
8. Chalcatzingo Burials as Indicators of Social Ranking

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This chapter discusses the human burials found during the 1972–1974 field seasons at Chalcatzingo with particular reference to Middle Formative social complexity. This social dimension is manifested by variations in grave type, mortuary furniture, and, derivatively, location. Alternative hypotheses for social differentiation at Chalcatzingo are presented, as well as similarities to Gulf Coast Olmec burial practices. Detailed descriptions of every burial are given in Appendix C.

No Early Formative (Amate phase) human burials were recovered by our excavations, and only a few burials of the early Middle Formative (Barranca phase) were found. The largest portion of the burials occur in Cantera phase (late Middle Formative) contexts, corresponding to the time of the heaviest occupation at Chalcatzingo. Some Late Formative, Classic, and Postclassic interments were also found and are mentioned briefly.

At the beginning of the project it was hoped that human skeletal remains would be of sufficient quantity and quality to allow the study of variations within the burial population in order to determine whether one or more morphological populations were present and/or restricted to particular site areas. Such data might have provided insights into the nature of external influences at Chalcatzingo, such as the hypothesized presence of a Gulf Coast elite.

Unfortunately, the majority of the skeletal material recovered was poorly preserved and highly fragmentary. Thus, sufficient morphological data could not be obtained to support or refute this hypothesis. The sexes of the individuals in nearly all instances were indeterminable, and age could not be refined beyond the simple division of infant, juvenile, young adult, and adult. In addition, no meaningful observations concerning deformation of the bones resulting from ei-

ther pathological causes or premortem artificial deformation could be observed. The teeth were often well preserved, however, and in one instance, from the Classic period, dental mutilation was noted (Burial 92).

While morphological data were difficult to obtain from the majority of the burial population, skeletal preservation was sufficient to provide bone chemistry samples from over ninety Middle Formative skeletons. These samples were collected and analyzed for strontium content by Margaret Schoeninger. Since strontium is differentially distributed between meat and vegetable products, the relative amount of strontium in human bone can be used to infer diet. The results of that analysis (Schoeninger 1979a, 1979b) suggest that there were significant differences in meat consumption among the population at Chalcatzingo. Whether these differences resulted from a differential diet among a single population, as Schoeninger suggests, or serve to differentiate two distinct populations (i.e., an intrusive Gulf Coast elite) cannot yet be determined.

Burials at Chalcatzingo occur as sub-floor interments in house structures and in nonresidential special contexts, such as the patio area enclosing the table-top altar (Mon. 22) on T-25 and the large earthen platform mound on the Plaza Central (Str. 4). They occur in both extended and flexed positions and exhibit a variety of orientations.

The burials have been classified into three types based on grave preparation. A simple, direct interment is a burial made in an unlined excavation in the ground, with no elaboration of the grave. A stone-associated interment is a grave which has several stones placed around the edges and/or covering parts of the body. This type of grave is not as complete as a stone crypt, the third type, in which the grave is lined and covered with stone

slabs. In some instances, the Chalcatzingo crypts lacked covering slabs, but this appears to be a result of destruction by erosion and modern plowing rather than an intentional omission by the people preparing the grave.

Mortuary offerings consisted primarily of pottery, utilitarian stone, jadeite and serpentine objects, and obsidian, with pottery by far the most common artifact. Although a wide variety of ceramics was utilized on the site [see the typology presented in Chapter 13], only a relatively limited number of types and forms were found with the burials. No strong pattern has emerged which correlates certain vessels with specific burial types, and although some general statements can be made, there is a great deal of variability among the mortuary attributes.

The vast majority of ceramic vessels associated with burials are finished with an Amatzinac White slip. The principal forms for these vessels are the small shallow bowl and the double-loop handle censer. The small shallow bowl (Fig. 8.1a) is the most typical form of all ceramics associated with burials, occurring with twenty-nine of the 143 Formative period burials. Some are incised with decorative motifs. A few small shallow bowls, such as the Atoyac Unslipped Polished III type, lack the white slip. Small shallow bowls are found with extended and flexed burials in both crypt and noncrypt graves. They are sometimes found singly, but are frequently placed in pairs, mouth to mouth, suggesting that they held food or some other perishable substance. The mouth-to-mouth placement never occurs in association with crypt burials.

In addition, small shallow bowls are frequently paired with the small bottles we call *cantaritos* (Fig. 8.1b), the *cantaritos* often sitting within the shallow bowls (see below). *Cantaritos* with or

without shallow bowls were found with twenty-two Middle Formative burials, apparently restricted to extended interments. Both they and the shallow bowls occur most frequently with Plaza Central burials.

Fourteen burials were associated with Amatzinac White double-loop handle censers (Fig. 8.1d). All but three examples of this censer form are found with Plaza Central burials, and one of these exceptions was a Cerro Delgado cave burial (Burial 156). The charred interior bases of these vessels suggest that they functioned for burning a substance such as copal at the time of the burial. Their near absence at other site areas suggests that double-loop handle vessels may have been reserved for censuring at the burial of a person of special rank, position, or role.

Only five spouted trays were found in definite burial contexts. Spouted trays (Fig. 8.1c) normally have their interiors slipped with Amatzinac White. Four such artifacts were excavated with burials on the Plaza Central, and each was associated with a small shallow bowl. A similar association comes from a vessel cache on T-25. The fifth burial association, with the double burials on T-24 (Burials 90 and 91), lacked the shallow bowl and is the only occurrence of a spouted tray in a grave which also contains a jade bead.

Both grey wares, Carrales Coarse and Pavón Fine Grey, are also represented in burial contexts. Carrales Coarse Grey vessels are associated with twenty burials, while Pavón Fine Grey is rare. Most commonly the Carrales Coarse Grey vessels are composite bowls, often nicely incised and highly polished (Fig. 8.1e). Such bowls occur with extended and flexed burials, but are usually absent from crypt burials and from burials associated with jade ornaments.

Other ceramic types, such as Peralta Orange, are rare in burials. In addition, only six burials had definite associations with figurines, whole or fragmentary. The only burial excavated with two whole figurines is Burial 45, a subfloor burial in PC Structure 2 (Fig. 8.2). Several other burials, again primarily on the Plaza Central, had associated figurine fragments, usually only heads or bodies.

Jade, serpentine, and other greenstone objects comprise another class of Middle Formative burial offerings. Three general categories of greenstone jewelry were found—earspools, beads, and pendants—as well as some miscellaneous pieces.

All of the earspools are of the type which Charlotte Thomson (Chapter 17) characterizes as “standard” earspools. None of the “paper-thin” earpool fragments recovered by excavations were associated with burials.

All of the beads occurred singly except in Burials 39 and 40, which contained necklaces obviously worn by the deceased. In the majority of burials yielding single beads, the beads were found at or within the individuals’ mouths. A tubular bead found between the legs of Burial 40 (Fig. 17.10j) is of far greater workmanship and quality than any singular beads associated with other burials. Other greenstone objects include jade awl points and a serpentine were-jaguar figurine. (See Chapter 17 for descriptions and illustrations of these artifacts.)

Obsidian was also found in several burials, although in some cases it was difficult to ascertain whether the obsidian had been placed as part of the mortuary furniture or had simply been within the soil used to backfill the grave pit. Definite associations of obsidian were found only in burials from PC Structure 1 and T-25. Among the eight burials from PC Structure 1 associated with obsidian, the obsidian occurs in the form of complete or fragmentary prismatic blades, and the two burials from T-25 containing obsidian had respectively a partial blade and a flake. Obsidian also occurs with Burial 138 on T-37 because the individual was interred in a trash area composed of obsidian workshop debris. The lack of obsidian with burials elsewhere on the site could reflect a recording error on the part of the archaeologists excavating the burials, but it more likely appears to be part of a pattern of the restriction of certain mortuary objects to the Plaza Central and T-25 burials.

Manos and metates were found in association with nineteen burials, thirteen of which were in PC Structures 1 and 2. Only one of the metates was whole (with Burial 110); the rest were fragments. Several of the manos were whole. Because it was almost impossible to sex the burials by ordinary means, it could be tempting to assign female gender to burials associated with utilitarian ground stone artifacts. This practice has been correctly criticized (Marcus 1978b: 130).

MORTUARY PRACTICES AS AN INDICATOR OF SOCIAL POSITION

The mortuary practices indicated by the Chalcatzingo burials offer mute testimony of a non-egalitarian social organization as early as the Barranca phase but probably extending farther back in time. This statement is based on two assumptions. The first is that the treatment of an individual at death reflects the social position occupied in life. The second assumption is that the variability in social position can be determined by burial practices, in particular, the nature of the grave and the mortuary furniture. Obviously, age and sex data are also important, especially with regard to achieved statuses, but this information is lacking for the Chalcatzingo burials, so that any conclusions as to social ranking are based on nonskeletal evidence.

Evidence of a non-egalitarian social organization involving differential ranks or statuses (presumably hierarchically ordered) was taken to be unequal access to: (1) certain scarce and/or valued items and (2) the labor of other persons. For our purposes, we assumed that the manifestation of this differential access, in life and in death, followed community-wide rules or norms, present throughout at least the Middle Formative period. Without this assumption, we could not compare burial practices in order to derive some sort of ranking.

Certain propositions can be stated concerning variation in mortuary practices based on some rather obvious considerations. The first is that jade and other greenstone objects, which are nonlocal in origin and relatively rare at the site, were restricted to certain persons in life and in death. This is based on analogy to other prehispanic Mesoamerican cultures in which jade was the most highly valued material, particularly because of the sacred connotations of the color green. Its importation and use are assumed to have been controlled by the elite, and probably only the elite could “consume” jade by having it included in their graves.

A second proposition concerns the labor devoted to the interment. An extended burial requires a larger grave pit than a flexed burial, indicating greater expenditure of time and labor. The addition of stones to the grave is an increased labor investment since large flat stones are uncommon at the site and had to be transported to the burial location and



Figure 8.1. Ceramic vessels commonly associated with burials: *a*, shallow bowl; *b*, *cantarito*; *c*, spouted tray; *d*, double-loop handle censer; *e*, Carrales Coarse Grey decorated bowl.



Figure 8.2. Vessels, figurine, and mano associated with Burial 45.

placed around the body. A crypt is even more complex. It is therefore assumed that only higher-status individuals were permitted or could command the extra effort involved in making this latter grave type.

With these two propositions dealing with jade and grave type as markers of social inequality, a further observation concerning burial location can be made which also demonstrates differential status. Burials with crypts are found only on the Plaza Central, particularly in Structures 1 and 4, and on T-25. Jade artifacts are found primarily in burials in these same areas.

Of all these, PC Structure 4, the large earthen platform mound, appears to have had the greatest importance as a burial location. Burials found on the upper surface of this structure obviously fall outside the normal pattern of house subfloor interments. It is significant that PC Structure 4 is the largest architectural feature on the site. Our limited excavations uncovered two elaborate burials, a looted crypt, and a stone-faced tomb structure (Fig. 4.10). But the most striking aspect was the tremendous amount of jade in the two unlooted burials here (nos. 39, 40), more than was found in all other burials combined, and the fact that only these two individuals had been wearing the jade as jewelry at the time of burial.

PC Structure 1, a residence directly across the plaza from Structure 4, is the only house structure excavated which contained crypt burials. Thirty-eight subfloor burials were found within this structure, far more than in any other single structure. The range of burials here covers essentially every burial type found on the site, from crypt burials with associated jade to simple flexed burials lacking furniture. Because PC Structure 1 is the only house with crypt burials and jade in the burials, and further because it is situated on the Plaza Central, it has been designated as an "elite" residence.

The jewelry found with these burials consists primarily of jade originally meant to be worn, such as beads and ear-spools. However, with the exception of the were-jaguar figure found with Burial 33, all the associated jade in PC Structure 1 consists of broken items which apparently were no longer functional for their intended use but which, because they are of jade, still represented items of value.

The fragmentary nature of the burial jade artifacts corresponds to the pattern found elsewhere on the site, in nonburial contexts (see Chapter 17). However, jade is a very strong mineral and is not easily broken accidentally, so this breakage may have been purposeful, especially in the case of the larger artifacts such as the "standard" ear-spools. It is interesting to note that some pieces of these broken items are always missing from the grave, i.e., the entire (broken) artifact was not placed with the burial.

A third area with some apparently high-status burials is the patio associated with the table-top altar on T-25 (see Chapter 7). The presence of elaborate graves, including two crypt burials within the altar itself, suggests special activities for this location. The T-25 burials may slightly predate those of PC Structure 1, indicating perhaps a shift in importance from T-25 to PC Structure 1 in terms of elite burial location.

Along with the assumed high-status markers of crypt grave, greenstone artifacts, and elite burial location can be added a fourth type of burial treatment: the staining of the body and/or artifacts with hematite. Hematite staining is much rarer than greenstone artifacts with burials at the site, though hematite was presumably more accessible, with known sources in the area (Chapter 23).

Almost all of the hematite pigment occurred in Plaza Central burials, the area of elite burials. A few flecks around the skull of Cave 4's Burial 156 may have been hematite pigment, and hematite powder was found in a vessel associated with the skull burial (no. 111) on T-25, a possible ritual burial.

Only the two burials on PC Structure 4 (nos. 39 and 40) have hematite stains on the body itself. Elsewhere, it appears as stains on the offerings or as separate pieces accompanying the body. The fact that hematite staining occurs with the two individuals on PC Structure 4 and with two other Plaza Central burials having both crypts and jade inclusions (nos. 28, 33) distinguishes it as some kind of high-status marker.

Below this high rank category defined by grave type and the presence of jade and possibly hematite staining, we further assume that persons receiving ceramics as grave furniture were somehow ranked higher in the society than individuals who lacked such offerings. The burial ceramics are generally not everyday utilitarian vessels, but comprise more

"costly" types as well as forms of obvious ritual use, such as the double-loop handle censers.

The lowest rank category is made up of simple, direct burials lacking any associated furniture as well as direct burials containing only chipped or ground stone tools. This latter group is included with the burials lacking furniture because these stone artifacts are primarily utilitarian, are frequently broken, and seem of little value. Thus, we cannot make any social distinction between burials with only stone tool inclusions and burials without any furniture. Obviously, perishable goods that may have been included in the grave could have served as status markers but cannot be recognized today.

It is instructive at this point to compare the proposed ranking with all the Cantera phase burial data by correlating grave type with mortuary furniture. These data are presented in Table 8.1. Three categories of burial furniture are differentiated: (1) jade with or without ceramics; (2) jade lacking, ceramics present; and (3) jade and ceramics lacking. In the first category, two subcategories of jade can be defined: jade worn at the time of burial and unworn jade. The unworn jade has also been subdivided to distinguish single bead inclusions, based on the assumption that other green stone artifacts, such as ear-spools, blood-letters, etc., were treated differently than were the single beads. Beads, unlike these other artifacts, are usually unbroken. Furthermore, they were usually not just added to the grave but placed at or in the mouth of the deceased. The placing of beads in the mouth of the dead was also a Postclassic custom reported by the Spanish for the Valley of Mexico.

The general picture provided by Table 8.1 is that the elite (with crypts and jade; upper left corner) are few, while the non-elite (lacking these two attributes; lower right corner) are many, as would be expected. The other possible groupings—jade without crypts and crypts without jade—provide intriguing, possibly intermediate categories, as do the stone-associated interments, but no specific hypotheses can be presented at this time. Stone-associated graves, however, have much less jade than either crypts or direct burials, and it is therefore unclear whether they may signify rank differences.

Elaborate stone crypt graves seem to be better indicators of high rank than do

jade artifacts. Crypt graves are highly restricted, occurring only in PC Structures 1 and 4 and associated with Monument 22, the table-top altar on T-25. Furthermore, they represent an additional labor investment at the time of interment. Nevertheless, if grave type alone were taken as a measure of ranking, then it can be seen that other categories (jade or jade and ceramics, ceramics only, and burials lacking significant offerings) occur generally with each grave type, i.e., there is no absolute correlation of grave type with mortuary furniture.

Jade in burial association is somewhat less restricted in distribution than are stone crypts. A problem faced in interpreting the Chalcatzingo data lies in the fact that fragments of worked jade were found in essentially every house area (see Chapter 17). At the same time, with the exception of PC Structure 1, subfloor burials with jade as mortuary offerings are very rare. Thus, while every Chalcatzingo household may have had access to jade, the data support the assumption presented earlier that only a relatively few high-ranking members of the society had enough wealth in that substance to afford to utilize it as a mortuary offering and thus take it out of distribution.

Twelve direct burials had associated greenstone objects, alone or with ceramics. However, over 50 percent of these were simply associations with single beads. It is noteworthy that single beads occur only with direct burials, whereas other greenstone objects occur with all the grave types. This correlation of beads with a presumably lower-ranking grave type suggests that beads were not important rank markers in the same sense as other greenstone objects, but were considered to be different from these other artifacts. Thus, although they are all of greenstone, there was a conceptualized dichotomy between the two types of artifacts (beads and nonbeads).

Attempts to further refine the lower ranks, which required consideration of mortuary attributes other than crypts and jade, were generally unsuccessful. Several multivariate analyses were attempted, including those of Schoeninger (1979a; 1979b), Teresita Majewski (1976a), and Grove (personal communication), but they revealed little direct correlation between the type of interment, the presence of green stone artifacts, and the quantity and type of ceramics and other artifacts. In fact, individuals associated with jade artifacts and buried

Table 8.1. Cantera Phase Burials Categorized by Grave Type and Mortuary Furniture

Grave Type	Mortuary Furniture								
	Jade with or without Ceramics ^a								
	Worn	Unworn							
		Beads Only	Other	Ceramics, No Jade			No Jade or Ceramics		
Crypt	39		28	3	34	114	37 ^b		
	40		33	5	36		94		
			95	26	105				
Stone-Associated			136	78	110	156	35		
				79	142	157	51		
				100	143				
Direct		12	16	2	38	90	1	57	96
		23	32	4	41	97	6	58	101
		43	54	8	42	98	7	59	102
		47	87	9	44	99	11	60	103
		108	89	10	45	106	17	61	104
		111	91	13	49	127	18	77	137
				14	50	128	20	82	138
				15	52	139	31	85	141
				19	62	146	46	86	144
				21	66	147	48	88	145
				22	73	148	55	93	158
				24	80	152			
				25	81	153			
				27	83	154			
				29	84	155			
				30					

^aBurials which include both worn and unworn jade are listed under "worn."

^bThis is a skull burial within a small crypt.

within crypts normally have few associated ceramics, so we could not determine whether any ceramic types or forms were associated with higher-ranking individuals. A similar inverse correlation between jade and ceramic quantity also obtains for directly interred burials. Finally, the burials exhibited such great diversity in mortuary furniture that it was difficult to detect more detailed patterning using multivariate methods. Thus, we were unable to apply the ranking to any clustering of other artifacts. On the other hand, Schoeninger's (1979a; 1979b) analysis suggests a correlation between certain artifact categories (jade; shallow bowls; and no furniture) and access or lack of access to meat in the diet, confirming in general terms our hypothetical ranking.

While the multivariate analyses did not associate particular ceramic types or forms with particular ranks, our observations suggest that two such correlations

can possibly be made, although the number of instances is small in both cases. It seems fairly certain that *cantaritos* placed within shallow bowls mark a high-ranked individual. Such associations occur four times at Chalcatzingo, with Burials 10, 33, 39, and 40. These last three burials are in elaborated crypt graves and were associated with jade. A correlation can be drawn with La Venta, where a *cantarito* and a shallow bowl were found in Offering 5, a possible burial on the northeast platform (P. Drucker, Heizer, and Squier 1959: 162–164, Fig. 41).

The double-loop handle censer may also be a marker of high rank, although its importance appears to be less than that of the *cantarito* within the shallow bowl. Of the fourteen instances of burials associated with these censers, eleven (79 percent) are from PC Structures 1 and 2, although only two burials (nos. 28 and 34) have crypt graves. This high concentration on the Plaza Central suggests

they have either rank value or particular social significance.

In addition, a ceramic type which seems to be negatively correlated with high rank is Carrales Coarse Grey. As was noted, vessels of this type are usually absent from crypt and jade-associated burials. This suggests they may have served as a marker of a lesser position within the community.

One can speculate as to what the generalized rank categories described above and detailed in Table 8.1 actually corresponded to in the social organization of Cantera phase Chalcatzingo. There is no evidence that they related to fixed social classes or to a rigid hierarchy of political, religious, or economic positions except for the highest category. The individuals buried in the platform mound (Str. 4) on the Plaza Central, in crypts (and tombs), wearing vast quantities of jade, with hematite stains on their bodies and furniture, were probably the "chiefs" of the society, at the top of the political order if not the religious and economic hierarchies as well.

Differential access to valued goods and labor as represented by the other burials may, however, reflect differences in wealth or prestige based on idiosyncratic qualities or kinship ties. For example, the privilege of owning jade may have been restricted to relatives and friends of the chief or to certain powerful kinship groups, such as lineages. People may have inherited this right, as well as the accumulated wealth of their families, such that valued artifacts will appear in their or their family members' graves for this reason and not because the individuals held certain fixed socio-political positions. This may explain the high "rank" assigned to some of the children (see below). In the absence of kinship-based access, people may have been able to accumulate wealth (e.g., in jade) through their own entrepreneurial activities, which indicates that any status thus obtained would have been achieved.

There are other possibilities to account for the differences in burial treatment. They may reflect different rules for the placement of mortuary furniture according to the sex of the deceased. They may relate to the occupation of the deceased, including religious offices. Differential access may even reflect ethnicity; perhaps the higher-status individuals were part of a Gulf Coast elite who lived and died at Chalcatzingo. Thus, the rankings may not, in fact, manifest

a local hierarchy. Again, morphological data would have been very useful to test this last hypothesis.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE BURIALS

The burials of the different site areas for the Middle Formative period are presented in greater detail below. The Late Formative, Classic, and Postclassic burials are also briefly discussed. The main distinctions between areas as represented by the archaeological features and artifacts of the graves are summarized, and distinguishing characteristics of burials within each area are also presented. Appendix C gives all the pertinent data for all burials, which are listed sequentially there by burial number.

Middle Formative Burials

PC Structure 4

Chalcatzingo's most elaborate burials were found along the top of the 70 m long Middle Formative platform mound, PC Structure 4, on the south and east sides of the mound. Although only two burials were recovered, the excavations atop the mound were limited in extent, and there is a strong probability that other burials remain to be found. Our 1976 excavations uncovered a looted crypt in the same area (Fig. 4.9), and 1974 excavations at the east end of the mound exposed a looted tomb faced with a stone wall and a stone-filled doorway (Fig. 4.10). The presence of the tomb structure and the elaborate burials which were recovered (nos. 39 and 40) strongly imply that the most important personages on the site were buried atop the platform mound.

Burial 39, an adult of undetermined sex, was uncovered during excavations in 1973. Burial 40, also an adult of undetermined sex, was found during the 1974 field season. Both burials share a number of traits. The individuals were in an extended, supine position, heads to the west. Both wore the majority of their associated jade artifacts, in sharp contrast to other burials on the site. Each also had a ceramic offering consisting of a *cantarito* placed inside an incised shallow bowl. As mentioned above, a similar association occurs with a jade-associated "burial" at La Venta (Offering 5; P. Drucker, Heizer, and Squier 1959: 162–164, Fig. 41).

At the time of its discovery, Burial 39 (Fig. 8.3) was covered by an irregular pile of stone which did not form the typical box-shaped crypt found with some other

burials. Red pigment covered most of the extended skeleton. Jade earspools were found on each side of the skull, and forty-nine small jade beads were under the mandible and around the neck in an association indicating that they had been part of a multistrand necklace. A stone adze, the only associated greenstone artifact not worn by the individual, had been placed on the upper chest. Eight jade beads found at the pelvic area had apparently been part of a belt or decoration worn below the waist.

Stones outlined the grave of Burial 40 (Fig. 8.4), but at the time of excavation the grave lacked covering stones. Its location on the sloping sides of the mound and its shallow depth today suggest that any covering stones might have been churned up by plowing and removed by the farmers who used this land. While in an extended position, the legs were slightly flexed, and the skeleton appeared to rest partly on its left side.

The right earspool of Burial 40 was still in position at the time of excavation, but the left earspool was found on the chest area, between the arms. One and probably both earspools had originally contained shell insets (Fig. 16.23a). Recovered in the area of the earspools were 94 tiny (2 × 2 mm) thin, flat squares of turquoise, apparently part of a mosaic covering on the earspools.

Eleven jadeite beads were found on the skull, and a polished concave iron ore mirror rested on the right maxilla. The mirror has two suspension holes near one edge (Fig. 16.22a). The position of the mirror and the beads around the skull indicates that although these had probably been suspended around the neck, they had either accidentally or purposely been raised to the face area at the time of burial. A spherical bead had been placed atop the mouth (between the lips?).

Sixteen beads were found in the pelvic area, again apparently part of a decorative belt or strand of beads worn below the waist. A long tubular bead (snuff tube?) lay between the legs. After the burial had been excavated and removed, a knotted strand of thread-like sinew was found under the area of the skull. It is probable that the sinew had at one time been threaded through the beads found on the skull but had been purposely broken at the time of burial or had partially disintegrated later. Like those of Burial 39, the offerings and body of Burial 40 were stained with red pigment.

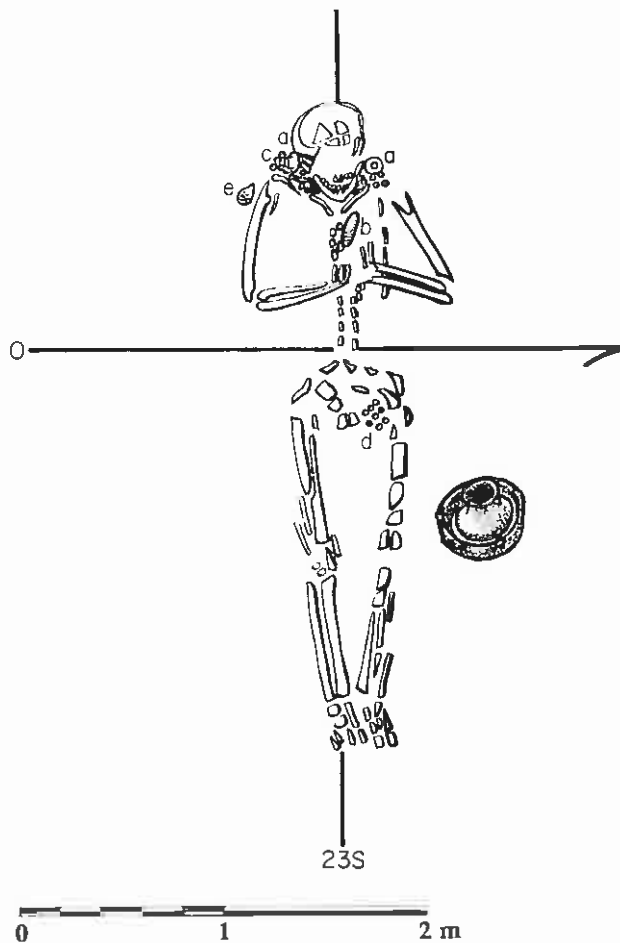


Figure 8.3. Burial 39, covering stones removed: *a*, earspools; *b*, adz; *c*, *d*, jade beads; *e*, figurine heads.

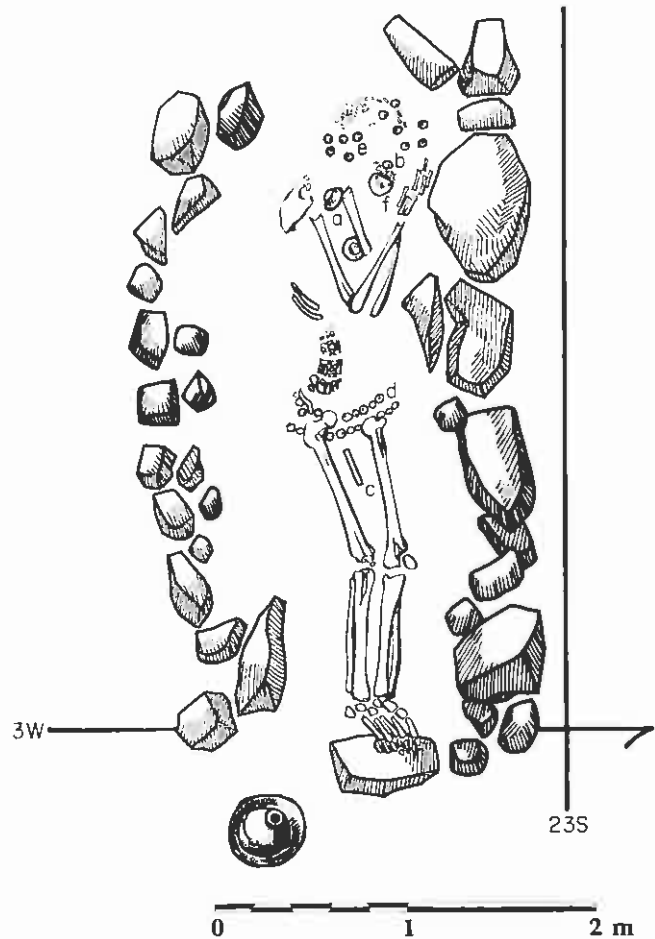


Figure 8.4. Burial 40: *a*, jade earspools; *b*, *d*, *e*, jade beads; *c*, tubular jade bead; *f*, iron ore mirror.

PC Structure 1

If crypt burials and/or jade ornaments are accepted as marker traits for high-ranking individuals, then Plaza Central Structure 1 (Figs. 8.5–8.7), an apparent domestic structure, occupied a prominent role among the houses of Cantera phase Chalcatzingo. Five crypts with stone covers (Burials 28, 33, 34, 36, 37) and three in the plow zone lacking covers (Burials 3, 5, 26) were found among the structure's subfloor interments. The facts that this structure is located on the Plaza Central, across the plaza area from the platform mound (Str. 4), and that it is the only residence found with definite sub-floor crypt burials, indicate that it was a special structure and probably the site's elite residence during the Late Cantera subphase.

The quantity of burials associated with this structure permits several observa-

tions. Neither depth, type of interment, nor mortuary furniture serves to make significant temporal distinctions among the thirty-eight PC Structure 1 burials. The similarity of ceramic debris, interment procedures, and offerings leads to the conclusion that these Late Cantera subphase burials occurred over a relatively short period of time, possibly within 100–150 years. In the following discussion, any variations in mortuary practices are therefore attributed to social and not to temporal factors.

Besides being the only excavated residence with crypt burials, PC Structure 1 is also unusual in that it is the only structure within which the entire range of burial positions and orientations found on the site occur (see Appendix C). Burials were almost equally divided among those oriented with the head to the north, south, west, and east, with a few

oriented to the northwest and northeast (Fig. 8.5–8.7). The majority of the individuals had been interred in an extended, supine position. Flexed burials, when found, had usually been placed on the right side.

As with the site as a whole, there does not appear to be any relationship among grave type, greenstone artifacts, and vessels interred with an individual. Nineteen of the twenty-four extended burials had associated vessels, which is what may be expected if both extended position and ceramic offerings are taken as an indication of at least some intermediate status. It is interesting to note that flexed burials, which might be assumed to be ranked lower than extended burials, divide almost equally between presence and absence of ceramic offerings.

A further noteworthy aspect with regard to the association of vessels with

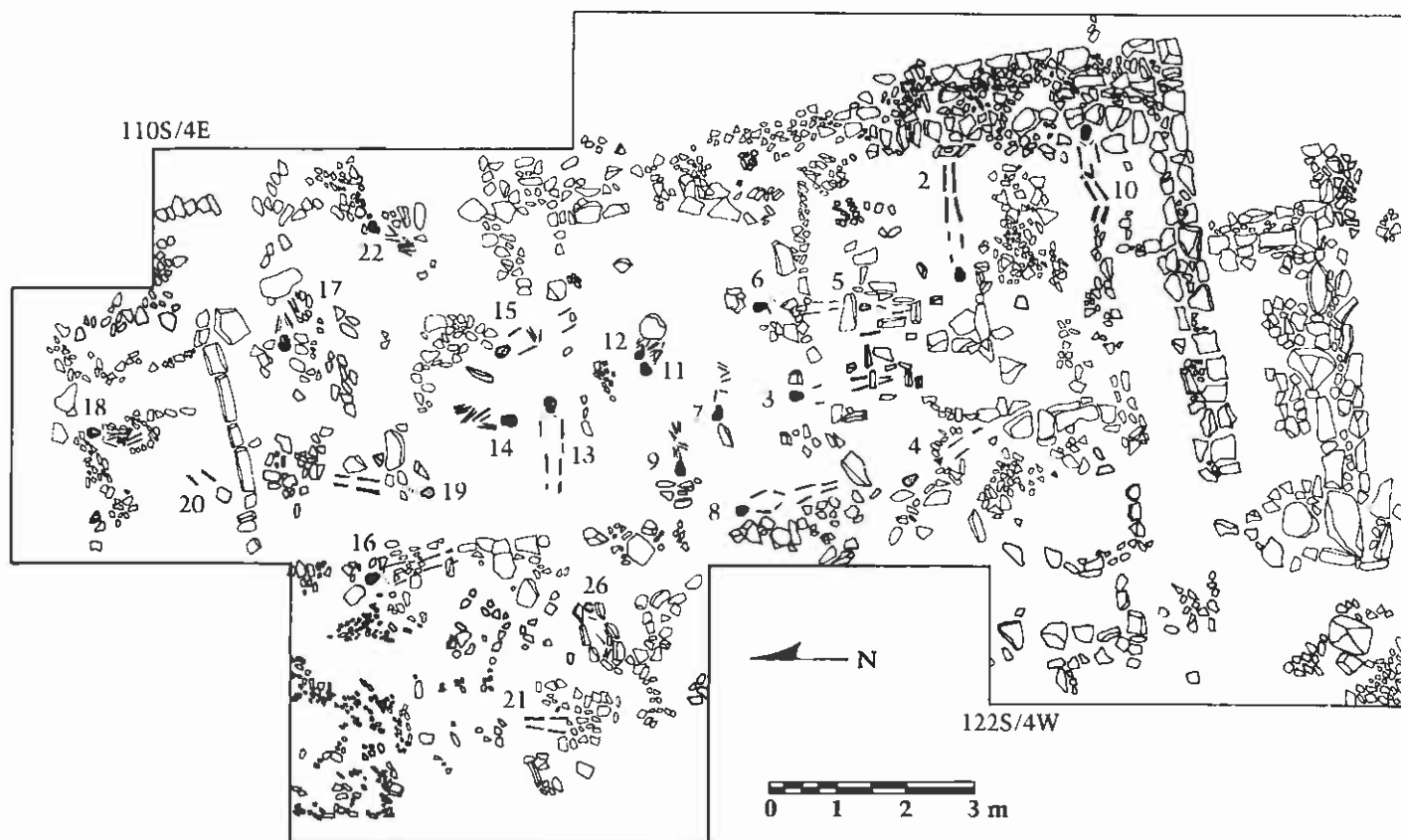
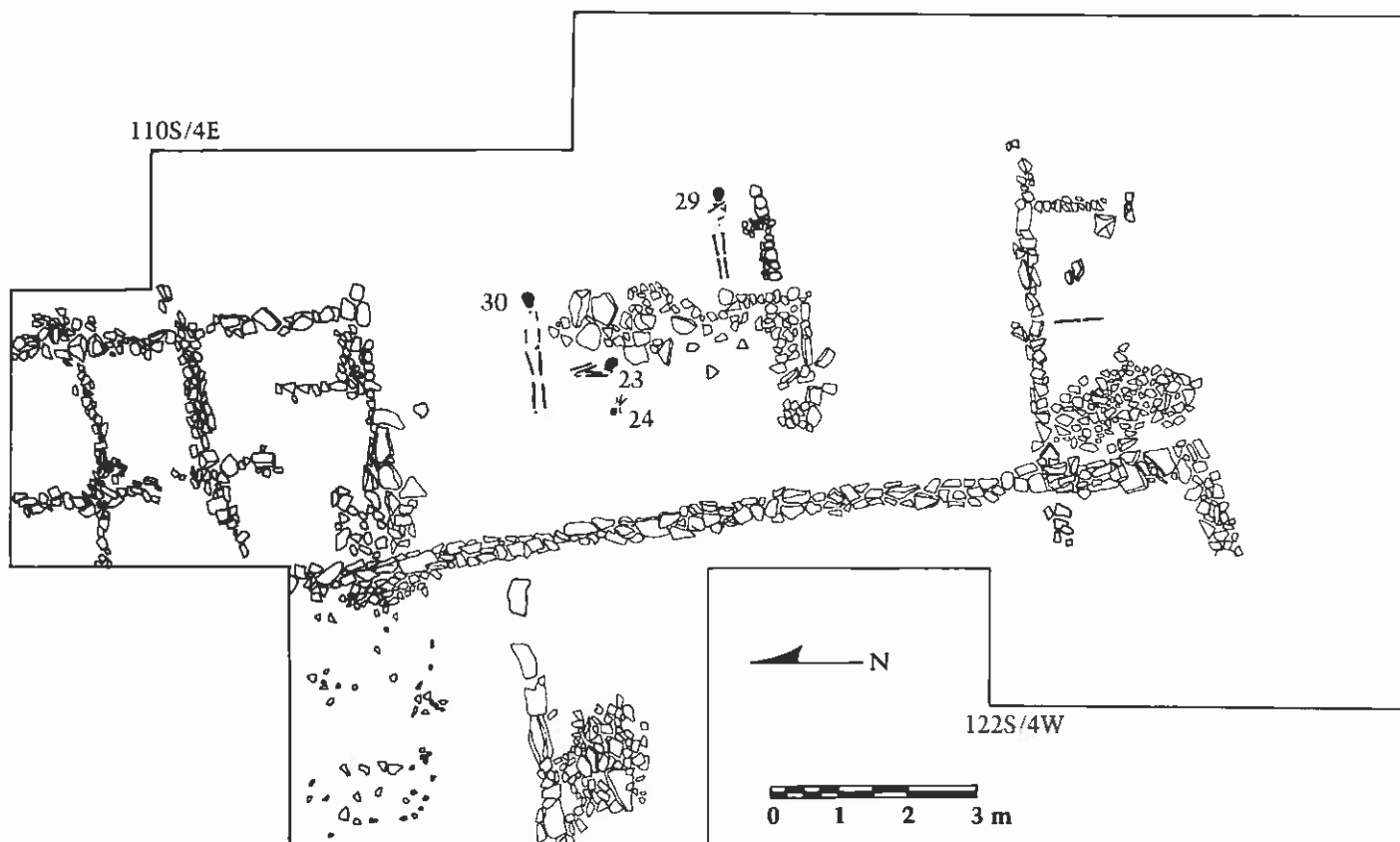


Figure 8.5. PC Structure 1, Stage d, showing locations of Burials 2–22, 26. Burial 1 (fragmentary) was located above Burial 2.



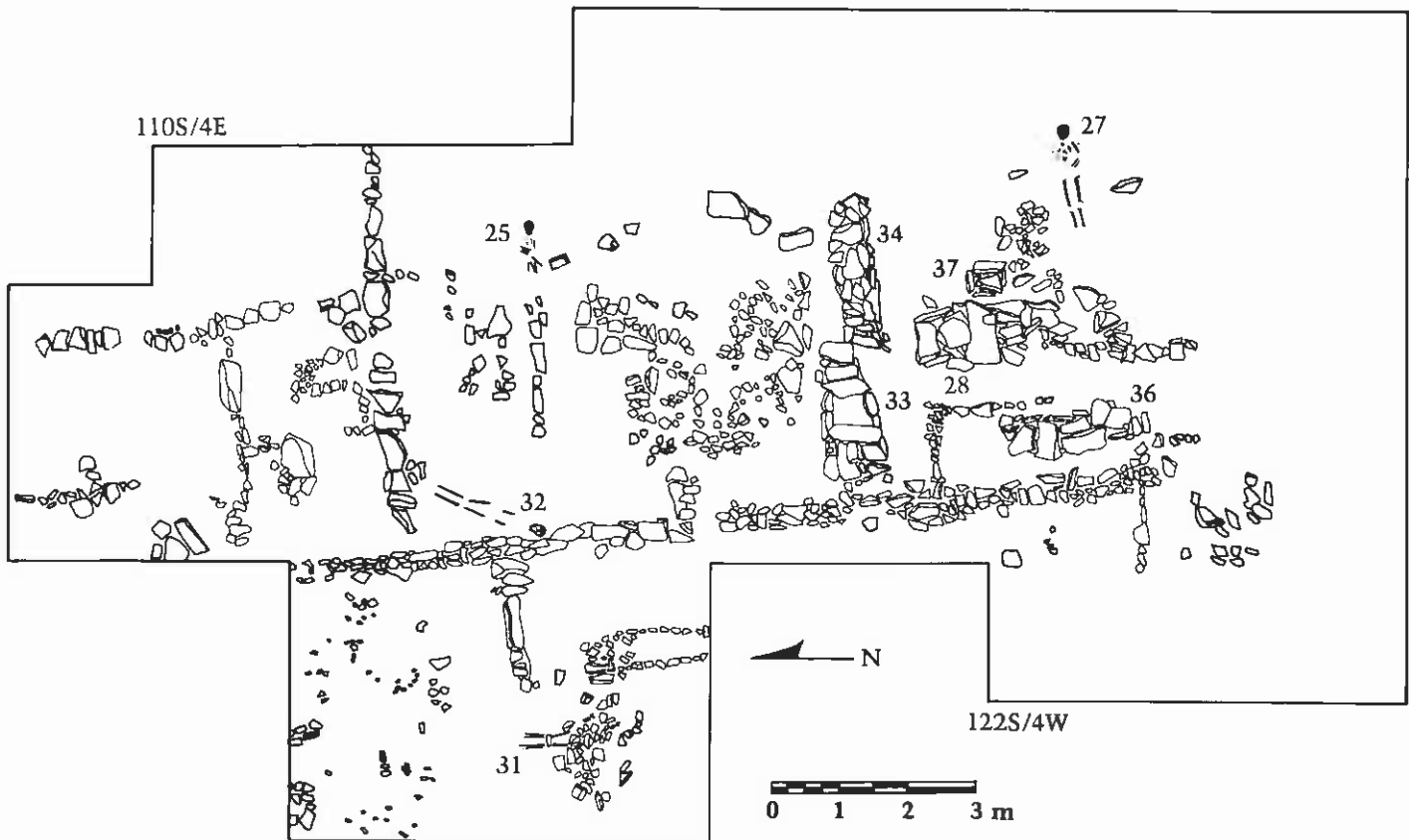


Figure 8.6. PC Structure 1, Stage c, showing locations of Burials 25, 27, 28, 31–34, 36, 37. Burials 35 and 38 too fragmentary to pinpoint.

extended and flexed burials in this structure has to do with the placing of small shallow bowls in the mouth-to-mouth position. Mouth-to-mouth shallow bowls occur only with PC Structure 1 burials, appearing with three of the flexed burials and three of the extended burials. This may indicate some association linking these individuals (see discussion below).

On the eight crypt burials discovered below PC Structure 1 (nos. 3, 5, 26, 28, 33, 34, 36, and 37), several comments should be made. First, Burial 37, though a crypt burial, contained only a skull. This is not a case of poor preservation; rather, the small crypt was built only to receive the skull.

At the pelvis area of Burial 3 was one of the most significant items placed as mortuary furniture with any Chalcatzingo burial, a stone anthropomorphic statue head (Mon. 17; Fig. 8.8). Grove, in his discussion of monument mutilation (1981b) has suggested that the stone head is from a portrait monument which probably represented the deceased.

Burial 33 (Fig. 8.9) was associated with a small, unslipped polished *cantarito* which had been placed within a shallow Amatzinac White composite bowl, a pattern which was discussed above. An important item found in association with this burial was a serpentine figurine in the were-jaguar style (Fig. 17.1). The figurine is within the La Venta–Olmec style, although it may be of highland manufacture (see Chapter 17). Also placed within the crypt were the point of a jade awl and five groups of small, rounded pebbles numbering five, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve respectively.

The distribution of the PC Structure 1 subfloor burials reveals an interesting pattern: burial furniture and orientation differ on either side of an imaginary line crossing the center of the house at grid coordinate 118.5S, a line which divides the house into northern and southern halves. There are 23 burials north of the line, and 15 to the south. Flexed burials were found only in the northern half, while seven of the eight crypt burials occur in the southern half. The seven PC

Figure 8.7. PC Structure 1, Stage b, showing location of Burials 23, 24, 29, 30.



Figure 8.8. Burial 3 with Monument 17 statue head in situ (lower right foreground) and destroyed remains of crypt, fragmentary skeleton, and *cantarito* (center).

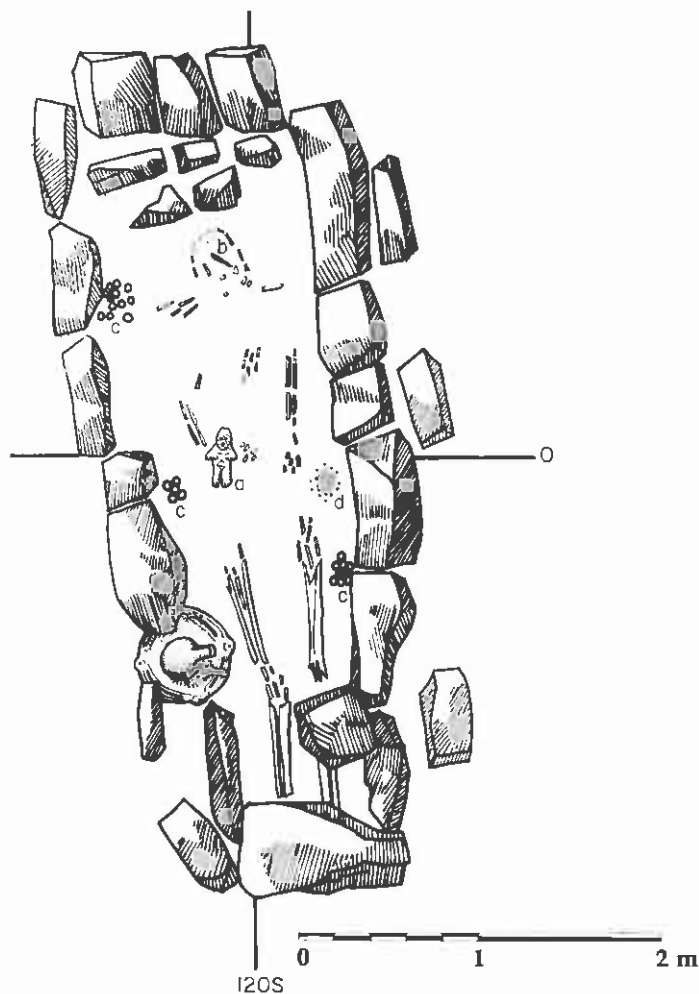


Figure 8.9. Burial 33 crypt: *a*, were-jaguar figure; *b*, jade awl; *c*, three groups of smooth pebbles within crypt; *d*, red pigment.

Structure 1 burials oriented with head to the south were all found in the northern half of the structure, while most of the north-oriented burials were south of the line.

Ceramic mortuary furniture is more abundant with interments in the southern half of the structure. Ten of the northern burials lack ceramics completely, whereas that is true of only three southern burials. In addition, seven of the eight burials associated with *cantaritos* occurred in the southern part, while five of the six occurrences of mouth-to-mouth shallow bowls were found to the north.

Other patterned distributions of furniture were evident in this structure, although they did not hold for the site as a whole. North- and south-oriented burials had the greatest range of ceramic

vessels as offerings. *Cantaritos* occurred only with extended burials oriented north or south. They are not found in extended east-west oriented interments or with any flexed interments. This same pattern is found for greenstone ornaments other than beads.

Flexed burials received the least variety of offerings, but they also follow a similar north-south dichotomy, with north-oriented flexed burials having only grey ware bowls and south- or west-oriented flexed burials only shallow bowls (e.g., Burial 9; Fig. 8.10).

Another burial pattern evident from some of the PC Structure 1 interments is the pairing of burials, which occur either adjacent to one another or as one overlying the other (although they are not always oriented in the same direction). While in a few instances the pairings

could be coincidental, most pairings appear deliberate. The burial pairs do not seem to represent individuals buried together at one time (i.e., a double burial) since normally several centimeters of earth separate them. Burials determined to occur in pairs are 3 and 33, 10 and 27, 5 and 34, 21 and 31, 19 and 32, and 15 and 30.

Any number of cultural distinctions could be responsible for the pairings. For instance, it is possible that the spouse of an already deceased high-ranking person was later buried in the same area, creating thereby a burial pair. Under better conditions of preservation this could have been partially tested by identifying the sexes of the paired individuals.

The most notable and intriguing pair consists of Burials 3 and 33, described above. Burial 3, the uppermost, was ap-

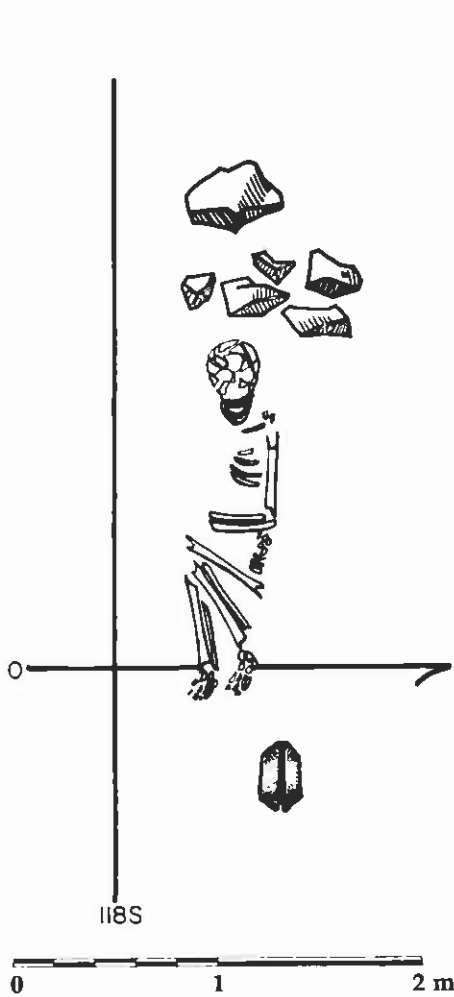


Figure 8.10. Burial 9, flexed, associated with two mouth-to-mouth shallow bowls.

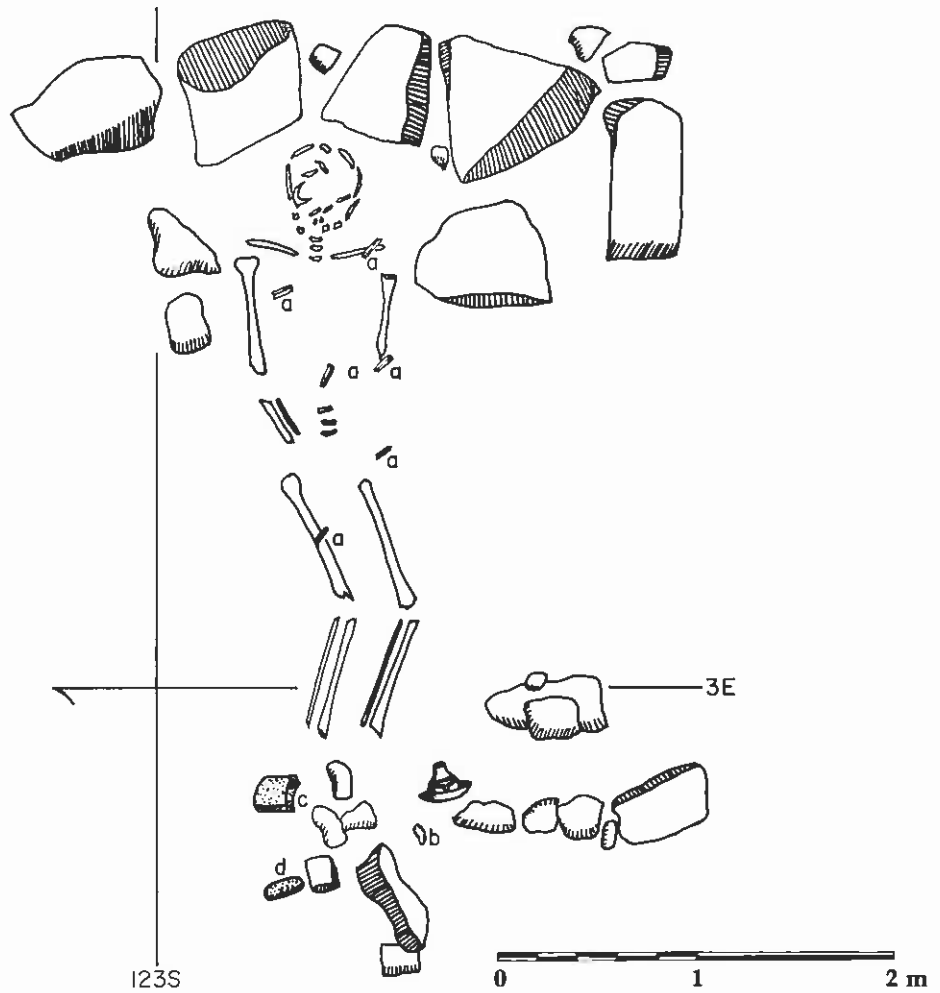


Figure 8.11. Burial 10: *a*, prismatic blades; *b*, flake; *c*, metate fragment; *d*, mano.

parently once a complete crypt, but at the time of its excavation it lay within the plow zone and was missing its stone cover. The mortuary goods associated with Burial 3 included a small *cantarito*, a Peralta Orange punctate bowl, a mano at the individual's feet, and Monument 17, the stone head which had been removed from a statue. Underlying Burial 3 was the complete crypt of Burial 33, at right angles to the upper burial. Offerings consisted of a *cantarito* within an Amatzinac White shallow bowl and the stone were-jaguar figurine.

These two crypts contain the most truly Olmec artifacts found during the project's excavations, the statue fragment and the figurine. The mano at the feet of the barely visible skeletal remains of Burial 3 does not serve to identify that burial as female. Nonetheless, it is pos-

sible that Burials 3 and 33 were a related pair of individuals, possibly husband and wife, connected to Gulf Coast Olmec culture or its symbolism within the society.

Another pairing consists of Burials 10 and 27. Both burials were directly interred in an extended supine position, heads oriented to the east. Burial 10 (Fig. 8.11) was associated with a mano, obsidian blades, and a *cantarito* placed within a shallow bowl. Burial 27 (Fig. 8.12) also had a mano and obsidian blades, but the vessels in this instance were two double-loop handle censers. Burial 10 is directly above Burial 27, and the two are separated by a depth of only 5 cm. If it is found that grinding stones were associated only with female burials, then both these individuals are female.

Burial 5, a crypt grave in the plow

zone, overlies Burial 34, also a crypt burial, by 40 cm. Although these burials have different orientations, the head area of Burial 5 overlaps the head area of Burial 34. Burial 5 is a child and is oriented with the head to the north. It was associated with a single Carrales Coarse Grey vessel. Burial 34, an adult, is oriented with the head to the east and had two double-loop handle censers placed along the exterior of the crypt. Perhaps these two individuals represent a parent and child.

Burials 21 and 31 are disturbed, and only the lower limbs of each remain. These are extended burials, directly interred. They were originally oriented with heads to the south. Burial 21 is 30 cm directly above Burial 31. Each burial was associated with a mano placed east of the legs. Burial 21 had a partial Peralta

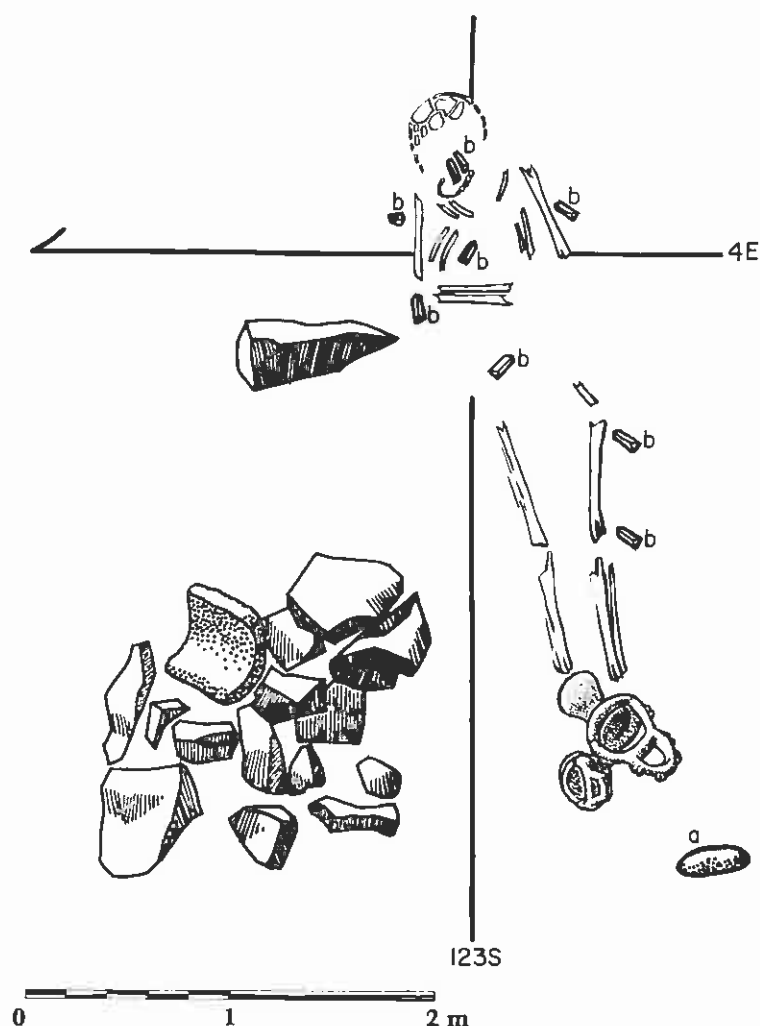


Figure 8.12. Burial 27: *a*, mano; *b*, prismatic blades and flakes.

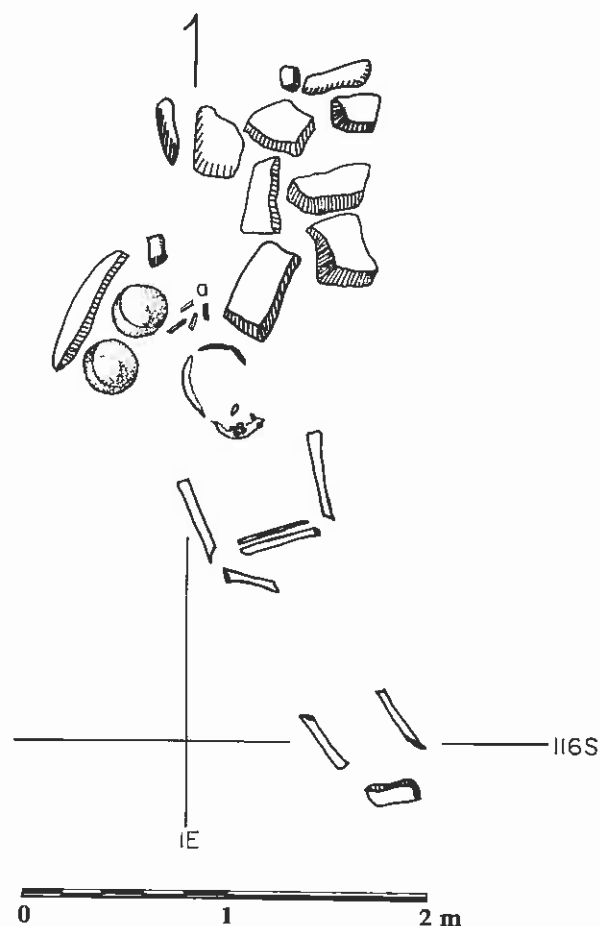


Figure 8.13. Burial 15: *a*, prismatic blades.

Orange punctate bowl in association. Other offerings may have been destroyed when the burials were disturbed.

Both Burials 19 and 32 were direct interments, extended, with heads oriented to the south. Burial 19 lay 28 cm above Burial 32. Burial 32 was associated with a small *cantarito*, two jade objects (a fang pendant and a broken awl point), and a ground smoothing stone. Burial 19 had two shallow bowls placed mouth to mouth.

Burials 15 and 30 occur almost perpendicular to each other and are separated by a depth of 39 cm. Both are direct, extended interments. Burial 15 (Fig. 8.13), head oriented to the northwest, was found with two small shallow bowls and four prismatic obsidian blades. Burial 30 (Fig. 8.14) likewise had two shallow bowls as offerings, but these had been

placed mouth to mouth. A double-loop handle censer was also in association.

Analysis of the mortuary furniture of the paired burials within PC Structure 1 reveals that members of each burial pair differed in their associated ceramic artifacts (see Table 8.2). Although this may be due to chance, it is possible that certain vessels were used as markers to distinguish individuals in each pair. Interestingly, not only vessel forms and ceramic types but also vessel combinations may have served this function. The mouth-to-mouth position of small shallow bowls may have been viewed as conceptually distinct from the shallow bowls placed singly, and the *cantarito* in a shallow bowl may have been considered different from the *cantarito* alone.

Even though the members of the burial pair probably did not die at the same

time, each has its own ceramic markers which do not co-occur in the two interments. This seems to imply that the first interment was remembered, and that the second was placed to be near the first and form its complement in the pairing. It is possible that we are seeing evidence of some type of social dichotomy, although the actual differences the individuals within a pair may express (e.g., sex, moiety) cannot be determined at this time. Nevertheless, the dichotomy within the burial pairs here and possibly elsewhere on the site remains an interesting problem for future research.

In addition to the burial pairs, there are two sets of double burials. Burials 11 and 12 and Burials 23 and 24 are interesting in that each pair represents an adult and infant, possibly parent and child. The 11–12 double burial has no associ-

Table 8.2. Burial Pairs on PC Structure 1

Burial Pair	Mortuary Furniture (Ceramic)					
	Double-loop Handle Censer(s)	Shallow Bowl(s)	Shallow Bowls Mouth-to-Mouth	Cantanto	Cantanto in Shallow Bowl	Composite Bowl
27	X					
10					X	
30	X		X			
15		X				
34	X					
5						X
3				X		X
33					X	
19			X			
32				X		
21						X
31						

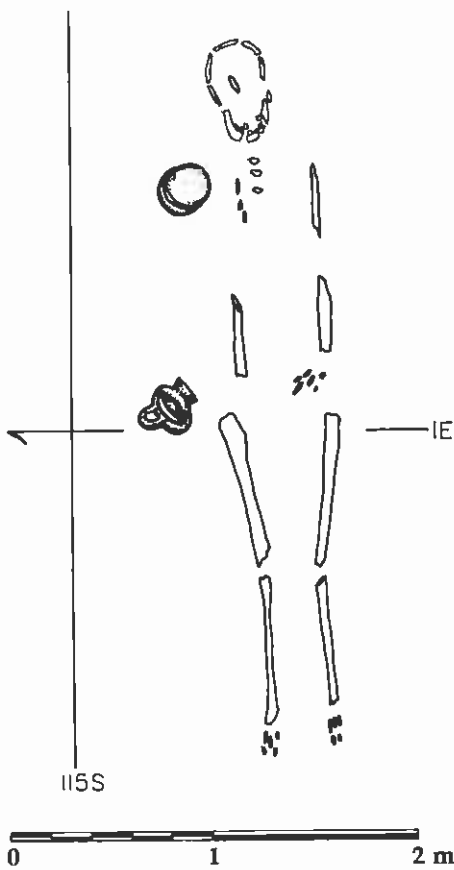


Figure 8.14. Burial 30.

ated ceramic offerings, but a greenstone bead was found at the mouth of the infant (Burial 12). An Atoyac Unslipped Polished II bowl lay near Burials 23 and 24, and a jade bead was found at the mouth of the adult (Burial 23; Fig. 8.15). It may be significant that both of these adult-infant burials occur within one restricted area of the house and in close proximity. It should also be noted that an extended burial (Burial 13) lies very near to the 23–24 group (but 50 cm higher), and that Burial 29 lies near the 11–12 group. These associations could be circumstantial due to the limited burial space available, or they may have some as yet undetermined significance.

PC Structure 2

A structure that possibly served the function of both residence and workshop area, PC Structure 2 is located west of

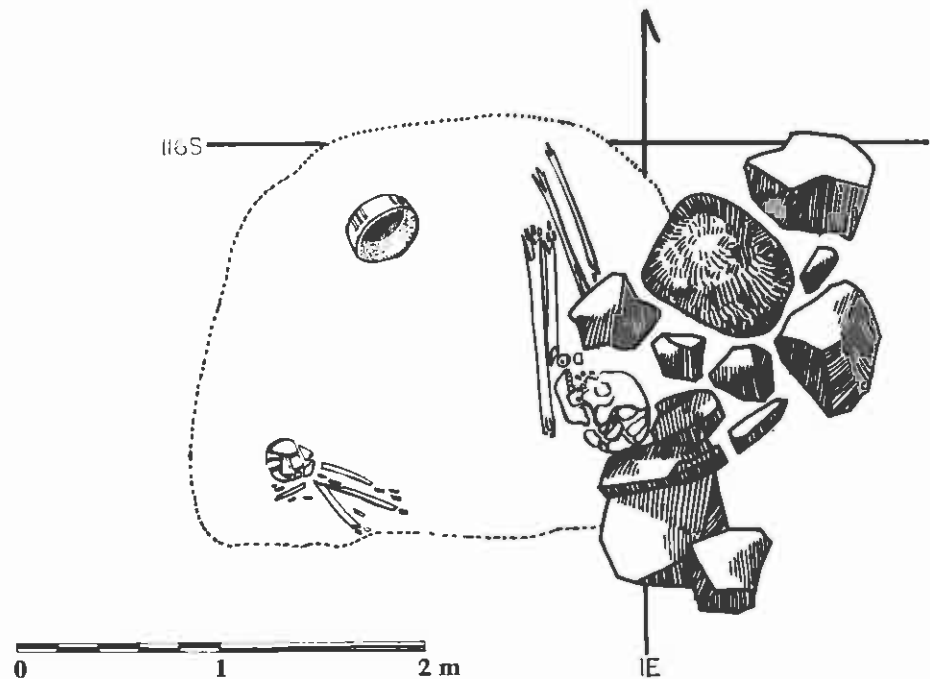


Figure 8.15. Burials 23 and 24: a, jade bead.

Structure 1, and like it is Late Cantera subphase in date. The ten subfloor burials here all occurred beneath one room (Fig. 4.7). They were directly interred in extended positions (eight supine, two prone). Most had their arms slightly flexed with the hands placed over the stomach area. Four of the burials (nos. 41, 43, 48, 49) are disturbed and fragmentary.

Jade beads had been placed in the mouths of two individuals, Burials 43 and 47. Burial 45, a child, had two complete figurines in association (Fig. 8.2), a rare occurrence at this site. No obsidian appeared as mortuary furniture.

Although near Structure 1, Structure 2's burials differ from those of the elite residence in several respects. They occur in a limited area of the structure. Crypt and stone-associated graves are absent, as are flexed burials. There are also no mouth-to-mouth vessels among the grave offerings. The absence of mouth-to-mouth vessels and flexed burials suggests that these traits may be more subtle status or social markers within the more general ranking and social markers already discussed, referring to positions perhaps restricted to PC Structure 1 residents.

T-25

Twenty-three Formative period burials were uncovered by excavations on T-25. Of these, four (nos. 107, 109, 112, and 113) were Barranca phase in date (see discussion of Barranca phase burials below), two (96 and 103) are Late Barranca or Early Cantera, and the remaining seventeen date to the Cantera phase. Their association with the T-25 altar patio and platform is discussed in Chapter 7, and only a few comments about them are necessary here.

Two Cantera phase burials were found within the stone altar structure. These two individuals, who may be considered to form a burial pair, probably held high ranks during their lifetimes. The deeper of the two, Burial 105 (Figs. 7.13–7.15), was interred in a stone crypt, extended, in a supine position with head to the east. Two unusual vessels were found with the burial, as was a Peralta Orange olla. The uppermost interment within the altar, Burial 95 (Fig. 7.19), had been placed within a partial crypt in an extended position, but with the head to the west. Along with a tubular jade bead, a Peralta Orange and a Tenango Brown olla made up the mortuary furniture. It is possible that the people buried within the patio area are descendants or rela-

tives of the individuals enshrined within the altar (see Chapter 7).

Three possible burial pairs exist among the Cantera phase burials interred within the patio area. Interestingly, two of the pairs are composed of children. One of these pairs, Burials 98 and 99, is really a double burial and the other, Burials 100 and 101, may be a double burial. The third pair, Burials 97 and 102, consists of two adults. A disturbed child's burial (no. 108) with four vessels and a tubular greenstone bead may also be associated with this last pair.

While most of the burials appear to represent individuals who died natural deaths, several may represent sacrifices associated with the altar. The most probable sacrifice is Burial 93 (Fig. 7.16), a child burial below the northeast corner of the altar. This child was probably sacrificed at the rebuilding of the altar structure. The child burial pair, nos. 98–99, may represent a sacrifice because the individuals appear to have been interred simultaneously. Burial 111 (Fig. 7.22), a skull associated with a ring of stone, may be an example of a decapitation sacrifice.

T-23

Burials within regular (non-elite) houses are best epitomized by T-23 Structure 1's subfloor interments. This house follows the pattern of other non-elite houses on the site: burials lack elaboration in the form of stone crypts, they rarely contain even a solitary jade bead, and they always lack more elaborate greenstone artifacts. The only preserved mortuary furniture is ceramic.

Seven burials were found during the T-23 excavations (nos. 79–85). Four occurred in extended position, and three were too disturbed to reconstruct the original position. The adult burials were all found in the northeast corner of the structure, while two child interments (Burials 80 and 82) had been placed beneath the floor of interior rooms.

An important question, which unfortunately cannot be tested from the current data, is whether the main personage in each non-elite house would be buried beneath the floor of the house or in some other location, such as PC Structure 1 or 4, as occurred at Classic Maya centers (e.g., Rathje 1970:366–367). It is certainly obvious that PC Structure 1's thirty-eight burials far outnumber the subfloor burials at any regular house structure. In view of the discussion of periodic purposeful destruction of house

structures by their inhabitants (Chapter 6), it would be important to know if houses were destroyed at the death of the house's main personage, just as monuments were apparently destroyed at the death of the site's main personage (Grove 1981b).

S-39

The archaeological deposits on S-39 are difficult to interpret in terms of their original nature. While probably a combination of household and workshop debris, the slightly sloping hillside here on the southwest edge of the site shows no traces of house foundation walls, although the area of concentrated deposit is delineated by large, partially buried boulders. Six adult burials and one infant were found associated with the artifact concentration (Fig. 4.36). Because nearly all the burials were found at quite shallow depths, they were disturbed by plowing.

Only four of the burials (nos. 142, 143, 147, and 148) had associated ceramic vessels. A fifth, the infant burial (no. 146), had a figurine in association but lacked vessels. Burials 142 and 143 had several stones placed along the sides of the grave. Burial 142 in addition contained small clusters of smooth pebbles, an "artifact" also found within the crypt of Burial 33 beneath PC Structure 1.

Cave Burials

Seven burials of apparent Cantera phase date were encountered during excavation of two of the Cerro Delgado caves. In Cave 1, Burials 152–155 were highly disturbed but may represent up to four child and infant interments. Associated with this cluster of disturbed skeletal material were four vessels.

Three Cantera phase burials were excavated in Cave 4. Burials 156 and 157 were in fair condition, but only traces of Burial 158 remained. Burial 156 was associated with four vessels and a thin obsidian needle, apparently a "blood-letter" used in auto-sacrifice, found at the pelvis. Stones were placed at either side and one on top of the head. Burial 157's head rested against the cave wall, and the body was partially outlined by stone slabs placed at intervals around the edge of the grave. A metate fragment covered the head, and a mano fragment had been placed near the left shoulder. One Carales Coarse Grey vessel had been placed near the left shoulder as well.

Barranca Phase Burials

Only ten Barranca phase burials were recovered during the Chalcatzingo excava-

tions. Due to their rarity, few data are provided relating to changes in burial practices through time. Most of the burials are disturbed and have few or no mortuary artifacts. No crypts were found among the burials, but jade was present in some of them.

The T-9B Barranca phase house structure (Fig. 4.20) yielded three burials. Burial 63, located on the west side of the house, was manifested only through a scattering of a few human bone fragments, and it was apparently highly disturbed. No burial furniture was found in association. Burial 64 was likewise highly disturbed and is present only as a scatter of bone. However, the bone concentration lay adjacent to an inverted Amatzinac White shallow bowl. Burial 65 was interred within a grave marked by three large stones (part of the house foundation) near the foot of the grave. A stone slab had been placed over the pelvic area, and a Peralta Orange olla occurred as a mortuary offering.

The four Barranca phase burials of the T-25 area are discussed in Chapter 7. Burial 107 had been interred within the Barranca phase trash pit on T-25. The burial was associated with an Amatzinac White cylindrical jar and a stingray spine. Burial 109 is a disturbed burial which underlies the area of the Cantera phase rebuilding of the altar. It therefore also underlies Burials 95 and 105, the Cantera phase burials placed within the altar interior. No ceramic offerings were found with Burial 109, perhaps because it had been disturbed. However, a tubular jade bead was found in association with this burial.

Burial 112 was uncovered during excavations behind (south of) the altar within an area presumed to be related to an earlier Barranca phase structure. This burial may therefore have originally been a sub-floor burial to that construction. The skull is missing and the burial lacks ceramic offerings. Burial 113 is heavily disturbed and no mortuary offerings were found.

Burial 149 was found during excavations on N-2 (Fig. 4.37). Fragments of an eroded *cantarito* were found at the feet. Burial 150, uncovered on N-5, consists only of the upper torso, arms, and skull of the skeleton. The lower body was missing, apparently through rodent disturbance. Burial 159 was associated with the Barranca phase structure on T-29 (Structure 1). Five other burials may be either Late Barranca or Early Cantera in

date: 56, 58, and 60 from T-9A, and 96 and 103 from T-25 (see Appendix C).

Late Formative Burials

Fourteen Late Formative burials were found during excavations on T-27. Three sets of double interments were included within this group (Burials 117–118, 123–124, and 133–134). The associated mortuary furniture and burial patterns are different from those of the Barranca and Cantera phases, suggesting perhaps a hiatus in occupation at the site.

A Middle Formative platform structure exhibiting several rebuildings was excavated on T-27. The Late Formative burials were intruded into the platform structure, which at the time of our excavations was completely buried and undetectable from the surface. Seven Late Formative burials, including the three sets of double interments, were discovered within slab-lined graves. The remaining seven Late Formative interments are direct burials. Most burials were found in supine positions, but with the legs flexed. Exceptions to this include Burial 119, which was loosely flexed and lying upon its left side, and Burial 124, which was part of a double interment and had been buried in a tightly flexed sitting position.

Burials 117 and 118 (Fig. 8.16), both adults, are buried together in a flexed supine position, with heads to the south. Five ceramic vessels, including four black ware pots, were found with the burials. In addition, a group of three unusual figurines occurred within the cluster of mortuary ceramics. These figurines, handmade but essentially identical in all details, depict seated anthropomorphic figures, heads tilted upward, wearing elongated Ehecatl-like masks (Fig. 8.17). Whether these figurines represent the Ehecatl (wind-god) concept at this time is purely speculative, but anthropomorphic figurines wearing duck-bill masks are known to occur in Late Formative art (e.g., the Tuxtla statuette).

Burials 123 and 124 (Fig. 8.18) were found together within a rectangular, stone-lined grave. Both were adults. Burial 123 was supine and loosely flexed, while 124 was a bundled secondary interment. Four ceramic vessels were found within the grave.

Double interment 133–134 likewise consisted of two adults. However, the grave was circular, and the top of the grave was outlined by a ring of flattish stones. Burial 133 was in a supine, flexed

position, while no. 134 was seated. Three grey ware vessels, all very well made and displaying different decorative techniques (fine-line incising, cursive incising, and traces of orange-on-white fresco decoration), were found in the grave. A “capped, hollow” ceramic earspool was associated with the skull of Burial 133 (Fig. 16.2f).

Individual interments with associated ceramics include Burial 119, which contained two vessels; Burial 120, which had three vessels, one with mammiform supports, in a rock-covered grave; and Burials 122 and 130, both direct interments with only one vessel in association with each. The vessel found with Burial 122, a grey ware, appears to be a nonlocal import.

In addition to the T-27 burials, two burials on T-4, nos. 53 and 56, seem to be Late Formative. Burial 53, a young adult, had been placed in a flexed position, the interment intruding into a Cantera phase structure foundation. No ceramics were present with the burial, making exact chronological placement tenuous. The only mortuary item was a metate fragment placed over the head. Burial 56, also a flexed burial, had been disturbed. It also lacked any grave goods except for a mano, which occurred in a dubious association.

The only other definite Late Formative burial recovered on the site, Burial 151, shares many traits with the T-27 burials, but was found in Cerro Delgado Cave 1 excavations. The interment is that of a young adult in a flexed position. Two ceramic vessels, both Late Formative, serve to place the burial chronologically. In addition, a solid cylindrical earspool with a polished red slip was found within the grave fill.

Classic Period Burials

Nine Classic period interments occur near the Classic period structure on T-20. These burials are unusual in that six of the nine are children, a situation not found with any other Chalcatzingo structure or burial group. Burials 67 and 68 represent a double interment of an adult and infant. The adult occurs in a flexed but supine position; the infant's burial position was difficult to ascertain. No ceramic mortuary furniture was present with this double interment, but it can be dated from the level of its intrusion.

A quadruple burial of children (Burials 69–72) was associated with two Classic period vessels. All the burials had been

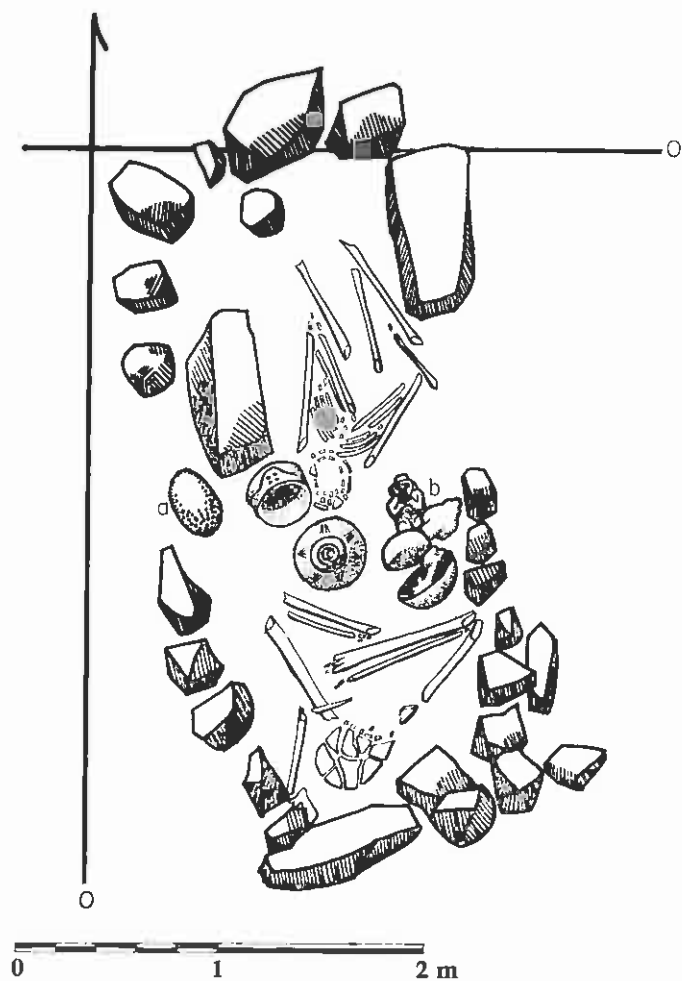


Figure 8.16. Burials 117 and 118: *a*, mano; *b*, three figurines.

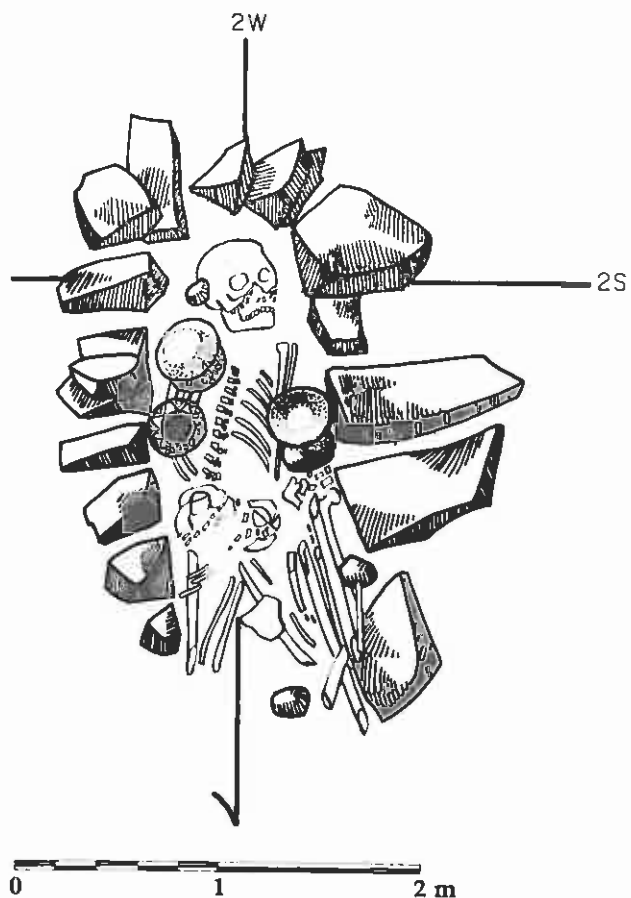


Figure 8.18. Burials 123 and 124 (secondary, bundled burial at lower right).



Figure 8.17. Figurines associated with Burials 117 and 118.

interred in tightly flexed positions. Burial 76 is likewise that of a child, associated only with a metate fragment.

The only other adult burials uncovered are nos. 74 and 75. Burial 74, tightly flexed in a seated position, may be a secondary burial. A jade bead was found near the neck area. Burial 75, interred in a flexed, prone position, had an obsidian spear point at the chest area, apparently as an offering. No ceramics had been placed with these burials.

One Classic period burial was found intruded into the subfloor area of T-24's Cantera phase house structure (Fig. 4.32). This interment (Burial 92) was in a flexed position with the head to the east. A jade pendant (Fig. 17.4k) and Classic period brown ware vessel were in association. Of interest with this individual was the dental mutilation present on the incisors. The upper front incisors were notched on the sides, while three of the four lower incisors had V-shaped notches.

A child burial (Burial 115) was uncovered during excavations at the north end of T-25 (Fig. 7.23). Like the other Classic period burials, it had been interred in a flexed and, in this instance, seated position. A small jadeite pendant (Fig. 17.7c) was associated with the child, but the interment lacked ceramic offerings.

Excavations of T-27 Structure 2, a Late Classic structure, uncovered a cache of thirteen vessels (Fig. 24.13), primarily orange ware bowls with ring bases, plus a human mandible and scattered human bone fragments (Burial 135). These were placed within a small, almost square stone-lined box. Two polished stone beads were also included with the cache. This group of ceramics represents the most elaborate offerings associated with a Classic burial at the site. Two other Classic burials from the same area, nos. 121 and 125, had only minor burial furniture.

The final Classic period burial recovered during the excavations—also Late Classic in date—is Burial 140, found on T-37. It is a child burial, interred in a flexed position. An orange ware bowl was placed over the skull and a small jadeite pendant (Fig. 17.4i) under the chin.

Two points can be made in summarizing Classic period burials at Chalcatzingo. First, of the fifteen recovered, over half (eight) were children. Second, of the fifteen, all for which position could be determined had been interred in a flexed position.

Postclassic Period Burials

The only Postclassic burials found at the site were uncovered during the excavations at Tetla. Both burials (nos. 160 and 161) are cremations. Burial 160 was a subfloor burial within the excavated Middle Postclassic house structure (Chapter 25). The cremated remains were associated with a black-on-red vessel fragment, a cache of obsidian blades, a jadeite bead, some mold-made figurine fragments, and three spindle whorls. The lithic artifacts and the spindle whorls may suggest that this was the burial of a female who used these items.

Burial 161 was discovered during the excavation of a stratigraphic pit northwest of the house structure. The remains were found within a Black on Red Polished bowl which had been covered with one-half of a Polychrome Resist Red dish with a tripod support (only two supports remained). A necklace fashioned from triangular shell sections was associated with the cremation.

EXTERNAL SIMILARITIES

The majority of the ceramic vessels associated with Chalcatzingo's burials show general similarities to vessels of the Middle Formative Zacatenco phase (e.g., Tolstoy and Paradis 1970; Vaillant 1930) in the Valley of Mexico. The crypt and stone-associated burials likewise have counterparts at El Arbolillo in the Valley of Mexico (Vaillant 1935: 168–180, Fig. 8). Several traits of the high-ranking Cantera phase burials also co-occur at La Venta, as was previously discussed. Some of these traits are generalized (e.g., associated jade) and are in fact present at other sites in both the highlands and lowlands. Other traits are of a more restricted nature and suggest that the trait co-occurrence may be due in part to some form of interaction between the two areas, such that Chalcatzingo's high-ranking individuals sought to emulate their Gulf Coast counterparts. These restricted traits are found among the PC Structure 1 and Structure 4 burials.

Jade in association with burials is not uncommon during the Formative period. Some El Arbolillo burials yielded greenstone jewelry (e.g., nos. 140, 148, 153; Vaillant 1935: 170–171), as have Formative period burials in Oaxaca (Kent V. Flannery, personal communication) and in other areas. The actual and pseudo burials recovered at La Venta (P. Drucker 1952: 25–27, 67–73; P. Drucker, Heizer,

and Squier 1959: 162–174) were usually richly endowed with jade.

Jade cannot be considered an "Olmec" trait, since its use in Formative period Mesoamerica is widespread. However, La Venta's burials and extraordinary caches indicate that the Gulf Coast Olmec elite had the ability to acquire this imported luxury item in quantity and the wealth to "consume" it and remove it from circulation. Using present data it can be surmised that Chalcatzingo too consumed more jade in its elite burials than did other central Mexican sites, but the quantity nowhere equals the La Venta consumption.

Although far more limited in quantity, another obvious parallel between Chalcatzingo's elite burials and traits at La Venta is the previously mentioned mortuary offering consisting of a *cantarito* placed within a shallow bowl (Chalcatzingo Burials 10, 33, 39, 40; La Venta Offering 5). Although it is uncertain if La Venta Offering 5 is a real or pseudo burial (P. Drucker, Heizer and Squier 1959: 162), three of the four Chalcatzingo examples are without question among the highest-ranking individuals at that site.

Elaborate stone cist graves at La Venta (e.g., Feature A-3-a; P. Drucker 1952: 67–73) may be crudely mirrored by Chalcatzingo's stone crypts. Both seem to have functioned as graves for high-ranking individuals. While stone-elaborated graves were not found at Zacatenco (Vaillant 1930: 188–189, but see Pl. 54-1), stone crypts and stone-associated graves were excavated at El Arbolillo (Burials 112, 116, 117, 118–119, 127, 129, 130, 139, 146; Vaillant 1935: 168–179, Figs. 7–9). Chalcatzingo's crypts seem, in construction, far more similar to El Arbolillo's than to the La Venta cists. On the other hand, the burial furniture within the Chalcatzingo crypts is more comparable to artifacts recovered in general excavations at La Venta. Some of these similarities are detailed in individual burials discussed below.

Burials 39 and 40, both wearing a large quantity of jade ornaments, probably represent the highest-ranking individuals found during our excavations. They were interred on the upper surface of the site's large platform mound, PC Structure 4. Looted crypts and a plundered stone-faced tomb atop the same structure indicate that other high-ranking individuals were also buried there. The actual and pseudo burials recovered at La Venta (P. Drucker 1952: 23–27; P. Drucker,

Heizer, and Squier 1959:162–174) also come from Middle Formative platform mounds. Whether this is an Olmec pattern only, or is more widespread remains to be tested at sites both on the Gulf Coast and elsewhere.

Chalcatzingo Burial 40 is unique in being the only Middle Formative period burial (highland or lowland) of an individual wearing a concave iron ore mirror. Such mirrors are found at Gulf Coast sites (e.g., P. Drucker, Heizer, and Squier 1959:Table 1, Pls. 43–46), but they are also known from Oaxaca, Guerrero, and other areas (Carlson 1981; Pires-Ferreira 1976b:317–325). The Chalcatzingo mirror is manufactured from high-purity magnetite and does not match any known magnetite sources (Chapter 23).

Burial 33 is also unique. While this crypt grave was associated with a *cantarito*–shallow bowl combination, it also contained the small greenstone were-jaguar figure. This figure bears a striking resemblance to other were-jaguar figures (e.g., Coe 1965a:14; Covarrubias 1957:56–57), including those found at La Venta (see Chapter 17; P. Drucker, Heizer, and Squier 1959:Pls. 26, 33–36). The Chalcatzingo figure is important because it is the only figure of this type to have been found in the context of controlled excavations at a site in the central highlands (not including one recovered from a Post-classic period floor at Coxcatlan, Puebla; Sisson 1974:48, Fig. 19 lower right). Similar stone figurines have emerged from Guerrero and also are alleged from Morelos, Puebla, and the Valley of Mexico (including Tlatilco), but these are not from controlled excavations.

Burial 3, highly destroyed and in the plow zone, forms a burial pair with Burial 33. The significant artifact from the crypt of Burial 3 is a carved stone head, forcibly removed from a statue and damaged in the process. Decapitated statue heads are rarely found archaeologically. Some have been recovered at La Venta (Mons. 28, 44, 64; Clewlow and Corson 1968) and other sites (San Lorenzo Mon. 6, Estero Rabón Mon. 5; de la Fuente 1973), but none in association with a burial. The presence of such a head with Burial 3 suggests that future excavations at Middle Formative Gulf Coast centers may uncover similar associations. As previously mentioned, Grove (1981b) believes the statue head may be a portrait head of the person buried within the crypt of Burial 3.

A final artifact found at Gulf Coast sites and at Chalcatzingo is the stingray spine. Again, this cannot be considered an Olmec marker since it is also found at non-Olmec sites (e.g., Huitzo, Oaxaca; Drennan 1976:Table 11.4), but its distribution may be significant. Two stingray spines were found in archaeological contexts at Chalcatzingo, one with Barranca phase Burial 107 (Fig. 7.11). La Venta examples include true spines and a jade replica, all from a bundle burial (P. Drucker 1952:26).

It is unfortunate, as previously noted, that the Chalcatzingo skeletal material was too poorly preserved for any detailed morphological analysis. One hope of the project was to check the morphological variability of the skeletal population on the possibility that some Gulf Coast individuals were residing at the site and might be morphologically distinct from the site's indigenous inhabitants. The skeletal data provided no clues of that nature, and, of course, no preserved skeletal remains are available from Gulf Coast Formative period sites for comparisons.

The individuals whose graves carry traits which co-occur on the Gulf Coast may be local Chalcatzingo elite bearing certain symbols of rank which appear Gulf Coast-like, or indeed one or many of them may be actual Gulf Coast persons, who likewise bear special symbols in their burial furniture. Whatever the ultimate resolution of this problem by future research, it is clear that the vast majority of the burials, those which can be classified as ranked below the uppermost elite, carry no special "external" traits and seem quite clearly part of the Middle Formative culture of the central Mexican highlands, as is also reflected in burials and artifact content at sites such as El Arbolillo and Zacatenco.

RESUMEN DEL CAPÍTULO 8

Los mejores datos para establecer la diferenciación social in Chalcatzingo provienen de las prácticas de enterramiento. Desafortunadamente, debido a la poca conservación de los restos esqueléticos, no se pudieron determinar las edades, los sexos, y las enfermedades, por lo que en general la información proveniente de los entierros se limitó a los datos acerca del tratamiento recibido en el entierro, tales como la naturaleza de la tumba y de los objetos asociados a ella. La mayoría de los entierros ocurren bajo los pisos de las casas, aún cuando varios fueron encontrados en el área del patio de T-25, dentro del altar T-25 mismo, y dentro del montículo de plataforma PC Str. 4.

Basados en la preparación de la tumba, se clasificaron 161 entierros en tres tipos: simple o directo, en el cual el individuo aparece colocado en un agujero sin modificaciones en el piso; asociado a piedras en el cual algunas piedras se colocan alrededor de las orillas o cubren parcialmente al cuerpo; y en cripta en el cual la tumba se encuentra delineada y cubierta con tabletas de piedra. Las ofertas mortuorias están constituidas principalmente por vasijas de cerámica con artefactos de piedra verde, objetos utilitarios de piedra, obsidiana, y otros objetos menos frecuentes. No surgió patrón alguno suficientemente definido para relacionar entre sí algunos de los artefactos con los diferentes tipos de entierros.

Casi todas las vasijas de cerámica son del tipo Amatzinac Blanco. Las formas principales son la del tazón somero y la de incensario con doble asa. Ocurren con frecuencia cantaritos con los tazones someros, lo que también ocurrió en un entierro en La Venta, el cual presentó esta misma asociación. Los objetos de piedra verde son de ornamento generalmente—orejeras, cuentas, y pendientes. De éstos, todos excepto las cuentas frecuentemente presentan ruptura intencional.

Las prácticas mortuorias sugieren que la organización social en Chalcatzingo no fué egalitaria desde la fase Barranca. Como prueba de la existencia de rangos y estados diferentes, se consideró el acceso desigual a los artículos escasos y valiosos, y al trabajo de otras personas en la comunidad. En este caso la presencia de objetos de piedra verde o de jade, los cuales no son de la localidad y son

relativamente raros, así como la presencia de tumbas de cripta que requieren trabajo extra, fueron indicativos de la existencia del estado elitista.

Los entierros que exhiben estos criterios elitistas se encuentran generalmente restringidos a la Plaza Central, en particular a las Str. 1 y Str. 4, y a T-25. Se presume por lo tanto que estas áreas hayan sido el foco de la actividad ceremonial-administrativa o de residencia de la elite. Dentro de este grupo, los entierros de mayor rango son los dos encontrados dentro del montículo plataforma PC Str. 4. Probablemente los atuendos y los cuerpos mismos de los "jefes" eran recubiertos con barniz de hematita, ya que al momento de su entierro estos individuos llevaban cantidad de joyería de piedra verde encima.

La mayoría de los entierros entran en esta categoría de alto rango. La gran variedad en la cerámica y otros objetos mortuorios esbozan intentos de refinar más los rangos menores, pero ocurren algunas correlaciones. Los cantaritos colocados dentro de los tazones poco hondos y los incensarios de doble asa, parece ser, estaban asociados a los individuos de mayor rango; en tanto que el tipo Carrales Gris Burdo se encuentra con mayor frecuencia en los entierros de rango menor. Curiosamente la mayoría de los entierros de rango menor contiene mayor número de vasijas de cerámica que los entierros de rango superior.

La residencia elitista, PC Str. 1, mostró treintaiocho entierros bajo el piso, con lo que produjo la exhibición de la variación total posible en los tipos de entierro, así como de las posiciones y orientaciones de los mismos. Se pudo observar que tanto los objetos asociados como la orientación difieren entre sí en las mitades sur y norte de esta estructura. Estos entierros también revelan otro tipo de patrón—la ocurrencia de seis pares de entierros, posiblemente esposo y esposa. Uno de estos pares presentó los artefactos más "Olmecas" encontrados en el sitio, consistentes en una cabeza desprendida de una estatua y una figurilla de piedra semeando un jaguar. Dentro de los entierros pareados, parece ser que se hayan utilizado ciertas formas o tipos de cerámica para distinguir con estas marcas a los miembros de cada par. También ocurren los entierros pareados en T-25.

La similitud entre los entierros eliticos de Chalcatzingo y los Olmeca de la costa del Golfo incluyen la presencia

de jade en la tumba, la construcción de criptas de piedra, el entierro en montículos plataforma, y la combinación de un cantarito en un tazón poco profundo. Los individuos de alto rango, por lo tanto, pueden haber sido personajes locales que copiaban a sus contrapartes de la costa del Golfo, o en realidad inmigrantes de afuera que gobernaban en Chalcatzingo. De todos modos, la enorme mayoría de los entierros, aquellos de la población no elitica, claramente forman parte de la cultura del centro de México perteneciente al período Formativo Medio, con expresiones tan claras como las encontradas en El Arbolillo y Zacatenco.