem appears alone whereas the figure in the DMA vessel holds or displays the shield in front of his body. While the sample of mold-impressed wares is very small, there is just one emblem vessel, which makes up 20% of the sample. The percentages of emblem vessels demonstrate a steady decrease in frequency of emblems on vessels between the Tlamimilolpa phase and the Metepec phase, and correspondingly between the plano-relief vessels and the mold-impressed vessels. Perhaps this steady decrease in emblems marks a shift in the necessity of such signs on art objects or perhaps it denotes a societal shift – an emphasis placed on the people of Teotihuacan rather than emblems. Indeed, many of the emblems that are depicted on stuccoed-and-tripod vessels have human attributes, such as headdresses and shields (figure 9), and differ from the abstracted emblems represented on plano-relief and incised vessels (figure 10).

Karl Taube and James Langley individually have attempted to find correlations in signs, symbols, and notations to interpret meaning and, in Taube's case, written language at Teotihuacan.³¹ Langley calls emblems with multiple symbols "sign clusters" and claims they

³¹ James C. Langley, "Symbols, Signs, and Writing Systems" in *Teotihuacan: Art from the City of the Gods*, eds. Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory, (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1994), and Karl A. Taube, "The Writing System of Teotihuacan," in *Ancient America* (Barnardsville, N.C.: Center for Ancient American Studies, I). See also Jesper Nielsen's "The Coyote and the Tasseled Shield: A Possible Titular Glyph on a Late Xolalpan Teotihuacan Tripod," *Mexicon* 26 (3) June 2004: 61 – 64.

have meaning, but he does not elaborate on their possible function as written language.³² Taube, on the other hand, interprets these emblems as hieroglyphic writing, similar to that of the Maya.³³ However, because glyphs at Teotihuacan are not typically arranged in linear order, their existence has been largely overlooked. Often glyphs and emblems are incorporated into a larger, pictorial scheme rather than isolated on a side plane, requiring the reader to have knowledge of the written language in order to decipher it.³⁴ For instance, while isolated emblems appear frequently on plano-relief vessels, their appearance is diminished and incorporated into imagery on stuccoed-and-painted vessels. Through my analysis of the vessels, it appears that many emblems that are isolated on plano-relief vessels are transferred to the shields carried by individuals on stuccoed-and-painted vessels (figures 12 and 2).

Animals

The category for animals consists of vessels that depict animals rendered in both a natural form (figure 13) and in a supernatural form (figure 14). Supernatural animals have no distinct human characteristics, such as a human face or human limbs; however, a few of the animals represented stand on two feet or are composite animals, like the two-headed feathered serpent on the vessel in the Cleveland Museum of Art's collection (appendix number 36). The data collected from the sample shows that none of the plano-relief or mold-impressed wares depict animals, whereas animals make up 15% of the stuccoed-and-

³² James Langley, "Teotihuacan Sign Clusters: Emblem or Articulation?" in *Art, Ideology, and the City of Teotihuacan*, ed. Janet Catherine Berlo (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992).

³³ Taube, "The Writing System of Teotihuacan;" Carla Millon, "Painting, Writing, and Polity in Teotihuacan, Mexico," in *American Antiquity* 38.3(1973).

³⁴ Taube, "The Writing System of Teotihuacan," 3-4.

painted wares group. The appearance of animals on stuccoed-and-painted vessels (figure 13), however slim, may correspond with the proliferation of animal imagery in mural programs at this time (figure 6). This connection to murals may explain why animals are exclusively represented on stuccoed-and-painted wares and are not represented on earlier plano-relief or mold-impressed wares, based on this sample.

Humans and Anthropomorphic Figures

The most significant category, humans, is comprised of vessels that depict blowgun hunters (figure 15, appendix numbers 27, 34, and 60), warriors in animal or militaristic costume (figure 2), priests participating in ritualistic sacrifice (figure 16), or butterfly personages (figure 17). Imagery of human beings makes up 35% of plano-relief wares, 50% of stuccoed-and-painted wares, and 80% of mold-impressed wares. This marks a shift in the steadily-increasing frequency of depicting humans in a number of contexts from the Tlamimilolpa phase on plano-relief wares to the Metepec phase on mold-impressed wares.

A sub-category of the “human” category, particularly important to this study, is warriors. The warrior category is determined by the depiction of a human who holds either a shield, an atlatl, or darts. Warriors, in many cases, have animal attributes but can be identified as human when depicted with a human face and arms. In the plano-relief sample, all of the humans depicted on ceramics are marked as warriors, making up 35% of the thematic categories in the sample total. The stuccoed-and-painted ware sample contains a warrior density of 27.5% of the sample total, and makes up 55% of the “human” category. 80% of the mold-impressed ware sample consists of warriors. This data suggests a steady increase in the proliferation of both human and warrior imagery on tripod vessels.

Among depictions of warriors, the data shows that the frequency of bird-warriors also increases over time. In the plano-relief sample, out of the six vessels depicting warriors, those with avian attributes are represented on four vessels, accounting for 67% of the vessels (figures 3, 18, 19, and 20). This amount increases in the stuccoed-and-painted ware sample at 73% (figures 2, 4, 7, 21, 22, 23, and 24), and in the mold-impressed ware sample at 80% with three bird-warrior vessels (figures 5, 25, and 26). The remaining warriors wear a jaguar or canine headdress (figures 27 and 28).

The prevalence of frontal facing warriors also increases from the plano-relief group. 17% of the warriors on plano-relief vessels, 36% of figures on stuccoed-and-painted wares, and 60% of figures on mold-impressed wares are rendered frontally. This steady increase of warrior imagery, as well as front-facing warriors may signify the growing importance of warriors in Teotihuacan society. While these militaristic patterns are certainly important to the topic of this paper, iconographical patterns can also point to more significant continuities and changes within the corpus of cylindrical tripods.

Bird Warriors

Bird-warriors stand out from other imagery on tripod vessels because they are consistently represented with an array of attributes. I have noted a number of attributes that act as diagnostics for identifying bird-warriors on these vessels. The principal attributes I have identified as bird-warrior features through visual analyses are as follows: avian features as described above; circular eye ornaments known as “Tlaloc” eyes; a nosebar; a shield, often with a hand on it; a torch held in an extended hand; and darts that are either held in a hand or attached to a shield. Bird-warriors who are in profile are typically rendered horizontally, as emphasized by a border on the lower edge of the vessel and the lack of human legs and feet. In contrast to warriors who are not associated with birds and are clearly depicted standing on two feet, warriors with a lack of feet and possession of wings confirms their associations with birds. In some cases, a netted element (figure 2) extends from the tail-feather of the figure, perhaps demonstrating flight (figures 2 and 21). Many bird-warriors also hold bundled torches and darts, giving us yet more diagnostic attributes for identifying these individuals. Figures 2, 3, 4, 7, 20, 21, and 22 have at least five of these attributes and thus can be interpreted as bird-warriors.

Circular Eye Ornaments

Circular eye ornaments, or “Tlaloc eyes,” recur in depictions of warriors. This accoutrement has been the subject of many iconographical studies and is significant to Teotihuacan pictorial narratives. In the past, most figures in Teotihuacan art were

identified as “Tlaloc,” the Aztec name for the storm god (for examples of the Storm God at Teotihuacan, see figures 29 and 30). Pasztory, in particular, refuted this common misconception in 1974. She argued that at Teotihuacan, circular eye ornaments are seen in several different contexts in art.³⁵ Pasztory notes that the overwhelming amount of individuals shown wearing the goggles at Teotihuacan makes it unlikely that all individuals can be considered as representations or emulators of the Storm God and therefore do not always denote the Storm God.³⁶ When considering paintings at Atetelco, Pasztory says,

“[W]hile the rings over the eyes provide a superficial resemblance to Tlaloc, a very clear distinction is made between Tlaloc and other goggled figures at Atetelco: Tlaloc...has the concentric eye-form, which appears to be a monstrous but organic part of the creature’s face, whereas the human figures...wear the rings as masks covering their own eyes.”³⁷

Indeed, in representations of the Storm God, the figure’s eye fills the entire open space of the goggle (figure 29) in contrast to the eyes of humans, where skin surrounding an almond-shaped eye defines the mask-quality of the circular ornaments (figures 2 and 7).

In all of the vessels I have identified as bird-warriors, the eye ornaments are worn as masks, denoted by the almond-shaped human eye beneath the accoutrement. Because the warriors wear the eye ornaments as masks, I can claim with confidence that these figures are indeed humans and not emulations of the Storm God. Furthermore, Pasztory

³⁵ As scholars do not know the names of Teotihuacan objects, figures, and gods, it is conventional to name the storm god at Teotihuacan after the later Aztec Tlaloc, who was heavily influenced by the Teotihuacan storm god, however, it is somewhat inappropriate to refer to this god by a different culture’s terminology. Thus, in many recent publications about Teotihuacan, this god is referred to as the Storm God – a terminology I will also adopt.

³⁶ Pasztory, “The Iconography of the Teotihuacan Tlaloc,” *Studies in Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology* 15(1974), 1-20.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 11-13; James C. Langley illustrates this more clearly in his 1986 book *Symbolic Notation of Teotihuacan: Elements of Writing in a Mesoamerican Culture of the Classic Period* (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 313), on page 261.

provided a list of additional attributes and contexts that represent the Storm God, effectively separating the Storm God's imagery with that of unrelated figures. Some of the Storm God's attributes are his large, ringed eyes, protruding fangs, lightning bolt staff, and conch shell.³⁸ These attributes do not appear consistently on bird-warrior images.

Nosebars

Nosebars are another frequent iconographical element on the faces of humans in Teotihuacan art. Most prominent are the stepped nosebars, also known as "butterfly" nosebars, and the fanged nosebar. In some cases, individuals are shown wearing a plain, rectangular nosebar, especially on early plano-relief wares (figure 3). In fact, out of the six plano-relief vessels that depict humans, four of the individuals wear a rectangular nosebar. The stepped nosebars mirror the shape of the stepped pyramids in the city; this shape is known as *talud-tablero*, in reference to the alternating sloping and upright walls that mark the temples of the city. They also look like stylized butterflies, hence the nickname "butterfly," and also appear on the faces of butterfly personages.

Fanged nosebars have a rectangular band with upper fangs. They are also called "Tlaloc" nosebars because they mirror the fangs that protrude from the Storm God's mouth (figures 29 and 30). These appear less frequently than butterfly nosebars, but seem to appear in elite settings. Individuals on three stuccoed-and-painted tripod vessels in this sample wear fanged nosebars (figures 2, 7, and 23). The individual on the DMA vessel (figure 2) is the only one of the three who is in profile, yet the nosebar is rendered frontally. The fanged nosebar is also worn by individuals in mural paintings at Tetitla (figure 31), Atetelco (figure 8), and Tepantitla (figure 32), as well as an individual carved in stone relief

³⁸ Pasztory, "The Iconography of the Teotihuacan Tlaloc," 15-18.

from the Avenue of the Dead Complex (figure 33). It is important to note again that fanged nosebars on humans appear as an ornament or mask-like accoutrement in contrast to the more organic nature of the Storm God's fangs (figure 29).

Several *talud-tablero* or butterfly nosebars have been excavated archaeologically, but only two fanged nosebars have been found in an elite burial at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid (figure 34). This finding led Cowgill to suggest that the fanged nosebar was associated with Teotihuacan power and rulership, rather than having religious connotations with the Storm God.³⁹ The archaeological finding of the fanged nosebar allows us to realize that such an accoutrement was worn, and as such, it is important to note a correlation between the greenstone fanged nosebar found archaeologically and the corresponding green color of fanged nosebars painted on the faces bird-warriors.

Shields, Torches and Darts

Shields appear in many forms in depictions of warriors on the tripod vessels. Some shields are blank or have simple dot designs (figure 4 and 20). Other shields have a symbol superimposed on the center of the shield. The butterfly nose-bar emblem, five-pointed half-stars, also known as "Venus stars," and one hand depicted on the center of the shield are common symbols depicted individually on shields. There is a consistent connection between shields with five-pointed half stars or one hand in the center and birds and bird-warriors. For instance, three out of four of the bird-warriors on plano-relief wares in the sample corpus hold a shield with a single hand on it. The individual on the DMA vessel (figure 2) also carries a hand-shield, and the frontally-facing figure on a LACMA vessel

³⁹ Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership*, 91, 145; George Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan: Early Urbanism in Central Mexico* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 228.

holds a Venus-star shield (figure 7). The hand-shield is often seen on the bodies of birds in mural programs, like those in the Wagner Collection (figure 35).⁴⁰ The birds are identified as warriors because of the militaristic connotations the shield and darts have.⁴¹ A mold-impressed vessel from the sample corpus also demonstrates the correlation of hand-shield and birds (figure 36). In fact, James Langley has named the emblem of a bird holding a hand-shield with darts the Teotihuacan “war emblem.”⁴² Langley, in particular, has argued that such insignia is emblematic of high-ranked warriors.⁴³

Another icon associated with the bird-warriors, the flaming torch, is thought to be a symbol of power at Teotihuacan because it is often represented in what are considered portraits of elites, as David Grove has argued.⁴⁴ The bird-warriors in figures 2, 7, 19, 20, 21, and 22 hold such an element, either in the extended hand of those in profile, or in the individual’s right hand if depicted frontally.

Furthermore, almost all of the bird-warriors in this corpus hold one or more darts, which obviously also carry military associations. A dart is composed of a single feather with eagle-down balls above and below the feather (figure 35). Darts are not always obvious in depictions of warriors and are frequently attached to a warrior’s shield (figure 35) or held in a hand.

Headdresses

⁴⁰ Kathleen Berrin, “Small Birds with Shields and Spears and other Fragments,” in *Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees* ed. Kathleen Berrin (San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1988):169.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁴² Langley, *Symbolic Notation of Teotihuacan*, 65.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 262.

⁴⁴ David Grove, “Torches, ‘knuckle dusters’ and the legitimization of Formative Period Rulership,” in *Mexicon* 9(3), 60-65; Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 229.

Most of the humans portrayed in the total vessel sample wear headdresses. At Teotihuacan, headdresses appear on humans and as symbols and are often difficult to categorize. Some of the headdresses rendered on vessels from the corpus include: the tasseled headdress (figure 7), the butterfly headdress (figure 20), the year-sign headdress (figure 37), the bird headdress (figure 23), the canine headdress (figure 38), and the simple feathered headdress (figures 2, 18, and 19). The headdress types may be particular to certain classes of figures. For example, Clara Millon has studied the tasseled headdress and argued that it is worn by individuals in high office, due to its appearance abroad in political contexts.⁴⁵ Round earspools are typically coupled with headdresses and are also known to be associated with elite individuals.⁴⁶

Typically, bird-warriors wear either a feathered headdress, a butterfly headdress, or the tasseled headdress, as is evident in this sample corpus. Each headdress may hold a certain meaning and it is difficult to discern the significance of each in the context of bird-warriors. Regardless, the fact that the warriors wear a headdresses also signifies their higher status.

Portals

The feathered and starred band that extends from the headdress and curves downward toward the tail-feather on the bird-warriors depicted on the DMA vessel (figure 2), two Dumbarton Oaks tripods (figures 4 and 39), and a tripod from the Diego Rivera

⁴⁵ Clara Millon, "Painting, Writing, and Polity in Teotihuacan, Mexico," in *American Antiquity* 38/3 (1973), 301-306; C. Millon, "A Reexamination of the Teotihuacan Tassel Headdress Insignia," in *Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees*, 114-132.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*; Saburo Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership: Materialization of State Ideology at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid, Teotihuacan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 143.

Anahuacalli Museum (figure 40) has been identified by Conides as a portal or doorway. A similar portal is seen in a mural painting from the Techinantitla compound (figure 29) and shown frontally on a mold-impressed tripod from LACMA (figure 5). Conides has found that this element is especially prominent in depictions of birds on stuccoed-and-painted and plano-relief wares.⁴⁷ Conides has convincingly argued that these portals or passageways may depict apartment compound doorways, and that bird-human composite figures are departing from an interior space, perhaps a location of ritual.⁴⁸ Several of the vessels in this study have a portal or doorway element that may signify the doorway of an apartment compound. Thus, we can see how the bird-warriors quite literally fly away from their existence on wall paintings and into the exterior realm, on portable vessels.

⁴⁷ Conides, "The Stuccoed and Painted Ceramics of Teotihuacan," 131.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

Teotihuacan

At its height, Teotihuacan sustained up to 140,000 residents in its 2,300 stone apartment compounds and covered approximately eight square miles.⁴⁹ The city is marked by three major pyramids built at different times. The first is the Pyramid of the Moon, which was built upon the city's foundation and then expanded between AD 150 and 450. The Pyramid of the Sun followed in construction (AD 170 – 310) and subsequently, the Pyramid of the Feathered Serpent was built (AD 200 – 400).⁵⁰ At about AD 250, a large number of apartment compounds were built to house the populace of Teotihuacan; this construction activity coincided with major augmentations of the Sun, Moon, and Feathered Serpent Pyramids.⁵¹ The city thus reached its apogee around this phase.

The apartment compounds, built in the Tlamimilolpa phase, were unique to Teotihuacan at this time, especially because of their permanence and decorated interiors, but also, and perhaps most importantly, due to their diverse array of inhabitants. Rene Millon has noted that classes can be identified by material remains at apartment compounds. Compounds housed the entire population, from low to high status Teotihuacanos. They also included whole neighborhoods of foreigners, such as Oaxacans in

⁴⁹ Cowgill, *Ancient Teotihuacan*, 140-143.

⁵⁰ Dates for Moon Pyramid in Saburo Sugiyama and Rubén Cabrera Castro, "The Moon Pyramid Project and the Teotihuacan State Polity: A brief summary of the 1998-2004 excavations," in *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 18(2007), 109-123; Dates for Sun Pyramid in Nawa Sugiyama, S. Sugiyama, and Alejandro Sarabia G., "Inside the Sun Pyramid at Teotihuacan, Mexico: 2008-2011 Excavations and Preliminary Results," in *Latin American Antiquity* 24/4 (2013), 403; for the FSP in Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership*, 39.

⁵¹ N.Sugiyama, S. Sugiyama, and A. Sarabia, "Inside the Sun Pyramid," 429.

the Oaxaca Barrio.⁵² This is unusual, especially in contrast to the Maya, who housed only elite persons in permanent, decorated structures that were located within the city. Lower-status individuals lived outside of the city in perishable homes.⁵³

Linda Manzanilla has attempted to designate social sectors in Teotihuacan apartment compounds based on visual analysis and material remains found in such compounds. She argues that there were eight components to each: administrative, craft, ritual, and residential sectors, military living quarters, a medical sector, a kitchen and storeroom, and an open area for secular activities.⁵⁴ If this was truly the case, one can see how military personnel were integrated into everyday life by living among individuals with different occupations.

Saburo Sugiyama has suggested that the monumental building projects were most likely implemented under the auspices of a series of individual rulers.⁵⁵ The emphasis on enlarging monumental structures and constructing permanent housing compounds shows

⁵² Rene Millon, "The Place Where Time Began: An Archaeologist's Interpretation of What Happened in Teotihuacan History," in *Teotihuacan: Art from the City of the Gods*, eds. Kathleen Berrin and Esther Pasztory, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 29-30.

⁵³ Pasztory, *Teotihuacan*, 49.

⁵⁴ Linda R. Manzanilla, "Neighborhoods and Elite 'Houses' at Teotihuacan, Central Mexico," in *The Neighborhood as a Social and Spatial Unit in Mesoamerican Cities*, ed. M. Charlotte Arnauld et al. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012): 60-64. Similar ideas are expressed in Manzanilla's "Corporate Life in Apartment and Barrio Compounds at Teotihuacan, Central Mexico: Craft Specialization, Hierarchy, and Ethnicity," (see bibliography for full citation).

⁵⁵ Rene Millon, "Where Do They All Come From? The Provenance of the Wagner Murals from Teotihuacan," in *Feathered Serpents and Flowering Trees: Reconstructing the Murals of Teotihuacan*, ed. Kathleen Berrin, (San Francisco: Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1988), 112; Saburo Sugiyama, "Worldview Materialized in Teotihuacan, Mexico," in *Latin American Antiquity*, 4/2 (1993), 122-123; and A. Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity*, 10.

a priority on the unity of the city and perhaps also a demonstration of a shift in sociopolitical structure.⁵⁶

However, the sociopolitical structure of Teotihuacan is still a subject of debate. The lack of elite burials and naturalistic portraits at Teotihuacan, as well as clearly defined royal architecture in the city, has led art historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists to differing interpretations of the societal and political systems over the years. For instance, Esther Pasztory claimed that the overt rejection of naturalism and the use of abstraction in Teotihuacan art, as well as a lack of narrative and public dynastic art, pointed to Teotihuacan being a utopian state, one which standardized its citizens and de-emphasized the individual.⁵⁷ The use of abstraction, Pasztory argued, was not a lack of artistic ability but rather an artistic and political choice that differed from Maya art, which was often narrative, contained hieroglyphic writing, and emphasized naturalistic representations of individuals, specifically rulers. According to Pasztory, de-individualization aided the dominance of unity in state ideology.⁵⁸

George Cowgill, too, notes the abundance of generalized art and lack of individual portraits and points out that the “emphasis is on acts rather than actors; on offices rather than office-holders,” also noting a focus on the well-being of the city as a whole.⁵⁹ He argues

⁵⁶ Headrick, *Teotihuacan Trinity*, 10; S. Sugiyama and Cabrera, “The Moon Pyramid Project,” 123; N. Sugiyama, S. Sugiyama, and A. Sarabia, “Inside the Sun Pyramid,” 429.

⁵⁷ Esther Pasztory, “Abstraction and the Rise of a Utopian State at Teotihuacan,” in *Art, Ideology, and the City of Teotihuacan: A Symposium at Dumbarton Oaks*, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), 281-320; also Pasztory, *Teotihuacan: An Experiment in Living*.

⁵⁸ Pasztory, “Abstraction and the Rise of a Utopian State at Teotihuacan,” 281-320.

⁵⁹ George Cowgill, “State and Society at Teotihuacan, Mexico,” in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 26(1997), 137.

that Teotihuacan may have begun as an autocracy, evident in the construction of massive pyramids, and shifted to a collective governance after the reign of a few tyrannical rulers.⁶⁰

In contrast to Pasztory's and Cowgill's focus on collectivity, Annabeth Headrick suggested a different political structure for Teotihuacan. She argued that Teotihuacan was ruled by three factions: an individual ruler, noble lineages, and military units that were associated closely with the ruler. She calls this the Teotihuacan trinity.⁶¹ While Headrick attempted to discern a clear and concise sociopolitical structure based on art, architecture, and ethnographical comparisons with the contemporaneous Maya and later Aztec cultures, her argument for an individual ruler controlling Teotihuacan falls short in key areas. For instance, Headrick drew from the Aztec political structure, documented in manuscripts, to identify a similar structure at Teotihuacan. She used the murals decorating the White Patio at the Atetelco apartment compound as examples, claiming that two groups of warriors – bird-warriors and canine-warriors – ruled alongside the Teotihuacan ruler. She supported this claim with the spatial layout of the mural groups on the patio, where the animal warriors flank a mural of what Headrick believed was the Teotihuacan ruler. Headrick attempted to point out instances of this mural group at other apartment compounds, but relied too heavily on spatial relationships that are not consistent among apartment patio painting groups. In any case, Headrick's theory emphasizes the Teotihuacan military as a major part of the society and the city's power. This emphasis is also reflected in the inclusion of sacrificed warriors in the building phases of monumental pyramids, as Saburo Sugiyama has shown.⁶² Teotihuacan's influence through its military is perhaps the best

⁶⁰ Ibid., 154-156.

⁶¹ Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity*, 18.

⁶² See Saburo Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership*.

testament to the city's power and, as we will see, is frequently manifested in the art of the city.

The Teotihuacan Military

The iconographical elements that appear on bird-warrior vessels denote both militarism and elite status, two ideas that are closely related at Teotihuacan. The depictions of bird warriors and their link to elite militarism exemplifies the political and militaristic endeavors Teotihuacan increasingly took on in the Xolalpan period (AD 350 – 550). Cowgill has noted that war and military at Teotihuacan was an important ideal in the foundation and development of the city and was increasingly emphasized as the city grew.⁶³

The Feathered Serpent Pyramid (henceforth FSP) and Moon Pyramid, in particular, contained the graves of members of the military, as well as sacrificial victims and possible elite persons.⁶⁴ Saburo Sugiyama has published the most recent archaeological data that reflects the significance of the military at Teotihuacan. S. Sugiyama's analyses of burials and offerings excavated at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid show that a significant amount of the sacrificial victims were associated with the military through the objects with which they were buried.⁶⁵ S. Sugiyama reports that ninety-five percent of the individuals who were associated with martial objects carried slate disks.⁶⁶ Slate disks and projectile points were found in abundance throughout the burials at the FSP and are often seen in depictions of

⁶³ Cowgill, "State and Society at Teotihuacan," 145.

⁶⁴ Saburo Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership*, 87-121. The Moon Pyramid seems to have held the remains of a Maya elite, whereas Sugiyama speculates the burial of Teotihuacan dignitaries at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid.

⁶⁵ Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership*, 229-231.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 230.

warriors in Teotihuacan artwork, denoting the strong emphasis on the military. A burial of a possible Teotihuacan elite, and perhaps more than one, known as Grave 13, was also excavated, though much of the grave was looted many years ago. The one undisturbed individual in Grave 13 wore a greenstone fanged nosebar, similar to those seen on the individuals in figures 6, 12, and 13, with three concentric circles decorating the rectangular portion of the object (figure 34).⁶⁷ There were two such nosebars found in Grave 13, but others have not yet been found anywhere else. Cowgill has proposed that despite the looting, Grave 13 may have held one or more rulers due to these elite objects.⁶⁸

The excavations of the Moon Pyramid revealed burials and offerings that were associated with the largest expansion of the pyramid (c. AD 250), known as Building 4, and contained materials that also held strong militaristic significance.⁶⁹ In particular, Burials 2, 3, and 6, are linked to Building 4 as dedicatory offerings. These burials contained numerous sacrificial victims who appear to be foreigners, denoting intercity interactions. These sacrificial victims are thought to be war captives, as their hands were bound behind their backs upon burial. Burial 2 is located at the nucleus of Building 4 and is thus associated directly with it. S. Sugiyama and Leonardo López Luján argue that one of the three individuals interred in Burial 2 represents Teotihuacan's state ideology due to the high-status objects associated with this individual.⁷⁰ Because Building 4 marks an important shift in Teotihuacan's sociopolitical structure, "[T]he contents of the dedicated burial

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 143-148.

⁶⁸ Cowgill, "Toward a Political History of Teotihuacan," 106.

⁶⁹ In S. Sugiyama and L. López Luján, "Dedicatory Burial/Offering Complexes at the Moon Pyramid, Teotihuacan: A Preliminary Report of 1998-2004," in *Ancient Mesoamerica*, 18 (2007).

⁷⁰ S. Sugiyama and López Luján, "Dedicatory Burial," 130.

indicate that a form of sacred rulership closely connected to the state military apparatus had been established and was responsible for this large-scale construction event.”⁷¹

In building 4, animal sacrifices, including those of birds, canines, felines, and snakes were interred with the human sacrifices along with obsidian knives, fine ornaments like greenstone earspools and beads, and possible warrior paraphernalia such as pyrite disks, which were also found in the Feathered Serpent Pyramid.⁷² Mirroring the offerings at the FSP, the sacrificed humans in the Moon Pyramid are thought to be war captives, as the hands of the victims were also bound.

S. Sugiyama proposes that the animal sacrifices included in the burials of human victims indicate animal-associated units within the military faction – birds, canines, felines, and snakes – that correspond closely with imagery on mural programs.⁷³ Cowgill also makes this claim, stating that warriors were associated with the ferocity for which these animals are known.⁷⁴ Recently, Nawa Sugiyama, Andrew D. Somerville, and Margaret J. Shoeninger published a zooarchaeological report on the animals included in Moon Pyramid offerings and found that the highest frequency of animals present were golden eagles, Mexican grey wolves, puma, and rattlesnakes.⁷⁵ Burials 2 and 6, in particular, had high numbers of golden eagles, denoting, perhaps, an emphasis put on the bird-warrior unit.⁷⁶ Also noteworthy is the incomplete remains of a horned owl associated with the individual

⁷¹ S. Saburo and Cabrera, “The Moon Pyramid Project,” 123.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 127-141.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁷⁴ Cowgill, “State and Society at Teotihuacan,” 146.

⁷⁵ Nawa Sugiyama, Andrew D. Somerville, and Margaret J. Shoeninger, “Stable Isotopes and Zooarchaeology at Teotihuacan, Mexico Reveal Earliest Evidence of Wild Carnivore Management in Mesoamerica,” in *PLOS ONE* 10(9): 2015, 1-14.

⁷⁶ N. Sugiyama, Somerville, and Shoeninger, “Stable Isotopes and Zooarchaeology at Teotihuacan,” 6, Table 2.

in Burial 2.⁷⁷ Given the burial's theme of state ideology, with its objects related to military and sacrifice, the presence of a single owl may signify the individual's high status.

The association of animals as mascots for military units may be, in some sense, quite logical. As mentioned earlier, Cowgill has noted that these particular animals were chosen because of their ferocity or because of an overarching ideal or principle. As an example, Cowgill uses the feathered serpent's strong association with war, as argued originally by Karl Taube.⁷⁸ Cowgill argues that the feathered serpent may signify an overarching ideal for war and sacrifice. Feathered serpents appear mainly as borders around doors on mural paintings while animals and humans carry out various actions in the murals.⁷⁹ Birds can be considered in a similar manner. Raptorial birds occupy both earth and sky, are carnivorous, and are able to fly long distances in a short amount of time. They have a keen sense of direction and are skilled hunters. The emphasis on birds in the portable art tradition at Teotihuacan is appropriate given their mobility.

S. Sugiyama concludes that the abundance of militaristic interments at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid and the Moon Pyramid suggests an early importance of the military faction to Teotihuacan, as these individuals played a key role in large building expansions on monumental structures. Therefore, the military faction was an essential part of the city's foundation.⁸⁰ Although these buildings and some of their dedicatory burials are earlier in date (AD 250-350) to many of the military-themed artworks (approx. AD 300-550) in the city, the burials indicate the beginning of a significant tradition at Teotihuacan:

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁷⁸ Karl Taube, "The Temple of Quetzalcoatl and the Cult of Sacred War at Teotihuacan," in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 21 (1992): 53-87.

⁷⁹ Cowgill, "State and Society at Teotihuacan," 147.

⁸⁰ S. Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership*, 229-231.

the emphasis on the military. Meanwhile, bird-warriors occupy the surfaces of cylindrical vessels throughout these phases, solidifying their important positions in the development of state and society.

“Spear-Thrower Owl” and the Maya

One of the best examples of the Teotihuacan military’s long distance affairs is their appearance in Maya art at cities like Tikal and Uaxactún. While the specific information regarding Teotihuacan and Maya relations is still debated, the art gives us clues about the long distance travel capabilities of the military. Epigraphers have interpreted Maya hieroglyphs on stelae from Tikal and Uaxactún to be records of the appearance Teotihuacanos, perhaps even members of the Teotihuacan military, in the Petén region in the late fourth century. For example, the arrival at Tikal in 378 of people from a place of reeds located in the west and likely a reference to Teotihuacan, is recorded in a number of Petén sites. David Stuart’s work on the interaction between Teotihuacan and the Maya highlights Teotihuacan’s military branding. The polity’s presence in the Maya area is suggested via the appearance of Teotihuacan-related iconography, such as circular eye ornaments, and a more simplified style in Maya art at the time.⁸¹

Stuart argued that Teotihuacan’s interaction with Tikal was forceful and resulted in the reconfiguration of the political system of the city and beyond.⁸² According to hieroglyphic inscriptions, Tikal’s leader, Chak Tok Ich’aak, also known as “Jaguar Paw,” died the same day the Teotihuacan warrior named Siyaj K’ak arrived. The inscriptions suggest that a person named “Spear-Thrower Owl” ordered the invasion.⁸³ Described as a

⁸¹ Stuart, “Arrival of Strangers,” 465-513.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 465-513.

⁸³ Although, Stuart admitted that this would be difficult to prove, “Arrival of Strangers.”

western lord, Spear-Thrower Owl was a very influential person in the history of Tikal. Indeed, his son became the city's next ruler. Although Spear-Thrower Owl himself never traveled to Tikal, his name appears in glyph form on Stelae 31 (figure 43) and 32. Spear-Thrower Owl's name glyph is an owl with an atlatl, also known as *lechuza y armas* (figure 44).⁸⁴ Thus, his name is marked with militaristic aspects. The individual portrayed twice in profile on Stela 31 is Nun Yax Ayin, who is thought to be Spear-Thrower Owl's son. He carries a shield and atlatl that have strong ties to Teotihuacan. The shield portrays the bust of a Teotihuacan soldier, indicated by the goggle mask, nosebar, feathered headdress, and earspools, suggestive of Teotihuacan's military presence.

At the end of his discussion about the relationship between Teotihuacan and Tikal relations, Stuart says, "[O]n the basis of the controlled Tikal evidence, I suggest instead that the distinctive *lechuza y armas* may be a personal name glyph even in Teotihuacan, serving to label the figures with which they are found. If Spear-Thrower Owl was a Teotihuacan ruler, the presence of his 'name-tag' would allow us to identify such figures as portraits of the warrior-king."⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the *lechuza y armas* glyph is similar to the Teotihuacan "war emblem," which is also included in the headdress of Siyah Chan K'awil's, who Nun Yax Ayin's successor and grandson Spear-Thrower Owl headdress (figure 45). Thus, the war emblem gives evidence of the far dissemination of a sign associated with Teotihuacan bird-warriors.

⁸⁴ Translation: owl and weapons

⁸⁵ Stuart, "Arrival of Strangers," 485. Interestingly enough, Jesper Nielsen and Christopher Helmke seem to have identified a Spearthrower Owl toponym on apartment compound murals. See: "Spearthrower Owl Hill: A Toponym at Atetelco, Teotihuacan," in *Latin American Antiquity* 19(4) 2008, 459-74.

Although we do not see other bird-warrior related imagery at Tikal, it is significant that Teotihuacan is mentioned at Tikal with Spear-Thrower Owl's name glyph, which demonstrates that birds are represented and affiliated with Teotihuacan power. Moreover, cylindrical tripod vessels appear to have been adopted into the Maya ceramic tradition, denoting an influence from Teotihuacan. One of the better examples of a Teotihuacan-influenced tripod vessel from the Maya area is a vessel from Copan named "The Dazzler" (figure 46). The Dazzler is a lidded cylindrical tripod vessel that includes a personified temple, characterized by a face with goggled human eyes and a nosebar in the portal of the temple and outstretched, winged arms with human hands holding flaming torches on each side of the temple. With this example, one can see how both the cylindrical tripod tradition and bird imagery are represented in the Maya area and to connote power associated ultimately with Teotihuacan.

Conclusion

Through analyses of the sample corpus, I have found that images of bird-warriors began to appear on plano-relief vessels during the Tlamimilolpa phase, became more frequent on stuccoed-and-painted vessels in the Xolalpan phase, and dominated the subject matter of mold-impressed vessels in the Metepec phase. Another important transition of this subject throughout time is the transformation of bird-warriors from being depicted in profile to ultimately being depicted frontally, which perhaps speaks to the increasing power and status of bird-warriors.

The data from the sample shows that images of bird-warriors supersede images of any other animal-warrior on the vessels. Furthermore, warriors from the other animal-units do not appear on vessels in the sample in the plano-relief wares nor the mold-impressed wares. In effect, we may be able to interpret this trend as a purposeful intention to disseminate bird-warrior-and-ruler-specific imagery in a portable art form while limiting representation of other units in the military faction to stationary contexts on murals.

The archaeological data from Saburo Sugiyama and Leonardo López Luján show that the military was emphasized at Teotihuacan early on and affected the major augmentation of monumental structures in the city. Nawa Sugiyama's zooarchaeological research shows the direct correlation of certain animals with warriors, as reflected in some of the art in the city. The frequent depiction of warriors on apartment compound walls

denotes the daily emphasis put on the military, and perhaps also suggests designated spaces for warriors, as Linda Manzanilla has suggested.⁸⁶

The bird-warriors' prominence on portable vessels over other animal-units suggests higher societal status. The city's influence on faraway regions, such as major Maya polities, was likely carried out by its military, and most notably by a warrior-king named "Spear-Thrower Owl," by the Maya, as David Stuart has found.⁸⁷ In examining the imagery on sixty-five cylindrical tripod vessels, I have found that the bird-warrior theme is represented on a large portion of the sample. The theme is represented throughout ceramic phases, transcending style boundaries and existing for about five hundred years. Because no other images seem to enjoy such transcendence and longevity, I conclude that bird-warriors held elite status within the Teotihuacan military and played an important role in the city's conquests, perhaps even its interaction with the Maya.

⁸⁶ Linda Manzanilla, "Neighborhoods and Elite 'Houses' at Teotihuacan," 62-63.

⁸⁷ Stuart, "The Arrival of Strangers," 465-513.

TABLE 1

Vessel	Emblem	Animal	Human	Warrior
Plano Relief /Incised				
Yale Art Gallery 1989.19.1	x			
Yale Art Gallery ILE2013.1.1	x			
Folkens Museum-Etnografiska, Sweden 1932.8.4274	x			
Folkens Museum-Etnografiska, Sweden 1932.8.4198	x			
MNA (app. #14)	x			
LACMA 1998.209.17	x			
Cleveland 1990.230	x			
Penn Museum 66-27-11	x			
Peabody Museum/Harvard 50-4-20	x			
British Museum Am1926,0501.1	x			
Metropolitan Museum 1979.206.364	x			
University of California San Diego (app. #55)	x			
Ethnological Museum, Berlin (app. #57)	x			
Folkens Museum Etnografiska, Sweden 1932.8.3985			x	x
Yale Art Gallery 1998.25.1			x	x
MNA (app. #15)			x	x
Sotheby's May 14, 2010 Lot 52			x	x
Hudson Museum HM553			x	x
Museo Anahuacalli (app. #56)			x	x
MNA (app. #65)			x	x
Statistics:	65%	0%	35%	(35%)
Stuccoed and Painted				
Boston University/Tlajinga	x			
MNA 9-2029	x			
MNA (app. #12)	x			
LACMA 1996.146.56	x			
LACMA 1998.209.13	x			
LACMA M.71.73.179	x			
LACMA 1993.217.15	x			
Cleveland 1990.231	x			
Brooklyn 44.189	x			
Dumbarton Oaks PC.B.063	x			
National Museum of the American Indian 22/9282	x			
Penn Museum 66-27-16	x			

Art Institute of Chicago 1968.790	x			
LACMA 1998.209.14	x			
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco 78.95			x	
LACMA 1998.209.15			x	
LACMA 1998.209.16.1			x	
LACMA 1998.209.16.2			x	
Hudson Museum, HM 551			x	
Dumbarton Oaks PC.B.066			x	
Art Institute of Chicago 1991.478			x	
Houston Museum of Fine Arts 656.70			x	
Anahuacalli (app. #64)			x	
Dallas Museum of Art 2007.70.FA			x	x
Yale Art Gallery 1958.15.2			x	x
MNA 9-2498			x	x
Natural History Museum LA County P.655.67-1			x	x
LACMA 1993.217.16			x	x
LACMA 1996.146.55			x	x
LACMA M.2006.49.1			x	x
Brooklyn Museum 44.3			x	x
Dumbarton Oaks PC.B.065			x	x
Museum of Natural History, NYC (app. #48)			x	x
Museo Anahuacalli (app. #61)			x	x
MNA (app. #13)		x		
San Francisco (app. #19)		x		
Cleveland 1965.20		x		
Dumbarton Oaks PC.B.067		x		
FW Science and History 31M.0263.0000		x		
Museo Anahuacalli (app. #47)		x		
Statistics:	35%	15%	50%	(27.5%)
Mold Impressed				
MNA (app. #16)			x	x
MNA (app. #17)			x	x
LACMA 1996.146.54			x	x
Museo Regional de Puebla	x			
Michael C. Carlos Museum, 1990.011.068			x	x
Statistics:	20%	0%	80%	(80%)

FIGURES



Figure 1
View of Pyramids of the Sun and Moon and Avenue of the Dead, Teotihuacan
Image: Artstor



- Goggle Eye Ornament
- Dart
- Fanged Nosebar
- Portal
- Upturned Wing
- Tail Feather
- Net Element
- Hand-Shield

Figure 2
Tripod Vessel with Bird-Warrior in Profile
Dallas Museum of Art; 2007.70.FA; AD 400 – 650
Image: <https://www.dma.org/collection/artwork/pre-columbian/cylindrical-tripod-vessel-two-goggled-figures>
Appendix #1



Figure 3
 Vessel with Bird-Warrior in Profile
 Private Collection; AD 250 – 450
 Image:
 Appendix #21



Figure 4
 Vessel with Bird-Warrior in Profile
 Dumbarton Oaks; PC.B.065; AD 200 – 750
 Image: *Ancient Mexican Art at Dumbarton Oaks*, edited by Susan Toby Evans, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 34, plates 8a and 8b.
 Appendix #43



Figure 5
Vessel with Frontal Bird-Warrior
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; 1996.146.54; AD 400 – 600
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/182675>
Appendix #20



Figure 6
Bird-Warrior from Atetelco Apartment Compound, White Patio, Portico 3,
Teotihuacan
Image: Annabeth Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity*, p. 80, fig. 4.10. Drawing by Jenni
Bongard after von Winning 1987:I:95, Figure 3b.



Figure 7; frontal and alternate views
Frontal Bird-Warrior
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; 1993.217.16; AD 550 – 650
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/175456>
Appendix #22



Figure 8
Personage with Fanged Nosebar in Netted Design Layout
Portico 2, White Patio, Atetelco Apartment Compound, Teotihuacan
Image taken by author



Figure 9
Vessel with Alternating Hand-Shield/Temple and Tasseled Headdress Emblems
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; 1998.203.13; AD 400 – 650
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/188678>
Appendix #26



Reptile's Eye Glyph

Figure 10
Tripod Vessel with "Reptile's Eye Glyph" Emblems
British Museum; AM1926,0501.1; 150 BC – AD 750
Image: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_detail.aspx?objectId=656723&partId=1&searchText=teotihuacan+tripod&page=1
Appendix #53



Figure 11
Tripod Vessel Depicting Eagles and Shells
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; 1998.209.14; AD 400 – 650
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/188658>
Appendix #25



Figure 12
Painted Incised Vessel with Hand-Shield and Dart Emblem
Museo Nacional de Antropología
Image: Boguchwala Tuszynska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>
Appendix #14



Figure 13
Vessel with Alternating Birds and Butterflies
Brooklyn Museum of Art; 44.189; AD 800
Image: <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/57257>
Appendix #40



Fot. Boguchwała Tuszynska
Figure 14
Tripod with Upright Supernatural Canine
Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli
Image: Boguchwała Tuszynska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>
Appendix #47



Figure 15
Vessel with Blowgun Hunters
Houston Museum of Fine Arts; 656.70
Image: <https://www.mfah.org/art/detail/385?returnUrl=%2Fart%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dteotihuacan%26page%3D4>
Appendix #60



Figure 16
Vessel with Sacrificer
Tetitla Burial 14; Museo Nacional de Antropología; 9-2498; AD 200 – 750
Image: Artstor
Appendix #11



Figure 17
Vessel with Butterfly Personage in Profile
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; 78.95; AD 550 – 650
Image: Artstor
Appendix #18



Figure 18
Vessel with Bird-Warrior in Profile
Folkens Museum-Etnografiska, Sweden; 1932.8.3985; AD 400 – 650
Image: <http://collections.smvk.se/carlotta-em/web/object/1219009>
Appendix #9



Fot. Boguchwała Tuszynska

Figure 19

Vessel with Bird-Warrior in Profile
Museo Nacional de Antropología

Image: Boguchwała Tuszynska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>

Appendix #65



Butterfly Headdress

Figure 20

Vessel with Bird-Warrior in Profile

Yale University Art Gallery; 1988.25.1; AD 400 – 500

Image: Artstor

Appendix #5



Figure 21
Vessel with Profile Bird-Warrior
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; M.2006.49.1; AD 450 – 650
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/208721>
Appendix #28



Figure 22
Vessel with Profile Bird-Warrior
Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli
Image: Boguchwała Tuszynska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>
Appendix #61



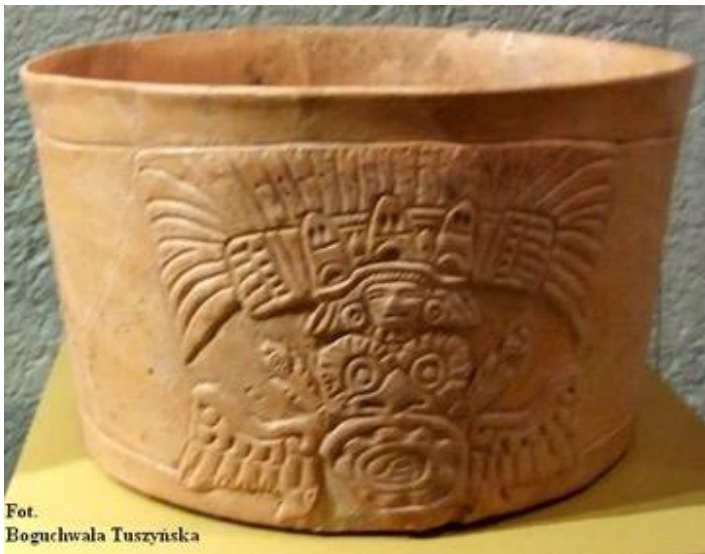
Figure 23
Tripod Vessel with Frontal Bird-Warrior
Brooklyn Museum of Art; 44.3;
Image: <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/55985>
Appendix #39



Figure 24
Vessel with Frontal Bird-Warrior
American Museum of Natural History, New York City
Image: Photo by Author
Appendix #48



Figure 25
Vessel with Profile Bird-Warrior
Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University; 1990.011.068; AD 500 – 600
Image: ArtStor
Appendix #63



Fot.
Boguchwala Tuszynska

Figure 26
Vessel with Warrior on a Bird
Museo Nacional de Antropología
Image: Boguchwala Tuszynska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>
Appendix #17



Figure 27
Vessel with Warrior Procession
Hudson Museum, University of Maine; HM553
Image: <http://umaine.edu/hudsonmuseum/palmer-collections/hm553/>
Appendix #35



Figure 28
Frontal Feline Warrior
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; 1996.146.55; AD 450 – 650
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/179430>
Appendix #23



Figure 29
The Storm God
Tetitla Apartment Compound, Teotihuacan
Image: Photo by Author



Figure 30
Mural Showing Storm God Emerging from a Feathery Portal
Techinantla Apartment Compound, Teotihuacan



Figure 31
Frontal Individual with Fanged Nosebar and Bird Headdress
Tetitla Apartment Compound Mural, Teotihuacan
Image: Photo by Author



Figure 32
Mural with Central Individual Wearing Fanged Nosebar and Bird Headdress
Tepantitla Apartment Compound, Teotihuacan.
Image: Artstor



Figure 33
Frontal Figure with Fanged Nosebar and Bird Headdress
West Plaza Complex, Teotihuacan
Image: Annabeth Headrick, *The Teotihuacan Trinity*, p. 32, Figure 2.10. Drawing by Linda Schele.



Figure 34
Greenstone fanged nosebars
Feathered Serpent Pyramid, Burial 13, Teotihuacan
Image: Saburo Sugiyama, *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership: Materialization of State Ideology at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid, Teotihuacan*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 143-148.



Figure 35
Mural fragment with a Bird Holding a Dart and Hand-Shield
Mural Fragment from the Wagner Collection, The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco
Image: <https://deyoung.famsf.org/deyoung/announcements/murals-teotihuacan-view>

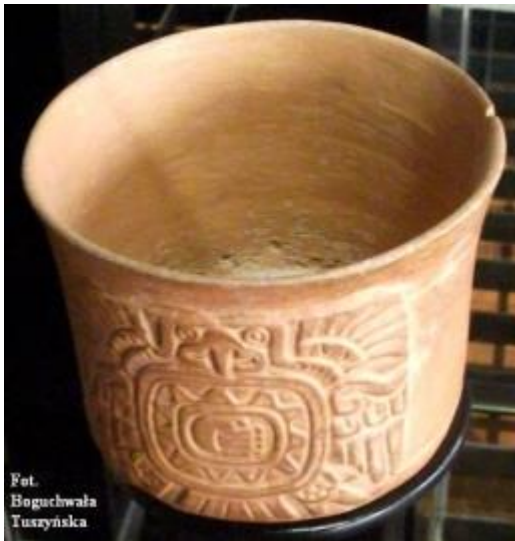


Figure 36
Vessel with *lechuza y armas* Emblem
Museo Regional de Puebla
Image: Boguchwała Tuszynska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>
Appendix #62



Figure 37
Tripod Vessel with Alternating Year-Sign Headdress and Mountain Motif Emblems
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; M.71.73.179; AD 200 – 450
Image: <http://collections.lacma.org/node/238076>
Appendix #29



Figure 38
Vessel with Warrior
Natural History Museum of Los Angeles; P.655.67-1
Image: <https://nhm.org/site/research-collections/anthropology-archaeology/image-gallery>
Appendix #45



Figure 39
Vessel with Butterfly Personage in Profile
Dumbarton Oaks; PC.B.066; AD 200 – 750
Image: *Ancient Mexican Art at Dumbarton Oaks*, edited by Susan Toby Evans, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 37, plates 9a and 9b.



Fot.
Boguchwała
Tuszyńska

Figure 40
Frontal Warriors with Various Elements of Regalia
Museo Diego Rivera Anahuacalli
Image: Boguchwała Tuszyńska, <http://przedkolumbem.blogspot.com/2013/08/fotogaleria-ceramika-z-teotihuacan.html>
Appendix #56



Figure 41
Puma on lower wall
Tetitla Apartment Compound, Teotihuacan
Image: Photo by Author



Figure 42
Jaguar sculpture adornments
Avenue of the Dead Complex, Teotihuacan
Image: Photo by Author



Figure 43
Tikal Stela 31

Image: David Stuart, "The Arrival of Strangers: Teotihuacan and Tollan in Classic Maya History," in *Mesoamerica's Classic Heritage: From Teotihuacan to the Aztecs*, ed. by David Carrasco et. al. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2000), p. 468, figure 15.2. Drawing by W. R. Coe.



Figure 44
"Spear-Thrower Owl" glyph

Image: Stuart, "The Arrival of Strangers," p. 481, Figure 15.14, d.

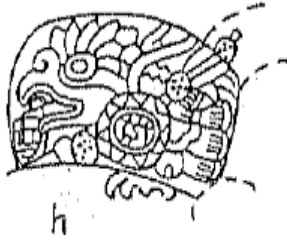


Figure 45
War emblem on Tikal Stela 31 headdress
Tikal, Guatemala
Image: "The Arrival of Strangers," p. 481, Figure 15.14 h.



Figure 46
"The Dazzler"
Margarita Tomb, Copan
Image: Artstor

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APPENDIX I

#	LOCATION	TYPE	IDENTIFIER	THUMBNAIL
1	Dallas Museum of Art	Stuccoed and Painted	2007.70.FA (450 - 650)	
2	Yale Art Gallery	Plano Relief	1989.19.1 (250 BC - 250 AD)	
3	Yale Art Gallery	Incised/Carved	ILE2013.1.1 (550 - 950)	
4	Yale Art Gallery	Stuccoed and Painted	1958.15.2 (300 - 500)	
5	Yale Art Gallery	Plano Relief	1988.25.1 (400 - 500)	
6	Boston University/Tlajinga	Stuccoed and Painted	Butterfly/Fanged Nosebar emblems	
7	Folkens Museum-Etnografiska, Sweden	Plano Relief (Berrin/Pasz 1993)	1932.8.4198 (400 - 650)	Image currently unavailable
8	Folkens Museum-Etnografiska, Sweden	Plano Relief emblems ("")	1932.8.4274 (400 - 650)	Image currently unavailable








9	Folkens Museum- Etnografiska, Sweden	Plano Relief birdman ("")	1932.8.3985 (400 - 650)	
10	MNA	Stuccoed and Painted ("")	9-2029 (400 - 750)	
11	MNA	Stuccoed and Painted ("")	9-2498 (200 - 750)	
12	MNA	Stuccoed and Painted	UNKNOWN	
13	MNA	Stuccoed and Painted	UNKNOWN	
14	MNA	Painted/Incised Bowl	UNKNOWN	
15	MNA	Plano Relief	UNKNOWN	
16	MNA	Mold Impressed Orange Ware	Metepc, Atetelco Apt. Compound	

17	MNA	Mold Impressed Orange Ware	UNKNOWN	
18	Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (University of California San Diego?)	Stuccoed and Painted	78.95 (550 - 650)	
19	Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Campbell, San Fran	Stuccoed and Painted (Pasz/Berrin 1993, cat142)	650 - 750	Image currently unavailable
20	LACMA, lent by Mrs. Fearing	Mold Impressed Orange Ware (" cat 158)	1996.146.54 (400 - 600)	
21	Sotheby's May 14, 2010 Lot 52	Plano Relief	250 - 450	
22	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1993.217.16 (550 - 650)	
23	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted Orange Ware	1996.146.55 (450 - 650)	
24	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1996.146.56 (450 - 650)	



25	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1998.209.14 (400 - 650)	
26	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1998.209.13 (400 - 650)	
27	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1998.209.15 (400 - 650)	
28	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	M.2006.49.1	
29	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	M.71.73.179 (200 - 450)	
30	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1993.217.15 (400 - 650)	
31	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1998.209.16.2 (300 -450)	

32	LACMA	Stuccoed and Painted	1998.209.16.1 (350 – 450)	
33	LACMA	Plano Relief	1998.209.17 (400 – 650)	
34	Hudson Museum, University of Maine	Stuccoed and Painted	HM551 (ND)	
35	Hudson Museum, University of Maine	Plano Relief/Incised	HM553 (ND)	
36	Cleveland Museum of Art	Stuccoed and Painted	1965.20 (400 – 550)	
37	Cleveland Museum of Art	Stuccoed and Painted	1990.231 (1 – 550)	
38	Cleveland Museum of Art	Plano Relief BOWL	1990.230 (1 – 550)	
39	Brooklyn Museum of Art	Stuccoed and Painted	44.3 (550 – 650)	

40	Brooklyn Museum of Art	Stuccoed and Painted	44.189 (800)	
41	Dumbarton Oaks	Stuccoed and Painted	PC.B.067 (200 – 750)	Jaguar jar (cannot get image)
42	Dumbarton Oaks	Stuccoed and Painted	PC.B.063	Jar with Tlaloc Emblem Headdress (cannot get image)
43	Dumbarton Oaks	Stuccoed and Painted	PC.B.065 (200 – 750)	
44	Dumbarton Oaks	Stuccoed and Painted	PC.B.066 (200 – 750)	
45	Natural History Museum in L.A. County	Stuccoed and Painted	P.655.67-1 (300 – 500)	
46	Fort Worth Museum of Science and History	Stuccoed and Painted	31M.0263.0000	
47	Museo Anahuacalli	Stuccoed and Painted	UNKNOWN	

48	American Museum of Natural History, New York City	Stuccoed and Painted	UNKNOWN	
49	Penn Museum	Stuccoed and Painted	66-27-16	
50	Penn Museum	Plano Relief	66-27-11	
51	National Museum of the American Indian	Stuccoed and Painted	22/9282 (300 – 500)	
52	Peabody Museum at Harvard	Plano Relief	50-4-20	
53	British Museum	Plano Relief	AM1926,0501.1	
54	Metropolitan Museum of Art	Plano Relief	1979.206.364	

55	University of California San Diego	Plano Relief	UNKNOWN	
56	Museo Anahuacalli	Plano Relief	UNKNOWN	
57	Ethnological Museum, Berlin	Plano Relief	UNKNOWN	
58	Art Institute of Chicago	Stuccoed and Painted BOWL	1968.790 (300 - 600)	 
59	Art Institute of Chicago	Stuccoed and Painted (It is a blowgunner scene)	1991.478 (300 - 500)	
60	Houston Museum of Fine Arts	Stuccoed and Painted	656.70 (150 - 650)	

61	Museo Anahuacalli	Stuccoed and Painted	UNKNOWN	
62	Museo Regional de Puebla	Mold Impressed Orange Ware	UNKNOWN	
63	Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University	Mold Impressed	1990.011.068 (500 - 600)	
64	Museo Anahuacalli	Stuccoed and Painted	UNKNOWN	
65	MNA	Plano Relief	UNKNOWN	

VITA

Personal Background	Amanda Ruth McCatherine Born in Temple, Texas, April 10, 1991
Education	Bachelor of Arts in Art Major in Art History, Minor in Anthropology Texas Tech University, 2014 Master of Arts, Art History Texas Christian University, 2017
Fellowship and Awards	Tuition Stipend Award Texas Christian University, 2015-2017 Kimbell Fellowship Texas Christian University 2015-2017 Mary Jane and Robert Sunkel Art History Research Award Texas Christian University, August 2016
Professional Experience	Curatorial Graduate Internship Dallas Museum of Art, Summer, 2016

ABSTRACT

The art from the ancient city of Teotihuacan has long fascinated Mesoamerican scholars. Humans, animals, deities, and landscapes in mural paintings decorate the interiors of palaces and apartment compounds while colossal animal heads adorn the façades of pyramids and massive sculptures of deities loom in plazas. The ceramics at Teotihuacan, while small in comparison to other artforms of the city, are no less intriguing. Teotihuacan's cylindrical tripod vessel tradition proliferates throughout most of the city's life and demonstrate stylistic shifts throughout time. In this thesis, I analyze the imagery on sixty-five tripod vessels to attempt to find patterns in pictorial themes across ceramic phases. Through this analysis, I focus on the bird-warrior theme as a case study and have found that the theme enjoys longevity in the tradition of tripod vessel manufacture in the city. The prominence of bird-warrior imagery on the vessels throughout time shows that bird-warriors held higher status in the Teotihuacan military in comparison to other animal-associated units, such as the canine, feline, and snake warrior units. I support this claim by pointing out instances of bird and militaristic imagery abroad at the Maya polity Tikal, which is used in reference to the city of Teotihuacan. It seems as if bird-warriors held important status in Teotihuacan society, especially in terms of the military, and this status is manifested through their appearance on cylindrical tripod vessels for several centuries.