THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Placing the Maize Goddess: Chicomecoatl and the Nahua Common Class

By

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June 2024

A paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts degree in the
Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences

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Abstract

Dozens, if not hundreds, of Chicomecoatl (Nahua Maize Goddess) sculptures exist today in museum collections around the world; however, their archaeological context is lost due to the destruction of Spanish colonialism beginning in the sixteenth century. This paper analyzes 46 of these Chicomecoatl sculptures alongside codices, administrative documents, histories, and the writings of scholars on Nahua class, empire structure, and gender to propose the theoretical argument that the statues may have originally been located in the community spaces of the common class. The paper operates through the lens of indigenous and feminist archaeology and approaches the artifacts through a functionally reversed and contextual archaeological method. The strict labor distinction between the common (mācēhualtin) and noble (pipiltin) class, their physical separation, and differing approaches to gender roles may have generated an attraction to goddesses of sustenance in the common class that differed from the imperial worship interests of the nobility. Previous scholarship assumes that statuary capable of veneration was the sole property of the noble class, thus existing exclusively in their living/working spaces. This paper offers a new perspective on Nahua worship, community structure, and gender roles by arguing that members of the common class living in calpulli communities may have had the interest and resources to commission and worship sustenance goddess statues.

In the contemporary Nahua village of Amatlán, the symbolic and physical aspects of maize play a pivotal role in the daily lives, divination, and ritual of the indigenous peoples. In his 1991 book, *Corn Is Our Blood*, Alan Sandstrom reveals the inner lives of the Nahua that he discovered from months of ethnographic research and immersion in their culture. Following the timing and techniques passed down through generations, the Nahua cultivate, harvest, and consume their most important crop; maize[1] (Sandstrom 1991:119). Sandstrom elucidates that the Nahua view themselves as sprouting from the earth like corn, have a deep interconnected relationship with the earth and its vegetation, and define their community positions by the success and care shown toward their crops (Sandstrom 1991:240-241). Maize is critical for personhood and daily sustenance but is additionally utilized by shamans in Amatlán to divine the future. Dried kernels and other objects are cast onto a table and the relation between them gives information about disease, outside influences, and the requirements, such as animal sacrifice, needed in upcoming rituals (Sandstrom 1991:237).

Rituals are utilized by the Nahua to venerate their gods in exchange for continued prosperity. Maize is key in the ritual of Xochitlalia, a celebration of seed spirits that are attached to each of the crops grown in Nahua fields. This ritual is cyclically enacted each year and begins with shamans placing paper portrayals of the seed spirits in a cedar chest. The chest is placed upon an altar and is not opened until the following year (Sandstrom 1991:244). Throughout the year, villagers give offerings to the seed spirits to ensure successful harvest (Sandstrom 1991:245). The final aspect of the ritual is the opening and cleansing of the chest to make way for the placement of new seed spirit idols (Sandstrom 1991:244). Sandstrom notes that the most

[1] The word “maize” is the scientific, formal, and/or international word for the more informal term “corn.” Sandstrom and many other scholars use the words interchangeably, and I take their lead, using one or the other dependent on the context and whose academic work I am referencing.

prevalent and paramount seed spirits found in the chest are those related to maize. He argues that corn in its religious form "is more than a mythic culture hero symbolizing the central importance of corn in Nahua life; it plays a deeper metaphysical role in the Nahua view of the universe and the place of human beings in the natural order" (Sandstrom 1991:246).

Beyond the specific uses of the indigenous populations, maize is critical in the modern day as it is readily available, inexpensive, filling (in the form of corn tortillas), and functional for the building and preservation of community (Blake 2015:6). Neil Browne and Michelle Harvey (2007) engage with maize foods and community building as a mode of cultural survival. Community is created, expanded, and maintained in the neighborhoods and homes of the modern Chicanx through food production, specifically tamales (Browne & Harvey 2007:245). Family, friends, and neighbors come together in the home to shape masa (corn dough) and corn husks around various fillings while sharing culture and community that can be considered sacred (Browne & Harvey 2007:253). On a larger scale, Latinx and other cultures around the world are tied together through maize in street foods ranging from elotes to tacos.

The history of maize in the Americas is traced primarily through archaeology. Traces of the crop are found in dwellings, trash heaps, and caves. Accessories of corn are the most prevalent, with grinding stones, vessels for cooking and serving it, storage, maize beer containers, and depictions of it in paintings, sculpture, and pottery. In the years of human interaction with maize we can trace the care and modifications of its structure throughout time as humans harnessed it for its sustenance (Blake 2015:2). Roughly 9000 years ago, a nomadic group first encountered teosinte, the grandfather of modern maize in southwestern Mexico (Blake 2015:17). Over several thousands of years, the maize plant was domesticated into the form of sustenance we know today (Blake 2015:29). Corn is one of few foods reliant on human

intervention to be planted and grown in quantities necessary for survival (Rodríguez et al. 2014:65). The enmeshment of corn and humans is facilitated and necessitated by this symbiosis. This relationship resulted in the interconnection of sustenance and religious belief for ancient civilizations such as the Nahua[2] who thrived in the basin of Mexico from 1325-1521 CE.

Maize became the primary food crop of the Nahua and granted them the basic sustenance required to grow and maintain their empire. Corn allowed the previously nomadic Nahua to become sedentary, form permanent villages, and build their empire (Rodríguez et al. 2014:63). Michael Blake (2015) explains that corn's prevalence coupled with Nahua expertise in its cultivation, allowed the empire to grow into the millions. If maize had been removed from the food chain it would have resulted in the complete collapse of the Nahua population, military, and culture (Blake 2015:49). Corn as a source of sustenance was typically available to all, regardless of class, and allowed for the overall success of the empire.

Maize was of critical importance to the Nahua in the form of sustenance, but also in religious significance. In the "Earthly Things" book of the *Florentine Codex*, eight pages are devoted to discussion of the types of and uses for maize. De Sahagún begins with a description of the maize cob, how it is harvested, and the ways it can be consumed, and likens maize to precious green stone in its beauty (Florentine Codex [FC]:"Book 11: Earthly Things," fol. 246r-247r).[3] Corn finds its way into the art of the Nahua Empire in the form of sculptures, codices [Figures 1-6], and altars [Figures 7, 8].

[2] This ancient civilization is commonly referred to as the Aztecs, but this is perhaps not the most accurate term to encompass the whole of their empire, as Azteca refers only to those that migrated from Aztlán. The Nahuatl language was the applied language of the empire and "Nahua" is more applicable in cases referring to the combined and unified territories. The empire was expected to speak Nahuatl, though many members, especially those in the outer reaches, spoke their own indigenous languages. Nonetheless, contemporary indigenous descendants, such as those in Amatlán, are known as the Nahua, thus it is apt to refer to their ancestors by the same name.
[3] Section title: Thirteenth Chapter, Which Telleth of all the Kinds of Sustenance.

Research Questions

Sculptures of Chicomecoatl [Images 1.1 - 48.1],[4] the Nahua Maize Goddess (discussed in depth in the *Chicomecoatl* section of this paper) are an anthropomorphism of maize that exist in abundance today, yet greatly lack academic analysis. Henry Nicholson (1963) offers the bulk of discussion, and claims that more stone images "represent [Chicomecoatl] than any other single supernatural in the pantheon" and that "literally hundreds of these 'standard' maize goddess idols are known" (Nicholson 1963:9). I have managed to locate 46 Chicomecoatl statues, which begins to support this claim of hundreds, yet more work is necessary to prove that so many exist.

I find that the prevalence of these sculptures coupled with Nahua class distinctions and complex gender dynamics leads to three questions: First, why were Chicomecoatl statues created in such quantities? Second, where would these statues have originally been located? City centers were particularly targeted by colonial advances in Mexico, resulting in largely destroyed and fragmented statuary (discussed further in the *Condition and Colonial Damage* section of this paper). Considering this devastation, the survival of Chicomecoatl sculptures brings me to question if they could have originally been situated outside the city in the communities of the common class. Finally, did class - pipiltin (noble) versus macehuales/mācēhualtin (common) - suggest different relationships with sustenance goddesses? The answers to these questions are ultimately unproveable without several archaeological finds that do not currently exist; therefore, the answers I offer are largely structured in theory.

In this paper I will explore Chicomecoatl veneration, colonialism and resultant damage, class, empire structure, and gender dynamics to speculate that approaches to female goddesses

[4] There is an argument that these statues represent the goddess' human impersonators that were dressed during festivals of maize. For the purposes of my argument and simplicity, I operate under the assumption that these sculptures represent the actual likeness of the goddess.

may have differed in separate classes. Also, I explore how urban versus rural lifestyles could have changed perceptions on the role of sustenance in daily life. The quantity of Chicomecoatl statues coupled with distinct class expectations/lifeways could indicate their presence in spaces of the mācēhualtin. Additionally, predatory empirical practices and androcentric worship within noble spaces could have effected their relationship with goddesses of sustenance; consequently, Chicomecoatl statues may have been largely absent from community spaces of the pipiltin.

Chicomecoatl

Sustenance plays an important role in the feasting, sacrifice, and ceremonies of religious festivals. Chicomecoatl is discussed in sixteenth century sources that describe her character and the human venerations performed in her name. In the *Florentine Codex*, she is expressed as "representative of maize and men's sustenance of whatever sort what is drunk, what is eaten" (FC:"Book 1: The Gods," fol. 3r),[5] and it is said that she "made all the food and all the variety of meals on which human bodies subsist" (FC:"Book 1," fol. 36v).[6] The Nahua scribe[7] explains that "she is our flesh, our livelihood; through her we live; she is our strength. If she were not, we should indeed die of hunger" (FC:"Book 2: The Ceremonies," fol. 29r).[8] In Fray Diego Durán's *Book of the Gods and Rites and The Ancient Calendar*, Chicomecoatl is detailed as "the deity of the harvest and of all the grains and plants of this nation" (Durán 1579:222). In these sources, Chicomecoatl is also referred to as Xilonen (young/tender corn) relatively interchangeably, and

[5] Section title: Here is Named the Goddess Called Chicomecoatl (Seven Snake),Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.
[6] Chapter 16, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.
[7] Within the *Florentine Codex*, the Spanish narration of Bernardino De Sahagún is accompanied by the words of a Nahua scribe in the language of Nahuatl.
[8] Section title: Chapter 23: On the Festival and Ceremonies that they Performed on the Initial Days of the Fourth Month, which was called Huei Tozoztli, Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.

statues of the goddess are named by their collections as either. Regardless of her attributed name, Chicomecoatl can be understood as representative of maize, and with it the sustenance and survival of the Nahua Empire and its people.

Gods of the Nahua were bearers of life and nourishment, but were also capable of destruction, wrath, and punishment, thus they are described with this duality in codices and histories. In *Book of the Gods and Rites*, Durán explains that Chicomecoatl was life-giving while also capable of causing the freezing of seeds, famine, and want of barren years. She could be ascribed with the spoiling of cornfields and crops by frost (Durán 1579:222). To appease the gods that could bring both prosperity and suffering, the Nahua publicly venerated their gods through feast, ceremony, ritual, and human/blood sacrifice.

In the eighth month of the year, falling around the beginning of September in the western calendar, the Nahua people would participate in the Huei Tecuilhuitl festival and perform rituals of fasting and human sacrifice to honor the goddess Chicomecoatl (FC:"Book 2," fol. 29r).[9] During this month, all citizens of the empire would fast for eight days, and on the eighth day would feast upon the spoils of the earth.[10] During this fast they would dress a young girl in the adornments of the Maize Goddess and treat her with reverence. On that final day, after the feast, she would be brought to the temple, beheaded, and then her skin would be flayed and worn by a priest.

Durán explains in *Book of the Gods and Rites* that "[the girl dressed as Chicomecoatl] had been honored only to be slain to the glory and honor of the deity" (Durán 1579:225-226). Durán asked the native Nahua why they could not be satisfied with sacrifice of animals; to which

[9] Section title: Chapter 8: KL Huei Tecuilhuitl.
[10] In the *Florentine Codex*, the celebration, feast, and sacrifice are performed on the tenth day of the month. I chose to utilize the eight-day ceremony described in *Book of the Gods and Rites* because it fits with the ceremony falling in the eighth month.

they responded that sacrifice of human beings was the only noble oblation to venerate their gods (Durán 1579:227). Chicomecoatl holds the power of sustenance but also famine, and these human sacrifices were necessary for the Nahua to remain in the favor of the gods. The Nahua were tied in a reciprocal life-debt with their deities; in exchange for life on earth, they were expected to sacrifice human life. Humanity was born from an initial blood sacrifice, and Caroline Dodds Pennock (2007:3) explains that the Nahua were "constrained to nourish and nurture their deities with blood in return for the blood which was let in order to bring about their own birth."

Chicomecoatl is perhaps best understood through her similarities and relationships with other sustenance goddesses, such as Chalchiuhtlicue (water) and Huixtocihuatl (salt). These goddesses sustained life on earth and accordingly were praised through ceremony, sacrifice, and sculpture. In the *Florentine Codex*, discussions of Chalchiuhtlicue are more extensive, but she is consolidated with the goddesses of maize and salt based on their shared vitality and importance. The Nahua scribe explains that in the manner they honored Chalchiuhtlicue, they also honored the goddess of maize, Chicomecoatl, and the goddess of salt, Huixtocihuatl. The Nahua remembered that sustenance was the reason they lived, and that water, maize, and salt were the source of all things necessary (FC:"Book 1," fol. 6r).[11] To Chalchiuhtlicue the Nahua attributed the life-giving qualities, but also the dangers of water; and because of this fear and reverence, gave offerings and life sacrifice to appease her during her festivals (FC:"Book 1," fol. 37r). Likewise, in the seventh month, they would dress and sacrifice a woman in the name of Huixtocihuatl (FC:"Book 2," fol. 6r).[12] The Nahua celebrated, sacrificed, and labored for these sustenance goddesses in the interest of continued prosperity and survival.

[11] Section title: Which Telleth of the Goddess Named Chalchiuhtliycue (the Jade-Skirted), Who Was [Goddess of] the Waters, Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.
[12] Section title: Chapter 7: KL Tecuilhuitontli, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.

Chicomecoatl statuary is lasting evidence of this reverence for sustenance goddesses. Henry Nicholson (1963) analyzes the formal aspects of the Art Institute of Chicago's Chicomecoatl bust [Image 1.1-1.2] alongside other images of what he calls "fertility goddesses." He points to how depictions of goddesses blend into each other, with iconographic elements overlapping in different representations (Nicholson 1963:9). Specifically, how the images of Chalchiuhtlicue and Chicomecoatl overlap in their headdresses, adornments, and clothing to a degree they are nearly indistinguishable. Many of the statues I analyze later in this paper contain elements that could be attributed to any/all the sustenance goddesses. It is important to understand, when discussing the god systems of Latin America, that the strict boundaries of western religions do not necessarily exist here. There is more nuance and fluidity in the presentation and behavior of gods that does not always adhere to their ascribed name, gender, or attributes.

Condition and Colonial Damage

The culture and way of life of the Nahua came to an end in 1519 CE, when Hernán Cortés and 600 men landed on the coast of Veracruz, Mexico. They stumbled upon one of the most complex cultures of the ancient world, the Nahua, and they were shocked by the complexity of Nahua politics, commerce, and art/architecture. Tensions built over the next two years, and the Spanish were finally able to conquer Tenochtitlan, and effectively the whole of the Nahua Empire in 1521, with the aid of tens of thousands of soldiers supplied by the Nahua' long-standing enemies - the Tlaxcalans (Hirth 2016:2). The Nahua Empire had yet to reach its zenith, still actively expanding, when overcome by the Spanish conquistadors. The colonial practice of the conquistadors was extreme, ending in the complete destruction of the Nahua way of life. The

city of Tenochtitlan was almost entirely razed, burned, and looted, and the majority of art and artifact were broken, destroyed, or buried out of context due to its "anti-Christian" iconography. The conquering of the Nahua was brutal and comprehensive, resulting in a loss of culture felt by generations of indigenous people in Mexico.

Fragments of Nahua culture exist today in sculpture and colonial codices, but Chicomecoatl statues exist in abundance, with dozens, if not hundreds remaining (Nicholson 1963:9). In search of sculptural depictions of Chicomecoatl, I scoured the internet, collections around the world, and museum catalogs for depictions of Chicomecoatl, primarily finding them in the United States, Mexico, Germany, and France. I have begun assembling a quasi-database, available through a QR code and link on page 49. In this database I have included images of the sculptures and information about them, such as image number,[13] the name given by their collection, an estimated date of creation, material, their dimensions (when available), their current museum or private collection, and their provenance. Due to colonial practices of the Spanish, the archaeological context of these objects, except for the *Chicomecóatl Olla Mítica Con Tapa* [Images 24.1-24.2], found at the Templo Mayor in Tenochtitlan (Mexico City), are nonexistent or inexact; however, the minimal information on provenance is recorded in the database.

It is important to note that my search has been limited in a few ways. Firstly, the sculptures I have access to are only those digitized by their collector and uploaded to websites or published in catalogs. The requirement of digitization severely limits what I have access to

[13] The image number(s) applied to the sculptures are based solely on the order in which I found and added them to the database. This image number is how they are labelled and referenced throughout this paper. "Figure" numbers are used when referencing objects that are not identified as Chicomecoatl statues; these figures can be found at the end of this paper.

because many less visually striking, but still relevant Chicomecoatl depictions have not been photographed, thus they are not included in this paper.

The next difficulty is whether to include images of photos. There are multiple instances in which a photo or a postcard containing a photo of a statue finds its way into a museum collection, but the actual statue does not (Figures 9, 10). These postcards and photos come with descriptions related to the date the photo was taken, how it was printed and mounted, and dimensions of the photo/postcard, but lack information about the physical statue. I could not find where the actual statues are held in collection; therefore, I did not add them to my database or this paper.

Another constraint in my search for Chicomecoatl statuary is limited resources. This is a larger undertaking than the resources available in a Master of Arts program and could justify a lifelong commitment to finding and cataloging the sculptures. Ideally, I could get in contact with and travel to several museums around the world and have access to their collections to widen my search to more than what is digitized. Further archaeological work, including analysis of the stone for clues to where it was quarried, and residential dig sites are necessary to move toward proving any arguments made regarding these statues.

The final obstacle is the perishability of materials used to depict deities by the Nahua. For example, sculptural depictions of Huitzilopochtli, the warrior god of the sun and patron god of the Tenochtitlan Nahua, were created once a year from amaranth dough for the festival of Panquetzaliztl. The dough was molded into the shape of Huitzilopochtli, dressed, paraded around the city, stationed in the temple, then later broken apart and eaten (Boone 1989:37-38). At the fall of the empire, his depictions were no longer created in this manner and thus we lack sculptural depictions of Huitzilopochtli. There is the possibility that similarly ephemeral versions of

Chicomecoatl were used for worship and could have taken the form of paper votives such as those used in the contemporary village of Amatlán, or even a singular maize cob upon an altar. The sculptures I can accrue are only those capable of surviving the last 500 years, those made of stone and sometimes ceramic. Despite these limitations, my corpus of sculptures has grown to include 46 statues of the Nahua Maize Goddess.

Methodology

Due to the destruction of colonialism in Latin America, the archaeological approach in Tenochtitlan and the surrounding Nahua areas faces many difficulties and obstacles. Mexico City now sits atop the flattened remains of classical Nahua daily life. Archaeological sites are difficult to identify in the sprawling city-scape of Mexico City, where buildings continue to be built and the city expands.

Study in this area is further complicated by the past market of fake artifacts that blurred lines between authentic/ancient artifact and replica/outright fake. Unlike fakes in some other materials, stone is not as readily age identified through scientific techniques like carbon dating, making counterfeit sculptures difficult to identify. In the absence of scientific dating techniques, scholars turn to experts that examine material, technique, and style; however, this is often disregarded due to the subjective nature of these analyses. Ultraviolet fluorescence, scanning electron microscopes, and X-ray fluorescence analysis can be used to find small traces of the metals used for carving or areas of repair or adhesive residue, but these machines are expensive, rarely used in long-term established stone statuary, and their results can be interpreted in biased fashion (Kelker & Bruhns 2010:112-113). To do work in this area of ancient culture, and do work

regarding stone, we as researchers have to accept that an unknowable number of our art objects may be counterfeit.

As an indigenous person, though I am citizen of a southeast United States tribe, I approach this work through the lens of Indigenous Archaeology, identified by Stephen Silliman (2015:214) as "an archaeology of, with, for, and by Indigenous communities." I also adopt Whitney Battle-Baptiste's (2011) model of Black Feminist Archaeology, though in an adapted form as Indigenous Feminist Archaeology. This model combines anthropological theory, narrative/oral history, feminism, and critical race theory into a lens that can be used to understand gender, religion, and class intersections in the past (Battle-Baptiste 2011:29). Decolonized archaeology usually refers to physical work done at sites that includes the indigenous populations being researched; however, in written work I aim to utilize decolonized language and indigenous perspectives to craft comprehensive portrayals of past indigenous culture.

The main methodology for my research is a functionally reversed archaeological approach. Without concrete "proof" of where these statues originally came from, I instead turn to codices, histories, and the writings of other scholars to establish baseline knowledge about Nahua class, empirical structure, gender, and the importance of agriculture and maize. I then place the Chicomecoatl statues within the gaps in this body of knowledge. In the basin of Mexico, these sculptures, and residences in general, need extensive archaeological projects to even begin processes of finding proof. Without multiple findings of these sculptures in common class community contexts, the arguments made regarding their location are purely theoretical.

I will additionally be using Contextual Archaeological Method (CAM) that I have tweaked and adjusted to fit my purposes. CAM is defined by Karl Butzer (1980:419) as the

utilization of environment, narrative, cultural indicators, administrative documents, codices, and archaeology of other sites/surrounding areas to generate context for artifacts that lack traditional and/or academic archaeological recording/context. These methods combined with other scholarly research on class, empire structure, and gender allow me to tentatively place Chicomecoatl sculpture in the communities of the mācēhualtin.

Iconography

Chicomecoatl statues generally share many similarities but can be categorized through their differences. I categorize these works to illuminate the various forms used across the Nahua Empire to portray the same goddess while charting the similarities that connect and define her. By pointing to the similarities and differences of the figurines, I can argue their possible placement based on the quality/mode of the creation, medium, size, and intricacy of the work (found in the *Class, Gender, and Figurines* section of this paper). These works must be differentiated because lumping them as wholly the same risks overlooking nuances in their portrayal and their possible contextual differences.

Maize Goddess figurines are identifiable as women through their clothing, accessories, and/or indication of breasts. Despite their open mouths and wide eyes, their faces generally lack emotional expression, and have defined and human-like noses (when present). I lack side and back view photos of most of the sculptures but can ascertain that almost all were carved in the round with imagery on all visible sides. The basic level of categorizing the Chicomecoatl statues is by their material, their body position, and the interaction of their hands with maize cobs and other objects. The image numbers of the statues in these categories can be found in the *Material*, *Body Position*, and *Hand Interaction* tables on pages 47 and 48.

The majority of Chicomecoatl statues are made from igneous/volcanic stone, typically basalt, and comprise 43 of the 46 sculptures I have accrued. The remaining 3 statues are made from other materials: two from ceramic [Images 16.1, 25.1-25.2] and 1 from a green metamorphic stone [Images 27.1-27.3]. This green metamorphic stone, while perhaps not made from true jade, fits the requirements of chalchihuitl stone, which was precious (FC:"Book 8: Kings and Lords," fol. 17r),[14] symbolized fertility, and was likened to a sapphire in its beauty and worth (discussed more in-depth in the *Class, Gender, and Figurines* section of this paper) (FC:"Book 6: Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy," fol. 120r).[15]

The next basic category is body position; how the legs are positioned in relation to the body or the abstract positioning of the whole body. Twenty of the 46 total statues are depicted standing. Standing Chicomecoatl figurines typically have thick legs with feet and toes [Images 3.1, 4.1-4.3, 7.1, 8.1, 11.1, 14.1, 16.1, 28.1-28.2, 32.1-32.2, 42.1-42.3, 43.1-43.2, 45.1, 47.1, 48.1], but occasionally have block-like feet without defined toes [Images 9.1, 26.1]. Roughly half of standing Chicomecoatl statues have fused legs and the other half have a gap between their legs from ankle to thigh.

Ten of the 46 total statues are kneeling. These kneeling Maize Goddess statues have varying degrees of detail on their exposed knees and feet. Some have very simplified knees [Images 5.1-5.3, 10.1, 12.1-12.2, 13.1, 44.1-44.2] or undefined feet [Images 29.1-29.2], while others have rounded and realistic knees [Images 33.1-33.2, 35.1-35.2] or detailed bottoms of their feet [Images 37.1-37.4].

[14] Chapter 9: On the adornments that the lords use in their areitos, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.
[15] Chapter 25: On the language and effects that they used while giving their best wishes to the pregnant woman and conversing with her, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.

Fourteen of the 46 total Chicomecoatl statues are neither standing nor kneeling. Their position is either unclear, very atypical, or the figurine is only a head or bust. One condition that makes the positioning unclear is when the statue is severed at the mid-to-lower thigh [Images 2.1, 17.1-17.2, 30.1-30.3, 36.1-36.4]. I cannot ascertain from photos whether these were originally carved without their lower legs, or if they were cut later in their history. Examination of their undersides could give more clues to if they were simply crafted without legs, or if they were cut due to damage or other reasons. Some statues are damaged on their lower half making body position unclear [Image 41.1]. Atypical positioning are instances such as three statues in the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac collection in Paris, France [Images 27.1-27.3, 31.1-31.5, 38.1-38.3]. The remaining statues in this category are heads and busts, meaning they do not have a body position.

Chicomecoatl statues can also be categorized and understood through the interaction of their hands with objects. One of the main identifiers of Chicomecoatl in statuary is through her holding corn cobs, in which her arms are bent at an acute angle, with palms facing inward at chest height. Twenty-two of the 46 statues have corn cobs in both hands. In every instance of Chicomecoatl statues in my corpus, those holding maize cobs hold 2 in their hand. In instances where they hold cobs in both hands, they hold a total of 4 cobs (with the exception of the kneeling statue in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Germany collection [Image 46.1] which holds three cobs with both hands entwined in front of her body). Six have cobs in one hand, and the other is either empty or damaged. Two have cobs in one hand and a scepter in the other. One statue has a scepter in one hand and a variant object in the other (the cobs in this depiction are atop her headdress). Eight statues have both of their hands empty. When both hands are empty their hands either rest on their thighs/knees [Images 10.1, 39.1-39.3] at their sides [Images 32.1-

32.2], or are held up near the stomach/chest [Images 24.1, 26.1, 31.1-31.5, 40.1]. The remaining 6 statues either have no hands or I could not ascertain their hand interactions from the photos available online and in catalogs.

Chicomecoatl statuary can be further categorized into typical and variant forms. The image numbers of the statues in these categories can be found in the *Typical Form* and *Variant Forms* tables on page 49. The typical form most closely conform to descriptions of Chicomecoatl whereas the variant forms have more overlap with other sustenance goddesses. Additionally, this delineation between typical and variant is important because I argue, in more detail in the *Class, Gender, and Figurines* section of this paper, that typical forms are more likely to have been in the community spaces of the common class than the variant forms.

Typical Chicomecoatl Statuary

The typical Chicomecoatl statues, of which I have found 21, conform to three material and formal requirements: 1. They are carved from volcanic stone. Most are basalt, undefined, or granite [Image 26.1]. 2. They are adorned by a squarish and sometimes flared headdress representing headdresses made from amatl paper used in ceremonies/rituals. These headdresses have 2 to 4 pleated circular rosettes along the top and outside corners of the headdress. The headdresses have varying numbers of defined sheets/ribbons on the front, sides, and back. 3. The statues are depicted either standing or kneeling.

The hands of the statues in the typical category interact with maize cobs and other objects. Thirteen of the 21 typical statues hold cobs in both hands. Three have cobs in one hand and nothing in the other. Two hold cobs in one hand and a scepter in the other [Image 15.1, 45.1]. The chicahuaztli scepter symbolizes fertility, and is associated with deities of agriculture,

typically in association with the god Xipe Totec.[16] Full size versions of the scepter were used by priests during fertility and rain bringing ceremonies [Figures 11-13] (Solis 2004:17). Finally, 3 of the sculptures have both hands empty. While there are minor variations within the iconography of typical category (number of rosettes on her headdress and hand interaction), their imagery is overall similar to a degree that they can be grouped as the same.

Variant Chicomecoatl Statuary

The variant statues share many formal qualities with the typical statues but have clear iconographic differences that warrant their further categorization. The first category of variants are carved from volcanic stone and are painted [Images 6.1-6.2, 7.1, 36.1-36.4, 40.1, 44.1-44.3] and/or inlayed [Image 23.1], of which I have identified 6. It is important to note here that many of the statues listed in other categories possess a hole/divot in their chest that may have, at some point, held a precious stone or other inlay but is now empty [Images 3.1, 9.1, 10.1, 28.1-28.2, 32.1-32.2, 36.1-36.4, 42.1-42.3, 46.1]. Additionally, many of these sculptures could have been painted. The statues included in this category still possess inlayed material and have been tested for and/or still show paint. The groupings I have outlined are determined by the current state of preservation, and the typical category could be expanded with further testing of inlays/paints.

The next category of variants are carved from volcanic stone but have a different headdress than those found in the typical category. I have identified 9 of these headdress variants including one from the previous Chichimec culture of central Mexico [Image 24.1]. These variant headdresses are form fitting across the forehead [Images 26.1, 46.1], and often have a pleated fan [Images 9.1, 12.1-12.2, 14.1, 37.1-37.4, 39.1-39.3] or circular array of paper [Image

[16] This comparison with Xipe Totec is fitting as rituals attributed to Chicomecoatl and Xipe Totec both involved the sacrifice of a human and the flaying/wearing of their skin.

13.1] at the back of the head. These variant headdresses can be attributed to other sustenance goddesses, such as Huixtocihuatl or Chalchiuhtlicue. This overlap of imagery indicates that these goddesses were likely held in equal esteem and in some ways synonymous with each other.

Another category of variants are carved from volcanic stone and depict only the head or bust of Chicomecoatl, of which I have identified 4. These head or bust depictions vary in their complexity of depiction.[17] The bust in The Art Institute of Chicago's collection [Images 1.1-1.2] is the most intricately detailed stone version of the Maize Goddess I have found. The head at the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac in Paris, France has standard intricacy (in line with the average Chicomecoatl depiction) [Images 34.1-34.3]. And the 2 head/busts in the Museo Amparo collection in Puebla, Mexico are the least intricate in their carving/design [Images 21.1-21.4, 22.1-22.4].

An additional category of variants are made from ceramic and are highly detailed, of which I have identified 2. These are vessels or incense burners depicted with more adornments and fillers than those of the typical category. I will discuss the exclusion of ceramic Chicomecoatl statues from my argument about the common class in the *Class, Gender, and Figurines* section of this paper.

The four final variants each have only 1 statue. These variants are extremely atypical, and the majority of their features are not shared with the other 42 statues. One is round in its cross section and forms the shape of a corn cob [Images 31.1-31.3]. One's body position is cross legged rather than standing or kneeling [Images 38.1-38.3]. The third is made from green

[17] The term "complexity" is perhaps a westernized view of the intricacy of their carving and detail. I use this to show how the sculptures range from depicting Chicomecoatl through the most basic symbols associated with the goddess/women to depictions with high levels of detail, sumptuous adornment, and aspects of humanistic realism. In the more simplistic depictions, the headdress is the most detailed part of the sculpture, while the face and body are rendered with gashes for eyes, nose, and mouth.

metamorphic rock [Images 27.1-27.3]. The last in this category is a relief carving done solely on the front side of a rectangular stone [Images 43.1-43.2].

Adornments of the Goddess

Ritual and ceremonial dress lend to identification of these statues as the Maize Goddess Chicomecoatl. In sacrificial rituals honoring the goddess, such as Huei Tecuilhuitl, the Nahua would "adorn [a] woman with the goddess's ornaments" (FC:"Book 2," fol. 55r).[18] This dress, as outlined in the *Florentine Codex*, resembles the dress of many of the Chicomecoatl statues. "They would put a four-cornered paper crown on her" (FC:"Book 2," fol. 55r),[19] with "ears at the four corners" (FC:"Book 2," fol. 55v),[20] represented in all the statues of the typical category. "They would hang around her neck many strings of thick, precious stones, which adorned her chest" (FC:"Book 2," fol. 55r),[21] found in several Chicomecoatl statues [Images 1.1-1.2, 6.1-6.2, 7.1, 13.1, 17.1-17.2, 27.1-27.3, 38.1-38.3, 39.1-39.3, 43.1-43.2]. "They would dress her in a huipil embroidered with images of the [goddess],[22] and they would put some skirts that were similar to the huipil on her. Everything would be elaborate and rich" (FC:"Book 2," fol. 55r-55v)[23] reflected in the clothing of these Maize Goddess sculptures. While none of the statues exhibit this elaborate embroidering, many of them wear wealthy and extravagant garments akin to what is described in the codex and depicted in illustrations of Chicomecoatl [Figure 14] in the

[18] Section title: Chapter 27: On the festival and sacrifices that were performed on the initial days of the eighth month, which was called Huei Tecuilhuitl, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid, Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.
[21] Ibid, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.
[22] Originally written by de Sahagun as "demon," but replaced here with "goddess," as is more fitting to a decolonized interpretation of indigenous myth and cultural truth.
[23] Section title: Chapter 27: On the festival and sacrifices that were performed on the initial days of the eighth month, which was called Huei Tecuilhuitl, García Garagarza 2023 Translation from Spanish.

Florentine Codex [Images 2.1, 6.1-6.2, 12.1-12.2, 14.1, 15.1, 25.1-25.2, 26.1-26.4, 37.1-37.4, 38.1-38.3, 39.1-39.3, 43.1-43.2, 45.1, 46.1, 48.1].

Nahua Class

Class status determined many aspects of Nahua daily life and visibly split the population into two categories: the noble class, or the pipiltin, and the common class, or the mācēhualtin/macehuales. Unlike the European, capitalist, socio-economic system, which is split into an upper, middle, and lower class, with multiple levels of status within each level, the Nahua system was strictly structured into two classes,[24] and did not have a social or economic middle class. Class was determined by birthright; if born to a commoner family, the individual would stay a commoner throughout their life, and it was impossible to socially ascend from commoner to noble (Smith & Hicks 2016:423).

All aspects of Nahua daily life were structured based on class, and these distinctions were visually evident. More extravagant houses, clothing, jewelry, and positions within government were afforded to pipiltin, whereas macehuales had more modest living conditions and experiences (Smith & Hicks 2016:430). The materials available to the noble class included green stone, gold, feathers, and turquoise. Volcanic stone, which the majority of Chicomecoatl sculptures are made from, would have been one of few attainable materials for the mācēhualtin. Our understanding of Nahua class and daily life are determined by codices, administrative documents describing households, landholdings, taxes, and sumptuary laws, as well as new

[24] I assume, for simplicity of argument, that "class" as a concept can exist outside of Western, capitalist socio-economic structures.

archaeological excavations of houses and domestic contexts that show wealth inequality and class (Smith & Hicks 2016:424).

When discussing Nahua life, it is important to recognize bias. Codices such as friar Bernardino de Sahagún's *Florentine Codex*, and the 16th century writings of friar Diego Durán reveal much about the daily lives of the Nahua; however, their approach is androcentric and Eurocentric, and their accounts focus almost entirely on the lives of the major city center, thus only discuss the affairs of the nobility. Their Eurocentrism and Christian approach also skew our understandings of class and personhood that functioned for the Nahua through highly religious and indigenous frameworks. That said, they are still highly valuable sources in understanding the lives of the Nahua and can be supplemented with other written and pictorial sources.

Documents on governmentally controlled consumption of foods, clothing, jewelry, and other goods based on class known as sumptuary laws combined with survey data taken for the *Relaciones Geográficas*, gives us information on the daily life, and importantly the diets of the nobility versus common population. Diet differed from city-state to city-state of the Nahua Empire, but all reflected more expensive consumption within the nobility than in the common class. For example, in Yacapitztlan, members of the nobility consumed high class game such as turkey, deer, and rabbit, while commoners ate maize, typically the left over from agricultural production, and often their only source of meat was wild dogs (Smith & Hicks 2016:430). This difference in food consumption would have made maize a highly important source of life for the mācēhualtin and could have cultivated an affinity for goddesses of sustenance, such as Chicomecoatl.

The pipiltin nobility held higher socio-economic positions than their mācēhualtin counterparts, but this class had wide variation in wealth and status within it. Michael Smith and

Frederic Hicks (2016) engage with historical documents and excavations to discuss the class distinctions of the Nahua and define four levels in the hierarchy of the pipiltin from lowest to highest status; 1. pilli, 2. tecuhtli, 3. tlatoani, and 4. huey tlatoani. The pilli were full members of the nobility and made up the majority of the pipiltin population, but they lacked the wealth, status, and political power of higher categories. The tecuhtli were the next level of the nobility and are described as lords or high lords. They often held political positions and possessed large houses, significant landholdings, and large amounts of wealth. The tlatoani[25] were the second highest level of noble. They were kings of city-states and their power and wealth varied dependent on the size and strength of their constituent lands. The highest level of noble was the huey tlatoani, who were the emperors of the Triple Alliance Empire (Smith & Hicks 2016:424).

The socio-economic status of the pipiltin was visibly expressed through their houses and landholdings, which I will discuss further in the *Structure of the Nahua Empire* section of this paper. The Nahua nobility claimed direct descent from the earliest Nahua kings, and the tlatoani and huey tlatoani claimed descent from the ancient Toltec kings at Tula; the ultimate source of noble lineage. This direct descent gave legitimacy to their power, wealth, and status, with ancestry as the reasoning why the macehuales could not ascend to the category of pipiltin (Smith & Hicks 2016:424). The lives of the nobility, as they lived around the ceremonial precinct of the cities, revolved around the rituals and veneration of the gods. When not concerned with ceremony, the nobility focused on the expansion of empire through warfare. Their interests in the agricultural affairs of the common class paled in comparison. Statuary of the nobility reflected these interests in worship and warfare; however, statuary of the common class could have been more reflective of agricultural and sustenance priorities in the form of goddesses such as

[25] The plural form of "tlatoani" is "tlatoque;" thus, the huey tlatoani plural is huey tlatoque.

Chicomecoatl, Chalchiuhtlicue, and Huixtocihuatl. The noble class held the totality of power but made up only about 2% or 100,000 - 140,000 people out of the Nahua Empire's total population of 5 - 7 million (Alfani & Carballo 2023:1269).

The remainder of the Nahua Empire's population was made up of the mācēhualtin commoners, whose lineage endowed them with an obligation to work the land. Their population thus was primarily made up of farmers. The *Historia de Los Mexicanos por sus Pinturas*, López Austin and López Luján (2009) and McClung de Tapia and Martínez Yrizar (2016) engage with the obligations of the macehuales and explain the mytho-history of working the land: The Nahua gods were divine beings formed in the likeness of man; their humanistic qualities made them approachable for veneration, but also gave them weakness. To combat this weakness the gods consumed foods and relied on humans to supply them with their sustenance (López Austin & López Luján 2009:177).

The gods created a man, Oxomoco, whose fixed destiny was to work the land, and a woman, Cipactónal, who was predetermined to spin and weave. From these two humans, the entire lineage of the mācēhualtin was sired with the continuing obligation to work the land and craft from the resources of nature to feed the gods. All things in existence – in this instance the gods and the macehuales – including animals, warriors, sacrifices, ancestors, the spoils and features of the earth, and everything else must reciprocally interact to maintain the balance of the universe (Historia de Los Mexicanos por sus Pinturas:25). All things participated in maintaining balance, but humans were the only creatures capable of feeding and sustaining the gods through their labor and sacrifice (López Austin & López Luján 2009:178). The gods reciprocated by supplying humanity with the day and night (sun and moon), human life, and the means to survive on earth (McClung de Tapia & Martínez Yrizar 2016:180). The common class could have been

more attracted to worship practices that honored goddesses of agriculture, such as Chicomecoatl because growing foodstuffs was their obligation, method of survival, and way of life.

With the divine expectation to grow foods, the status of the mācēhualtin was determined by how they accessed land. The commoners, like the pipiltin, had great variation within their class, from the lowest slaves, through the levels of farmers who made up the majority of macehuales, and up to warriors, merchants (pochteca), luxury artisans, priests, and officials (calpixque) (Smith & Hicks 2016:428). Macehualis were not allowed to own land and had to give service to work the land owned by the tecuhtli noble. This was done in three ways with varying levels of status; 1. noble-dependency, 2. membership in a tecalli, or 3. membership in a calpulli.[26] Noble-dependent commoners had claim to land only when decided by their noble benefactor and had very limited personal freedoms and self-sovereignty (Smith & Hicks 2016:429). They made payment to their nobles in the form of goods and work.

Tecalli were communities of related nobles that possessed small commoner villages. The workable land was owned by the tecalli collectively, and each noble typically owned land of their own. Commoners could live and be members of a tecalli by working the land and paying rent and giving service to the nobles (Smith & Hicks 2016:426). These commoners had more rights and personal freedoms than those in noble-dependency, but not as many as the highest status farming commoners, those who were members of a calpulli.

The calpulli was a socio-economic grouping akin to a neighborhood, which I will discuss more in depth in the *Structure of the Nahua Empire* section of this paper, and membership in a calpulli was the highest status access to farmland in the Nahua Empire. Our knowledge on the

[26] Calpulli/calpolli most commonly refers to a neighborhood, taxation, and work arrangement but is also used to mean “big house” in some writings, such as the *Florentine Codex*, to describe temples in the ceremonial precinct of Tenochtitlan. I solely use it to refer to the neighborhoods/communities of the mācēhualtin.

concrete formation and function of the calpulli comes from early colonial census data taken in the city-states of Morelos, as analyzed by Smith and Hicks (2016). In a calpulli, the farming members had access to land in exchange for paying rent, in the form of cotton textiles, foodstuffs (primarily maize), and other labor services to the noble who owned the land. This noble, unlike in a tecalli, was typically largely separate from farming operations, unless the farming results were unsatisfactory. If the land was continually farmed and productive, the members could depend on access to the land each year. Land was allocated by a calpulli council, and unused or unproductive land could be reassigned to new or more productive members (Smith & Hicks 2016:426).

Calpulli members experienced large amounts of freedom and self-determination in their access to land given they produced goods and paid rent to the noble landowner. Unlike the other methods of farmland access, the individual freedoms afforded by membership in a calpulli could have fostered autonomous and rich systems of religion and honoring the gods. This freedom of behavior and worship, coupled with the agricultural interests of the common class, could indicate that sculptures of sustenance goddesses were primarily commissioned for and situated in the community spaces of the calpulli.

Structure of the Nahua Empire

The structure of community spaces in the Nahua Empire are best understood within the modularity model of community organization found in J. Lockhart (1992) and Timothy Hare (2000). The modularity model nestles smaller communities within increasingly larger community spaces. Here, it is most fruitful to start from the largest units of community and work down to the smallest. The largest unit of community for the Nahua' was their empire. The colonial aspect of

the empire means that the boundaries, types of people, and the cultures at the edges were constantly in flux. The Triple Alliance of the Nahua maintained their control over this large empire by demanding tribute from conquered territories in exchange for continued prosperity (Hodge 1998:30). Additionally, they erected monuments created from materials of newly controlled states that expressed the totality of Nahua control (Umberger 1996:85-86) and replicated rituals of dominance through human sacrifice of those defeated in battle (Dodds Pennock 2007:6-8). The community structure of the Nahua can be categorized into four basic levels: 1. Large Altepetl (state) 2. Small Altepetl (city; or city-state in instances such as Tenochtitlan) 3. Calpulli (neighborhood), and 4. Calli (household).

The largest community space was the large altepetl or state. There were three states within the Triple Alliance, and each was ruled by the Huey Tlatoani, or emperor. These were the territories of the empire, and contained cities, neighborhoods, and houses. Capital cities, such as Tenochtitlan are both large and small altepetls because they are structured the same; however, capitals are the central command of a branch of the Triple Alliance, thus they are typically categorized as a large altepetl (Smith 2016:201).

The small altepetl, or city, was the second largest community unit. In non-capital cities the altepetl consisted of a defined territory with an urban center containing a ceremonial precinct, palaces of the nobility, and a marketplace. Cities were typically arranged around the ceremonial and civic center in which rectangular plazas were surrounded by pyramids/temples, shrines, ballcourts, and palaces of the royal elite, such as the tlatoani (Smith 2016:201). Sculptural depictions of religious icons often represented the worship practices and interests of the people. In the city-center, dominated by nobility members, sculpture often took the form of male deities and/or was monumental in size (often human height or larger). Additionally, these sculptures

were often crafted from precious materials. The feminine attributes, size (41 of the 46 statues collected for this paper are 60 cm (2 feet) or less in height), and relatively inexpensive stone of Chicomecoatl statuary could indicate that they were not found in the noble spaces of the city center.

The second smallest community space in the Nahua Empire were the neighborhoods of the noble and common people. The higher nobility built their neighborhoods and homes in close proximity to the city center under strict guidance of city planners, whereas commoners and pilli nobles established their neighborhoods and homes in the periphery of the cities without formal direction or planning. The result of these periphery projects are the neighborhoods of the common class, the calpulli (also the tecalli and noble-dependents lived in similar accommodations) (Smith 2016:201). The calpulli, beyond service to a noble in exchange for access to farmland, largely functioned as neighborhoods for the common people. They were often not related by genetics or kinship but shared economic and social characteristics. Their neighborhoods were physically and symbolically separate from other calpullis. Unique communities connected through worship interests could have been formed in the calpulli away from the strict structure of the city center; therefore, sustenance goddesses, such as Chicomecoatl, could have been honored to a greater extent in these neighborhoods than in city-centers where the nobility resided.

Michael E. Smith (2016:213) claims that each calpulli had a patron deity with a temple and image of the deity. If this could be proved factual, through archaeological discovery, the Chicomecoatl statues would be perfectly at home in these small neighborhood temples. Elizabeth Boone (1989) argues, when discussing statues of Huitzilopochtli, that Huitzilopochtli statues would not be appropriate in the neighborhoods of the common class because the deities in those

spaces were associated with agriculture and fertility (Boone 1989:10). The assertions of these two scholars are the only places I have found that directly corroborate my speculation that sustenance goddess statues, such as Chicomecoatl could have originally resided in the community spaces of the mācēhualtin.

Calpulli neighborhoods functionally tied people of different backgrounds together in community and the conditions/attributes of these communities differed throughout the empire. Timothy S. Hare (2000) explores census data from pre-colonial Morelos to give quantifiable data on calpullis. He found that calpullis had an average of 274 households and 1,752 people. There are variations in the physical space of the neighborhoods with some reaching the landmass of mid-size cities (Hare 2000:86). The large size of some calpulli indicates that there could have been a rich and complex cultural and economic life within commoner spaces and neighborhoods. These variations in size and culture may have allowed for diverse interests, such as some neighborhoods seeking permanent deity sculptures (choosing permanence over ephemeral votives in paper or other perishable materials). It is important to note that Chicomecoatl statues would likely not have been found in *every* calpulli, and likely in very few, throughout the empire. The commissioning of any sculpture would have required large amounts of resources and a communal mindset. These conditions may only have existed in select neighborhoods that could afford/cared to have a permanent sustenance goddess idol. If Nicholson's (1963) claim that hundreds of these sculptures exist (Nicholson 1963:9), those numbers would still represent only a small fraction of the thousands of calpulli across the Nahua Empire.

The smallest category of community unit was the tecpan-calli (noble lord-house or palace) and calli (common house) (Evans 1998:7). The palaces of the nobility, beyond their use for home, shelter, and comfort for their inhabitants, had three types with different functions: 1.

Administrative palaces where the local rulers took residence and conducted issues of local government. These palaces were planned around a central courtyard/business meeting space with suites of other rooms with varying purpose encircling the courtyard. 2. Mansions built under strict guidance of sumptuary laws for the wealthiest of nobles and commoners. 3. Pleasure palaces and retreats with varying specific functions (Evans 1998:8-9).

The huey tlatoani lived in the most opulent of administrative palaces, the huetecpans. In the courtyards of the huetecpans, the strategies of empire were discussed and mobilized; this is where the Tenochtitlan arm of the Triple Alliance made its imperial plans. The decisions made here were disseminated to the civic spaces of cities throughout the empire and passed from the nobility to the masses (Evans 1998:14). From these grand palaces in the city center the huey tlatoani and tlatoani administered their governmental decisions. From more modest, but still quite large dwellings, the tecuhtli nobles similarly addressed their calpulli's administrative needs. From their palaces they controlled labor, the acquiring of tribute, and other regulations of political and religious form that maintained peace and general comfort in their constituencies (Hare 2000:84).

The homes, or calli, of the mācēhualtin were in similar arrays around a central courtyard, but on a smaller scale both physically and socially. Within a given neighborhood, typically three calli were arranged around a shared patio, and each cluster could contain three or more, multigenerational family systems (De Lucia 2016:248). Unlike in the greater community unit of the calpulli, calli were formed through kinship and/or family. Kristen De Lucia (2016) engages with the calli cluster formation of the common class by analyzing burgeoning archaeology of rural home systems, survey documents, and histories. She claims that during the years of 1325-1521 CE, the common people lived in multigenerational households that were typically decided

through bilateral kinship, a system in which social capital belongs equally to descendants of the mother and father. However, nuclear families and households of individuals were also relatively common. The household size in a small city would be in the range of 3-8 people, whereas large cities such as Tenochtitlan could have 10-15 people in one household (De Lucia 2016:248).

De Lucia (2016) explores household archaeology that is turned to the edges of the empire rather than focused on Tenochtitlan, where ancient space competes with the modern urban sprawl. This household archaeology is most fruitful for reconstructing the daily lives of the Nahua common class (De Lucia 2016:247). The mācēhualtin are currently understudied because 16th century sources largely focused on the lives at the city-centers, which were almost entirely those of the pipiltin. She argues that the

> "physical arrangement of space provides insight into social interactions while the distribution of artifacts across household space aids in our understanding of how activities were organized. In addition, archaeological evidence can offer something that documents cannot—it can tell us how households changed through time" (De Lucia 2016:250-251).

Archaeology in commoner households has revealed two types of mācēhualtin house. 1. Complex structures with multiple rooms as found in Tenochtitlan and other large and major cities. 2. Small, one room structures in territories such as Morelos and in the Toluca Valley. The houses of commoners were almost identical in rural and urban areas, indicating that social behaviors were inherent to mācēhualtin life, rather than tied to agricultural versus urban lifestyle (Smith 2016:212-213). With future archaeology performed in common space households and neighborhoods, more could be discovered about worship and social practices of the common class.

Alan Sandstrom (1991) performed ethnographic work in the contemporary Nahua village of Amatlán (roughly 400 miles northwest of Mexico City) and inspires insight into possible ways the neighborhood and housing structure of the common class could have functioned prior to

Spanish colonial pressures. He explains that the calli of Amatlán are one room structures built in clusters around a central clearing in which "the family prepares and consumes food, stores equipment and produce from the fields, makes ritual offerings, socializes children, sleeps, and carries out the many daily activities of village life" (Sandstrom 1991:107). He details how the different types of Nahua houses are built, in the style passed down through generations and describes the materials and community structure required to build.

The building process involves the group effort of several men and women and highlights the careful attention paid to the functionality of the space for the women who work within the home (example: double checking that the doorways are high enough to accommodate a woman walking with a pot of water balanced atop her head). If the modern Nahua village reflects their ancient counterpart; the pre-Columbian mācēhualtin, then the ancient process of building a house required strong community ties and a respect for women and their many duties within and around the home. This interest in woman-ascribed duties and strong community ties could have created an environment for veneration of sustenance goddesses, such as Chicomecoatl. Sustenance goddesses, who were inherently tied to the agriculture success and survival of the common people, could have been held to a level of esteem that required the commission of permanent sculptures for worship.

The above discussion of community structure in the Nahua Empire hinges on the modularity model of organization; however, there is significant scholarly tension as to whether this is the correct model. Barbara Price (1977) argues against the modularity model stating that the calpulli's size demonstrates that it could not have functioned as a community without contemporary transportation and communication. Further, she argues that groups would become more localized rather than spreading out. She argues that [calpulli] function was loose and

agriculturally focused and lacked social ties and cultural uniqueness from one neighborhood to the next.

Hicks (1982) and Hare (2000) rebut Price's claim and argue that the community structure model is modular because community was generated in three ways: 1. The mācēhualtin were required to give service to the noble, ceremonial center connecting them with the city and its people. 2. Religious ceremonies held in the city center lent to generating feelings of group identity as not just workers, or neighbors, but united under their belonging to an empire and its religious system. 3. The marketplace allowed for the flow of commerce, social interaction, and culture between the people of the city and the empire. These community generating processes would allow for communities to spread over large areas and cultivate unique social interactions and identities in far-flung neighborhoods.

The other concern when discussing community structure of the Nahua is whether to view it through a model of segmentary descent or through corporate structure. Some Latin American civilizations, such as the Maya, exhibited segmentary descent in which their communities were built through direct descent of lineage and kinship (Hare 2000:93). There is not sufficient evidence to apply this model of thinking to the Nahua, as their neighborhood and community structure appears to have been built on the corporate necessity of work and farming. Additionally, social interaction was likely cultivated through their common experiences and more closely resembled a corporate structure model.

Surveys show that members of a calpulli could pick-up and move to a different neighborhood with relative ease for various reasons. This ability to change situations negates the segmentary descent model that would not allow for easy relocation of individuals away from their neighborhoods built on kinship and family (Smith & Hicks 2016:427). Class and

community structure exhibited through household/residential archaeology, modern ethnohistory, and administrative documents indicates that the modular and corporate models apply most effectively to our interpretations of the Nahua Empire.

Gender and Nahua Life

16th century sources, such as codices and Durán's writings, are critical for our understanding of Nahua society, ritual, and what they held as important in daily life; however, they are skewed through an androcentric and Eurocentric lens. The writers of these sources were typically pious members of the catholic church and, according to Caroline Dodds Pennock (2018:279) their "Christian morality with its binary sense of good and evil found it difficult to reconcile the manifold aspects of indigenous deities, leading to the simplification or fragmentation of their complex identities." The Christian approach to gender is simplified into a binary, with rigid social roles attributed to men versus women. This binary, with strong favoritism for men cannot necessarily be applied to the role of gender in Nahua society.

Scholars such as June Nash (1978) color the Nahua as wholly misogynistic and assume that all aspects of their lives had a clear hierarchy of men over women. Nash argues that the origin of male dominance is the imposition of the birth-giving and childrearing role onto women (Nash 1978:348). Inga Clendennin (1991) describes the thanklessness of childbirth/rearing; however, she also portrays it as an honorable sacrifice:

> "During the process of birth women were and were seen to be abducted from their usual gentle domesticities, and… to be 'possessed' by some great presence beyond the self. For those who emerged victorious from the struggle, the warrior metaphor was still insisted upon, the midwife greeting the newly delivered child, the little 'captive,' with war-cries, while praising the panting mother for her warrior's courage. But the woman would receive none of the material rewards of the successful warrior, and there was a bitter under-taste to the midwife's praises" (Clendennin 1991:247).

The child is then parturiated and becomes a future sacrifice for the gods either in battle, upon the sacrificial stone, or themselves in childbirth (Clendennin 1991:248). Though the act of childbirth is not recognized publicly as a sacrifice after the birth, it entails the continuation of humanity through cyclical life debt, thus was valuable.

Caroline Dodds Pennock (2007) argues in a similar vein as Nash that war narrative created a subjugation of women and female goddesses. However, this narrative is localized to the city center and the spaces of the nobility. Dodds Pennock explores concepts of female subjugation by analyzing one of the few female sculptures from Tenochtitlan found in situ, the monumental *Coyolxauhqui Stone* [Figure 15]. In 1978, the *Coyolxauhqui Stone*, depicting a beheaded and dismembered woman in ceremonial dress, was found at the base of the steps at the Templo Mayor (Main Temple that contained shrines to Huitzilopochtli and Tlaloc where many human sacrifices were done) (Dodds Pennock 2007:5). This stone is situated within the mythological narrative of the Nahua and a specific epoch of empire expansion. Coyolxauhqui, the goddess of the moon, was defeated in the story of the birth of Huitzilopochtli (god of the sun, war, sovereignty, power, and the personification of the successful Nahua Empire): Coyolxauhqui contested the method of her mother's impregnation and Huitzilopochtli emerged from his mother's womb, fully formed, and swiftly defeated Coyolxauhqui. He then decapitated, dismembered, and rolled her body down Coatepec mountain (FC:"Book 3: The Origin of the Gods" fol. 1r).[27] In this defeat, Huitzilopochtli, and by extension the whole of the Nahua Empire, succeeded over the first threat to his/the empire's power (Dodds Pennock 2007:7).

The Templo Mayor represents the mythical Coatepec mountain [Figures 16, 17]; each sacrifice and subsequent tossing of a body down the steps to land near/atop the *Coyolxauhqui*

[27] Section title: To Uitzilopochtli the Mexicans Paid Great Honor, Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.

Stone cyclically replicated that first defeat of a Nahua threat to power (Dodds Pennock 2007:8). The *Coyolxauhqui Stone* is not singular in depicting a decapitated and dismembered woman in monumental form and found near the ceremonial precinct in Tenochtitlan. The *Coatlicue* (and also the incomplete Yolotlicue and two other possible skirt-named goddess fragments) [Figures 18-21] depict a goddess without arms and a head; in this instance her limbs and head are replaced by snakes, used to symbolize blood (Klein 2008). War narratives that liken the defeat of the enemy with the subjugation of women became prolific in sculptures of the city center. Through space they became tied with the noble class's ideals. Dodds Pennock's analysis could lend to the argument that the whole of Nahua society was misogynistic, but it is only concretely applicable to the pipiltin who were immersed in these views and surrounded with sculptural advertisements of war and empire.

The beheaded and dismembered depictions of female goddesses in the city center, those tied to narratives of empire, are depicted differently than the Chicomecoatl statues that have possession of their heads and limbs. The human sacrifices done in honor of Chicomecoatl during the Huei Tecuilhuitl festivals could make great fodder for depicting the goddess in her beheaded and flayed form as representative of warfare success, but she is instead depicted as whole. The statues retaining their limbs indicate that Chicomecoatl statuary was not utilized like imagery of Coyolxauhqui and the skirt-named goddesses to promote the strength of empire. There are several instances of intact limbs on female sculpture in the city center, but their themes of sustenance are less in line with the priorities of the common class. This difference in iconography between women depicted with limbs versus those that are dismembered and/or decapitated (and located in noble spaces) could indicate the presence of Chicomecoatl statuary in

the mācēhualtin neighborhoods, away from the war, sacrifice, and misogyny of the ceremonial center.

There are many scholarly approaches to gender, but Nahua dynamics can generally be viewed in one of two ways; through the gender parallelism model in which men and women have separate, complementary roles, that were different but had equal value or through the gender flexible model in which gender is a flexible and unstable category that required control and supervision. Elizabeth M. Brumfiel and Cynthia Robin (2008) offer an additional archaeological approach to gender that recognizes past systemic, androcentric bias, and offers new perspectives on gender roles as complex, overlapping, and continually changing.

An amalgamation of these viewpoints is necessary to understand gender dynamics of the Nahua. Within the noble class, the gender flexible model is more applicable as their misogyny could be affected by changes in empirical strategy or shifting rituals. Outside the war and ceremony of the noble class, the mācēhualtin could experience something along the lines of gender parallelism in which men and women had more equitable roles and dynamics. In these spaces, respect for women and their sacrifices as child-bearers could create a community in which sustenance, with its inherent connotations of fertility, could be valued. In spaces that treasured fertility and sustenance (mācēhualtin) over warfare and nationhood (pipiltin), goddesses such as Chicomecoatl could have been erected in sculpture for worship.

The Nahua Empire was short lived and volatile in terms of expansion and warfare within a 200-year span. Due to their continual expansion into new territories, the Nahua likely grappled with incorporating new views of gender into their existing approach. This could have resulted in a constantly changing gender dynamic throughout the different spaces of the empire.

Class, Gender, and Figurines

The iconographic elements of Chicomecoatl statues combined with Nahua class and gender context allow for theory that the sculptures may have primarily been in the community spaces of the common class. However, their formal aspects indicate that some may have been more likely than others to have been in these communities. The statues vary widely in their imagery and class/gender contexts could differ across various communities, so worship and commission of statues cannot be understood as universally the same. In this section, the sculptures are organized as A. least likely, B. somewhat likely, and C. most likely to have been in calpulli neighborhoods based on their intricacy, adornments of the goddess, size, material, and finishings (painting/inlay).

The most unlikely to have been in a community space of the common class is the bust in The Art Institute of Chicago's collection [Images 1.1-1.2]. This depiction of Chicomecoatl has a level of detail not seen in any of the other stone sculptures mentioned in this paper. Her adornments, specifically her ear plugs, were associated with the noble class. As described in the "Kings and Lords" book of the *Florentine Codex*, the highest female pipiltin would wear turquoise, amber, white crystal, gold, silver, or white obsidian ear plugs (FC: "Book 8," fol. 31r)[28] which can be seen adorning the bust's earlobes. Finally, this bust is incomplete; its particular degree of deterioration could indicate that it was originally human-sized and depicted the goddess's whole body. Her intricacy, jewelry associated with pipiltin women, and possible monumental size are more similar to sculptures of the ceremonial precinct, thus this bust is least likely to have been situated in the communities of the common class.

[28] "Section title: Fifteenth Chapter, in which is described the adornment of the women, Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.

Ceramic versions of Chicomecoatl were less likely to have been in spaces of the common class due to their intricacy and use of space. Of the two ceramic Chicomecoatl figures in this paper, only one is without archaeological context. The *Chicomecóatl Olla Mítica Con Tapa* [Images 24.1-24.2], was found at the Templo Mayor in Tenochtitlan, thus is situated in the spaces of the nobility. The other ceramic brasero [Image 16.1] does not have provenance, but her imagery is detailed to a degree not seen in stone depictions of the Maize Goddess. Both ceramic depictions utilize almost all available space to portray her adornments or related imagery. The intricacy and use of space is more akin to sculptures of the city center, such as *The Coatlicue* [Figure 18], in which the majority of the surface is incised, and empty/smooth space is less common.

The Chicomecoatl figurine carved from precious green stone [Images 27.1-27.3], was also probably not in spaces of the mācēhualtin due to the expense of its material and value in spaces of the nobility and in ceremony. Teresa Cabrero García (2019) claims that throughout Mesoamerica green stone was considered sacred because of its connotations of fertility, vegetation, life, and water (Cabrero García 2019:22). Also, throughout the "Kings and Lords" book of the *Florentine Codex*, green stone is described solely in its relationship with the highest of the pipiltin; taking the form of nose rods, lip plugs, necklaces, and bracelets (FC:"Book 8," fol. 29r).[29]

I am hesitant to place the painted and inlayed Chicomecoatl statues in either the spaces of the nobility or in that of the common class. It is currently unknown, without testing, how frequently these sculptures were painted and inlayed, so it is unclear if this finishing was accessible to the mācēhualtin. My assumption is that painting and inlaying would have been

[29] Section title: Fourteenth Chapter: Here are described the palace and the houses of the lords…, Anderson & Dibble 1953-1982 Translation from Nahuatl.

significantly more expensive than depictions in raw stone, and that many commoners would not indulge in extravagances such as those. However, this is conjecture, and I would still argue for their general placement in communities of the mācēhualtin.

The three extremely atypical, volcanic stone portrayals of Chicomecoatl are difficult to place in either space due to their unique iconography and method of depiction. The two carved on only one side of a stone block in relief [Images 38.1-38.3, 43.1-43.2] are carved in a mode similar to sculpture from the ceremonial precinct, such as the *Coyolxauhqui Stone* [Figure 15]. This could indicate their presence in spaces of the nobility; however, their size, both under 40 centimeters (15 inches) is not in line with the monumental size of many ceremonial center sculptures. The other atypical sculpture [Images 31.1-31.5] is unique in its portrayal of Chicomecoatl physically in the shape of a corn cob. This distinctive design makes the context more unclear than others in this collection, hence my reluctance to place it within a specified class space.

The materials and simplicity (while still being quite detailed and recognizable) of the typical form, head/busts, and headdress variants make them the most likely to have been in the calpulli neighborhoods. Basalt was readily available, workable for ease of carving, and relatively inexpensive (though resources would need to be pooled to commission sculptures of any material). While the sculptures of these categories differ in their iconography, their materials and simplicity may have been more attainable for members of the common class. These form the crux of the theory that Chicomecoatl sculptures could have been present in the community spaces of the mācēhualtin and make up the majority of Chicomecoatl depictions (34 out of 46 total statues).

Conclusion

Through a reverse and contextual archaeological method that relies on sources such as administrative documents, codices, and the art historical and archaeological research of other scholars, I propose that Chicomecoatl statues may primarily have been in the calpulli communities of the Nahua common class. Class distinctions were visible and evident, like the richness of clothing/adornment and differences in food consumption, with the common class eating primarily maize. This difference and survival based on crops could have stimulated investment in goddesses of sustenance like Chicomecoatl, Chalchiuhtlicue, and Huixtocihuatl within mācēhualtin communities. The differing priorities of the pipiltin (warfare and religious ceremony) and the mācēhualtin (agriculture) could have been reflected through distinct sculptural subjects. Additionally, the common class's obligation through their descent to work the land, coupled with the freedoms afforded by membership in a calpulli, may have allowed for different worship interests related to their way of life; possibly taking the primary form of Maize Goddess veneration.

The structure of community that separated the nobility from the common class could have generated diverse approaches to worship throughout the Nahua Empire. The nobility, who lived in city-centers, were physically distant from the mācēhualtin living on the edges of the empire. This distinction was likely evident in sculptures of the noble versus common classes. Noble statues are largely male, monumentally sized, and occasionally made from precious materials (jade, turquoise, gold, etc.); conversely, sculpture of the common class may have been primarily of women, smaller, and crafted from more accessible materials, such as the basalt of Chicomecoatl statuary. Also, the separation and size of mācēhualtin calpulli could have allowed for unique and multifaceted systems of god veneration to be cultivated. These communities may

have been substantially focused on concepts of agriculture and sustenance rather than warfare and empire and could have had the interest/resources to commission permanent sculpture. Additionally, the homes and community structure of contemporary Nahua villages, such as Amatlán, could offer insight into the possible respect shown to woman-ascribed duties in the home through building practices. If ancient communities reflected their modern counterparts, there may have been communities that allowed for the worship of sustenance goddesses, such as Chicomecoatl.

Gender dynamics likely differed between classes of the Nahua empire, and sculptural subjects and narratives may have reflected these differences. Statues such as the *Coyolxauhqui Stone* [Figure 15] and *The Coatlicue* [Figure 18] are depicted as beheaded/dismembered to promote warfare and empire expansion (Dodds Pennock 2007). Conversely, Chicomecoatl sculptures retain their heads and limbs which could indicate that they were originally situated in the community spaces of the mācēhualtin, physically separate from the empirical agendas of the city-center. On the edges of cities and the empire, in common calpulli communities, gender dynamics could have been more flexible and equitable than in the noble dominated city-center. Respect for women and their sacrifices could have established mācēhualtin communities in which sustenance, as connoting fertility, could be honored in the form of goddesses such as Chicomecoatl.

Chicomecoatl statues may have been absent from noble spaces due to class distinct worship, separation of classes through community structure, flexible gender dynamics within differing classes, and the sheer quantity, material, and size of her depictions. I argue that these factors could suggest that Chicomecoatl statuary was primarily situated in the calpulli neighborhoods and communities of the Nahua common class.

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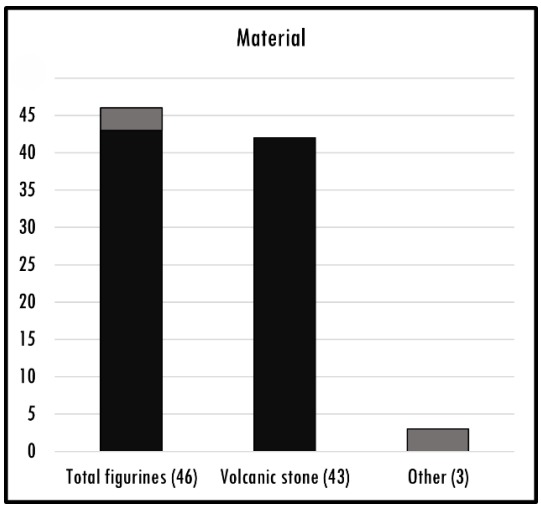
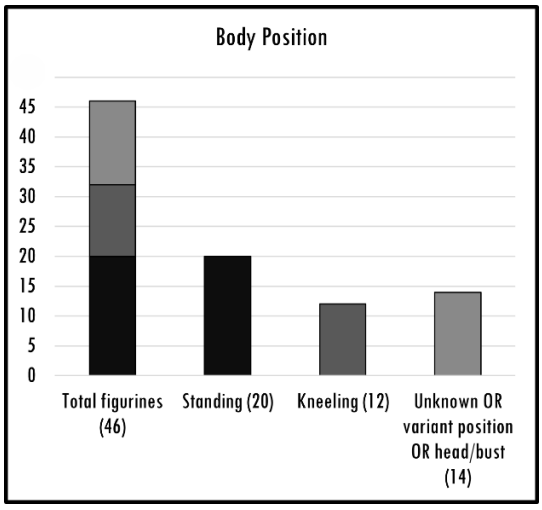
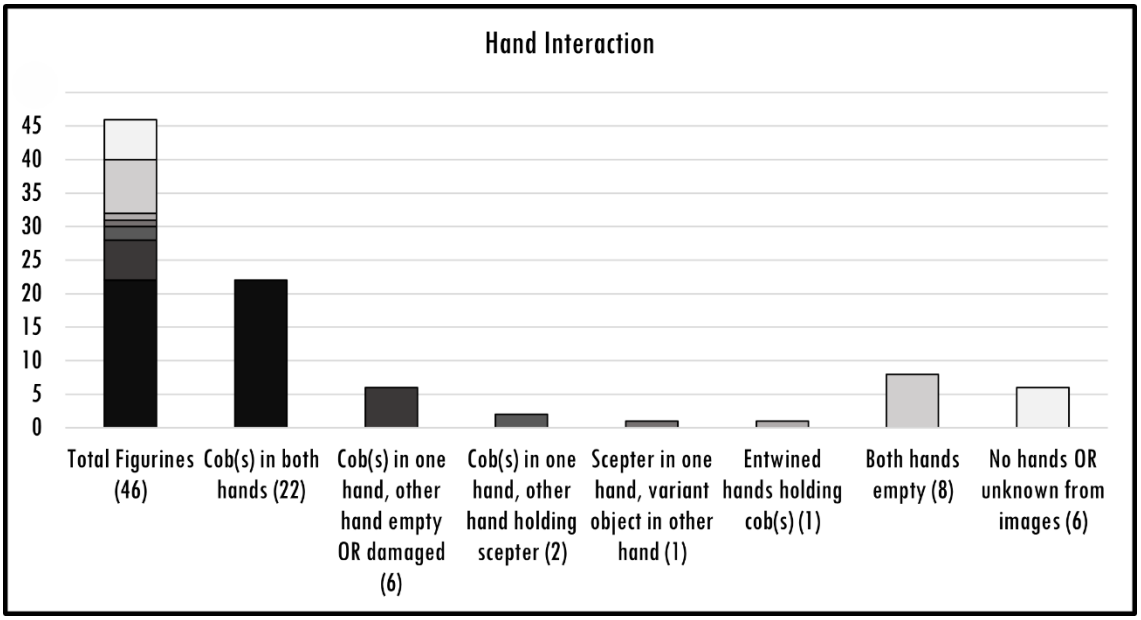
Material		
Volcanic stone		Other
1.1 - 1.2	28.1 - 28.2	16.1
2.1	29.1 - 29.2	25.1 - 25.2
3.1	30.1 - 30.3	27.1 - 27.3
4.1 - 4.3	31.1 - 31.5	
5.1 - 5.3	32.1 - 32.2	
6.1 - 6.2	33.1 - 33.2	
7.1	34.1 - 34.3	
8.1	35.1 - 35.2	
9.1	36.1 - 36.4	
10.1	37.1 - 37.4	
11.1	38.1 - 38.3	
12.1 - 12.2	39.1 - 39.3	
13.1	40.1	
14.1	41.1	
15.1	42.1 - 42.3	
17.1 - 17.2	43.1 - 43.2	
20.1 - 20.4	44.1 - 44.3	
21.1 - 21.4	45.1	
22.1 - 22.4	46.1	
23.1	47.1	
24.1	48.1	
26.1		
Total: 43 of 46		**Total: 3 of 46**

Body Position		
Standing	Kneeling	Unknown OR variant body position OR head/bust
3.1	5.1 - 5.3	1.1 - 1.2
4.1 - 4.3	10.1	2.1
6.1 - 6.2	12.1 - 12.2	17.1 - 17.2
7.1	13.1	20.1 - 20.4
8.1	29.1 - 29.2	21.1 - 21.4
9.1	33.1 - 33.2	22.1 - 22.4
11.1	35.1 - 35.2	24.1
14.1	37.1 - 37.4	27.1 - 27.3
15.1	39.1 - 39.3	30.1 - 30.3
16.1	40.1	31.1 - 31.5
23.1	44.1 - 44.3	34.1 - 34.3
25.1 - 25.2	46.1	36.1 - 36.4
26.1		38.1 - 38.3
28.1 - 28.2		41.1
32.1 - 32.2		
42.1 - 42.3		
43.1 - 43.2		
45.1		
47.1		
48.1		
Total: 20 of 46	**Total: 12 of 46**	**Total: 14 of 46**





Hand Interaction						
Cob(s) in both hands	Cob(s) in one hand, other hand empty OR damaged	Cob(s) in one hand, other hand holding scepter	Scepter in one hand, variant object in other hand	Entwined hands holding cob(s)	Both hands empty	No hands OR unknown from images
2.1	4.1 - 4.3	15.1	43.1 - 43.2	46.1	10.1	1.1 - 1.2
3.1	9.1	45.1			24.1	21.1 - 21.4
5.1 - 5.3	11.1				26.1	22.1 - 22.4
6.1 - 6.2	17.1				31.1 - 31.5	25.1 - 25.2 ?
7.1	36.1 - 36.4				32.1 - 32.2	27.1 - 27.3 ?
8.1	37.1 - 37.4				39.1 - 39.3	34.1 - 34.3
12.1 - 12.2					40.1	
13.1					48.1	
14.1						
16.1						
20.1 - 20.4						
23.1						
28.1 - 28.2						
29.1 - 29.2						
30.1 - 30.3						
33.1 - 33.2						
35.1 - 35.2						
38.1 - 38.3						
41.1						
42.1 - 42.3						
44.1 - 44.3						
47.1						
Total: 22 of 46	**Total: 6 of 46**	**Total: 2 of 46**	**Total: 1 of 46**	**Total: 1 of 46**	**Total: 8 of 46**	**Total: 6 of 46**



46 Chicomecoatl Figurine Occurences (as of May 2024)

Typical Form: Volcanic Stone + Rectangular Headdress + Standing/Kneeling							
Cob(s) in both hands		Cob(s) in one hand, other hand empty		Cob(s) in one hand, other hand holding scepter		Both hands empty	
Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)	Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)	Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)	Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)
13	2.1 3.1 5.1 - 5.3 8.1 20.1 - 20.4 28.1 - 28.2 29.1 - 29.2 30.1 - 30.3 33.1 - 33.2 35.1 - 35.2 41.1 (Broken) 42.1 - 42.3 47.1	3	4.1 - 4.3 11.1 17.1 - 17.2	2	15.1 45.1	3	10.1 32.1 - 32.2 48.1
Total **Typical Form** Occurrences: **21**							

Variant Forms							
Volcanic Stone + Alternate Headdress		Volcanic Stone + Painted / Inlayed		Volcanic Stone + Head / Bust		Ceramic	
Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)	Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)	Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)	Number of Occurrences	Image Number(s)
9	9.1 12.1 13.1 14.1 24.1 (Older) 26.1 37.1 - 37.4 39.1 - 39.3 46.1	6	6.1 - 6.2 7.1 23.1 36.1 - 36.4 40.1 44.1 - 44.3	4	1.1 - 1.2 21.1 - 21.4 22.1 - 22.4 34.1 - 34.3	2	16.1 25.1

Metamorphic Stone + Atypical Features		Volcanic Stone + Maize Cob Shaped		Volcanic Stone + Cross Legged		Volcanic Stone + Relief + Atypical Features	
1	27.1 - 27.3	1	31.1 - 31.5	1	38.1 - 38.3	1	43.1 - 43.2

Link to growing database of Chicomecoatl depictions:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1swRtFud53AXlmOJr
SDGiYUqU2PINsdpj09Dex160ahc/edit?usp=sharing

1.1, 1.2: Nahua, 1400 - 1500 CE, Basalt, 32.4 cm x 20.3 cm x 12.1 cm, Tenochtitlan, Central Mexico, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL, https://www.artic.edu/artworks/65328/head-of-xilonen-the-goddess-of-young-maize

2.1: Nahua, 900 - 1520 CE, Basalt, 50.2 cm x 25.4 cm x 13.3 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago, IL, https://nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org/artworks/diosa-del-maiz

3.1: Nahua, 1400 - 1519 CE, Basalt, 44.8 cm x 23.2 cm x 7.6 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO, https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/object/1957.31

4.1, 4.2, 4.3: Nahua, 1400 - 1500 CE, Basalt, 35.6 cm x 18.1 cm x 8.9 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, NY, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/307644

5.1, 5.2, 5.3: Nahua, 1400 - 1500 CE, Basalt 49.5 cm x 21.6 cm x 14 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, NY, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/307633

6.1, 6.2: Nahua, N/A, Stone, painted, 48.5 cm x 27 cm x 16 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museum fur Volkerkunde, Berlin, Germany, https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/Details/Index/1572079

7.1: Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Basalt, painted 70 cm x 30 cm x 15 cm, Tenochtitlan, Central Mexico, The National Museum of the American Indian, New York City, NY, https://americanindian.si.edu/exhibitions/infinityofnations/meso-carib/008143.html

8.1: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Basalt, 49.8 cm x 19.4 cm x 8.6 cm, Valley, Central Mexico, University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum, Miami, FL, https://emuseum1.as.miami.edu/objects/5175/chicomecoatl-the-maize-goddess?ctx=005bf5e4-404f-4672-a347-15320e8e1c62&idx=22

9.1: Nahua, N/A, Stone, 37 cm x 17 cm x 16 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany, https://recherche.smb.museum/detail/61870/chalchiuhtlicue-chicomecoatl

10.1: Nahua, N/A, Stone, 45.2 cm x 22.2 cm x 17.7 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mna.inah.gob.mx/colecciones_detalle.php?id=2121

11.1: Nahua, N/A Stone , 68.2 cm x 21 cm x 17.3 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mna.inah.gob.mx/colecciones_detalle.php?id=2296

12.1, 12.2: Nahua, N/A, Stone, 20.3 cm x 13.5 cm x 11.9 cm, 1302 g, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mna.inah.gob.mx/colecciones_detalle.php?id=2941 + MOLD: https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/181611-figurine-

13.1: Nahua, N/A, Stone, 36.1 cm x 19 cm x 20.2 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mna.inah.gob.mx/colecciones_detalle.php?id=2943

14.1, Nahua, N/A, Stone, 53.5 cm x 21.5 cm x 14.5 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mna.inah.gob.mx/colecciones_detalle.php?id=2952

15.1, Nahua, N/A, Stone, 23.1 cm x 14.1 cm x 9.5 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mna.inah.gob.mx/colecciones_detalle.php?id=2958

16.1, Nahua, 1500 CE, Ceramic, painted, 104 cm, Tláhuac, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, Mexico, https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/brasero-chicomec%C3%B3atl-unknown/XwE0O9XW_2BtLg?hl=es

17.1, 17.2: Nahua, 1400 - 1520 CE, Stone, N/A, Unknown, Central Mexico, Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ, https://tucsonmuseumofart.pastperfectonline.com/Webobject/73C2F8D0-0B9D-4A6E-8CF3-817496542046

20.1, 20.2, 20.3, 20.4: Nahua, 1250 - 1521 CE, Basalt, 23.1 cm x 15.2 x cm 13.5 cm, Valley, Central Mexico, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Pue., Mexico, https://museoamparo.com/colecciones/pieza/2912/escultura-de-xilonen

21.1, 21.2, 21.3, 21.4: Nahua, 1250 - 1521 CE, Basalt26 cm x 19 cm, Valley, Central Mexico, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Pue., Mexico, https://museoamparo.com/colecciones/pieza/3474/cabeza-de-chicomecoatl

22.1, 22.2, 22.3, 22.4: Nahua, 1250 - 1521 CE, Basalt39 cm x 22.5 cm, Valley, Central Mexico, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Pue., Mexico, https://museoamparo.com/colecciones/pieza/3473/busto-de-chicomecoatl

23.1: Nahua, 1430 - 1520 CE, Painted stone, inlaid with precious stone, 60 cm x 45 cm, Zempoala, Hidalgo, National Institute of Anthropology and History, Mexico City, MX https://www.elsiglodetorreon.com.mx/noticia/2009/restaura-inah-escultura-de-500-anos-de-antiguedad.html

24.1: Chichimec, N/A, Stone, N/A, Tenuyuca, NW of Tenochtitlan, Tenayuca Site Museum, Xólotl, Baz, Mexico, https://mediateca.inah.gob.mx/repositorio/islandora/object/objetoprehispanico%3A23865

25.1, 25.2: Mexica (Nahua), 1469 - 1481 CE, Ceramic , 45.5 cm x 39 cm x , Templo Mayor, Tenochtitlan, Mexico, Museo del Templo Mayor, Mexico City, Mexico, https://lugares.inah.gob.mx/en/museos-inah/exposiciones/2170-1225-agricultura.html?expo_id=2159&lugar_id=452

26.1: Nahua, 1200 - 1521 CE, Granite, N/A, Central Altiplano, State of Mexico, Museo de la Escultura Mexica, Mexico City, Mexico, https://mediateca.inah.gob.mx/repositorio/islandora/object/objetoprehispanico%3A25078

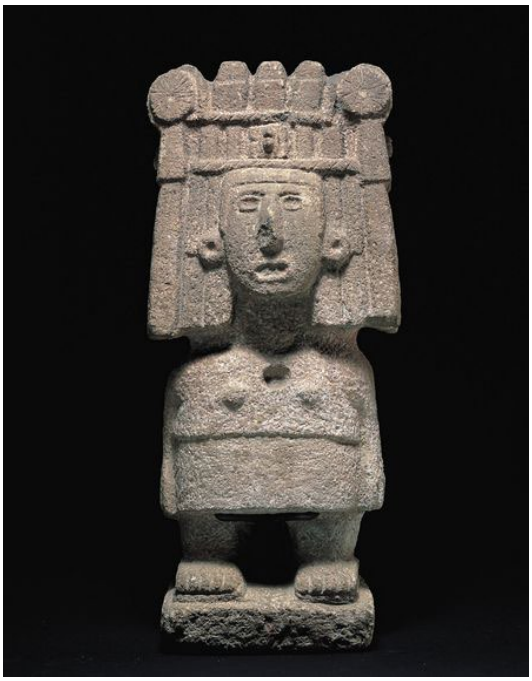
27.1, 27.3: Nahua, 1250 - 1521 CE, Stone, green metamorphic, 32.5 cm x 24.5 cm x 5 cm, 5023 g, Valley, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/132220-statuette-anthropomorphe-de-deesse

28.1, 28.2: Nahua1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 57.5 cm x 24 cm x 16.7 cm, 13092 g, Unknown, Oaxaca, Tuxtepec, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/138571-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse

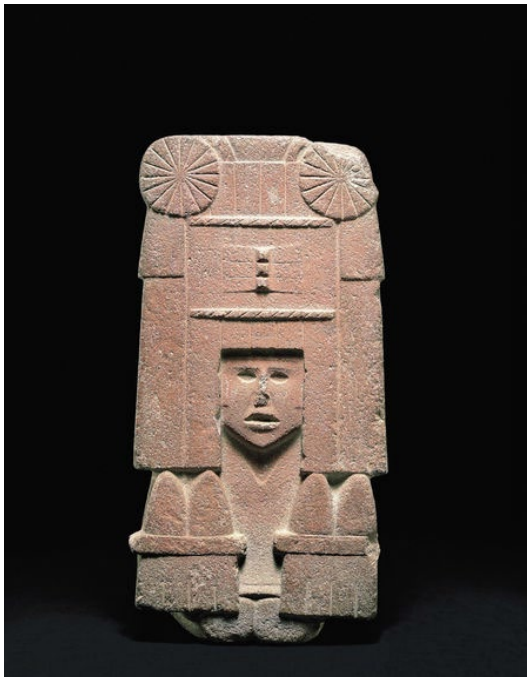
29.1, 29.2: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 41.2 cm x 19 cm x 14.3 cm, 12538 g, Valley, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/245920-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse

30.1, 30.2, 30.3: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 66 cm x 36 cm x 20 cm, 27740 g, Unknown, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/105486-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse

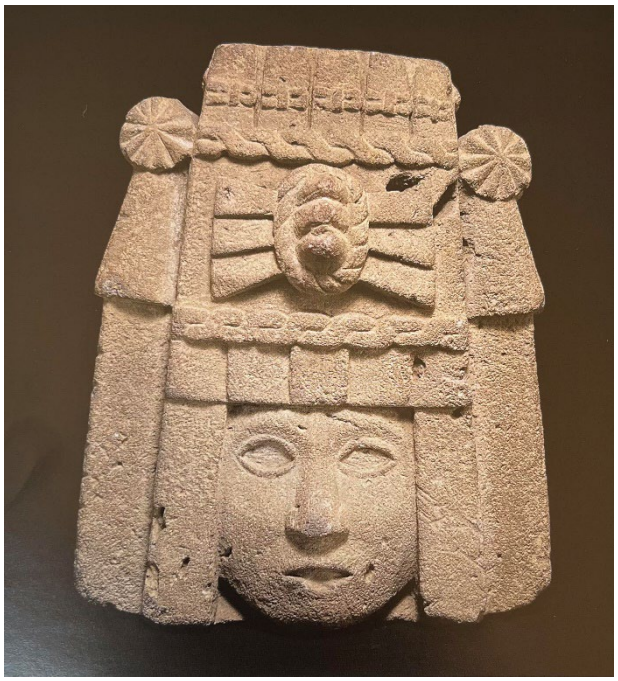
31.1, 31.2, 31.3, 31.4, 31.5: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE , Stone, volcanic, 35.5 cm x 15.5 cm x 15 cm, 14867 g, Unknown, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/105487-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse




32.1, 32.2: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 49 cm x 21 cm x 13 cm, 16000 g, Unknown, Federal District, Mexico City, Atzcapotzalco, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/91185-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse



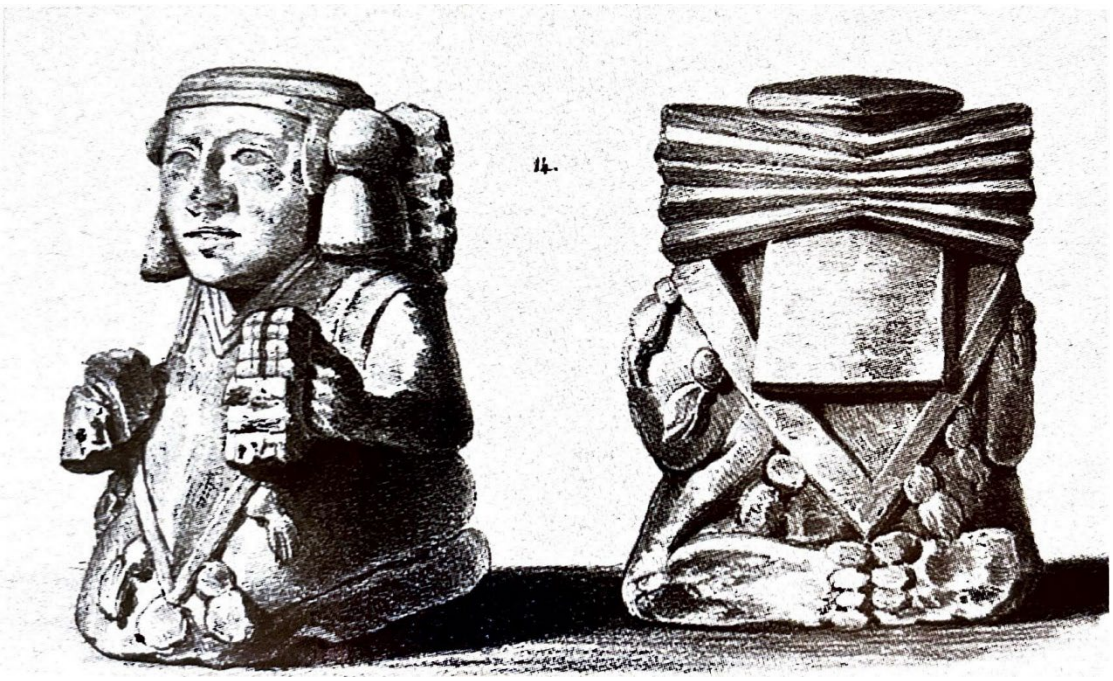

33.1, 33.2, Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 41.5 x 20.5 x 16 cm, 16,972 g, Valley, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/91188-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse




34.1, 34.3, Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 30.5 cm x 24.7 cm x 11.5 cm, Unknown, Oriziba, Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/812817-tete-de-chicomecoatl


35.1, 35.2: Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 60.4 cm x 27.1 cm x 21.3 cm, Unknown, Texcoco, Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/812808-deesse-du-mais

36.1, 36.2, 36.3, 36.4: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, painted, volcanic, 33.6 cm x 20.5 cm x 15 cm, 6688 g, Unknown, San Mateo Mexicaltzingo, Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/91190-sculpture-



37.1, 37.2, 37.3, 37.4: Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 26.8 cm x 17.2 cm x 11.2 cm, 6703 g, Unknown, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/105515-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse

38.1, 38.2, 38.3: Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 31.4 cm x 28.2 cm x 10.2 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/812810-fragment-de-statue-pierre

39.1, 39.2, 39.3: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 43 cm x 24 cm x 15 cm, 17600 g, Unknown, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/315888-sculpture-anthropomorphe-de-deesse

40.1: Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, painted, 50 cm x 27.5 cmx 16.5 cm, 28085 g, Unknown, Central Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France, https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/123865-statuette-anthropomorphe

41.1: Nahua, 1325 - 1521 CE, Stone, volcanic, 28.3 cm x 22.5 cm x 8.2 cm, 2786 g, Unknown, Mexicaltzingo, Mexico, Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France https://www.quaibranly.fr/en/explore-collections/base/Work/action/show/notice/93415-statuette-anthropomorphe

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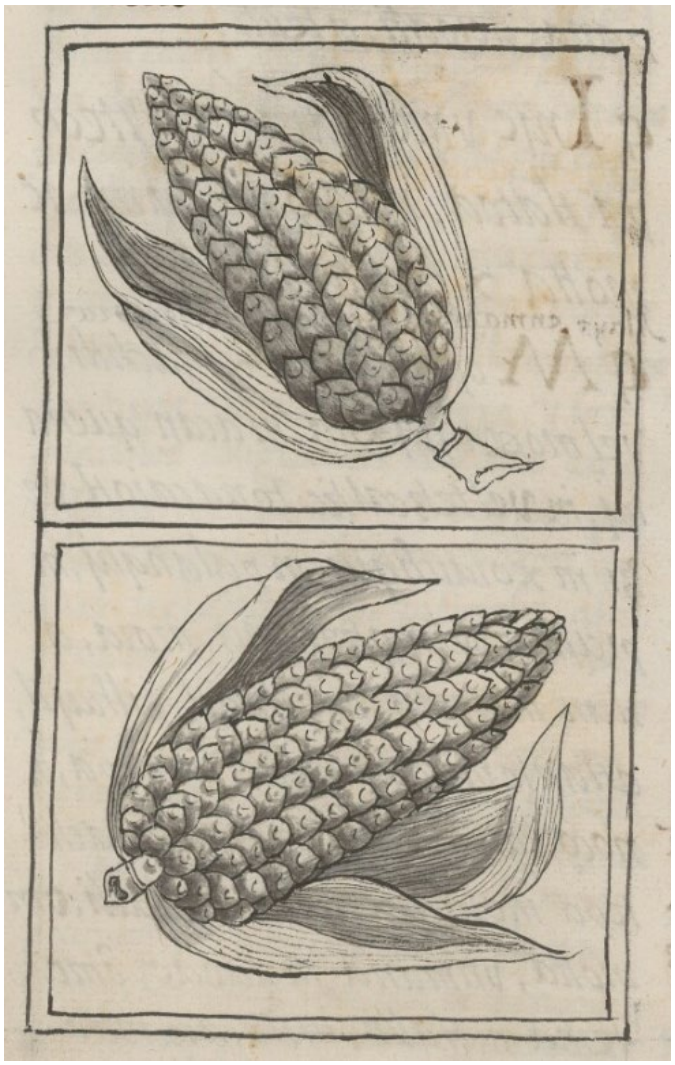
44.1, 44.2: Nahua, 1440 - 1521 CE, Stone, painted, 39.4 cm x 24.1 cm x 15.9 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY United States, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/61014

45.1: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, 68 cm x 27 cm x 14 cm, 42.8 kg, Unknown, Central Mexico, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany, https://id.smb.museum/object/107907/maisg%C3%B6ttin-chicome-coatl

46.1: Nahua, 1350 - 1521 CE, Stone, 38.5 cm x 19.5 cm x 17 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin, Germany, https://recherche.smb.museum/detail/62194/chalchiuhtlicue-die-mit-dem-edelsteinrock-

47.1: Nahua, 1500 - 1520 CE, Stone, 48.5 cm x 21.3 cm x 11 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Wereldmuseum, Leiden, Amsterdam, https://collectie.wereldmuseum.nl/#/query/af3c842f-253d-4f78-ad96-4ea1f16465f8

48.1: Nahua, 1200 - 1520 CE, Stone, 46 cm x 24.5 cm x 9.5 cm, Unknown, Central Mexico, Wereldmuseum, Leiden, Amsterdam, https://collectie.wereldmuseum.nl/#/query/2f7a5cc4-566a-4241-a464-815d0e88abaf



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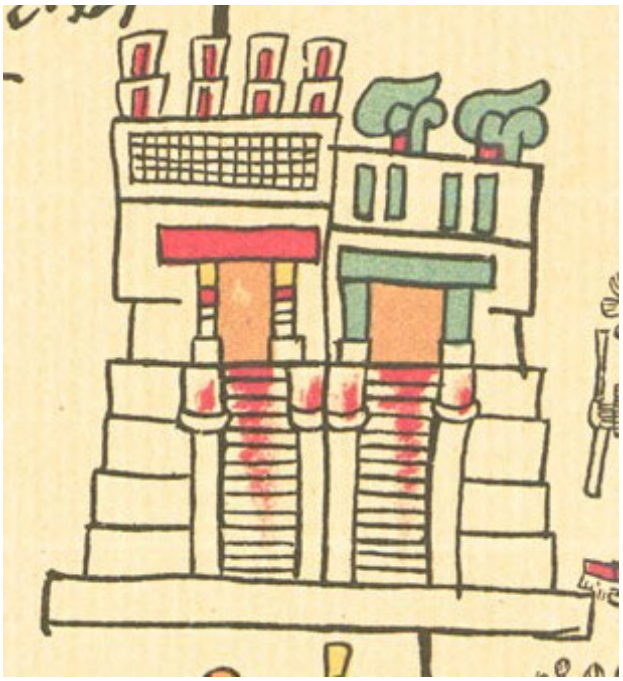

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Figure 21: Mexica (Nahua), Snake arm fragment, 1500 CE, Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth H. Boone.