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Dressing the Saints: Indigenous Maya Elements in Catholic-Related Textiles at the Michael C. Carlos Museum

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Dressing the Saints: Indigenous Maya Elements in Catholic-Related Textiles at the Michael C. Carlos Museum

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An abstract of a thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
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Elizabeth Caris

Utilizing modern Maya textiles in the Michael C. Carlos Museum collection, this paper investigates ancient Maya and Catholic imagery working syncretically in Catholic-related Maya textiles. Catholicism and syncretism both figure in the ways in which the highly textile-literate Maya perform and understand their religion. The textiles discussed range from apparent continuations of ancient Maya imagery and techniques to incorporating Catholic symbolism to a deliberate subversion of the dominant foreign culture. This syncretism, and subversion, is particularly evident in the actions and textiles of the cofradías, or Catholic confraternities. Some textiles formerly understood as Catholic can now be identified as sacred shaman's cloths, functioning in both shamanic and Catholic contexts. This paper focuses on one such sacred shaman's cloth and numerous clothing pieces associated with a wooden saint figure, or santo. The uses and appearances of these textiles illuminate the intermingling of cultures and ideas that pervades the post-Conquest indigenous world.

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Introduction

Textiles permeate all aspects of life throughout the Americas, proving to be an effective tool for understanding societies and their changes. In particular, textile-oriented cultural expression endures from the ancient to the colonial and modern eras in the Maya-dominated region that corresponds with modern Guatemala. Yet, as opposed to Andean textile preservation in arid desert climates, very few remains of pre-Hispanic textiles have been found in Mesoamerica, driving art historians to study dress and weaving largely through other media, primarily sculpture and painting. In post-Conquest times, however, both continuity and change are identifiable in Maya textiles, due to significant scholarship on modern Maya dress, particularly in the Guatemalan highlands.[1]

The many iterations of modern Maya textiles include not only men's and women's dress, but also cloths specifically reserved for indigenous ritual uses and those involved in Spanish-influenced Catholic ritual via the cult of the saints. This paper will introduce how Catholicism and syncretism, the mediation of Maya beliefs and the imposed European religion, both figure in dressing saint figures (*santo* for a male, *santa* for a female). These carved wooden effigies (fig. 1) used in ostensibly Catholic worship by the Maya are copiously dressed and re-dressed, as well as prayed to, fed (ritually and literally), paraded, and honored in myriad ways that traverse indigenous and Spanish practices. Such finely outfitted effigies function as intermediaries between the human and the spirit realms as well as bridges between the two religious-cultural contexts in which they simultaneously operate.

[1] Mireille Holsbeke, *With Their Hands and Their Eyes: Maya Textiles, Mirrors of a Worldview* (Antwerpen: Etnografisch Museum, 2003), 22.

Certain key elements of Maya Catholicism can be gleaned from miniature santo jackets, shirts, belts, and capes (figs. 4, 7-11), santa *huipiles* or blouses (fig. 11), as well as the offering cloths arrayed around them (fig. 9). Ranging from continuing traditional patterns and techniques to incorporating Catholic symbolism to deliberate subverting of the dominant foreign culture, Maya santo/a-related textiles help trace key changes in history, tradition, expression, and representation.

In addition to a discussion of saint figures, I utilize a 1940 ethnography to aver that a cloth from the Michael C. Carlos Museum Maya textile collection may have functioned both in Catholic and shamanic contexts. Not only does this stand as a testament to the intertwining of Maya and non-Maya ritual systems but suggests a subversive infiltration of the shamanic religion into the church itself.

Shamanic cloths may masquerade as simple all-purpose cloths,[2] but I argue that their uses illuminate the intermingling of cultures and ideas that pervades the post-Conquest indigenous world. Ethnographers and explorers, beginning in the 1930s, have been intently preoccupied with the "unchanging" ancient traditions perpetuated by certain Maya populations.[3] Rather than depicting two distinct versions of the Maya, pre- and post-Conquest, I identify both ancient Maya and Catholic imagery and techniques in modern Maya textiles in order to understand the spectrum on which the two religions operate and interact. The parallel uses of santo-related clothing and offerings and similar-looking cloths employed in shamanic ritual and Catholic

[2] Flavio Rodas N., Ovidio Rodas Corzo, and Laurence F. Hawkins, *Chichicastenango: The Kiche Indians: Their History and Culture: Sacred Symbols of Their Dress and Textiles* (Guatemala: Union Tipografica, 1940), 131.
[3] Joel W. Palka and Catherine Leonardo, *Maya Pilgrimage to Ritual Landscape: Insights from Archaeology, History, and Ethnography* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 2014), 31.

contexts form a case study in syncretism as well as in the preservation of indigenous identity. As such, the dialectic between the two major forms of religious textiles are extremely expressive of the dialogue conducted in fiber between tradition and change.

Weaving itself is not only an ancient activity and abiding tradition among the Maya but embodies certain aspects of Maya worldview and creation stories. The tree or post used to secure the top end of the backstrap looms used to weave Maya textiles is often referred to as "mother tree," a part of the Maya World Tree. The cord connecting loom to tree is considered to act as a kind of umbilical cord, connecting the weaver and loom to a branch of the World Tree via their Maya ancestors.[4] Weaving can thereby be considered a network of interconnections, fundamentally linked to creation. By weaving, the weaver is "giving birth" to the textile she makes, but the entire process is closely tied to the beginning of life as the Maya know it, the World Tree (fig. 5). That textile she is creating bears an unmistakable bond to an ancestral, primordial past. It also serves as a bridge between the living and the dead, the weaver representing the living Maya and the cord serving as the link with ancestors.

Catholicism in Guatemala

The history of Catholic intervention –particularly the cult of the saints—in Guatemala is a critical place to begin. Outlasting nearly any other vestige of Spanish colonization, Catholicism may be considered the primary heritage of Spain in the Americas.[5] Religious conversion was one

[4] Robert S. Carlsen, "Ceremony and Ritual in the Maya World," in *The Maya Textile Tradition*, ed. Margot Blum Schevill (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 181; Cecelia F. Klein, "Woven Heaven, Tangled Earth A Weaver's Paradigm of the Mesoamerican Cosmos," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 385, no. 1 (1982): 4.
[5] Adrian C. Van Oss, *Catholic Colonialism: A Parish History of Guatemala, 1524-1821* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), xi.

of the highest priorities for the invading and colonizing Spanish across their incursions into the Americas. During the colonial period, which ranged from the late 15th to the early 19th century, the Spanish Crown sent to the Americas more than fifteen thousand missionaries and friars of the Catholic orders. Approximately six percent were sent to Guatemala; the only greater numbers of missionaries were assigned to cover the much larger viceroyalties of Mexico, Peru, and New Granada, which spanned what are now Colombia, Ecuador, Panamá, and Venezuela.[6] A principal goal of the Spanish Crown was to complete the conversion process peacefully and so it cannot be surprising that elements of indigenous spiritual beliefs were incorporated and utilized within the Catholic belief system. Mass conversion, difficult though it was, however, was much preferred to large-scale, complex military endeavors by Spain. Achieving as peaceful a conversion as possible of such a great number of people required that a certain degree of accommodation be extended to indigenous traditions.[7]

First, converting the indigenous populations of Guatemala meant transporting the indigenous people scattered throughout the highlands into controllable centralized settlements more familiar to the Europeans. These resettled *congregaciones* mirrored Spanish-style societies that centered around a community church. The daunting task of creating these communities and centralizing disparate populations fell to the friars of the religious orders who were largely underprepared for such a mission. In an effort to maintain as peaceful a conversion as possible, the shrewd friars heavily utilized gift-giving to persuade indigenous Maya elite called *caciques.* Showering the local leaders with Castilian products, such as scissors and needles, gave the missionaries a distinct advantage in their efforts to first baptize the elites and then follow with

[6] *Ibid*., 6.
[7] Van Oss, *Catholic Colonialism*, 14-20.

the rest of the population.[8] This mass conversion was relatively pacific as a result, largely avoiding the kind of overt military force that concerned the Spanish, but it was by no means quickly achieved.

Catholic confraternities, or *cofradías*, were the primary foundations laid by the Spanish in their conversion efforts and are perhaps the best example of syncretism between indigenous Maya practices and Catholic structure. Still active today, cofradías are a kind of religious brotherhood, initially only institutionalized in urban areas by the Spanish. Similar institutions existed in Spain, though those in the Americas differed. While European Catholic confraternities were almost exclusively concerned with religious affairs, in Colonial Spanish America the cofradías appear much more engaged economically and socially in their community. Another form of syncretism, the Maya cofradías incorporated into their responsibilities both local social structures and hierarchies as well as the imposed churchly duties. The cofradías were tasked primarily with overseeing the worship of the saints, particularly that of the cult of the patron saint of the community. Many communities and individual churches have multiple cofradías, each responsible for a different saint and its cult and ceremonies. Deeply hierarchical, the societies consist of ranked offices with opportunities for advancement for those "indios" who provide commendable service. Members meet regularly to venerate their saint at its shrine, which is located in the homes of confraternity members. Often the highest-ranking member hosts the gatherings and directs the activities.[9]

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[8] A similar strategy was used with the Guna people of Panamá. See Rebecca Stone, "Engaging the New: The Creative Tradition of the Modern Guna Cutwork Blouse Panel (Dulemola)," *Threads of Time: Tradition and Change in Indigenous American Textiles*, Online Catalogue (Atlanta: Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2017), threads-of-time.carlos.emory.edu/exhibits/show/essays/engagingnew.

[9] Allen J. Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients: Maya Ceremonies of World Renewal from the Pre-Columbian Period to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas, 2016), 153-154.

Catholic accommodations to Maya culture were especially visible in the Church's relationship with the cofradías. Confraternities were expected to generate revenue from the indigenous population and in turn make payments to the Church. These cofradía payments paid for church services, priests, and saints' day festivities, making them the primary source of clerical income. Their significant contribution of wealth to the parishes prevented the Church from aggressively regulating their activities. In 1770, an archbishop in Guatemala wrote that the suppression of the local cofradía system in Sololá had led to the local Kakchikel Maya to abandon the Church and refuse baptism. He concluded that because of this and other such incidents, the Church would run the risk of mass exodus and even large-scale revolts by the Maya and urged the Church to abstain from overtly manipulating the confraternity systems.[10] Such warnings contributed to the Spanish reluctance to limit the more indigenous activity of local cofradías in order to preserve the conversions they had already achieved.

Though less prevalent than in the Colonial period, cofradías persist today and are still concerned with the maintenance of their saint figures. The saint images continue to be processed through the community on sacred festival days, dressed in lavish layers of clothing and raised high above processing crowds. High status achieved by rising through confraternity ranks remains a critical mark of community respect, and cofradía officials spend much of their own money to mount elaborate displays of veneration. Additionally, the most elaborate Maya clothing seen since the Conquest is often worn by members, as the confraternities are closely tied to status and rank in addition to religious activity.[11] By 1787 there were 3,153 authorized cofradías in

[10] Carlsen, "Ceremony and Ritual," 188.
[11] Patricia B. Altman and Caroline D. West, *Threads of Identity: Maya Costume of the 1960s in Highland Guatemala* (Los Angeles: Fowler Museum of Cultural History, University of California, Los Angeles, 1992), 18.

Guatemala. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming Maya response to the system elated the Spanish. However, when the Church began to look more closely at the local confraternities, it was evident that they were being used largely to perpetuate pre-Conquest tradition, ceremony, and beliefs.[12] Despite the Spanish intent that the European system more readily facilitate Catholic conversion, the cofradías became a primary setting for the continued expression of local traditions and exemplified a syncretic religious system rather than a purely Catholic one.

A Maya Shamanic Bundle Cloth

Local Maya traditions are shamanic in nature and have been active for thousands of years.[13] This means that the curing of ills, be they physical, natural, or social, is the responsibility of a spiritual intermediary who contacts the other realms via ceremonies and often in trance or trance-like states.[14] Ancient Maya shamans, like similar contemporary ritual specialists and those throughout the indigenous Americas, often utilized entheogenic substances to reach altered states of consciousness in order to cure, divine, or communicate with the spiritual realm. They also presided over ceremonies to ensure "life, health, and sustenance" for their community.[15] In terms of textiles, special cloths are employed to hold, carry, and underlie power objects when placed on the earth so that the shaman can utilize them in his or her intercessory spiritual duties on behalf of the community.

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[12] Carlsen, "Ceremony and Ritual," 188.
[13] David A. Freidel, Linda Schele, and Joy Parker, *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 11-13.
[14] Rebecca Stone, *The Jaguar Within: Shamanic Trance in Ancient Central and South American Art* (Austin: University of Texas, 2014), 10.
[15] Robert J. Sharer and Loa P. Traxler, *The Ancient Maya* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 745-747.

The shamanic bundle cloth known as a *pisbal kotsih* is not well differentiated in the literature on Maya fiber arts nor does it appear in descriptions in appraisals, catalogues, and museum identifications. The designation pisbal kotsih appears in a 1940 account of Chichicastenango textiles in the form of an illustration and short discussion of its uses.[16] A very similar textile exists in the Michael C. Carlos Museum collection, where its description falls under the general grouping of "cofradía servilleta" or Catholic confraternity napkin (fig. 3). There was no mention in the museum documents accompanying the textile of any shamanic or even non-Catholic function, as is expressed in the 1940 text. Sacred shaman's bundle cloths are not so visually different from other types of typical Maya textiles: they combine striped backgrounds with brocaded elements, are comprised of two cloths sewn together with extravagant embroidery over the seam**,** and take a large, roughly square shape. According to the illustration and description by Rodas et al., however, the brocaded figures are proportionately larger in relation to the whole piece than in other types, all of them face upright in one direction, and the predominant background hues are the high-status reds and blues.[17]

It is significant to note that these pisbal kotsih are hidden in plain view and are not generally acknowledged for their specific and almost entirely non-Catholic uses. They have been able to move throughout communities and Western collections as largely indistinguishable from other textiles used for clothing and church purposes. Since the early 16th century, shamanic religion has been vilified by the Spanish and hiding native practices from the new overlords allowed the Maya to survive over the last five hundred years. Yet a surprising proportion of the use of such decidedly non-Catholic cloths has taken place in shamanic outdoor settings (fig. 4)

[16] Rodas et al., *Chichicastenango,* 131-134.
[17] *Ibid.,* 134.

and even inside Catholic churches themselves. Not only are the sacred cloths difficult to differentiate from other types ("it is indistinguishable from the ordinary *kaperrah* or "napkin"[18]), the cloth's name and the beliefs encoded in its uses were challenging to communicate in Western terms. While the authors complained it was "very difficult to translate" pisbal kotsih into a clear English concept, in 1940 Rodas et al. were ahead of their time in even attempting to reconcile the relationship of two such starkly differing religious systems. They concluded that the most accurate translation was a "holder of prayer-containers."[19] The "holder" or cloth, is concerned with hiding, protecting, and revealing sacred entities. "Prayer-containers" consist of such items as flowers, seeds, candles, incense, and other offerings as they are thought to hold the prayers and supplications of those who provided them.[20]

According to this description of the pisbal kotsih in use, the Catholic saints are among the spirits to which the shaman directs his attention. This concept of the santos acting as intercessory powers is not wholly different from their intended Catholic function. However, it also closely relates to the staple belief of shamanism that the shaman must rely on the intercessory power of supernatural beings to help humans on this plane of existence.[21]

When the pisbal kotsih is carrying its offerings, there are levels of containing and hiding. The cloth encloses the sacred offering material, which in turn contain the prayers the intercessor (shaman) wishes to convey to higher powers. Such actions of concealing and restricted access

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[18] *Ibid*., 131
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] In the Andes, a Quechua word, ukhu̯, embodies the concept of the value of things that are hidden and wrapped. See Rebecca Stone, "Dialogues in Thread: The Quechua Concepts of Ayni, Ukhu, Tinku, Q'iwa, and Ushay," *Threads of Time: Tradition and Change in Indigenous American Textiles,* Online Catalogue (Atlanta: Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2017), threads-of-time.carlos.emory.edu/exhibits/show/essays/dialoguesinthread.
[21] Stone, *The Jaguar Within*, 62-65.

increase the sacredness and power of the rites. The 1940 ethnographers admit that "it may seem absurd to describe objects such as candles as containing prayers, but to the mind of the Indian, more mystical and also more materialistic than we, such offerings do in a sense contain prayers, for he imagines prayers to be wafted upward, toward the gods or the ancestors, on the fumes of pom or the aroma of flowers."[22]

The concept of offerings containing or transmitting prayers can also be found in Catholicism, especially in the use of candles lit in a specific chapel in front of a saint image and is thought to reinforce the prayers of the supplicant. However, the Maya practice appears significantly more grounded in objects as vehicles and living entities than Catholicism allows. The objects inside the bundle cloth include flowers and European candles, also found in Catholic contexts, but alongside them it also holds fragrant *pom* or *copal,* an incense made from the copal tree (*Protium copal*). Archaeologists have found that these copal trees were grown in plantation-like swaths of land expressly for the purpose of harvesting their resin. Used in numerous ceremonies, pom use dates back to the ancient Maya: censers and remains of "incense balls" have been found at multiple Maya sites and the word "pom*"* has been identified in hieroglyphic writing. [23]

Similar ceremonies using candles and copal have been recorded from Maya towns across Guatemala. While some, like the one described by Rodas et. al, are more traditionally inclined, others portray more Catholic influence, while still others demonstrate a blatant merging of the two. One such obviously syncretic ceremony was recorded in the contemporary Maya town of San Sebastián Hueheutenango. At the beginning of the festival of the patron saint, the effigy is

[22] Rodas et al., *Chichicastenango*, 131.
[23] Jennifer Peace Rhind, Fra*grance and Wellbeing: Plant Aromatics and Their Influence on the Psyche* (Philadelphia: Singing Dragon, 2013), 86.

brought outside the church and into the street (fig. 2). There, seven members of the saint's cofradía work with the head shaman of the community, each sacrificing one rooster. The roosters' blood is spilled into a bowl that contains candles and copal and then the mixture is deposited into a fire at the feet of the patron saint, Saint Sebastian in this case.[24] While the specific candles certainly have European and Catholic origins, fire has been used in Maya ceremonies long before the Spanish arrived, often signifying rebirth and renewal. More traditional Maya renewal ceremonies involving fire continue to this day.[25] The long history of incense use by the Maya has already been discussed, but this ceremony exemplifies the use of a Catholic saint effigy in conjunction with Maya shamanic traditions like the bloodletting of a rooster and use of fire and pom.

According to the description of rituals involving the pisbal kotsih — the traditional outdoor transmission of prayers via physical and then olfactory means in the presence of a spiritual intercessor in the form of a shaman — took precedence over the Spanish-imposed churchly rituals. Rodas et al. write that only *after* a ceremony on the hilltop called Pascual Abaj, which is still in daily shamanic use today above the town of Chichicastenango, "if the religious desires of the [client] require further expression, he and his wife may then visit the church, still accompanied by the prayer-maker [shaman or ritual specialist] with more offerings" in the sacred cloth.[26] Thus, the church ranks second in spiritual importance, considered secondarily efficacious in transmitting human desires to the spirit realm. Significantly, the shaman acts as a ritual

[24] Krystyna Deuss, *Shamans, Witches, and Maya Priests: Native Religion and Ritual in Highland Guatemala* (London: Guatemalan Maya Centre, 2007), 29.
[25] Cecilia Medina Martin and Mirna Sanchez Vargas. "Posthumous Body Treatments and Ritual Meaning in the Classic Period Northern Peten. A Taphonomic Approach," in *New Perspectives on Human Sacrifice and Ritual Body Treatments in Ancient Maya Society*, ed. Vera Tiesler and Andrea Cucina (New York, NY: Springer, 2008), 112.
[26] *Ibid*., 132.

specialist *within the church itself*, usurping the role of the Catholic priest or at least complementing it on an equal basis. Even more remarkable is their next comment:

> If one watches the prayers on a Sunday morning when the church is crowded, one will notice [the shaman] making the sign of the cross with the pisbal kotsih above the head of his kneeling client, removing a candle from the bundle and making a cross with it above the client's head, and lighting the candle before a saint or on the floor in the middle of the church. No doubt the pisbal kotsih and its contents are held near the worshipper's head so that they may absorb the prayer-thoughts that fill it.[27]

The shamanic cloth is thus brought into the church and utilized in what appears to be a distinctly Catholic way: the sign of the cross. However, even the act of making the sign of the cross with the sacred cloth is not unique to Christianity. Crosses in contemporary Guatemala are understood to contain their own guardian spirits and are "referred to as *koman kurus* (our father cross) […] and nourished with candles and incense," but are directly linked to the ancient Maya cross shape that symbolized the World Tree and the four cardinal directions.[28] Such a ritual scene wholly exemplifies the concept of syncretism. Taking place in the church, surrounded by images of Catholic saints and crucifixes, the ritual may appear Catholic, but the actions with the sacred bundle taking place on the floor, reminiscent of the earth outside the church, and the presence of a shaman are clearly not.

The sacred bundle cloth can also be used to carry and bless seeds for planting, enhancing its sacred function. Extending the idea that the cloth holds special, prayer-containing entities, the seeds inside are filled with the desire for them to sprout and produce the maize necessary for life. They too might be believed to absorb all the prayers that the bundle transmits from one realm to another. Seeds denote life, fertility, the community, the Maya crop (not a Spanish one), so they

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[27] *Ibid*.
[28] Deuss, *Shamans, Witches, and Maya Priests*, 28.

align more firmly with continuing ancient Maya traditions. It is unclear to what extent the sacred cloths containing seeds are used inside a church and incorporated into Catholic ritual.

Another connection between sacred bundles, seeds, and fertility is evident in the contemporary Tz'utujil Maya town of Santiago Atitlán. The town has long been considered a noteworthy example of a community that has retained many of its indigenous Maya rituals and traditions. Modern practice of the bundle cult is particularly evident in the ostensibly Catholic cofradía system. The activities serve as some of the most fundamentally Maya religious endeavors, with very little to no counterpart in the Catholic Church.[29] First recorded in 1958,[30] the contemporary bundle cult of Santiago Atitlán remains active in at least six distinct cofradías.[31] Though most saints, and sometimes Maya deities, have images sculpted in the round, the Martín deity of Santiago Atitlán has no such image. Instead, he is invoked from a cloth bundle which can only be handled by a designated shaman dedicated solely to the cult of Martín. Considered the deity "who embodies the positive, life-generating aspects of the world," he is also the patron of the maize harvest, recalling the use of the pisbal kotsih's use for holding seeds. Atitecos, the inhabitants of Santiago Atitlán, celebrate the Dance of Martín on November 11, which coincides with the Roman Catholic feast day for Saint Martin of Tours. Beyond the name and day, however, few connections can be drawn between the two spiritual figures. Martín is not even addressed as Santo, as other Catholic saints are in Maya contexts. The date serves as the end of the harvest season and the area is about to enter the dry season and the dance is "an effort

[29] Michael E. Mendelson, "A Guatemalan Sacred Bundle," *Man* 58 (1958): 124.
[30] Mendelson, E. Michael. "The King, the Traitor, and the Cross: An Interpretation of a Highland Maya Religious Conflict," *Diogenes* 6, no. 21 (1958): 1-10.
[31] Robert S. Carlsen, *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town* (Austin: University of Texas, 2011), 193. As of 2016, ten cofradías have been recorded in the town of Santiago Atitlán- the same ten that were recorded in 1958 by E. Michael Mendelson.

to help renew the world and give it power to bear new life."[32] Although the same exact ritual actions involving pom and candles are not present in this ritual, the act of bundling and concealing the sacred is very similar to the uses of the pisbal kotsih.

The importance of these bundles in Maya ritual can be traced to the Classic period (ca. CE 250 to 900) and is referenced in the Post-Classic *Popol Vuh.*[33] The "Bundle of Flames" or *pisom q'aq'al,* was a sacred relic left to the K'iché Maya by Jaguar Quitze, one of the first four men created. Incense was burned before the bundle in order to honor Jaguar Quitze and his three brothers, the forefathers of the K'iché.[34] Similar uses of bundles are clearly evident in Santiago Atitlán's Dance of Martín.

Rodas et al. conclude their discussion with "the pisbal kotsih of today[…] contains objects, such as pom, candles, flowers, or seeds, which we can see with our eyes, but it also encloses invisible things, the adoration of gods and ancestors, the memories of a people whose life as individuals and as a race is a mysterious and sacred drama."[35] Despite the gap in culture, time, and religion, the authors grasped something of the fundamentals of shamanic thought and practice. The fact that all this is executed with a cloth, its appearance and shamanic functions likely well-known to the highly textile-literate Maya as to its appearance and its "subversive" uses yet able to avoid notice by Europeans even when utilized right in a church, shows the context in which santo-related textiles must be understood. If the Maya take their bundle to the hilltop first and the church second, then so must our consideration follow that value system.

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[32] Allen J. Christenson, *Art and Society in a Highland Maya Community: The Altarpiece of Santiago Atitlán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 157-158.
[33] Carlsen, *The War for the Heart and Soul of a Highland Maya Town,* 80.
[34] Dennis Tedlock, *Popol Vuh: the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life* (London: Touchstone, 1996), 67.
[35] Rodas et al., *Chichicastenango,* 133.

Santos in Colonial Spanish America

Three-dimensional figures of saints were less prominent in the church decoration of the early colonial period in Guatemala than they are now. The Spanish were far less interested in producing sculpture for churches than in commissioning paintings, due in part to the higher cost of sculpture. In addition to the prohibitive cost of sculpture for fledgling churches, established indigenous sculptural programs made the friars hesitant to decorate their new churches with potentially blasphemous "idols." Regarding these existing sculpture workshops, "inasmuch as their repertory was entirely religious, the Spaniards looked upon the native sculptors as heathen idol-makers."[36] Initially wary of this indigenous carving, many "gifts" of Catholic saint effigies were sent from Spain to Guatemalan towns to decorate the churches and be used in processions on saints' days, which were modelled on the confraternity saints' days in Spain (fig. 2).[37] Though the first saint figures in colonial churches were sent from Spain, more and more were carved by indigenous artists over time and they became essential to the Catholic worship in Mesoamerica.

Spanish confraternities were responsible for festivities on saints' days and each one maintained its own patron saint. Many had charitable purposes as well, some supporting hospitals, the sick, and the poor. On feast days, confraternities, like their New World counterparts, processed through their cities with dressed images of their saints.[38] From humbler displays, the sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries saw an increase in wealthy, lavish religious

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[36] John D. Early, *The Maya and Catholicism: An Encounter of Worldviews* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida: 2006), 80.
[37] Allyson Poska, "From Parties to Pieties," in *Confraternities & Catholic Reform in Italy, France, & Spain*, ed. John Patrick. Donnelly and Michael W. Maher. (Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999), 221.
[38] Maureen Flynn, "Baroque Piety and Spanish Confraternities," in *Confraternities & Catholic Reform in Italy, France, & Spain*, eds. John Patrick. Donnelly and Michael W. Maher. (Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1999), 234.

exhibition among Spanish Catholic confraternities. Saint figures would be elaborately dressed, but the wealth of the ceremonies extended to enormous, multi-day processions and gold and silver-embellished clothing of the confraternity members themselves.[39] Though Maya cofradía wear was unique to that specific cofradía, it could never exceed the magnificence of the santo's clothing.

Maya churches are replete with images of the saints, with some housing as many as fifty. The town's patron saint, in painting or sculpture, often holds a primary position behind the crucifix and altar or a large *retablo* (a large painted or sculpted structure behind the altar) with niches to hold numerous saintly images. Additional saints on pedestals or in niches adorn the walls and chapels of the church, denoting the prominence of the saints in the community.[40]

The Michael C. Carlos Museum Santo

The Carlos collection includes one such saint figure, a late 19th century santo, almost certainly representing San José or Saint Joseph, the patron saint of the Americas chosen by Spain in 1555. Jesus' step-father was consciously chosen, many scholars argue, for this elevated role because Spain could likewise present themselves as a benign step-father to the native peoples in their new colonies.[41] Since the Bible only mentions Joseph eight times, and those only briefly, much room was left for creative, propagandistic invention of him as a benevolent patriarch and favored intermediary to intercede with his wife Mary and "son" Jesus, who was actually referred to as the "son of Joseph" once in the Bible.[42] José was the head of the Holy Family (an earthly

[39] Marcelin, Defourneaux, *Daily Life in Spain in the Golden Age* (Palo Alto: Stanford Univ. Press, 1979), 115.
[40] Early, *The Maya and Catholicism*, 14, 19.
[41] Charlene Villaseñor Black, *Creating the Cult of St. Joseph: Art and Gender in the Spanish Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 13.
[42] *Ibid*., 21.

trio parallel to the Holy Trinity above) and so his authority was interpreted as analogous to that of Spanish men in their families. Spain, itself a patriarchal power under a king, echoed this symbolic structure as well. Therefore, in the logic of patriarchy, Joseph wielded authority over the actions of Mary and Jesus; he was promoted from a shadowy figure to the most powerful intercessor of all the saints. Praying to the figure of José was promoted as the best way for a colonial worshipper to have the prayers heard and answered. Hence, there are more images of Joseph than any other male saint in Guatemala, making it likely that this one is such a figure.[43] Unfortunately, because the museum records do not indicate which town this figure came from and many santos are similar in appearance, its identity cannot be verified absolutely.

The physical features of this santo are strikingly like those used in images of Jesus, which is unsurprising since most colonial American José figures look like Jesus figures, again because of the emphasis on the family connection in the Bible.[44] This example is particularly fine and very European in style. Curly brown, shoulder-length hair and even, aquiline features make him handsome in a Spanish type of way; the Maya have straight black hair and light brown skin, so he is not being interpreted as Maya, though some of his original dress would have been. His head and hands that would have been visible outside the typically engulfing garments are fully and naturalistically painted with white skin and rosy cheeks. An undersuit is painted on in blue-grey but was always meant to be covered by the long shirt and other miniature men's garments like those seen in figures 4, and 7-11. It would have been supremely disrespectful to depict the saint in the nude even when the figure was not donning its woven garments. His head inclines benevolently and due to articulated joints, his arms can be posed in various ways. Assembled

[43] Joseph F. Chorpenning, *Patron Saint of the New World: Spanish American Colonial Images of St. Joseph* (Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 1992), 11.
[44] Villaseñor Black, *Creating the Cult of St. Joseph*, 22.

with pegs, mortis and tenon joins, and hinge joints, the santo's limbs can be posed and adjusted. Colonial art historian and conservator Gloria Fraser Giffords, in an interpretation of the MCCM example, writes that such moveable santos most commonly represent St. Joseph, Mary, or Jesus. Articulated Joseph and Mary figures can be posed around the infant Jesus to form the Holy Family Tableau.[45] Notably, careful attention to detail is evident in his hands, which are complete with white-tipped fingernails, cuticles, and pink palms (fig.1b). Details of the eyes and skin also denote the level of care taken to create this santo. His exposed skin has a soft luster and the sparkling glass eyes surrounded by delicate painted eyelashes lend a lifelike appearance. Both the shine of his skin and the use of glass for the eyes support a 19th century date, according to art historian Susan V. Webster.[46]

Indeed, the preferred European naturalistic style and the Maya audience's expectations for three-dimensional saint images dovetailed in an odd way. The Spanish may have taken for granted that sculpted images should look as much like people as possible but did not confuse the two. Forbidden by God in the Bible, the "graven image" had been a very complicated aspect of Christian faith and devotion for hundreds of years. While images of saints and deities were created to facilitate worship, the Church forbade worshippers from venerating the image or idol itself.[47] Protestants particularly criticized the Catholic Church for a reliance on saint images and relics, accusing them of idolatry on a large scale. Catholics would then reinforce the distinction

[45] Gloria Fraser Giffords, "Santo Interpretation," 8 November 2008. Object 2009.42.260 Documents, Michael C. Carlos Museum.
[46] Susan V. Webster, "Interpretation," 3 November 2008. Object 2009.42.260 Documents, Michael C. Carlos Museum.
[47] Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Theology, Ethnography, and the Historicization of Idolatry." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67, no. 4 (2006): 582.

between the carved and painted images of saints and deities and their "true" counterparts, stressing the intercessory function of the images.[48]

In stark contrast, carved figures were not considered lifeless representations by the Maya worshippers, but rather as animate, living, breathing beings.[49] Creating figural representations of spiritual beings was not a new concept impressed upon the Maya by the Spanish. Maya peoples have long dressed figures of deities with richly woven and embroidered textiles and processed them through the community, accompanied by music and dancing, much as Catholic versions are today. Some of the figures were kept in public spaces for worship while others resided in caves, at springs, hilltops, and other sacred locations where sacrifices and offerings were performed.[50] This understanding of the dressed saints closely resembles ancient Maya characterizations of sculpted deities as animate. Living manifestations of humans or deities must be cared for, involving offering food and drink and other items to the figures. In this way, they are not only considered inherently animate, but are made so through the actions made upon them. Ancient Maya sculptures of both deities and rulers were "brought to life," as it were, through the ritual actions of the people, imbuing the object with a kind of animated essence. Caches of offerings at the base of stone images of ancient Maya rulers suggest that the images were not merely stone, but a living embodiment of the ruler or deity. Through constant ritual care, the image is brought to life and can intercede with the divine on behalf of the Maya people.[51] Even the process of the creation of these images of wood, stone, or clay was rife with ritual meaning and intent. One Spanish chronicler wrote of one such carving process:

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[48] *Ibid.*, 583.
[49] Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients*, 11.
[50] Early, *The Maya and Catholicism*, 72-73.
[51] Megan O'Neil, *Engaging Ancient Maya Sculpture at Piedras Negras, Guatemala* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 2014), 59-61.

> When the wood had arrived, they built a hut of straw, fenced in, where they put the wood and a great urn in which to place the idols and to keep them under cover, while they were making them. They put incense to burn to four gods called Acantuns, which they located and placed at the four cardinal points. They put what they needed for scarifying themselves or for drawing blood from their ears, and the instruments for sculpturing the black gods, and with these preparations, the priest and the [workmen] shut themselves up in the hut, and began their work on the gods, often cutting their own ears, and anointing these idols with the blood and burning their incense, and thus they continued until the work was ended.[52]

Parallel actions are evident in the contemporary Maya's treatment of santos and santas, syncretically combining ancient Maya ritual feeding and animation with the Spanish Catholic cult of the saints.

Although the Roman Catholic Church actively encouraged the cult of the saints and organized the cofradías to give indigenous converts a stake in churchly hierarchy and practice, it did not expect the sculptural image of the saint to be understood as the recipient of direct prayer, but as an intercessor between humans and God. Whereas the Church intended for prayers to be made to God via the saints, the Maya prayed *directly* to the image of the saint, often addressing the saint in their local Mayan language (Kakchikel in Sololá, K'iche' in Chichicastenango, etc.). They still do, as any observant visitor can attest.

Shamans are even known to play roles in the saints' day festivals. Many saints are invoked on multiple days throughout the year, in multi-day rituals. There is a ceremony that takes place in the town of Zinacantán that invokes Catholic saints, but the ritual specialists are not Catholic priests. The ceremony is instead led by the shamans of the community. The rite consists of praying over candles, flowers, and incense overnight, and then the shamans split off in pairs with the prayed-over offerings to assigned sacred places. Some pairs go to sacred

[52] Early, *The Maya and Catholicism*, 80.

mountains, others to crosses or water features, while the four oldest shamans visit the community's churches to supplicate the Catholic saints for protection. After these respective prayers, the shamans reconvene at the sacred mountain Kalvario, signifying the importance and integration of the Catholic saints to the ceremony, but the most revered place where protective gods congregate is the sacred mountain.[53] The significance of Calvary as a sacred hill is a prime example of the Maya syncretic approach to ritual.

Celebrations and processions with the saint, overarchingly similar to such processions in Spain, clearly involve indigenous Maya elements as well. Anthropologist Sandra Orellana describes the perpetuation of Maya religious practices within the cofradía sphere: "Fasting, ritual purification, abstinence from sexual relations, burning incense, drinking, and dancing characterized aboriginal general celebrations as well as those of Colonial cofradías."[54] Incense is a shared element between shamanism and Catholicism, yet the particular type of incense burned was a local tradition over millennia. However, the other ritual actions involved in a Maya saint's feast day, such as fasting, drinking, and dancing, were not prescribed nor much appreciated by the friars. Purification would take place in sacred spaces outside the church, such as a sacred spring or waterfall. Nature and her spirits, it could be argued, are the true deities being worshipped by the Maya.

Some santo effigies bear unmistakable Maya traits, such as the figure of Saint John processed in Santiago Atitlán. He holds in his hands what appears to be a baby lamb, a symbol for Jesus, often by sported by images of Saint John the Baptist, but the animal figure instead sports whiskers, black sports, and fangs, signifying a baby jaguar.[55] To Europeans, it surely

[53] Early, *The Maya and Catholicism*, 40.
[54] Christenson, *The Burden of the Ancients, 154*.
[55] Carlsen, "Ceremony and Ritual in the Maya World," 179.

would seem heretical to make Jesus a wild, ferocious animal. To the Maya, however, the jaguar, the apex predator of the Americas, was revered and frequently associated with powerful shamans and kings.[56] Moreover, a common word for shaman across multiple Maya languages is *balam,* which is synonymous with jaguar due to shamanic transformation into wild animals during visionary experiences.[57] Such images of a European saint holding an animal from the Americas, particularly one that is so charged with indigenous shamanic meaning, indicate a clear syncretic relationship between the two religions among the Maya, perhaps leaning more towards a potentially subversive privileging of indigenous religion.

Perhaps the most visible manifestation of the "Mayanization" of the saint figures is their being clothed over and over in miniature but extravagant versions of local dress, some fully Maya (the huipiles and wide *fajas* or belts) and some partially Hispanicized (the sleeved shirts and jackets).[58] In these ways a "Catholic" worshipper, holding a conversation in their native tongue while admiring and taking pride in the saint's fine clothing, was interacting on Maya terms with a small but powerful version of him or herself. Saint figures are quite literally folded into Maya culture on their terms.

As among the colonial and modern people, a santo's clothing is more Europeanized than is a santa's attire. The mirroring of living people in wooden figures is clear; men dress in a more hybrid way, with tailored jackets and pants but the wide belt as a Maya element, and women in a more strictly traditional one, whether flesh or wood. As an aside, in traditional indigenous thought a piece of wood was equally alive: trees are living beings that are addressed and thanked

[56] Lynn V. Foster, *Handbook to Life in the Ancient Maya World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 179.
[57] Stone, *The Jaguar Within*, 63.
[58] Altman and West, *Threads of Identity*, 31.

for giving their bodies for firewood, sculptures, and other uses. The wood from which this piece is carved, like many, is cedar (*meliaceae cedrela*).[59] There is only one Maya word for tree, wood, and plant: *te*. In some areas, it is pronounced *che*, but both pronunciations emanate from a common proto-Maya word.[60] Various names for specific trees and plants exist with these two words as suffixes, one of which is a cedar tree called *kuche*, meaning "sacred tree." It has been identified as a wood often used for carving sacred images.[61] As mentioned at the outset, among the Maya as many world peoples, from ancient times onward the Cosmic or World Tree has been a long-held symbol of the living universe, with roots in the Underworld, trunk in this realm, and branches in the celestial. Therefore, the dichotomy that we, and certainly the Spanish friars, may have made between an "image" in wood and a "real" person in the flesh does not necessarily apply to the Maya mindset.

The tiny but faithfully reproduced saint's clothing in the Carlos collection includes: a cape, a *tzut* or headcloth, two *camisas* or shirts, a faja or belt, and a jacket. One garment a huipíl (wide shirt) for a female saint (fig. 11) is included as well, simply because the collection only holds that one example. It is, however, of much finer quality than any of the other representative items for a santo.

The miniature red jacket, measuring only 6 inches tall and 17 inches wide (when the sleeves are extended), is perhaps most striking of these santo clothes (fig. 7). A minute green braid has been embroidered onto the edges of the cotton jacket. In Sololá in particular, men's

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[59] Dr. Alexander Wiedenhoeft of the USDA Center for Wood Anatomy Research identified a small sample of wood removed from a hip joint as a species of Cedrela.
[60] Joyce Marcus, "The Plant World of the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Lowland Maya," in *Maya Subsistence: Studies in Memory of Dennis E. Puleston,* ed. Kent V. Flannery (New York: Academic Press, 1982),
[61] Joyce Marcus, "Archaeology and Religion: A Comparison of the Zapotec and Maya," *World Archaeology* 10, no. 2 (1978): 180.

full-size jackets often include a solid or two-tone braided edging, pockets, and a striped pattern, which were certainly not present in the conventional Spanish jacket. The braided edge around the jacket is known as *murciélago* (bat), and has been attributed as a local, not Spanish design. [62] Bats, that live in caves which are considered entrances to the Underworld, were therefore considered sacred by the ancient Maya.[63] It is unsurprising that bat imagery persists in textiles from Sololá, which is a Kakchikel Maya city. Numerous Kakchikel textiles continue to include bat imagery, as the title of the Kakchikel leader meant "Lord of the People of the Bat".[64]

The sacred nature of the wearer of the little jacket is evident in the great amount of care that went into creating this garment. In terms of tailoring, which was a wholly Spanish introduction, sleeves, a collar, and cuffs and even functioning jacket pockets have been incorporated. The pockets would not have been used, but that level of detail shows respect, the time taken, and is a nod to the European origin of the saint that wears the jacket. Traditional Maya men carry bags instead of having pockets, as is true among many Native Americans.[65]

Shirts with sleeves and a collar were also brought by the Spanish for indigenous men to adopt. A shirt like the small green camisa (fig. 8) may very well have been worn by the wooden santo. Importantly, green and gold are the colors assigned to Joseph by the Catholic church. Green santo clothing is somewhat rare, as most is red (fig. 4), the high-status color long associated with Maya creator gods, the sun, blood, and beginnings.[66] However, red appears in

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[62] Altman and West, *Threads of Identity*, 39.
[63] Elizabeth P. Benson, "The Maya and the Bat." *Latin American Indian Literatures Journal* 4, no. 2 (1988): 105-6.
[64] *Ibid*., 102.
[65] Nicola Sharratt, *Carrying Coca: 1500 Years of Andean Chuspas* (New York: Bard Graduate Center, 2014).
[66] Willard B. Moore, "The Intersection of Folk and Fine Art." *Journal of Folklore Research* 36, no. 1 (1999): 79.

some of the green shirt's stripes, like a Maya commentary on what colors they deem most appropriate for divine figures. Recall that santos are dressed in new clothing over and over during their lifetimes so not all of this Joseph's many shirts would be late 19th century in date; this green example actually dates to the early twentieth century. Like the red shirt (fig. 4) and indeed santo clothing as a whole, the green shirt shows little signs of wear. Santos rarely, if ever, wore deteriorating textiles since faded or ripped clothing would be considered insulting to the saint and humiliating to the cofradía responsible for him or her.

In terms of finery, the santo tzut (fig. 9) — meaning an all-purpose cloth often folded on a man's head for whatever needs arise — is a very prestigious and unusual piece. Measuring 39.5 inches by 36.5 inches, this tzut is very large, differing from the diminutive size of the rest of the ensemble, but expresses the status of its santo by the luxurious materials and extensive time and labor required for manufacture. It could have draped over the head of the figure and its rich and colorful folds spread over the altar in an impressive display. Being full-sized, it also becomes more analogous to an actual man's tzut, following the Maya mandate to make saints and people equivalent in many ways. It too features Joseph's green color, here with another high-status color, blue. The silky material is likewise sumptuous and very rare. Silk has been imported to the Americas via the Spanish since the 16th century and has held pride of place in the hierarchy of non-indigenous fibers ever since (the luxury material is also found in Peruvian colonial textiles, such as a woven cushion cover with a detailed European-style coat of arms at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston[67]). The incorporation of this extravagant thread displays wealth and power of the owner to the onlooker. Another clearly European element are the bands of sewn-on lace,

[67] Rebecca R. Stone-Miller, Anne Paul, Susan A. Niles, and Margaret Young-Sanchez, *To Weave for the Sun: Ancient Andean Textiles in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 189-190.

which is not likely to have been made locally in Guatemala but rather imported for overseas. All in all, this is a very hybrid Maya cloth, but nevertheless pays homage to its santo in the terms of the Spanish-influenced culture that resulted when the two worlds collided.

Certain male saint's wear, the wide belts known as fajas, do represent a purely "traditional" aspect to his dress (fig. 10). Woven with stripes and wound around the waist, fajas can be plain or elaborate. This miniature one is more impressive than first glance might indicate. The blue and white stripes, changing from one color to the other, are made from tie-dyed threads (*ikat* to most textiles specialists, *jaspé* in Spanish). Though not forming a complicated pattern, the use of these pre-dyed threads is a more elevated technique than a simple white or blue stripe. In addition, being made with indigo as the dye, a notoriously difficult colorant and one that has high value as a result, further distinguishes the stripes from the everyday. To lavish blue tie-dye on this little belt is another prestige statement meant to honor the divinity as a high-status Maya man.

Finally, the most unchanged of the santo garments is the huipíl made for a santa (fig. 11). Like full-sized blouses characteristic of Maya women from antiquity to the present, tiny ones are rectangular and heavily brocaded. A very talended Maya woman spent a great deal of time on elaborate purple and pink patterning, as weaving a small garment is considerably more difficult than a full-size one. Requiring great manual dexterity, its space not leaving room for fingers, a diminutive blouse stands out from the rest. The artist intentionally left two holes in the front, carefully embroidering their edges so they would not unravel. These openings may well indicate, or at least suggest, who wore this particular huipíl. The Mother Mary often is shown nursing Jesus: one hole could have been for her arm and one for her breast. Maya women breast feed and the loose fit and wide armholes of the full-size huipíl are, in fact, designed to facilitate this

action. By dressing a santa thusly, the Maya reinforce their ideal female role as fertile, nurturing, responsible, and skillful. It is interesting to note that in many colonial paintings from nearby Mexico, Mary is depicted spinning or weaving, again reflecting how indigenous values can be expressed in the midst of Spanish religious demands.[68]

Conclusion

Syncretism between the ritual and belief systems of the Highland Maya and Catholicism is clearly evident in the cofradía context, especially the santo clothing ensemble, as well as in the continuation of aspects of ancient Maya bundle cults. Both the sacred shamanic cloth and santo/a clothing represent the belief that all is alive, so central to the ancient Maya worldview and persistent in syncretic Catholic and indigenous ritual to this day. The cloths hold power, as do the charged offerings they hold inside, and the saint effigy is much more alive than just an "image." By instilling color, detail, and life into the tiny finery of the santo, a particularly indigenous version of beauty, appropriateness, and status was infused into the act of dressing the saints. By maintaining those parallel but elevated beings' lives through ritual activity, the Maya simultaneously reinvigorate ancient traditions and uphold Catholic values. The devoted members of the cofradía carry on this fascinating religious fusion through the long-treasured and highly expressive medium of cloth.

[68] Villaseñor Black, *Creating the Cult of St. Joseph*, 72.

Figures

Figures 1a,b. This late 19th century painted wooden santo would have been fully dressed in fine miniature Maya textiles and processed through the community on festival days. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.260.

Fig. 2 Figure 5. Festival days in Guatemala, such as this Santiago Saint's Day Procession in Santiago Atitlán, include elaborate processions of fine dressed santos/as through the town. Photograph by "majunznk", licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0.

Figure 3. This *pisbah kotsih* from Nahualá is an excellent example of shamanic bundle cloths surreptitiously used in Catholic settings. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.69.

Figure 4. Santos don finely woven miniature textiles such as this both inside churches and while on procession. Red, a sacred color to both the ancient and contemporary Maya, is the most

common color for santo clothing. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.259.

Fig. 5 The large stone carved sarcophagus lid of the Maya king of Palenque, Pakal, shows the Cosmic or World Tree born from his body. Photograph by Asaf Braverman, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Figure 6. In this outdoor Maya ceremony at Iximche, a red and white textile is filled with offerings (to the left of the fire). Photograph by Tom Fortunato, licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Figure 7. Minute and intricate details such as braided edging and functional pockets denote the extreme care that went into constructing this santo's jacket. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.247.

Figure 8. Although green santo clothing is less common than red, this green camisa may have been worn by a St. Joseph santo figure, as the saint's colors are green and yellow. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.433.

Figure 9. A full-size, rather than miniature, cloth, this tzut would have been lavishly draped over a small santo, displaying the fine material and technique employed by the responsible cofradía. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.189.

Figure 10. Jaspé, or tie-dyed, stripes on this faja signify the status of both the santo and its associated confraternity members. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.432.

Figure 11. Two holes in this santa huipíl suggest that it may have belonged to a representation of the Virgin Mary, allowing her to be posed breastfeeding the baby Jesus. Photograph by Michael McKelvey, 2017. Courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 2009.42.180.

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