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The World of Perception — Comparative Philosophy of the Ancient Mayan Bird Totems

Zhilong Yan¹, Aixin Zhang¹

¹ Shanghai Theatre Academy

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Abstract

Philosophy extends from literature to the study of art, religion, history and archaeology, and attempts to focus on the philosophical interpretation of the ancient Mayan bird totems. This article highlights the interaction between literature narration and cultural relic image narration, bringing methodological enlightenment to philosophical "comparison". The subjects focused on the mythological themes of hummingbirds and maidens, macaws and gods, the two main nodes. The purpose of this paper is to explore the mind structure of bird totemism hidden in Maya culture by beginning with perception and then reinterpreting the bird totemism image. This paper not only emphasizes the "comparative" philosophy as an important evidence of theoretical interpretation, but also closes the gap between written text and artistic expression.

Zhilong Yan¹, and **Aixin Zhang^{1&*}**

¹ *Research on Art Totem, Shanghai Theatre Academy, Shanghai, China*

& *These authors contributed equally to this work and should be considered co-first authors*

***Corresponding author:** AiXin Zhang, aixin.zhang.art@outlook.com

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1. Introduction

I would like to expound on the philosophy of ancient Mayan bird totems in classical and post-classical times. Bird symbols have been shown to play a key role in human society as a spiritual energy in many disciplines, including anthropology, ornithology, ethnology, culture, sectarianism, and totemic theory worldwide (Tidemann et al., 2012; Hull et al., 2017; Lawrence, 1989; Bailleul-LeSuer et al., 2012; Kynes, 2016; Wang, 2008; Huang, 2004; Guo, 2007; Armstrong et al., 2006:100). In ancient Egyptian civilization, the bird totem symbol has a symbolic meaning of the divine life. Specifically, in

Egyptian mythological texts, mythical figs such as the sun god, Isri, and Horus often appear in the form of bird totems, and they all share the same basic theme that birds represent an intermediary that is connected to the higher self, and in turn, becomes intimately connected to God and becomes one. Thus, the ancient Egyptian bird totems herald another form of rebirth (Yan, & Zhang 2021).

Similarly, ancient Chinese civilization considered the bird totem symbol to be a way of communicating with God, such as the Hemudu people's idea of a sun god and a bird god derived from soul worship, the belief in and expression of the supernatural by primitive humans (Huang, Houming, 2004: 112). We find many symbols of gods in the art of ancient Mesopotamian civilization. however, the cultural importance of bird symbols has never been truly revealed.

Although they now have some knowledge of the historical, religious, and cultural aspects of ancient bird totem symbols, most of their work has been in archaeology, anthropology, linguistics, history, sociology, art, and religious studies (Majchrzak, 2018; Bailleul-LeSuer, 2012; Shemesh, 2018; Wen, 2003; Chen, 2002:38-51; Hao, 1999; Long, 2016). And philosophical methodology has not yet influenced the idea of ancient bird symbols in any powerful way. Because no scholars have systematically observed the role of bird totem symbols in ancient Maya civilization. Now those Mayan hieroglyphics have been largely deciphered, and correspondingly, our understanding of ancient Mayan material culture is improving. Because of this, the features of abstract thought in the ancient Mayan world can be revealed. As a result, it has become possible to understand ancient Mayan history, political thought, economics, and religion. In order to better understand these aspects of ancient Maya culture, many scholars have used tools in various academic fields (McLeod, 2017: 7).

So far, no effort has been made to understand the Mayan philosophy, especially that of the ancient Mayan bird totem symbol, as it differs from other aspects of the ancient Mayan mind. I believe that the best way to understand the philosophy of ancient Mayan bird symbols is to adopt the philosophical methodology and the tools of philosophers.

2. Review of literature

In the relatively few historical, artistic, ethnic, and religious studies of the Maya bird totem symbols, many scholars have recognized the importance and complexity of the Maya bird totem symbol philosophical speculation. However, there is relatively little literature on research in this area.

According to our review of the literature, scholars at home and abroad have focused only on other mythological themes identified in archaeological finds of ancient Mayan visual artefacts, including pottery, sculpture, murals and hieroglyphics -- water lilies, cosmic snakes, jaguars, coyotes, jaguars, crocodiles, smoking gods, Toltec and Aztec gods and symbols (García, 2018; Zamora Corona, 2020; McDonald et al., 2012; Li, 2020; Bai et al, 2012).

Only two scholars K. Hull and Laura Ibarra García are part of a study and commentary about birdman portraits in ancient Mayan art (centuries B.C. to the first millennium A.D) (Hull & Fergus et al., 2017; García, 2018). Other scholars have excluded bird totems from academic discussion because of their small size and limited number. Birdman totem symbols,

for example, often exist as a side character in artifacts unearthed in classical and post-classical Maya. In fact, the bird symbol was a major theme in ancient Mayan mythology and art, although it gradually gave way to other divine symbols in later times (Mazariegos, 2017: Introduction).

However, the study of bird totems is largely in the fields of art, religion, history, and archaeology. Although archaeologists, other anthropologists and linguists have tried to engage and provide explanations for various aspects of the Mayan bird's totemic philosophy, the research has been fragmented. Because philosophers and non-philosophers have different ways of thinking, and they may not come to the same conclusion from the ancient Mayan thought they came into contact with from different angles. In addition, these non-philosophers contributed to a better understanding of Mayan ways of thinking by studying specific aspects of ancient Mayan thought. But their research and participation in Mayan thought are limited (García, 2018).

As a result, the importance of philosophical speculation on the symbolic totemic objects of birds has been neglected and underestimated. For all I know, this is probably the first article, and I believe it could contribute to the philosophical speculation of Mayan bird totem symbols. This article not only closes the gap between written texts and artistic expression, especially by focusing on bird symbols and revealing their changes in narrative and visual representation but also emphasizes the philosophy of "comparison" as important evidence for theoretical interpretation.

3. Research methodology

In order to do this, I look for ancient Maya image narration and text narration from pre-classical to post-classical periods. I use high-quality image data and interpretation texts from archaeologists and historians. In addition to these documents, I use some anthropologists involved in philosophical concepts to explain the text. In short, the selection criteria of first-hand and second-hand materials are based on the consideration of ancient Mayan image data and interpretation text data. In addition, I use pan-off-image methodology to identify ancient Mayan bird symbols and use comparative philosophy methodology to interpret the philosophical connotation of ancient Mayan bird Totem symbols.

4. Research structure

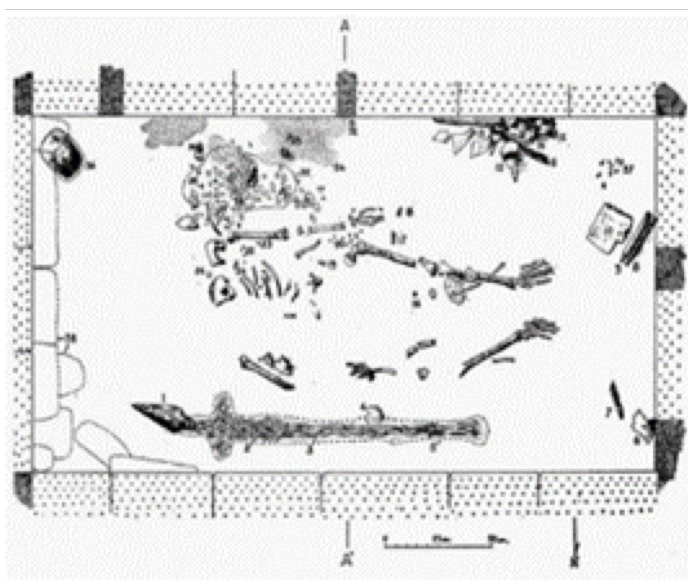
This paper attempts to explain the philosophical reasoning behind the ancient Mayan bird totems and to make an image analysis of the symbol of bird totems. I began by focusing on the central concept of perception, which is the most basic philosophical category of Chinese and Western metaphysics. Then, we continue to tell the ancient Mayan thinking structure about cognition, combined with the analysis of the art form of bird totemic symbols, so as to show and excavate the main points of comparative philosophical speculation of ancient Mayan bird totemic symbols, and to show the possibility of understanding the Chinese and Western's philosophical speculation.

Various human cross-cultural tools for interpreting Mayan symbols of the gods are based on an idealistic and simple theory, such as shamanism and animism, ontology, etc. However, all these doctrines nullify the true wisdom of the ancient

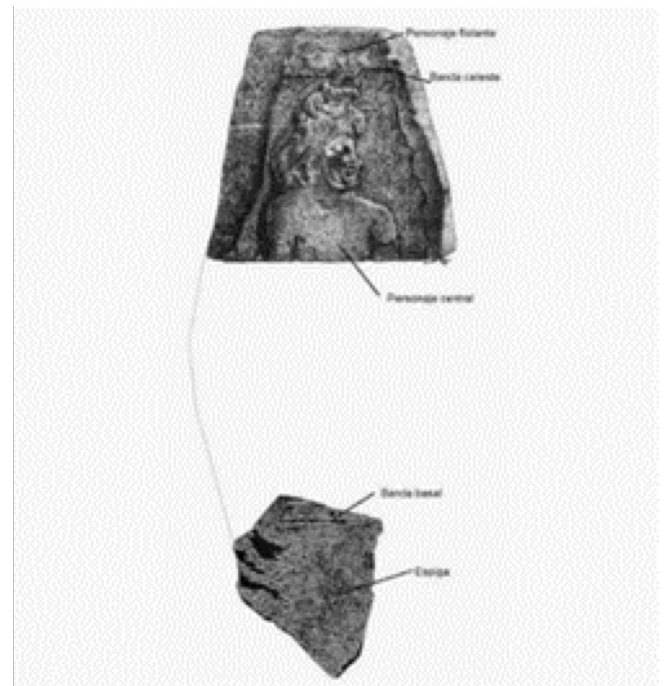
Maya people because of their tendency to romanticize the Maya or the West's tendency to view them as apolitical irrationality. Here, I would like to compare several theories of the concept of perception and open another way, namely, the theory of the process of perception, which was created by philosophers such as Steiner and Xie Lin, as well as the theory of ancient China.

5. Research significance

Notable examples are Alexis McLeod's philosophy: "Ancient Mayan Philosophy: King of Time". The scholar's interest in Mesoamerican philosophy, especially comparative philosophy, is the central point of his academic interest. In addition to McLeod and Alexis, there are also articles in the field with relevant perspectives, such as Miguel Leon-Portilla's "Time and Reality in Mayan Thought " and James Maffie's "Aztec Philosophy." Although my current research is based on a small topic (bird totems) and is smaller in scope than the three philosophers. It is intended not only to bring ancient Mayan bird totems into philosophical discussions, but also to provide valuable insights into the Chinese and Western philosophical debates, helping scholars in different disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, ethnology, religious teaching, and art to engage in a dialogue with the Chinese and Western philosophy, and in particular to the future artistic practice of totems.



(a)



(b)

Fig 1. (a) Debris unearthed from graves (Sheseña, 2013: 71, fig 4).; (b) Debris unearthed from graves (Sheseña, 2013: 71, fig 4).

6. Results - Image Illustration

2.1. Hummingbirds and Maidens – Perception of the Absolute Self

The node theme in ancient Mayan mythology about hummingbirds and maidens is the only known version of the earliest sun and moon myth in many versions. In this story, the Earth god lives with his daughter Moon, but soon their peaceful life is shattered by the sun god Aramco, who incarnates a hummingbird, the Sun bird, and tries to approach the girl and marry her, only to be punished by the Earth god or gods. From the mythological theme, this is a story about the origin of the universe and the sexual and reproductive origin of the Sun and the Moon.

Images from classic Mayan ceramic vessels suggest that Aramco, the suitor sun god, may also have been a hummingbird because he had a prominent beak on his beak as a symbol of birds (Fig. 1). But Taube notes that in addition to hummingbirds, suitors also have a species of mosquito that shares a common trait with hummingbirds, piercing flowers with its beak and suggesting that mosquitoes should be the counterpart to hummingbirds (Fig. 6c) (Segre, *Metamorfosis de lo Sagrado*, 173; Taube, "Ancient and Contemporary," 123, quote from Mazariegos, 2017).

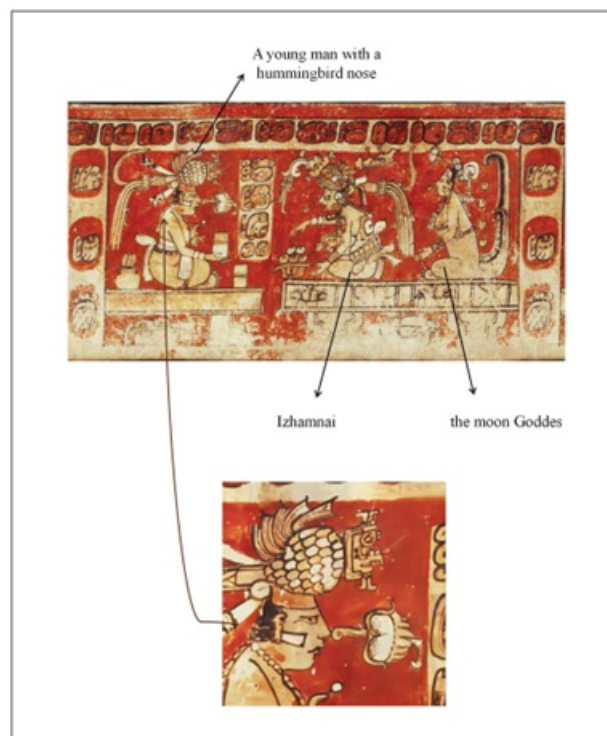


Fig 2. "A vase carved by the Three Gods. Hummingbirds."

Launch photo of a vase carved by the Three Gods (vase K504), a late classic, lowland Mayan region. The current location is unknown. A young man with a hummingbird nose approached Izamunai and the moon goddess (Mazariegos, Oswaldo Chinchilla, 2017:86. fig 29).

The story of the hummingbird proposal myth dates back to a playful post-Mayan sculpture in which a hummingbird appears to chase or kiss the girl's full breasts and the young girl looks as if she is in masochistic pain and trying to shake off her attacker (Fig. 3ab). These strange scenes reappear in a vase of activity between a naked young woman and a strange, ugly man (Fig. 3c). But the only difference between the two scenes was that the ugly man had a long hummingbird beak on his nose. The woman with the full breasts seemed oblivious to the ugly man so far removed from Maya's ideal Adonis that she stroked the monster's chin eagerly and lovingly while he eagerly grabbed the breasts of the young girl with the full breasts and buttocks in front of her. According to Taube, some of the contacts between men and women in Mayan art are actually sexually explicit (Mazariegos, 2017 102).

This metaphorical gesture of sexual touch also appears in a delicate vase unearthed in the Late Mayan classic, the Lowland Maya (Fig. 3d). But we noticed that the man's nose had changed from that of a hummingbird to that of a mosquito. In Puebla's modern narrative, a hummingbird turns into a blood-sucking mosquito, sucking the breast of a plump girl whose skin is superior to that of a yeti and mixing the girl's blood with her own (Segre, *Metamorfosis de lo Sagrado*, 173; Taube, "Ancient and Contemporary", 123. quote from Mazariegos, 2017).

In addition, images of ancient Mayan mosquitoes often appear in other scenes, such as in a badly eroded vase (Fig.4b), where viewers can see mosquitoes lying on top of an unknown animal, piercing flowers with their long, pointed beaks like bloodsucking mosquitoes or flies, piercing a teenage girl's breasts and sucking her blood.



Fig 3. (a) "Bird Bites Woman's Chest. Zheng Positive Statue," Tohir's thumb-ceramic sculpture, an early post-classic, may have come from Guatemala's Pacific coast. Private collection, Guatemala City. A bird bit a woman in the chest, possibly hinting at her magical dip. (Mazariegos, 2017: 92. fig 33); (b) "Birds Bite Women's Chest. Side Statue" Tohir's thumb-ceramic sculpture, an early post-classic, may have come from Guatemala's Pacific coast. Private collection, Guatemala City. (Mazariegos, 2017: 92. fig 33) ; (c) God pierced a conch behind the buttocks of a naked woman as she embraced her long-nosed companion. Note that a man's nose is a combination of the noses of a human and a hummingbird. (Mazariegos, 2017: 101. fig 41) ; (d) "Mosquito Bite" Paintboard, Late Classics, Lowland Maya. The current location is unknown. A mosquito bit a young woman's breast. (Mazariegos, 2017: 94. fig 35).

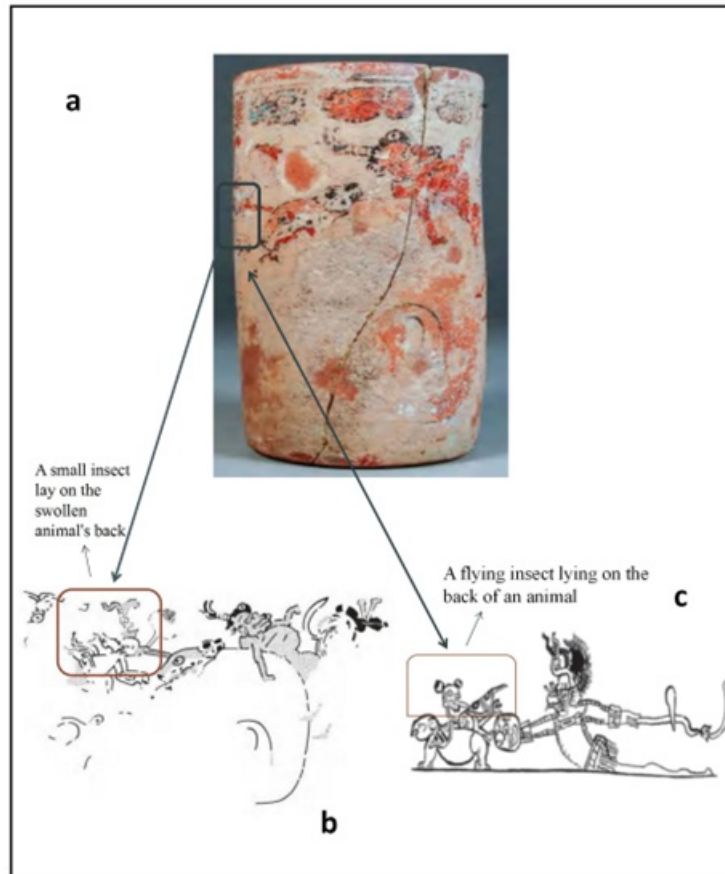


Fig 4. (a) "The Vase and the Flying Bug," an eroding vase, a late classic, lowland Mayan region. The Bobo Vuch Museum at Francisco Marocún University in Guatemala City. (Mazariegos, 2017: 13. fig 7); (b) "Vases and flying insects. Image" A design image of a vase with a small insect (possibly a mosquito) lying on the back of a swollen animal. Thompson era, Rio Honda Vase K1223 details, late classics, lowland.Maya region. Chuck used his axe against a flying insect lying on the back of the spire (Mazariegos, 2017: 13. fig 8); (c) "A Flying Bug on the Spire's Back," Thompson'sTimes.

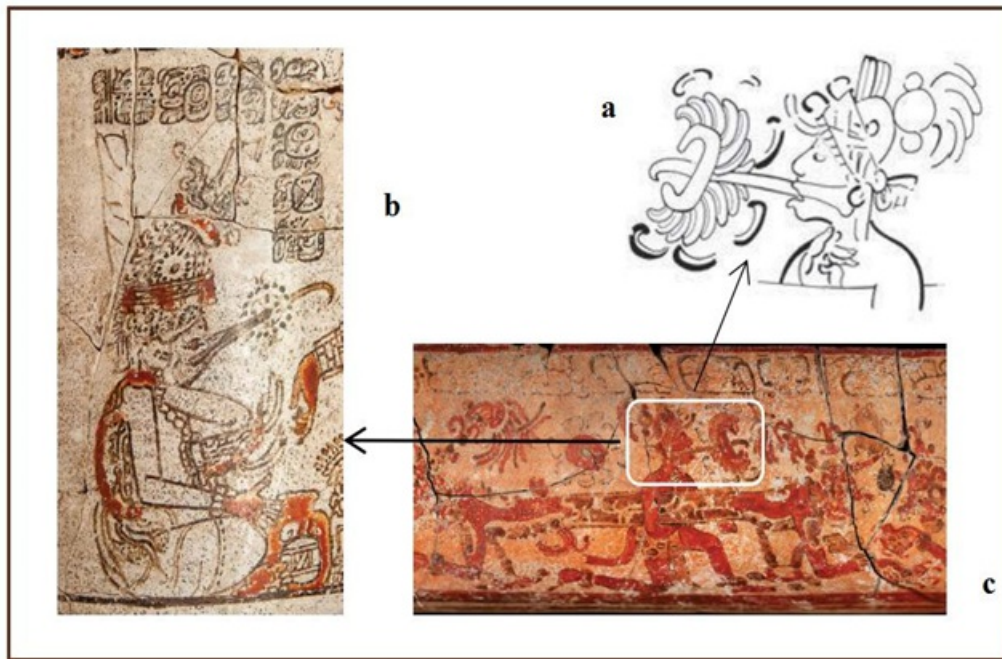


Fig 5. (a) The face and beak of hummingbirds. Local line drawing. The face and beak are shown in detail on the local map. (Mazariegos, 2017: 88. fig 31); (b) "Hummingbird" details a ceramic vase from Tikal's funeral, a late classic, lowland Mayan region. Molly Museum, Tikal, Guatemala. Image caption Tz'unun ("hummingbird") (Mazariegos 2017: 87. fig 30); (c) Face and Hummingbird Beak vase from Naranjo, Petén, Guatemala, Late Classics, Lowland Maya. Antigua, Guatemala: a young man wearing a hummingbird's beak and flowers is pictured. Note that the hummingbird's beak bears many similarities to the long, pointed mosquito's beak. (Mazariegos, 2017: 88. fig 31).

A maiden typically symbolizes a flower in which a hummingbird vents its sexual desire. Edward Seler studied the graphic details of a ribbon carving of a jaguar's lower temple unearthed during the Late Mayan Classical period and in the Mayan lowlands (Fig.6b). The image shows a hummingbird emerging from the flowers and biting a woman's breast. "The bird's long, pointed beak was inserted into the flower's rib cage, suggesting the flower was intended for birds" (Seler, "Animal Pictures," 237). Similarly, in the Perez Code, there is a narration: "Pupislintek transformed himself into a hummingbird and comes down to pick flowers. He sucked honey from the flowers with nine petals, and the flowers take him for a husband." (Craine and Reindorp, Codex Pérez, 120, cited in Mazariegos, O.C. 2017)

Hummingbirds and mosquitoes have a common feature, piercing flowers with their long beaks. However, mosquitoes seem better suited than hummingbirds to reveal an ancient Mayan idea of sexual metaphor, as the blood they draw from humans is a sacred object in Mayan narratives. In a delicate vase unearthed in the late Classical Maya, two scenes show strange scenes of a maiden having sex with a fat mosquito-eyed creature. Instead of ducking, the naked maiden offered her breasts to the ugly creature. In the scene on the right, the creature kisses a well-dressed maiden as she stands (Fig.6c). Instead, we find in Fig 7 that these sexual acts disappear and are replaced by caresses between them.

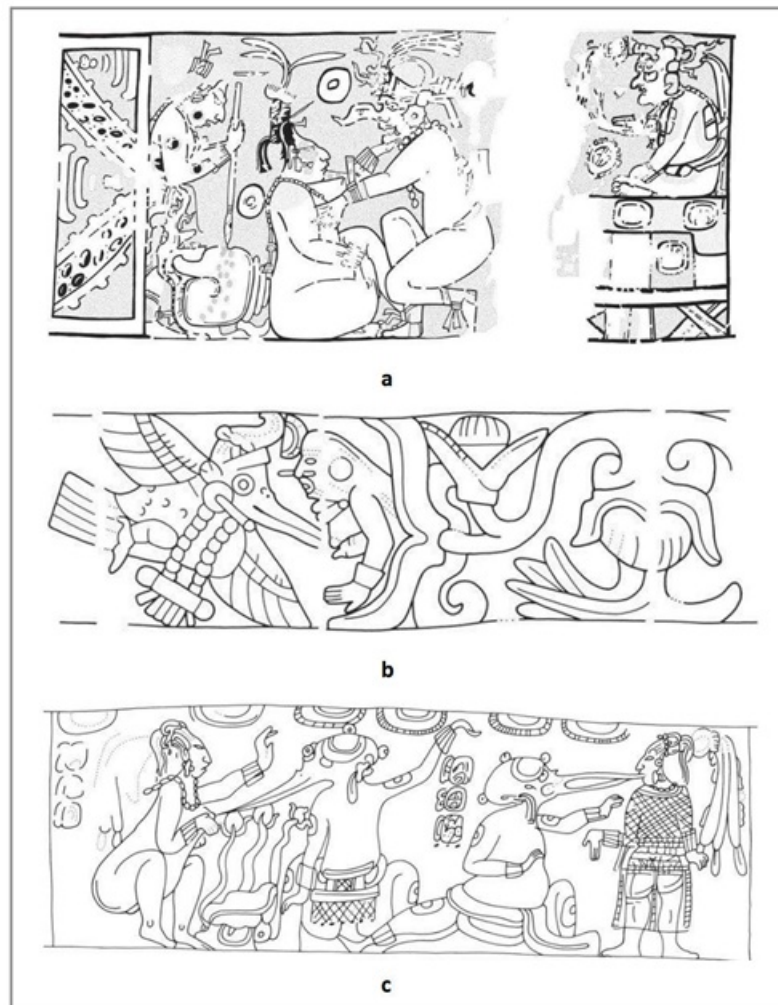


Fig 6. (a) "A vase. A long-nosed sexual partner. A partial picture." God pierced a conch behind the buttocks of a naked woman as she embraced a long-nosed partner. Note that a man's nose is a combination of the noses of a human and a hummingbird. (Mazariegos, 2017: 102.fig 41); (b) "Hummingbird Bites a Woman's Breast" in Jaguar's Lower Temple, Chichen Itza, Late Classical, Lowland Maya region carved in ribbon detail. The hummingbird bit the breast of a woman emerging from the flowers. (Mazariegos, 2017: 93.fig 34) ; (c) "Mosquitoes and Women" by Vase K7433, Late Classical, Lowland Maya. The cut scene depicts oversized insects having sex with women, hinting at a sexual metaphor. (Mazariegos, 2017: 95. fig 36).

In short, in the ancient Mayan concept, the universe was created by two gods, a creative process that needed to be created through reproduction and sexuality. The union of the hummingbird as a deity and the maiden is a metaphor that implies a description of the cosmic processes of creation, procreation, fertilization, and maturation. This logic helps to explain how the Maya built relationships between moons and birds, as well as animals such as owls and bats (Fig.8).

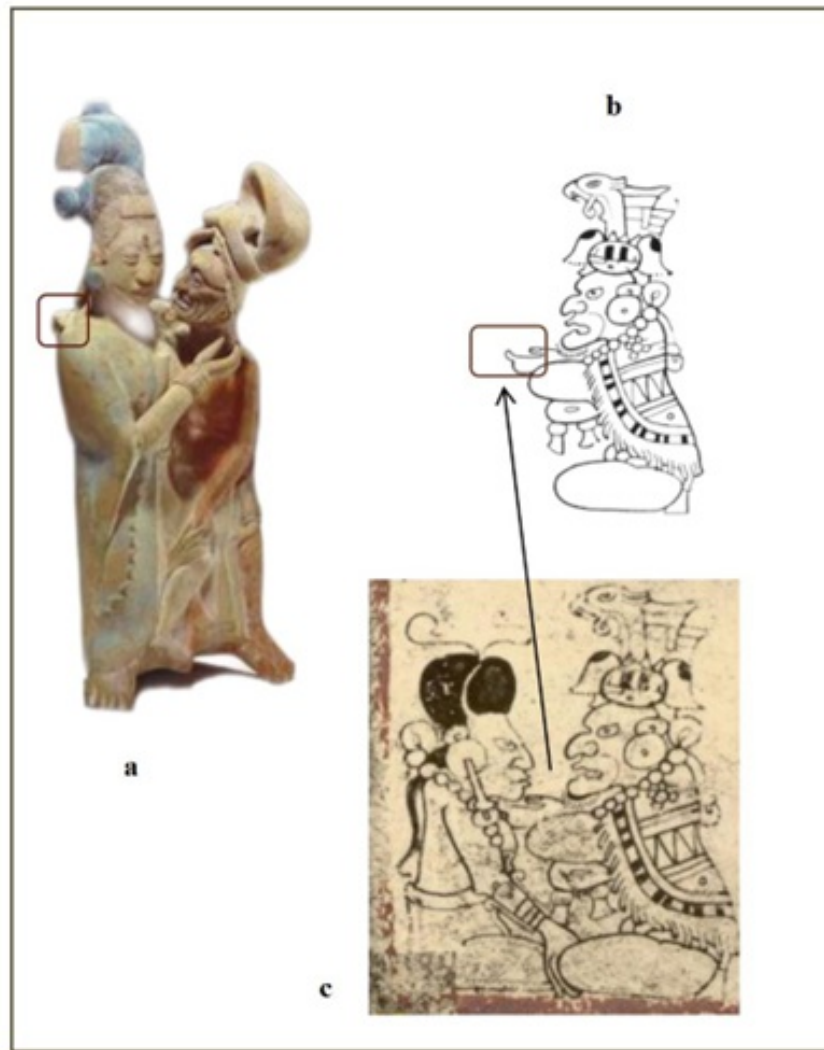


Fig7. (a) "Caress. Ceramic" (Dominguez, C. B. C. 2015: 87. fig 6B); (b) The Image of the N-god. The Bird. God in the Dresden Code, by Simon Martin. (Dominguez, C. B. C. 2015: 32.fig 36) ; (c) "Caress" (Dominguez, C. B. C. 2015: 87.fig 6A).

If the universe originated in a story about the breeding of the Sun and the Moon, then it stems from an ancient Mayan grand narrative of the universe.

So why did Maya create such a sexually metaphorical story about hummingbirds, including intimate contact with or assault of teenage girls?

For Maya, the union of hummingbirds and maidens is a metaphor for the relationship between human behavior and the planet's primordial debt. According to the original debt treaty, after man has reaped the fruits of the earth, he will give back to the earth in a ritual of repayment. In the mythical description above, a man who is a suitor should properly appease his future father-in-law in his pursuit of his wife. If a man does not keep her original debt and forces her way into her father-in-law's house to take the fruit that symbolizes the earth, he will be punished by her master. So, the story hints at tensions between potential partners.

But that doesn't explain the use of animals for sexual purposes: animals such as hummingbirds or mosquitoes that resemble the beak of a hummingbird.

According to the philosopher Rudolf Steiner, the dual nature of human beings generally refers to the elements of thought and emotion, they are mutually reinforcing and indispensable. Humans participate in universal events of the universe through the element of thought; the element of emotion can pull them back into their own existence. The result of this union is that we become a whole individual (Rudolf,2017: 113). If the hermaphroditic intimacy of hummingbirds and maidens is seen as a combination of two elements of dual human nature, thought is seen as a representation of hummingbirds and emotion as a representation of maidens. In this logic, we perceive our emotions through our thoughts about ourselves, and we feel pleasure and pain through our feelings about things, and only then can we become rich individuals and human beings with the energy of living beings. Therefore, the ancient Maya adopted the androgynous intimacy of a pair of hummingbirds and young girls as an artistic expression of the principle of the origin of the universe, that is, the sexual and reproductive origin of the sun and moon. In fact, according to the principle of the double nature of man, they may well be regarded as an object corresponding to the double nature of man. When the two elements merge into one, they become living beings like reproduction creates real life.



Fig 8. (a) The Owl and the Moonwoman The owl spread its wings behind the

Moonwoman's head. (Tedlock. 2010: pp.24) ; (b) The Bathawk and the Moonwoman
An eagle described as "bat-like" crawls over Moonwoman. A lunar calendar from the
Dresden Code. (Tedlock. 2010: pp.198, fig 52); (c) The Eagle and the Moon Goddess
and the Merchant Goddess (Thompson, 1990: p.449) ; (d) The Goddess of the Bird of
Prophecy carries a specific bird as an omen of the Dresden Code, post-Classical
Yucatan. (Miller., & Taube ,1997: p.126).

2.2. *Birds and God – Perception of the Relationship between Limited Things and God*

As described above, in the mythological theme of the ancient Maya node, the hummingbird is punished by God for secretly marrying a young girl, and in the mythical theme of the node, the macaw is also harmed by God's weapon, such as a spear, for stealing the fruit of the tree of the world, but God loses his left arm in such a brutal struggle. According to mythology, birds are punished by God for a reason. So, the question is, where did the relationship between macaws and broken arms come from? What role did they play in Maya's understanding and perception of the world?

An ancient late Izapa stone is now preserved at the Museum of Art in Sococuso, Mexico (Fig. 9). In the lower right corner of the monument is an upright crocodile tree, its head bowed, and tail cocked, its tail ending in branches and leaves.

There was a bird with branches and leaves hovering over it, and across from it is a large bird in the shape of a misshapen head, and at the bottom of it stood a man with a tool in his hand that is waging a long war, and he turns to look at the large bird that is perched on a crocodile tree, and we noticed that the man's left hand is gone, replaced by three wounds.

Many scholars believe the Izapa Stone tells the story of seven macaws from Mayan mythology. The macaw in the story is a very proud man, very arrogant, who boasts of eternal power, strength and judgment, like the sun and moon. Set in an earthly age when there is no sun and it is always dark, the twin heroes decide to teach the evil macaw a lesson by blowing his jaw off with a blowgun as he squats in a tree every day eating fruit. But as the twin heroes ran to catch it, the parrot struggled to rip off the hero's bleeding left arm. The same mythology can be found in Fig 10, "The God Who Shot the Sun, Moon and Bird" and "The Man Who Beat the Bird," a story of a macaw shot down by a god or twin hero.

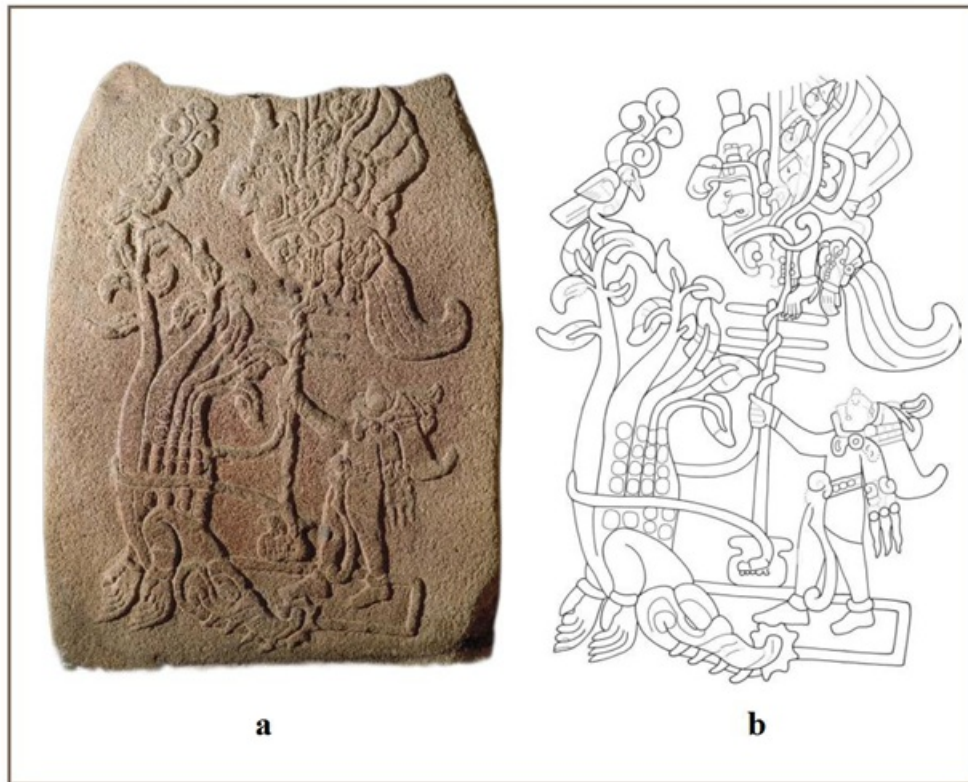


Fig 9. (a) "Stone tablets. Serpentine jaws bite the belly of a large bird." Izapa stone 25, Late Pre-Classical, Chiapas Pacific Coast, Mexico. Museo de Artes de Soco Cusco, Tapacula, Mexico. (Mazariegos, 2017: p.132 fig 55); (b) "Stone tablets. Serpentine jaws gnawing at the underbelly of large birds. Locals." Carved relief line. (Mazariegos, 2017: p.133, fig 56).

This recreates an artistic representation of a hero confronting a bird in the late Pleistocene Western Wall mural in Guatemala.

It shows a bird flying through a gap in the sky toward a tree in the Western Wall mural in San Bartolo (Fig.11). In the middle of the mural, we notice a large bird perched on a tree with a snake in its mouth and a god standing in the middle. Taube thought God had sacrificed himself in front of a tree, his genitals spurting blood as if impaled on a leaf. But here we find no scene of God clashing with a large bird. Taube noted that fragments of the mural show a large bird tied to God's back. Since Taube observed the large bird in a dying state, he thought the fragmented theme should be God and the dead bird (Taube et al., *Murals of San Bartolo*, pt. 2, 19, 52; Nielsen and Helmke, *Fall of the Great Celestial Bird*, 8, quoted from Mazariegos, 2017).



Fig 10. (a) Detail of the patchwork, late classic, lowland Mayan region of the sun, moon and bird god. Cancun Maya Museum, Quintana Roo, Mexico. Almost the same spotted god shot at the main bird god. (Mazariegos, 2017: 175, fig 82); (b) The Man Who Defeated the Birds beat Arsenal b / c Caguix, Izapa Stone, Raw Classic Maya. In this scene, the descending bird is attacked by two heroic twins. Arsenal's Boo Kakuike, who was at the bottom of the tree for the second time, has been beaten. (Miller, & Taube 1997: 182).



Fig 11. "Birds and the Self-Sacrifice of the Gods," details murals from the Western Wall in San Bartolo, Guatemala, late Pleistocene, Mayan lowlands. 100 BC The main bird god came down from a crack in the sky (right) and perched on a tree (centre) while the god sacrificed himself (left). (Mazariegos, 2017: p.169, fig 74).

Figures 12 to 15 of all relate equally to the arm of the victim (the spirit) as the subject of the sacrifice after the battle with the big bird, while the powerful red unique macaw in Fig 12 is very special, with many bird heads protruding from either end of the bird's outstretched wing, and snake heads appearing in the bird's reproductive area and holding a human arm.

So why do snakeheads appear in birds' reproductive parts? According to the colonial text description, in mythology, this implies a metaphor for sexual intercourse in Central America, not only for macaws' libido but also for the debilitating physical state that the average male typically experiences after sexual activity or feeding (Graulich, *Myths of Ancient Mexico*, 192-99; López Austin, *Human Body*, 293, cited in Mazariegos, 2017). So, the spirit or twin takes advantage of the macaw's physical weakness and then takes the opportunity to shoot one down, just as the birds in the previous pictures appear on a tree eating fruit and the twins shoot it down.



Fig 12. (a) "Macaw Bites the Hand of God" from Las Pacayas, Guatemala, in the Late Classic, a painted platform in the lowland Maya region. National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Guatemala city. (Mazariegos, 2017: 149, fig 64); (b) A macaw bites off a god's hand A macaw bites off the hand of a god with jaguar ears. Note that the blowgun is behind the wounded God. (Mazariegos, 2017:147, fig 65); (c) The Chief Bird God is one of the main gods of the original Maya; in many scenes, the bird has a snake in its mouth, possibly a storm or lightning; and the Mirador Stone, Guatemala, the original Maya. (Miller & Taube, 1997:137)



Fig 13. (a) "A snake in a bird's groin bites into an arm," a replica of a stucco macaw in a Copan Stadium building. Copan Museum of Culture in Honduras. The snake in the bird's groin was gnawing at God's severed arm. (Mazariegos, 2017: 135, fig 57); (b) "The Big Macaw and the Broken Arms" temple-shaped tent cover, an early classic, may have come from Escuintla on Guatemala's Pacific coast. Industrial Bank of Guatemala City. This features a giant macaw perched on a roof with its severed arm dangling from a cornice. (Mazariegos, 2017: 145, fig 61); (c) "A Big Bird With Wings in a Temple Tent" Temple, an early classic, may have come from Escuintla on Guatemala's Pacific coast. Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey. (Mazariegos, 2017: 146, fig 62); (d) "A Big Bird With Wings on a Temple Tent," an early temple classic, may have come from Escuintla on Guatemala's Pacific coast. Los Angeles County Museum of Art. (Mazariegos, 2017:147, fig 63).

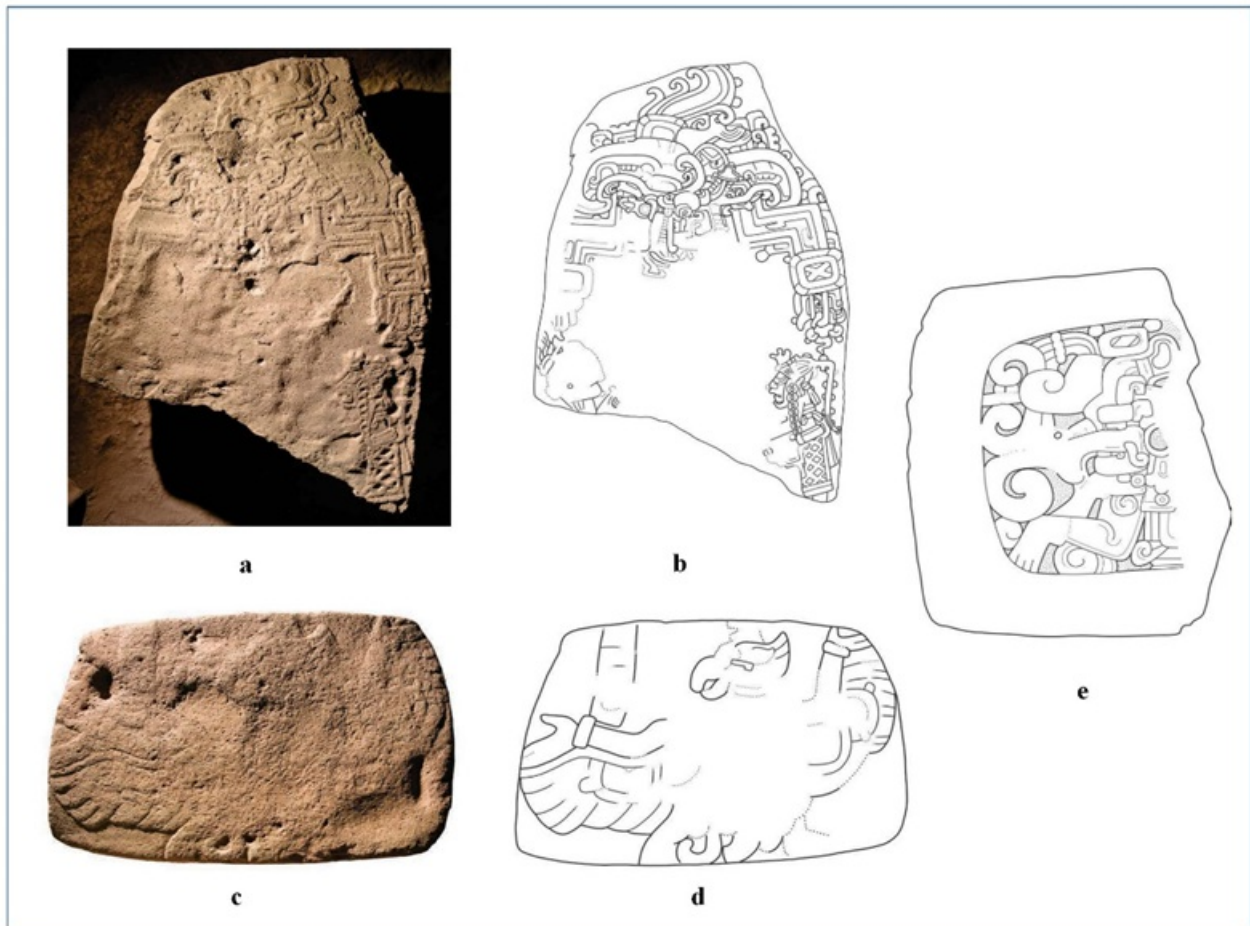


Fig 14. (a) Sculpture of the altar 13: the bird god of the sky, pacific coast of Guatemala, late preclassical period. Guatemala. (Mazariegos, 2017:155 fig 72); (b) Sculpture on altar 13: the bird God of the sky. Picture the picture of altar 13. The main bird God fell from a crack in the sky. (Mazariegos, 2017:155 fig 73); (c) "Bird Gods and Arms. Sculpture." Guatemala Pacific Coast Pre-Classical Late. Guatemala 1 January 1998 (Mazariegos, 2017: p.153, fig 70); (d) The Bird God and the Arm. _ Picture 2, Altar 30. Note the feathers that grow from the arms of birds. (Mazariegos, 2017:153 fig 71); (e) "Bird Gods and Arms. Pictures." Southern Jewish Sculpture Paintings, Late Pre-Classical, Guatemala Valley. A man's arm dangles below the head of the main bird god (Mazariegos, 2017: p.152, fig 69).

Metaphors of macaws' fertility have appeared many times in modern Whincup mythology. The Teotihuacan sun god, which lives as a bird in a lush, forested landscape, closes the heads of many birds on the wings of a large bird. At first, it emerged from the underworld to spit into the sea without clothes on a scene that, mind you, has been described many times in Egyptian mythology, often alluding to metaphors for fertility or sexual assault. Finally, many parrots came from all directions, all with feathers as ceremonial arrows of the Teotihuacan sun god.



Fig 15. "A Big Bird's Wings and a Broken Arm". A mural detail from Atetelco, Teotihuacan, an early classic, in the Mexican Valley. A large bird with multiple heads on its wings, legs and body bit into a severed arm. (Mazariegos, 2017:143, fig 59).

According to multiple colonial texts, while macaws' propensity to steal fruit hints at sexual metaphors in Central America, there is no plausible explanation for the meaning of God's severed arm.

It seems to me that the severed arm of God in the struggle against the macaws should be suggestive of a divine thing cut from the wholeness of the Absolute. When the unity of divinity is severed, the macaw takes the severed arm in its beak in order to break away from the unity of divinity and evolve into a fallen bird god.

But, back in the distant past, when religion maintained its own purity, distancing itself from folk mythological beliefs and flying forever like an elegant bird in a clear and mysterious blue sky, philosophical mysticism and it once enjoyed an intimate two-man world. Philosophers such as Plato and Pythagorean derived some legacies from mystical theories that influenced later generations. In later years, according to the philosopher Shereen, religion was tainted by impurities that were once part of folk beliefs, entangled with what was real and sensuous, and limited to the absolute. Finally, it causes no one, including those limited in nature, to pay attention to the Absolute who is otherwise inhabiting a more tranquil state of spiritual fullness.

So, I just would like to talk about the rational things that have been distilled from the mythological beliefs of the ancient Maya people, and that is the most complete of these rationalizations. Through awareness, we ascend to a higher order of potential and rise from an awareness of a new difference to an awareness of the highest unity.

For comparative mythology, King Kong's relationship with God or the Absolute mirrors the original sin story of the Garden of Eden in the Bible, a theme of human depravity.

In fact, the theme is to lay a solid theoretical foundation for religious mystical beliefs that connect people to God and the human heart to God.

Philo describes how Adam, God's human ancestor, was at first pure and holy, but at the instigation of the serpent (the ultimate erotic symbol of lust) he disobeyed God's command, Eve stole the forbidden fruit for the first time and used her emotions to control reason, bringing them together physically. Therefore, the offspring of Adam and Eve have always tended to leave their father (God) and mother (reason) in favor of his wife (emotion, lust) – the original sin of man who, when the soul enters the body, does not allow reason to control the emotions that lead to the degradation of humanity, and is therefore cast out of heaven by God.

However, according to Shi Yanping, Philo believed that man was redeemable, despite his original sin. Logos, as the true essence of God and as the "image and reflection of God", acts as the "intermediary" between Man and God, maintaining the channel of communication between man and god, so that the gap between man and god is temporary. It is still possible to reconnect with God as long as the soul can be released from the prison of the body and set free through the struggle for control of emotions and reason (Shi,1994: 71).

Philo's contribution, though, is to touch upon the supreme essence of God and the supreme source of the possibility of our human experience through a metaphorical interpretation of the biblical Garden of Eden, a story of reason and sensibility, and to explain the split between God and the human soul.

But the assumption that there is some sort of direct connection between the nature of God and the matrix of the experiential world seems like a crude attempt. Only the claim of percolation by the German idealist philosopher Schilling is more worthy of attention, when he argues that "God's independent creative activity is a percolation, a self-examination that goes deep into the interior of reality" (Schilling, 2017: 44). Thus, although we need to resort to an intermediary activity, not in a positive way, but in a negative way, the world of experience arises because of gradual descent and distancing from the original source. This relationship between the essence of God, the primordial unity, and the matrix of the experiential world, has been shown many times in the figurative imagery of pre-classical and late Mayan sculptures. The bird totem, as an independent reflection of the soul's free body, can be regarded as self-awareness in the form of conceptual reality. If we take the macaw out of the primordial unity of divinity or self-division, we see it as a self-division of self-knowledge of the primordial unity of divinity. Just as plants can continue to reproduce through cuttings? Is it absolute to treat one part of the essence as a subject and the other as an object?

If we think of it this way, we still do not understand that the possibility of self-existence as a finite thing is contained in the primordial unity, and that when it leaves the unity, it retains the fullness of the primordial unity. Just as real beings (finite things) depend on primordial unity, they acquire the ability to exist as a unity in themselves but retain their independence, rather than being completely divided among themselves and becoming a separate entity that has no relation to the primordial unity. To quote one of the philosophers, Platino's most wondrous and sensuous phrases should convey what I'm trying to say, and be the closing line of this part. "When we see God, the viewer is not our reason, but something that precedes and is higher than our reason... It is not strictly viewing... He is no longer who he is, nor anything that keeps him to himself; he is one with God, as the center of one circle overlaps with the center of another" (Berry Bouillier translation, 1861, Nine Chapters, 473, cited in Rev. William, 2012: 298).

7. Discussion - Perception and Understanding of the World

In order to extract the true "hidden" philosophy from the emotional image narration and text narration of ancient Maya. We should reclaim the objects that were "once dominated by religious absolutism." Shereen considered mysticism to be the earliest form of philosophy and the purest and purest "state" of religion. "However, in the post-Renaissance period," philosophy became a "secret" theory as opposed to open religion, focusing on the knowledge of ideas, and no longer treating the infinite as objects of knowledge. " Religion, on the other hand, is entangled with the perceptual and the existential and no longer retains its "purity" (Schelling, 2017: 22). In addition to the doctrine of absolutes, philosophy should treat the eternal birth of things and their relationship with God as the only thing that matters. For only in this way can a complete ethics, a guide to the life of bliss, be established "(Schelling, 2017, 23).

The ancient Maya, these races, seem to have been very aware of the myth of the Golden Age of the Higher Clans, and by borrowing symbols and images of gods from the imaginations of the Higher Clans, pondered the eternal birth of real things and their relationship to God. It is in this context that the spirits of the ancient Maya were able to detach themselves from the phenomenal world and direct their souls to a rational and intuitive view of God or the absolute nature, rather than simply following a dualist system that simply put the appearance of self-perception in complete opposition to the world. Therefore, their process of perceiving bird totems, and their connection to God or absolute unity, is experienced intuitively, and this experience subtly enters the occurrence of a power flowing through the mind, the power of spiritual love.

What is a concept? For example, when we see a bird, we may react to what we observe; then the idea is added to the object. When the bird is out of sight, but the concept of the bird is retained, this is the concept of the object. In fact, the concept does not exist in a separate way, but as an interconnected whole. Mayan thought, for example, embodies the concept of law-abiding organisms reproducing, while concepts based on personal things merge perfectly. Like Maya, from the concept of many hummingbirds, integrated into the concept of the human body.

We need to note, however, that concepts cannot be acquired by observation. According to the theory of simplicity, our perceptions, as the world directly presents itself to us, appear to have a state of being that is completely unrelated to us. For example, when I watched the ancient Maya create an image of a multi-headed bird, which, in plain English, was not an actual physical form, in other words, what I saw through my own rational cognition was not a representation of an actual bird, but an image of countless bird heads connected to a human head. However, this image confuses and repels me because it is completely at odds with our early and unknown perceptions.

This is the use of western physiology to explain this phenomenon, but it is not helpful to understand the relationship between perception and reason and appearance. This is where the Western anthropologist's materialist tools misinterpret shamanism because the West does not understand the concept of organic reproduction in Mayan thinking. In fact, this concept is another expression of the integration of subject and object.

Before answering this question, we need to think about real beings, because it is only "through the mind of the thinker that it can be connected with observation" (Schelling, 2017: 60).

When we look at an object, even though it seems to exist, it is not to the left or right of our consciousness. In fact, once a person thinks, he sees the object as an object and himself as a thinking subject. Then we have a consciousness about objects and a consciousness about ourselves.

But when we think in this way, the self and the object are opposed. In other words, this is the dual nature of man: when he thinks, he includes himself and the world at large, and by thinking, he transforms himself into an individual who is the antithesis of things.

How, then, did the objects we observe, and the elements that collide with the thought in consciousness, enter the consciousness of the ancient Maya?

This consideration of the question can be found in the modern Chinese philosopher Zong Baihua in his masterpiece "The Walk of Beauty" a very classic answer. The following is a quote from a poem by Guo Liufang, which shows how he once explained how "moving me" found and experienced images in real life.

*Nong's family lives two lakes East,
Twelve beaded curtains glow red at sunset,
Today, looking out over the river,
The originator is in the picture.*

Zong Baihua believes that he lives in the real world, and when he has a certain distance from daily life, he finds home in the picture, integrated into a beautiful image of nature.

This is the beauty of what we see and absorb in reality through a collision with our own consciousness. Finally, by observing and thinking about the process of aesthetic psychological change after things, namely aesthetic principles, he comes to the idea that beauty (things) is not just an objective being that is transferred from our consciousness, but in turn influences us, educates us, and improves our spiritual state (Zong, 2017: 17-21).

In Zong Bai Hua, his intuitiveness and Kant's view of aesthetic principles are a conditional understanding. We will not discuss Kant's argument for aesthetic principles for the time being, for Kant is talking about subordination to experience, but in the final relationship between man and the universe, he avoids the issue altogether and makes the point that finitude and experience are all reality, and nothing else. He did not want to admit that man had a gift for knowing the eternal and the absolute, so the light of the infinite blooming tangled with the finite in Kant's murky philosophy, and that it had secretly taken the root of his faith.

George Berkeley perfected a rational and intuitive understanding of the connection between the unity of the finite and the absolute, in contrast to the philosophical systems of Zong Bai Hua and Kant. Berkeley's intellect intuitively states that the Soul Self personally creates an awareness that is in a state associated with the unity of the Absolute. Although he understood that our perceptions were subject to his own subjective category, he did not limit the perceived reality to my appearance, as Schopenhauer did, ignoring the fact that the content of this perceived world was caused by the appearance or object of spiritual organization.

This knowledge of appearances and objects creates the biggest misunderstanding in modern philosophy. Because they are highly prized for the subjective perception of the change within us, the object that causes the change, including the unrecognized domain of the object, is ignored. Schopenhauer's proposition that the world is only my representation is based on this system of perception. "The world is my representation: it is a truth that is valid in relation to anything living and capable of knowing... For him, he does not know the sun and the earth, but always knows only the eyes that see the sun and the hands that touch the earth; the world around man exists only as a representation" (Schopenhauer, 1996:3). Although he describes a perceived object as a representation, he does not accept the valid fact that tissue based on organisms within himself is a combination of mere representations. He does not acknowledge that the hands and eyes that we perceive the world as I am. In other words, in his opinion, only my hands and eyes can change the earth and sun as a change to themselves, and the appearance of eyes and hands is impossible (Rudolf, 2017: 81). Idealistic Schopenhauer's argument may not be suitable for gaining insight into the relationship between perception and representation.

On the contrary, Bekele argues, our perceived appearances are created through the power of God (the unknown realm of objects).

He says that I see a table because of the perception that God evokes in me, so Bekele does not acknowledge the existence of a world of external entities other than God and human souls, which he regards as "nothingness" (George Bekele, *Essays on Principles of Human Cognition: Section VI*, cited by Rudolf, 2017: 71).

If, according to him, the Mayan moon goddess and sun god perceive each other in a way that uses the feelings the other evokes as a perception of myself. In other words, they perceive their emotions through their own thoughts of themselves, so that they can feel the pleasure and pain of their lust for each other. Thus, the ancient Maya adopted the sexual intimacy of a pair of hummingbirds and a young girl as an artistic metaphorical representation of the above-thought subject, especially the scene of God watching over everything behind the nude goddess, which occurs in many sculptures

and often implies that humans experience not only the change in our own perception that we have cut through, but also the unity of God or the Absolute that causes it. For the Mayans is well aware that any perception we humans have of the appearance of things in reality, is given not only by corresponding sensory sensations and the processes of movement and heart, but also by corresponding other perceptions, including those triggered by the power of God. So, the Mayans believed that the way humans perceive things was so constructed by God that their artistic expression was presented through a profound mystical philosophy.

It was in this way that the Mayans gave mythology its deepest mystical philosophical meaning, not just by looking for mythological themes, but by looking for the laws of creation on which mythology is based regarding the relationship between the universe and the finite. This can be found in Schilling's *Philosophy and Religion*, where he says, "To know nature means to create it" (Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, 2017: 266). In other words, although nature already exists, in order to recreate it, we need to rediscover the principles on which it is based. However, it is impossible for nature to be created before nature, but we can achieve it through thought and perception. Just as Maya succeeded in understanding and thinking about herself and the world in a constant flow of thought and perception.

But the above study of simplicity and idealism between perception and representation of the world does not find a stable point. For realism, the biggest question we face is: how do we create a world of appearances from ourselves?

The answer to this has been discussed earlier. These answers can be found in the following themes of Mayan mythology and art: we cannot focus on the thought object itself and ignore the thought process itself. After hummingbirds and maidens meet, for example, God is shown to be the primary trigger for our perception of each other's objects; while in another mythical node theme, macaws detach themselves from God's wholeness and become unique beings, implying that this limited part of ourselves is connected to the rest of the cosmic unity around us through mere perception, in the form of time and space, and that what we are thinking about as a wholeness connected to things

I would like to make it clearer through an example of an ancient Chinese philosophy of relevance. There is a parable in Zhuangzi's "Heaven and Earth" that expresses his understanding of the combination of finite and infinite:

“ “ ”

In this fable, Hyun-ju means the Word, Knowledge means thinking, and Distant Zhu means vision and Judge for a year. The whole parable says that if we "reason" or "think" or "see" or "speak" we cannot attain the true "Word." Only the "thought of an elephant" can get the "word." According to this note, Ye Lang explains Zhuangzi's parable as follows: "A parable has two meanings under certain circumstances: first, the image is superior to speech (concept, logic) as far as the expression is concerned; and secondly, this image is not merely a physical image, but an image combining the physical and the invisible ('like labor lost')" (Ye, 1985: 131). Thus, the allegory of Zhuangzi's "Heaven and Earth" is a response to

Berek's proposition that "the altar of heaven and all that belongs to the earth, in one sentence all these forms make up the grand architecture of the world." According to Berek, the physical and invisible between the heavens and the earth form the foundation of the whole foundation. Chuang Tzu had the same idea here, saying that this image, not just a physical image, should be a combination of the physical and the invisible. Only such an image can convey the reality of life in the universe.

Ancient Mayan bird totems contained the idea of such a perceptual process, derived from such a thought code. Without studying traditional Chinese philosophy, it is impossible to truly understand the secrets of the subject matter of ancient Mayan classical art, although in modern literature we have never found evidence of cultural exchanges between Central America and continental Asia.

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Author contribution

Professor Zhilong Yan's and Dr. Aixin Zhang's contributions:

- Make important contributions to the concept or design of the subject, data acquisition, analysis, or interpretation
- Write work, or make key modifications to important knowledge content
- Approve final release
- Agree to be responsible for all aspects of the work and ensure that issues related to the accuracy and integrity of any part of the work are properly investigated and resolved.

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