

The Crossed Bones Motif Pulque Cups and Stars

Altar of Skulls and Cross bones represent the night sky, probably both the sky that appears overhead at night as well as the sky of the underworld.

The altar friendly Bites in which the Xukmolpillis were discovered must represent such a celestial "model". This is almost certainly confirmed by the single skull (with eyes) that is pegged into the wall of the protruding upper zone.

The crossed bones motif is the more complex of the skull and cross bones symbols. I believe the motif harkens back to the Olmec times, to the X motif so commonly referred to as part of the "Celestial bond." That the cross bones are meant to be seen as celestial by the Aztecs is obvious from their presence on the Altar and on pulque cups, which frequently show them with down feathers attached. Down feathers are frequently interpreted as "sacrificial" designators. This is probably true but their ^{more} fundamental significance is their association with heaven and the celestial. Remember also that the thigh bones of a ^{sacrificed} captive were often displayed at the top of a pole set in the central courtyard of the captor's house. A kind of celestial bone display not unlike the familiar bone displays of skulls called *tzompantles* which were common in post classic cities of central Mexico. Also such cross bones with pole recalls the Xocotl-Mictli pole and probably gave the warrior displaying the bones a special access to heaven.

And what part of heaven did cross bones refer to. There were nine to fourteen layers to chosen from. Because the crossed bones not only formed the sign of "Ollin" which means "movement" and "time" "life force" but also a celestial function, the bond

one say that Chakchaboc occupy the 2nd layer of Heaven. But we know that at times they accompany the Sun from noon until sunset so they would also be found in the 5th layer of Heaven occupied by the Sun. Remember also that the Chakchaboc in Codex Borjome were crossed bones painted on their shields.

Skulls + cross bones = Shashid

* Skulls with eyes show "life in death" The "X" or ~~often~~ all in shape of the cross bones also symbolizes "life in death" Life in death defines the spirits of ancestors.

are there to designate the "fifth" layer of heaven. The fifth layer of heaven was the abode of the stars and of the sun. The stars were the celestial companions of the sun, the souls of dead warriors. It is true that the ~~sun~~ ^{sun} was conquering the stars at dawn ~~became~~ ^{became} their antagonists and ~~fighting~~ ^{engaging} in the great celestial struggle. But the battle itself united them into a special fraternity and companionship. The special relationship between warrior and captive was declared again and again from the early creation myths including the birth of Kutzilgochtle. At the unique bond father and son bond maintained between a captor and his captive from the time of the latter's capture on the battlefield until his death upon the sacrificial stone. The display of the sacrificed captive's thigh bones on a pole was ~~not~~ ⁱⁿ much more an act of respect than a ~~simple~~ ^{display} display of warrior pride.

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by the
Bosch

