

Belt (Cinturon)

Date

1910-1920

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

cotton and dye

Description

The cinturon, or belt, is worn as part of the typical everyday attire of a man in this village. Woven from natural cotton of red with purple, orange, green, yellow, and white details, the zigzag motif may represent the path of a Maya priest as he ascends the steps of a temple or cerritos, the Spanish word meaning “little hills.” The central design on either end is a double-headed eagle, an important symbol and reference to the intertwining of Spanish and native Maya cultures, as the double-headed eagle was once the emblem of the Spanish king, Charles V. The diamonds that line either side of the design are the most frequent iconography in Maya art, symbolizing the four corners or directions of the Maya world. The smaller diamond in the center symbolizes the sun. The combination of these motifs and their meaning demonstrates the importance of the Maya belief system even in the most common articles of their day-to-day lives. This piece may have been woven later than 1920.

Dimensions

Overall: 12 x 90 1/2 in. (30.5 x 229.9 cm)

