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"Architecture and Society, Maya Style"

with Dr. Edward Kurjack



Jim Reed,
Editor

Portal to the Maya Underworld Found in Mexico?

And dogs with night vision?

A press report by National Geographic News on August 22, 2008, says Mexican archaeologists working outside a village on the Yucatán Peninsula have announced the discovery of a labyrinth filled with stone temples and pyramids in 14 caves – some underwater.

The discovery has experts wondering whether Maya legend inspired the construction of the underground complex – or vice versa.

According to Maya myth, the souls of the dead had to follow a dog with night vision on a horrific and watery path and endure myriad challenges before they could rest in the afterlife.

In one of the recently found caves, researchers discovered a nearly 90 m (300 ft) concrete road that ends at a column standing in front of a body of water.

"We have this pattern now of finding temples close to the water – or under the water, in this most recent case," said Guillermo de Anda, lead investigator at the research sites.

"These were probably made as part of a very elaborate ritual," de Anda said. "Everything is related to death, life, and human sacrifice."

Mixing myth and reality

Archaeologists excavating the temples and pyramids in the village of Tahtzibichen, in Mérida, the capital of Yucatán state, said the oldest item they found was a 1,900-year-old vessel. Other uncovered earthenware and sculptures dated to AD 750 to 850.



Archaeologists Victoria Rojas (not shown) and Lara Hindersten (back) work at a site in the village of Tahtzibichen, in Mérida, the capital of Mexico's Yucatán state, on April 12, 2008. Mexican archaeologists announced in August the discovery of a maze of stone temples in underground caves, some submerged in water and containing human bones. Ancient Mayas likely considered the construction a portal for dead souls to pass into the underworld, scholars say.

Photograph by Tammara Thomsen/HO/Reuters.

"There are stones, huge columns, and sculptures of priests in the caves," said de Anda, whose team has been working on the Yucatán Peninsula for six months.

"There are also human remains and ceramics," he said.

Researchers said the ancient legend – described in part in the Maya sacred book *Popul Vuh* – tells of a tortuous journey through oozing blood, bats and spiders, that souls had to make in order to reach Xibalba, the underworld.

"Caves are natural portals to other realms, which could have inspired the Maya myth. They are related to darkness, to fright and to monsters," de Anda said, adding that this does not contradict the theory that the myth inspired the temples.

William Saturno, a Maya expert at Boston University, believes the maze of temples was built after the story.

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Olmeca Rubber Balls Reveal Vulcanization Process

In 1939, Charles Goodyear discovered the chemical process that later would be known as vulcanization; he mixed rubber with sulfur and formed a resistant and hard mass. Olmeca people used a similar procedure to create rubber balls to be used at ball game ceremonies, more than 3,500 years ago.

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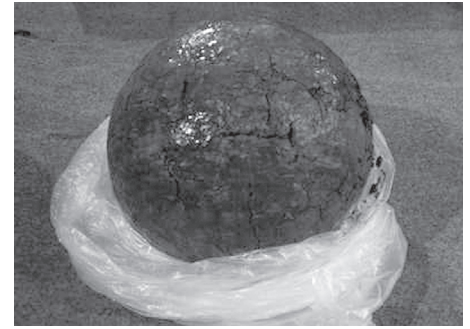
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Close-up view of one of the Olmeca rubber balls from El Manati. Images courtesy of INAH.

In 1989, during the archaeological salvage project at El Manati Hill, located in southern Veracruz, Mexico, in the Coatzacoalcos River basin, in Hidalgotitlan municipality, archaeologists Ponciano Ortiz Ceballos and Maria de Carmen Rodriguez Martinez discovered 12 rubber balls associated with axe offerings (some made out of jadeite).

National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) investigators were surprised by the perfect state of conservation of the rubber balls, in spite of time. This made them think a process similar to vulcanization was performed on the rubber that made it so enduring.

After years of investigation and several studies where Cambridge specialists participated, it was established that Olmeca people mixed the latex of the rubber tree, whose scientific name is *Castilla Elastica* with *Ipomoea Alba*, a perennial herbaceous liana cultivated in the tropical regions of Mexico, which contains latex with sulfides.

Sulfur contained in *Ipomoea* produces a chemical reaction that allows vulcanization. Sulfur atoms interlace to isoprene polymeric chains of rubber, turning latex into a resistant and hard material.

Mesoamerican people processed rubber by cutting an incision on the tree to obtain the sap, which is a milky and sticky liquid in its natural state. They placed pots at the foot of trees to collect the sap. When dry, it is very fragile and does not manage to retain forms.



INAH Olmeca experts stated that almost all of the wooden busts were ritually buried, following a strict protocol that included wrapping them in a petate or vegetal fiber mat. This is the earliest notice of funeral wrapping in Mexico.

The *Ipomoea* plant was crushed to obtain liquid, and when there was sufficient, it was poured in a container with the latex. After removing and mixing approximately 15 minutes, the latex became a white, solid mass that was removed from the container to mold balls and other utensils, such as elastic bands and figures.

Unlike Charles Goodyear's vulcanization process, in which great amounts of fire are needed to homologate sulfur with latex, the Olmeca process does not pollute, because it does not give off toxic particles.

Olmeca people offered latex in its liquid form in ritual ceremonies, and also used it for waterproofing fabrics and utensils.

El Manati Hill wooden busts

The previously mentioned INAH archaeologists indicated important religious ceremonies took place at this site more than 3,000 years ago.

Over the centuries, one or several villages around El Manati Hill practiced ceremonies that along with the 12 rubber balls culminated with the massive offering of 37 wooden sculptures or busts (see photo bottom left).

Two of the wooden busts have recently been subjected to Carbon 14 testing and reveal dates around 1,200 BC. Researchers now believe that it appears there was a great calamity then, floods or drought, that obliged the community to reinforce their offerings to mountain deities. Researchers also found burials with human remains that included sacrificed children and newborns which were apparently offered during water and fertility rituals.

Wood from Ceiba and Jobo trees was used to carve these anthropomorphic sculptures. Exposed to daylight after 3,600 years, they were blessed in a ceremony by representatives of the local Mayacal community.

Conservation of such ancient objects represents a challenge for restorers and experts, but preserving this important cultural heritage will bring untold relevant contributions to further understanding of the Olmeca culture.

Source: Condensed from two reports released 7/17/2008 by INAH at: <http://dti.inah.gob.mx>



Old Bones Tell a New Story

Between 2003 and 2005, underwater archaeologists of the Quintana Roo Speleological Survey (QRSS) discovered three skeletons in underwater caves along the Caribbean coast of the Yucatán Peninsula (two males and a female). Researchers realized the remains were very old. Due to an acceptable state of preservation, the remains were good candidates for radio carbon dating.

During the month of August, 2008, the researchers in charge of the analysis delivered the results at two different conferences – the World Congress of Archaeology in Ireland and the Fourth International Symposium of Early Man in the Americas at the Mexican National Museum of Anthropology, in Mexico City.

Dubbed “Eva of Naharon”, the female skeleton has been dated at 13,600 years old. If that age is accurate, the skeleton – along with the two others – could provide new clues to how the Americas were first populated. She’s upsetting the apple cart!

The remains of *Eva* were located in clear water in a cave located at 44.5 km (27 miles) to the southwest of the town of Tulum, in the Orange Grove Cave System. Here was the partially complete skeleton of a woman about 35 years of age, 1.41 m (about 4 ft. 7 in.) tall and weighing about 53 kilograms (117 lbs.).

A team of scientists was led by paleontologist Arturo González, director of the Desert Museum in Saltillo, Mexico. “We don’t know how [the people whose remains were found in the caves] arrived and whether they came from the Atlantic, the jungle, or inside the continent,” González said.

“But we believe these finds are the oldest yet to be found in the Americas and may influence our theories of how the first people arrived.” In addition to possibly altering the time line of human settlement in the Americas, the remains may cause experts to rethink where the first Americans came from, González added.

Clues from the skeletons’ skulls hint that the people may not be of northern Asian descent, which would contradict

the dominant theory of New World settlement. That theory holds that ancient humans first came to North America from northern Asia via a now submerged land bridge across the Bering Sea.

“The shape of the skulls has led us to believe that *Eva* and the others have more of an affinity with people from South Asia than North Asia,” González explained.

Ancient floods, giant animals

The two other skeletons excavated in the caves have been given a date range of 11,000 to 14,000 years ago, based on radiocarbon dating.

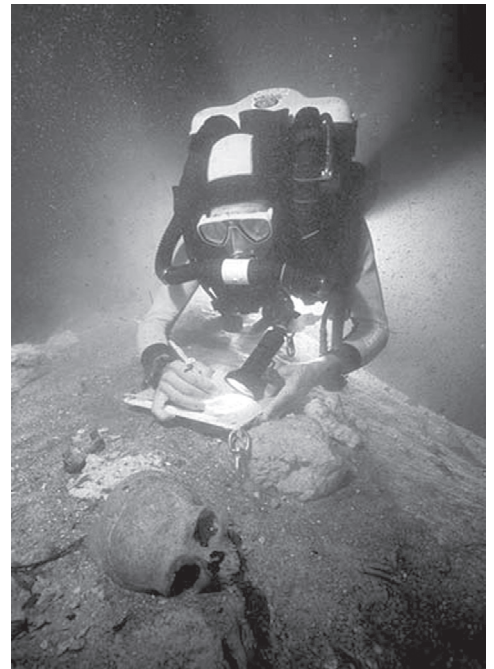
All of the remains were found some 15 m (50 ft.) below sea level. But at the time *Eva of Naharon* is believed to have lived there, sea levels were 60 m (200 ft.) lower, and the Yucatán Peninsula was a wide, dry prairie. The polar ice caps melted dramatically 8,000 to 9,000 years ago, causing sea levels to rise hundreds of feet and submerging the burial grounds of the skeletons. Stalactites and stalagmites then grew around the remains, preventing them from being washed out to sea.

What a meteorite has wrought

A limestone shelf juts from the arid north shore of the Yucatán Peninsula. This region lies along the rim of a massive crater formed 65 million years ago when a city-size meteorite plowed into the Earth. The impact raised dust clouds that darkened the sky, altered weather and triggered a mass extinction, including the dinosaurs. The meteorite also left a ring of fractures in the bedrock of



the peninsula that gradually filled up with fresh water, forming holes known today as cenotes. Deemed a source of life by the ancient Maya, cenotes hold centuries-old artifacts ranging from everyday pots to the skeletons of human sacrifices. Photo courtesy of Wes Skiles.



Octavio del Río, one of the cenote survey project co-directors, sketches details of a Maya skull that lies in the debris of a cenote in the northern Yucatán Peninsula. The victim may have been a human sacrifice, perhaps to Chac, the Maya god of rain, who lived in the underworld. Probing 20 or so cenotes in ancient Maya territory, expedition scientists concluded that small-town Maya followed the religious customs of grand cities such as Chichén Itzá, and that cenotes were vital to their sense of eternity. Photo courtesy of Wes Skiles.

González has also found remains of elephants, giant sloths and other ancient fauna in the caves.

If González’s finds do stand up to scientific scrutiny, they will raise many interesting new questions about how the Americas were first peopled.

In September, González began excavating a fourth skeleton, known as *Chan hol*, which he says could be even older than *Eva*.

The *Chan hol* remains include ten teeth, which will allow researchers to date the specimen and gather information about *Chan hol*’s diet.

González said he and his team hope to publish the full results of their analysis after the excavation of the fourth skeleton.

“We’re not yet in the phase of research of determining how they arrived,” he said. “But when we have more evidence we may be able to determine that.”

Source: Condensed by the editor from various sources, including reports by Leticia Sánchez at www.milenio.com and Eliza Barclay at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>



2012-Themed Conference Draws 1,100 Participants Including 52 Guatemalan Maya Spiritual Leaders

Editor's Note: This conference took place the weekend of August 23, 2008, in La Antigua, Guatemala and welcomed over 1,100 guests and participants to participate in "The Maya Prophecy of 2012". The event was coordinated and hosted by Mary Lou and Jay Ridinger of Jades, S.A., (the folks who brought to life the ancient Maya jade quarries). What impressed me was the fact that so many Guatemalan Maya Elders were in attendance and they got their first exposure to the work of John Major Jenkins as well as they got to see my "Understanding 2012" DVD that attempts to explain the theories behind the 2012 phenomena using all color images.

The conference was held at the historic Casa Santo Domingo and included a dance presentation by Ballet Folklórico entitled "Nin'ha," a lyrical interpretation of the *Popol Vuh*, kindly donated by INGUAT (El Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo).

This distinguished event brought together the leading-edge theories of independent researchers, whose aim is to reconstruct and illuminate Maya cosmology, with the inestimable knowledge of Maya Spiritual Guides and indigenous leaders. The various segments of the conference shared a definitive message: that on this fragile planet, we have an inherent responsibility to "hang together" in the effort to honor the knowledge of the indigenous Maya.



Two caring souls, Spiritual Guide Don Rigoberto Itzep Chanchavac with Mary Lou Ridinger.



Maya leaders in traditional outfits. The Ballet Folklórico performs a dance entitled "Nin'ha".



All photos by Georgeann Johnson.

Mary Lou Ridinger opened the talks by underscoring our deepened understanding of the link between the Maya ballgame, the creation myth written in the *Popol Vuh*, the images found on carvings at the site of Izapa, and the galactic alignment set to occur during the years around 2012. (The end of the Maya's 5,125-year Long Count Calendar is December 21, 2012.)

To headline the program and to help explain this complex area of study was John Major Jenkins, author of numerous books and articles that reflect a nearly twenty-year study of the Quiché Maya, the Long Count Calendar and its end-date in 2012, and the subsequent transformation of consciousness predicted by the ancient people of Mesoamerica.

Jenkins outlined his striking theory about the significance of Izapa, a ceremonial site located in southwestern Chiapas, Mexico, as the birthplace of the Maya Long Count Calendar. According to Jenkins' research, astronomers at Izapa accurately predicted what modern scientists now acknowledge as a rare alignment between the December solstice sun and the Milky Way, an event that occurs during the years around 2012.

Jenkins illustrated his presentation with a series of slides depicting various stelae found at Izapa, each of which present a different element of Maya creation mythology found in the *Popol Vuh*.

In presenting his position, Jenkins emphasized that these stone carvings serve as eloquent illustrative metaphors for the perceived astronomical events of 2012. He suggested that though it may be radical thinking to internalize the concept of multiple creations, of many re-births of the world, to do so is the beginning of the transformation towards a new



Speakers and participants of the conference were treated to a traditional prayer and blessing offered by Spiritual Guide Rigoberto Itzep Chanchavac of the Misión Maya Wajshakib Batz'.



During a moment of reflection and ceremony, a young Maya honors images of carved stelae within a new museum diorama.

form of consciousness, the consciousness of unity.

The conference also recognized the wisdom of Maya spiritual guide Aq'ab'al (Aurelio Sajvin), who shared with participants his knowledge of the Maya concept of time. Aq'ab'al gracefully reminded his listeners that the essence of understanding Maya time is a spiritual wellness on an individual level. He pointed out that in today's world, we frequently find ourselves

continued on next page

2012-Themed Conference, *continued*

continued from previous page

“... bumping into each other, looking for a flat road to where we are going” and that in order to truly understand Maya time, we must first become “energetically well”.

The DVD video “Understanding 2012” by Jim Reed of the Institute of Maya Studies was presented in English, with subtitles in Spanish. Reed, who has presented his work alongside that of John Major Jenkins, developed the video to help any audience better understand the ancient Maya perception of the galaxy.

Additional speakers included Mary Lou’s sister, Georgeann Johnson, whose presentation focused on the alignment symbolism found in the Maya ballgame. “The story of the Maya ballgame is a story of being on a team. It’s a story of collaboration, and working in a group.” Johnson showed that the ballgame employs “the ancient astrological dictum: as above, so below,” by introducing the crowd to the elements of the game as symbols for the galactic alignment. Johnson concluded that if we are to recognize Maya myth as a lesson for our time,

then “... the era of collaboration and team play for the common good is dawning.”

This call for unity was emphasized by Don Alejandro Cirilo Pérez Oxlay, Guatemala’s Ambassador for Indigenous Peoples, who spoke against what he perceives as a growing trend in Western media of using Maya spiritual traditions in its books and films, while failing to include contemporary indigenous Maya people themselves. Mary Lou Ridinger of Jades, S.A. proposed an ongoing discussion regarding this and other issues for the following day, and stressed the importance of future dialogue.

“The Maya Prophecy of 2012” conference drew members of the local and International press, as well as 1,112 participants, including over 200 International and Guatemalan tour operators and guides, various International Ambassadors and Consulates, 52 Spiritual Guides representing many of Guatemala’s indigenous ethnolinguistic groups, and representatives from over a dozen museums and universities of Guatemala.



Don Alejandro in traditional attire.

Following the conference the public was invited to the inauguration of the new Maya Cosmology Museum, located inside the Archaeology Museum at Jades, S.A.

Please note: The video “Understanding 2012” by Jim Reed, as well as a video production of the Conference can be purchased by contacting Jades, S.A. at: baldop70@gmail.com.

Source: Condensed from “The Jaded Report” (July 28, 2008 issue) of Jades, S.A.’s new blogspot at: <http://jadesmaya.blogspot.com>

In a related story, this Maya conference participant received a historic honor:

Don Alejandro Named Guatemala’s Maya Ambassador

On January 15, 2008, Alvaro Colom was sworn in as Guatemala’s first leftist president in more than 50 years, promising to fight poverty in a nation where half the people live on less than \$1 a day. Colom, who led Guatemala’s efforts to coax thousands of war refugees back home after its civil war ended in 1996, took office in a ceremony attended by world leaders, diplomats, politicians, and more significantly, numerous representatives of Guatemala’s Maya cultures.

“Today is the beginning of privileges for the poor, the beginning of privileges for those without opportunities,” Colom,

56, said after receiving the presidential sash to the tune of traditional Maya music.

“We are going to fight for the unity of the country, for the harmony with our indigenous people,” Colom said.

Now, in a groundbreaking move toward national reconciliation and unity among its peoples, on August 9, 2008, the Guatemalan government has formally recognized the Maya and other native cultures in this Central American nation, granting them an official government seat to represent their rights and interests.



Guatemala’s new President Alvaro Colom, right, holds a presidential staff given to him by Don Alejandro to signify proper guidance as he vowed to better represent the Maya people. Photo: Moises Castillo/AP.

Thirteenth generation Maya Quiché spiritual leader and head of the National Maya Council of Elders of Guatemala, Don Alejandro Cirilo Pérez Oxlay, has been chosen by Guatemalan President Alvaro Colom as the Ambassador Extraordinary Itinerant of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Guatemala.

Editor’s Note: This story is very important in the affairs of the modern Maya. We’ll report more next month.

Source: Condensed from numerous articles at: www.lescarney.com/guatemala.htm, www.turtleisland.org, and www.commonpassion.org



Don Alejandro Cirilo Perez Oxlay is the head of the National Maya Council of Elders of Guatemala, Day Keeper of the Maya Calendar, a 13th generation Quiché Maya High Priest, a Grand Elder of the Continental Council of Elders and Spiritual Guides of the Americas, and an international lecturer on Maya Culture. He is charged as the primary keeper of the teachings, visions and prophecies of the Maya people.

Decoding Maya Colors

For decades, archaeologists have pored over the art of the Maya, studying scenes of gods, kings, and captives for clues to the beliefs and workings of this ancient Mesoamerican civilization. Now, however, researchers are taking a microscopic approach to the art – with impressive results. By analyzing rare pigments that some Maya artists applied to masks, ceramics and other artworks, archaeologists are tracking previously invisible trade-routes in the Maya world.

A fine case in point is the brilliant blue-green pigment that Maya artists

applied to three jade mosaic masks recovered from 1,300-year-old royal tombs at Calakmul, one of the greatest Maya capitals. Archaeologists long assumed that the mysterious pigment came from malachite or chrysocolla, minerals that result from the weathering of copper ore. But a team of French researchers decided to look more closely, and the result of their study appears in the current issue of the scientific journal *Archaeometry*.

Employing three different techniques, including particle-induced

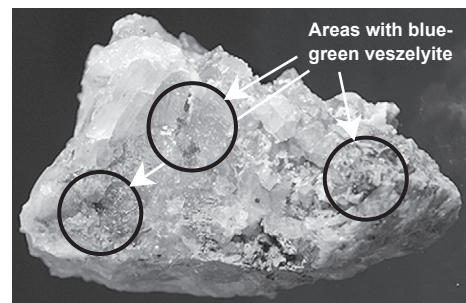


Photo of veszelyite crystals. View the image in color at: <http://archaeology.org/blog/?p=33>.
Courtesy of Excalibur Mineral Corp.

X-ray emission, the French researchers discovered to their surprise that the radiant green came from veszelyite, a rare mineral that occurs only in very small crystals in a few places in the world. Its use as a pigment “had never been reported for any civilization to our knowledge,” noted the team in its paper.

Moreover, the team determined that the blue-green mineral came from a source in the state of Puebla, southeast of present-day Mexico City. In all likelihood, Calakmul’s powerful elite imported it from this region as a luxury good, perhaps during their dealings with rulers of the great highland city of Teotihuacán.

Archaeologists elsewhere are beginning to examine other brilliant pigments in the Maya world. Researchers at the University of Arizona are studying a beautiful scarlet pigment made from cinnabar, a mercury ore originating in volcanic settings. Maya mourners once sprinkled the tombs of the royal dead with this brilliant pigment, and the Arizona team hopes to reconstruct in detail the cinnabar trade routes.

What all this is showing us is that rich exotic color has long been the stuff of luxury and longing. It’s not just today’s designers at Versace or Prada who crave such eye candy; elites in the ancient world knew and prized radiant color as well.

Source: From an original article by Heather Pringle, released 8/8/2008, at: <http://archaeology.org/blog/?p=33>

4,500-year-old Mummies Discovered in Chile

Eight perfectly preserved mummies, believed to be some 4,500 year old, were found by workers engaged in a restoration project in Chile’s far north in late June, 2008.

“These mummies date back to between 2,000 BC and 5,000 BC”, said archaeologist Calogero Santoro.

The mummies are remains of individuals belonging to the Chinchorro culture, which was one of the first to practice mummification and the perfect condition in which the mummies were found is indicative of their advanced techniques.

Three of the eight skeletons have been kept on the site in the Morro de Arica site for visitors to see while the other five were taken to Tarapaca University in northern Chile, where other mummies found in previous years are preserved.

Morro de Arica is known for its mummies. Several hundred of them, some as old as 7,000 years, were discovered in 1983 in the area.

In 2005, University of Tarapaca archaeologists found 50 Chinchorro mummies, dating back to 4,000 BC, during the demolition of a house.

The unusually large number of mummies found in the sector indicate that one of the oldest Chinchorro cemeteries may have been located there. The Chinchorros are presumed to have died out or migrated in the first century AD.

The mummies found in northern Chile date back even earlier than the ones discovered in Egypt, making them some of the world’s oldest.

Source: From an original article released 6/28/2008, at: <http://sify.com/news/fullstory.php?id=14704621>.
Submitted by Scott Allen.

Portal to the Maya Underworld

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“I’m sure the myths came first, and the caves reaffirmed the broad time-and-space myths of the Maya,” he said.

Underworld entrances

Saturno said the discovery of the temples underwater indicates the significant effort the Maya put into creating these portals.

In addition to plunging deep into the forest to reach the cave openings, Maya builders would have had to hold their breath and dive

underwater to build some of the shrines and pyramids. Other Maya underworld entrances have been discovered in jungles and above ground caves in Belize and northern Guatemala.

“They believed in a reality with many layers,” Saturno said of the Maya. “The portal between life and where the dead go was important to them.”

Source: From an original article by Alexis Okeowo released 8/22/2008, at: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>

Get in the know about 2012!

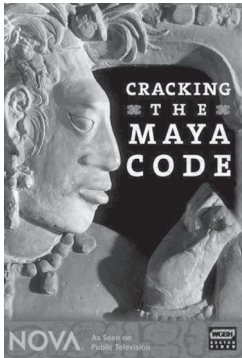
Thanks to our webmaster Frank May, the Institute of Maya Studies now maintains an area of our web site devoted to **Understanding 2012**. Feel free to post your own comments or questions. Updated periodically, check out our 2012 link at: <http://mayastudies.org>

Institute of Maya Studies' Line-up of Presentations!

October 8: IMS Meeting (Classroom-style) (Rescheduled from September)

DVD Presentation of "Cracking the Maya Code"

with commentary by Steve Mellard



This is a definitive look back at how a handful of pioneers deciphered the intricate system of hieroglyphs developed by the Maya. One of the greatest detective stories in all of archaeology, it had never been told in depth before. With glorious footage of Maya temples and art, this documentary culminates in the fascinating account of this once magnificent ancient civilization's ingenious method of communication.



Glyphs on a carved stone bench at the Maya site of Copán in Honduras.

The ancient Maya civilization of Central America left behind an intricate and mysterious hieroglyphic script, carved on monuments, painted on pottery, and drawn in handmade bark-paper books. For centuries, scholars considered it too complex ever to understand – until recently, when an ingenious series of breakthroughs finally cracked the code and unleashed a torrent of new insights into the Mayas' turbulent past. Now, NOVA presents the epic inside story of how the decoding was done – traveling to the remote jungles of southern Mexico and Central America to investigate how the code was broken and what Maya writings now reveal.

October 15: IMS Meeting (in the Museum Auditorium):

"Architecture and Society, Maya Style"

with Dr. Edward Kurjack



At the site of Ek Balam, members of their Maya society become architectural elements in 3D!

Social interpretation of Maya architecture presents several problems that remain to be resolved. What sort of organization constructed the monumental buildings at the centers of Maya communities? How can we tell the difference between ordinary houses, elite palaces, community structures and temples?

Should we consider the Maya builders master masons or architects?

Traditional styles are associated with Maya architecture at Río Bec, the Chenes, the Puuc, the East Coast, etc. What is the ethnological equivalent of these styles? My own research suggests that each large site seems to possess its own style. This is due to the instability of political leadership from generation to generation – efficient rulers followed by less competent individuals. Nevertheless, if architecture is defined as durable, useful and beautiful, Maya buildings exceeded those requirements.

Get the answers from a true Maya expert. Be there to welcome our good friend, Dr. Edward Kurjack back to Miami!

The Institute Maya Studies • All meetings are Wednesdays • 8-9:30 PM • Miami Science Museum
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Upcoming Events at the IMS:

October 1: *IMS Board Meeting*
All IMS members are welcome to attend.

October 8: *IMS Meeting: Classroom-style DVD Presentation of "Cracking the Maya Code"* – With glorious footage of Maya temples and art, this documentary culminates in the fascinating account of this magnificent ancient civilization's ingenious method of communication. This is a definitive look back at how researchers deciphered the system of hieroglyphs developed by the Maya, with commentary by **Steve Mellard**.

October 15: *IMS Meeting: Museum Auditorium "Architecture and Society, Maya Style"* – If architecture is defined as durable, useful and beautiful, Maya buildings exceeded those requirements. We know there are numerous defined styles of Maya architecture, but what about the multi-tiered levels of Maya society that built them? Get the whole story from our good friend of the IMS, **Dr. Edward Kurjack**.

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

October 11–12: *Symposium "Recordkeeping in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica and the Andean Region"*

– A Pre-Columbian Symposium at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. Speakers include: Elizabeth Boone, Oswaldo Chinchilla, Stephen Houston, Alfonso Lacadena, David Stuart, Karl Taube, Javier Urcid and Gary Urton. Get more info at: <http://pre-columbian@doaks.org>

October 18: *Symposium "Mesoamerican Mythologies"* – Theme of symposium of the New World Archaeology Council (NWAC) at the Beckman Center of the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering in Irvine, CA. Get more info at: <http://mesoamericanmythologies.info>

October 31, 2008 – April 19, 2009
"The Aztec World" – Exhibit at The Field Museum of Chicago, Chicago, IL. Get more info at: www.fieldmuseum.org

November 7–11: *Conference "It's Good to be King: The Archaeology of Power and Authority"* – Theme of the 41st Annual Chacmool Conference at the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Get more info at: www.arky.ucalgary.ca/chacmool2008

December 1–6: *Conference "La Vida Cotidiana de Los Mayas"* – Theme of the 13th European Maya Conference, at the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France. Combining a 3-1/2-day long Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop and a 2-day symposium. Get more info at: www.wayeb.org/conferencesevents/emc_now.php

February 6–8, 2009: *Symposium "Maya Calendars and Creation"* – Theme of the Sixth Annual Maya Symposium and Workshop at Tulane University. Get more info at: <http://stonecenter.tulane.edu/MayaSymposium>



Please note that all articles and news items for the IMS newsletter must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor by the second Wednesday of the month. E-mail news items and images to mayaman@bellsouth.net or forward by postal mail to: Jim Reed, 936 Greenwood Ave NE, Apt. 8, Atlanta, GA 30306



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October 15: IMS General Meeting:

"Architecture and Society, Maya Style"

with **Dr. Edward Kurjack**

*The Puuc architecture at Uxmal features stone
homages to the common Maya's thatched houses.*