



# INSTITUTE OF MAYA STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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## IMS General Meeting November 19:



## "Underwater Archaeology: A Lost City of Belize"

with Dr. Heather McKillop



Jim Reed,  
Editor

## Is Mexican Pacific Coast Village Mystical City of Aztlán?

### *Location of Aztec homeland has been sought and debated*

In the pre-dawn darkness, the fishermen return with nets brimming with plump shrimp and tie up their canoes behind homes of mud and wood. It's a way of life that's hardly changed over the past 1,000 years in Mexcaltitán, an isolated Pacific coastal island that's been dubbed the Venice of Mexico because its sunken streets become canals during the rainy season.

Embedded in that humble daily ritual may lie clues to one of the hemisphere's great historical mysteries: Where did the mighty Aztec civilization come from?

For local officials and some historians, Mexcaltitán is nothing less than the mythical Aztlán, birthplace of the ancient Aztecs.

### **Immigration flashpoint**

According to legend, the Aztecs left an island in 1091 and wandered for two centuries before settling in what is now Mexico City. There, they founded the legendary city of Tenochtitlán, an island city of canals and floating gardens, and lorded over an empire that stretched from Guatemala to northern Mexico before the Spanish conquered them in 1521.

The location of Aztlán is no mere academic exercise: the term has become a flashpoint in today's raging U.S.-Mexico immigration debate.

To enter "Aztlán" in an Internet search is to be immersed in a fierce, often nasty, ideological battle over immigrant rights. Historians and archeologists are bitterly divided over the location of Aztlán, or even over whether the place ever existed.



*Mexcaltitán is an island located in one of the lakes in the swampy mangrove estuaries north of San Blas and Puerto Vallarta, in the Pacific-coast state of Nayarit. The original name was Aztlán, which means "Place of the Herons", which makes sense to some, because the region is full of herons and egrets. Aerial photo courtesy of Jeremy Schwartz/Cox Newspapers.*

With some theories placing the Aztec homeland in the U.S. Southwest, Utah or California, the notion has become fraught with political overtones.

For decades, the idea of an Aztlán located within the United States was an important part of the growing Chicano pride movement. Anne Martínez, a University of Texas history professor, said the embrace of Aztlán reflected a desire by Mexican-Americans to forge a clear geographical link, and thus a belonging, to the United States.

"It was also the idea that wherever Mexicans are outside of Mexico that *that* is Aztlán," she said. "That we take Aztlán with us."

### **"Powerful idea"**

Today, the term is more likely to be used by anti-immigration groups warning of a *reconquista*, or reconquering, of the

*continued on page 6*

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## Almost a Hundred Sacbeob Led to Chichén Itzá

*Chichén Itzá can be compared to Rome because many roads led to this Yucatán city. Recent investigations at the archaeological site have revealed almost a hundred Sacbeob or "White Roads", as declared by Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) archaeologist Peter Schmidt.*

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The specialist Schmidt, who for 48 years has participated in different archaeological works in this ancient city, reiterated that at the moment more than 90 roads have been detected. "They have not been completely explored. Nevertheless, we have significant examples, excavated and recovered. Recent workings are concentrated in a sacbe between the Castillo group great platform and the Osario group platform".

Sacbeob had a fundamental role in the Maya area, since they set social, political, religious and economical ties between great population centers and small communities that depended on them.

Chichén Itzá was a place of great affluence that extended at its peak for 25–30 sq. km; "and was inhabited by approximately 30,000 people", stated Schmidt, in charge of the Archaeological Project in the zone since 1993.

Sacbeob network demonstrates the iron internal political control. On one hand, there were local roads used for internal communication between groups near the Great Level; on the other, there were regional roads that connected the remotest groups with the center".

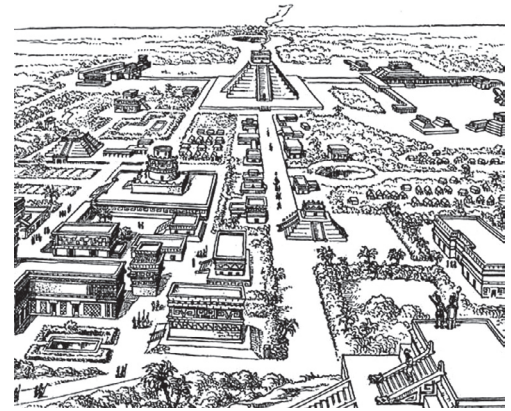
## Agreement Paves the Way for Archaeological Peace Park

Three dignitaries from Guatemala recently traveled to the University of California – Santa Barbara (UCSB) to participate in a historic signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on October 22, 2008. The act established a collaborative research program at the ancient Maya city of El Pilar and launched the El Pilar Peace Park Initiative.

Straddling the borders of Guatemala and Belize, El Pilar was mapped for the first time in 1983 by UCSB archaeologist Anabel Ford, who has been working in the Maya forest area since 1972.

"The site is a binational space, and building collaborative ties is critical to realize this dream of a peace park," said Ford.

"If we can actually do it, it will be the first archaeological peace park in the world. Having the university establish a strong



In spite of registered Sacbeob (more than 90 distributed in the area), "at the moment we are sure that only ten arrived to both main groups of Chichén Itzá: the Castillo group and the Thousand Columns group".

The "white roads" also marked status of important classes, because only they could use routes that communicated residential group roads with the main roads.

Another interesting fact pointed out by archaeologist Schmidt is that Sacbeob were civil works related to the water conduction and handling in Chichén Itzá. Due to high precipitation, Itzaes adapted routes to catch the greatest possible amount of water, although they counted on fifteen natural cenotes (wells).

"Sacbeob construction was adapted to avoid great water stagnations. It consisted, in most of them, of crossed channels that crossed the road widely, with two exit orifices to drain the water", concluded Peter Schmidt.

Source: From an original article released 9/10/2008 and posted on the INAH website at: <http://dti.inah.gob.mx>.  
Artwork courtesy of L. Swanson. Submitted by Scott Allen.



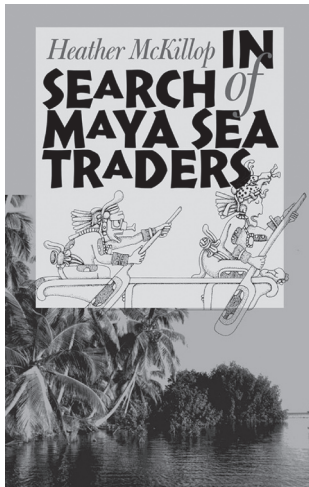
*Archaeologist Anabel Ford and coworker examine a structure at El Pilar. Photo courtesy of The El Pilar Program.*

collaborative tie with Guatemala is very important."

The signing of the MOU marks the 25th anniversary of Ford's discovery of El Pilar. Thanks to Ford, today El Pilar is at the heart of a 5,000-acre archaeological reserve linking Belize and Guatemala and celebrating the culture and nature of the Maya forest.

Source: Condensed from an article released 10/10/2008 at: [Media-Newswire.com](http://Media-Newswire.com). Image from a news release dated 10/16/2008 on UCSB's own website at: [www.daily-nexus.com](http://www.daily-nexus.com).

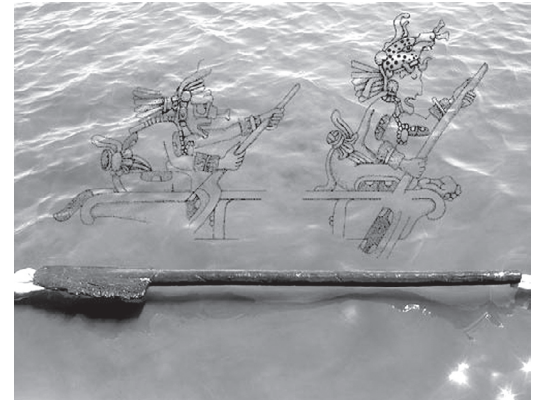




# *In Search of Maya Sea Traders*

by Heather McKillop

*"In Search of Maya Sea Traders* is certain to be of great interest to the large general readership that is fascinated by the civilization of the ancient Maya. Heather McKillop, a highly respected specialist on the ancient Maya, has provided an engrossing and informative account of her archaeological fieldwork on the coast of Belize in Central America. The book is a terrific read and is strongly recommended to aficionados of Precolumbian Maya civilization."



*An ancient wooden Maya canoe paddle that Heather McKillop and her team found submerged at the K'ak' Naab' site in Belize.*

Published by Texas A & M University Press, 2005. ISBN 1585443891 (cloth); ISBN 1585444243 (paperback).

— Jeremy A. Sabloff, University of Pennsylvania, and author of *The Cities of Ancient Mexico* and *The New Archaeology and the Ancient Maya*.

Stone temples rising above the rainforest canopy and elaborate hieroglyphs carved onto stone monuments give silent testimony to the high culture of the Maya ancestors of the indigenous peoples of Central America. They have inspired generations of archaeologists, professional and avocational, to take to the field in search of the past.

One such archaeologist is Heather McKillop, who in 1979 first visited the coast of Belize in search of a little-known aspect of ancient Maya life: the sea trade that helped move salt, obsidian, coral, and other goods around the interior of the empire. In 1982, she began bringing volunteers and students to the islands off the coast of Port Honduras, Belize. Since then she has returned many times to excavate sites that reveal the scope and diversity of the trade that passed by water throughout the Maya world.

In this book, McKillop tells the story of the search for the Maya sea traders, as well as the story of the traders themselves as it emerges from the excavations. *In Search of Maya Sea Traders* describes the trading port of Wild Cane Cay, where exotic obsidian, jade, gold, and other goods – including highly crafted pots – were traded from distant lands. McKillop also tells us about the more coastal-inland trade of salt, seafood, and other marine resources.

Through the story of her own work and that of her students and volunteers, McKillop models both the research design and the field work that are required to interpret the civilizations of the past. She includes the adventure of discovery, the challenges of working

in wild environments (from snakes and rising sea levels to falling coconuts) and the tedium of daily measured digs in a near-tropical setting. Through her experiences, the reader also gets to know some of the local residents of Port Honduras and Wild Cane Cay, descendants of the ancient Maya.

*In Search of Maya Sea Traders* will appeal to that part of each of us that longs to explore distant places and cultures, in quest of a seldom-glimpsed past.

*McKillop will be signing copies of her books before and after her IMS presentation on November 19. See below and page 7 for program announcement.*

## IMS Meeting, November 19, 8 PM

### **"Underwater Archaeology: A Lost City of Belize"**

In Dr. McKillop's own words: "I will discuss the discovery and investigation of a massive ancient Maya salt industry including wooden structures preserved in a peat bog below the sea floor in southern Belize. What we found stunned the archaeological community and transformed our knowledge of ancient Maya architecture and economy: no wooden structures from the Classic Maya civilization had previously been found. The posts and beams of wooden buildings were preserved along with artifacts. They had been untouched for 1,300 years due to sea-level rise that had protected them and hidden them from modern view, until my project.

"The buildings were used in the ancient Maya salt industry, as indicated by the extensive deposits of 'briquetage' – pottery vessels used in the boiling of brine to produce salt. The pottery vessels were standardized in their dimensions indicating mass production of salt. The salt works provide a new source of this basic biological necessity for the dense urban populations of the interior of the Yucatán, where salt was scarce.



*Team member Mark Robinson, a graduate student at Essex University in the United Kingdom, taking underwater photos of a wooden post marked by flags.*

"The findings challenge the long-distance import of salt from the north coast of the Yucatán and indicate there was a large industry for the production, storage, and distribution of salt – white gold of the ancient Maya. I will discuss our innovative methods for searching underwater, the types of wooden structures and salt production we have found, and the implications of our findings for our understanding of ancient Maya architecture in general and specifically the ancient Maya salt industry."



# Maya Vault “Poles”

by Joaquín Rodríguez III PE, SECB

Most Mayanists are familiar with the wood poles that are frequently found across Maya masonry vaults. I use the word “poles” since their function and, hence, their designation, is in question.

## What has been suggested

- a) That these poles were temporarily braces to hold stable the halves of the vault while the lime mortar hardened.
- b) That they were too few and slender to do much bracing and, therefore, might have been simple poles for curtain rods. Taking into consideration that some of these poles hang as high as 12 ft. off the ground and could be as thick as 4 in. to 5 in., it doesn't seem practical that the Maya meant them primarily as curtain rods.
- c) That they may be the remains of scaffolding that elevated masons and plasterers to the working surface.
- d) That they may not be of structural use, but simply a carryover of timber construction where ceiling ties were necessary until all the wood armature was in place.

Caught in the middle of these arguments, I promised some archaeologists I would run some calculations on the poles.

## Terminology

- a) A **beam** is an element that functions in flexure; that is, it carries the load by bending.
- b) A **lintel**, always seen over a doorway or window, is a type of beam (*dintel* in Spanish).
- c) A **brace** is an element that carries concentric axial load (*arriostre* in Spanish) and can be either in tension or compression.
- d) A **column** is a vertical element carrying axial compression; if it is a part of a wall, it's called a pilaster.

## Preliminary findings

Here are some preliminary numbers that members of my staff and I ran on “poles.” On the off chance that they could indeed be temporary braces, we checked the member capacities. I have no actual measurements, but I remember them being about 2-1/2 in. to

3 in. in diameter. I used for comparison some vault cross-sections I have been working on, one from Chichén Itzá's market and another from Xunantunich. We ran some compression capacity calculations, taking into consideration that being well embedded in the supports cuts down their buckling length.

We considered two wood possibilities: a high-grade chico zapote (comparable to a No. 1 grade southern pine) and another, more common No. 2 southern pine. Obviously the stronger wood had higher capacity: about 1,200 lbs. vs. around 800 lbs. for the No. 2 southern pine. In any case, we are talking about 1,000 lbs. each.

Most Maya vaults are self-stable when cured (truly corbelled). Those few that are not corbelled and rely on real arching – compression at the top against the other half – would still have to cure before full strength is achieved. These stresses are, however, very, very low (more on this later). So, if we assume that the Maya used the poles as temporary construction braces, we have two possibilities: they were tension braces, or compression braces.

## Tension braces

Tension braces are used at the spring point of tied arched vaults (similar to ceiling joists in conventional wood-rafter construction). They are intended to eliminate the “kick out” of an arch. In a corbelled arch, there is no kick out, so these elements would be useless. As a third nail in that coffin, the tension capacity of the pole embedded in the mortar would be controlled by the bond of the wet mortar on the wood. That means a total of a few hundred pounds at best. As the mortar dries, it would shrink away from the wood and reduce the bond. In conclusion, these poles placed at the spring point of the vault would be of little use as braces.

## Compression braces

A truly corbelled vault is built by keeping enough mass (weight) behind the spring point to balance the cantilevered mass being added at the nose of the corbels as you go up. This, of course, assumes that the mass stays together as one piece.



*In situ Maya vault “poles” within a room with a corbelled arch, high atop “El Castillo,” at Xunantunich, Cayo District, Belize. Photo: JR.III.*

The cemented masonry or lime concrete would tend to split in tension with the inner face falling in, leaving the reaction mass behind. This would be more critical while the mortar is fresh. So, if we assume that the builder is temporarily bracing his vault as he goes up, these braces would carry compression from a half vault to the other. Based on a couple of vaults, Xunantunich (see photo above) and Chichén's Mercado, we get about 3,000 lbs. of inward force per foot (disregarding mortar strength) at the level of the vault brace.

This would require 3-in.-diameter braces spaced at about 4 inches apart (3 poles to a foot). Even intended to partially brace only the lower half of the vault, these poles would have to be placed at 3 ft. spacing, half way up the vault.

## Checking information

In checking some pictures I took of Xunantunich and Uaxactun and from photogrammetry, we get that these poles may be as big as 5 in. to 5-1/2 in. in diameter. We then went back and recalculated the strength of those poles. Comparing the same wood possibilities, we came to about 18,000 lbs. for the chico zapote and 16,000 lbs. for the No. 2 southern pine, which is quite a difference. But even then, we would need braces spaced out every 5 to 6 ft., and there aren't that many in those buildings either.

*continued on next page, at right*

# Ancient Urban Landscape Hidden in the Amazon

It could be a case of history repeating itself in the jungles of South America. Huge swathes of the Western Amazon were cleared 600 years ago, though back then it wasn't for logging; it was to make way for an urban network of towns, villages and hamlets.

For the past few decades archaeologists have been uncovering urban remains that date back to the 13th century – long before European settlers had sailed across the Atlantic and discovered the “New World”.

This means that decent chunks – some 20,000 sq. km – of the Western Amazon forest is not, strictly speaking, what could be called “virgin” forest. It is what took over after local cultures were wiped out by European settlers and imported diseases and their towns and villages were left untended.

“In 1993, I went to live with the Kuikuro people,” says Michael Heckenberger of the University of Florida. “After a few days, the village chief, Afukaka Kuikuro, took me out to the remains of an earthen wall.” Heckenberger soon realized that the structures which the Kuikuro held to be associated with their gods were, in fact, the remains of their ancestors' cities. He now returns to the area every year with a team of Brazilian and U.S. colleagues to trace the extent of the pre-European settlements with a GPS transmitter in hand.

What has emerged from this work is a digital map of two complex and

dense urban clusters, right in the heart of the jungle. The clusters are connected by roads and each has a distinct central element. In one case this is a ceremonial plaza and in the other, a residential plaza.

The next largest residential centers are 3 to 5 km to the southeast and northwest of each center; slightly smaller centers are between 8 km and 10 km from the centers, to the southwest and northeast.

Each of these “towns” had its own central plaza and was protected by an earthen wall. They were surrounded by smaller, non-walled residential hamlets. The towns, villages and hamlets were interlinked by roads, the largest of which followed the direction of the sun at the mid-year solstice.

## Return of the forest

Although the team has looked at the detail of just two of these urban clusters, it has found evidence of another thirteen, covering a total area of more than 20,000 sq. km – equivalent to the size of New Jersey or Wales.

The researchers estimate the population of each village and town would have been between 250 and 2,500, and all fifteen clusters could have been home to more than 50,000 people.

What happened to these towns? Some modern Kuikuro villages still



Larger towns and villages were surrounded by a ditch, such as this one that is being excavated. Image: Science/AAASH.

stand on original sites, and in these villages the primary, or high-ranking, houses lie southeast and northwest of the central plaza – a similar pattern to the ancient orientation.

It is likely that when European colonizers arrived in South America in the early 16th century, the indigenous population was decimated and urban clusters were abandoned.

Unlike ancient Andean civilizations, the Kuikuro and other indigenous peoples from the Amazon had little stone close at hand. They built with earth and, once they were gone, the forest reclaimed the land, leaving little trace of the once considerable urbanization.

## Altered landscape

The findings raise big questions, says Susanna Hecht of the University of California in Los Angeles. For starters, it forces rethinking the long-held assumption that these parts of the Amazon were virtually empty before colonization. What's more, it shows that the large populations that did inhabit the region transformed the landscape.

“What we find is that what we think of as the primitive Amazon forest is not so primitive after all,” Heckenberger said. “European colonialism wasted huge numbers of native peoples and cleared them off the land, so that the forest returned.”

What, then, did the primitive Amazon look like? That is a mystery, says Heckenberger. It is clear, though, that these large urban clusters reordered the entire landscape.

Source: From an original article by Catherine Brahic titled “Amazon Hides an Ancient Urban Landscape”, released 08/29/2008 at: <http://environment.newscientist.com>. Submitted by Scott Allen.

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## Maya Vault “Poles”, *continued*

Another point. If we disregard the braces and check tensile-splitting stresses in the mortar close to the top of an almost-finished fresh vault (its most critical condition), we get only about 2 psi. This is a very, very low stress that the mortar should be able to handle easily even fresh.

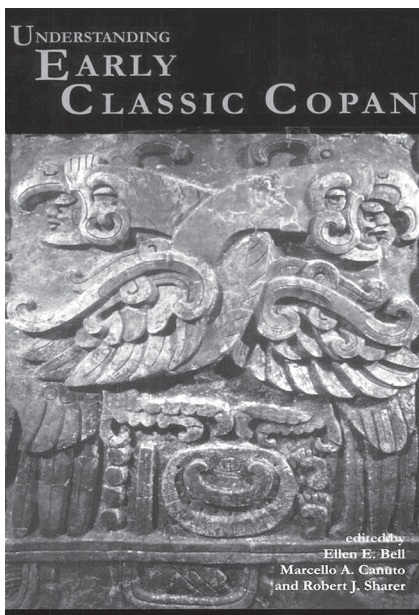
### Conclusions

These compression braces would be unnecessary and not of great value. I agree with those that question the curtain-rod hypothesis and side primarily with those that think of these

poles as scaffold beams. How else are you going to place face boot stones and mortar, etc.?

Also the hypothesis that they are just a carry-over from timber construction makes a lot of sense. Where would we need the ceiling joists to tie the rafters across and “collar beams” to temporarily hold these rafters in place at the top until the whole roof is locked in?

It is entirely probable, however, that they are, to a degree, “all the above.” I will attempt to get some better data in our field trip this November but I doubt these numbers will change much.



Published by UPenn Museum of Archaeology, 2004. 456 pp., 24 color plates, 80 line art. ISBN 1-931707-51-0 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-931707-51-0.



Ceramic vessel collection from Margarita Tomb Chamber 2 reproduced from Figure 9.12 page 180 of the book. Photo courtesy of Robert J. Sharer.

**Suggested reading:**

# Understanding Early Classic Copan

**Edited by: Ellen E. Bell, Marcello A. Canuto and Robert J. Sharer**

The book is “an outgrowth of a symposium of the same name organized for the 65th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Philadelphia in April 2000.”

– Preface

“This volume, the first to focus on the Early Classic\* context (400-to-600 CE) of the Maya city of Copan, combines and synthesizes different research methods and disciplines, interpreting data that contradict, enhance, and supplement previous work. Its methods are conjunctive, including and integrating research in archaeological survey and excavations with studies in art, hieroglyphics, history, forensic/biological anthropology, and chemical analysis of teeth, bones, and other materials. The book is not just multidisciplinary but interdisciplinary, linking, for example, the architecture of monuments with epigraphy, language concepts, and human events.”

This book should be subtitled “The Essential Copan”

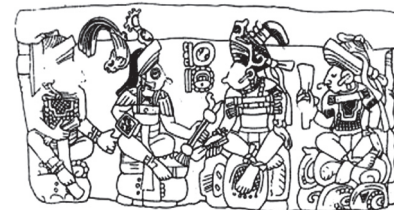


Figure 13.1(a) from page 267 of the book, fire and war imagery appearing on the west side of Copan Altar Q. Left center; Kinich Yax K'uk Mo' with shield and burning dart. Drawing by Barbara W. Fash.

Not only does it cover the history of Copan, from its late pre-dynastic stage through the end of the Classic dynasty, but details the findings of the multiple superimposed structures under buildings 10L16 and 10L26, etc, placing all the findings from the tunneling in historical context.

Furthermore, it co-relates the growth, construction and state formation of Copan to Kaminaljuyu, Tikal and the Zapotec-Mixtec city of Monte Alban, giving us a view of the complete, early classic Maya world.

\*The authors, for the purpose of this study, refer to the Early Classic period of Copan as defined by the Acmi ceramic phase (400 to 600 CE) and equated with the early kings of the Copan's dynasty (Rulers 1 to 10).

Source: Submitted by Marta Barber. To purchase, see a 4-color image of the cover, or review the book's contents, visit: [www.museum.upenn.edu/new/publications/titles/978-1-931707-51-0.shtml](http://www.museum.upenn.edu/new/publications/titles/978-1-931707-51-0.shtml)

## Is Mexican Pacific Coast Village Mystical City of Aztlán?

continued from page 1

Southwest U.S. by Mexican immigrants. The Just Build the Fence blog defines Aztlán as “the enemy encamped within our own borders.”

“Aztlán is a very powerful idea,” said Mexican archeologist Jesús Jáuregui, a leading expert on Aztlán theories. “It can mean something different to each person.”

In Mexcaltitán, clues that this was once Aztlán are tantalizing. In Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs (who called themselves the Mexica), Aztlán means “place of whiteness” or “place of herons.” And the village is indeed a favorite haunt of white herons and egrets, that nest in the surrounding lagoon, as well as seasonal blooms of white water lilies.

Héctor Apodaca, a guide at the village's museum, argues that local fishing holes have the

same names as Aztec places, like *Toluca*. Apodaca says that Cora Indians, who were among the last indigenous groups to be subdued by the Spanish and speak a version of Nahuatl, still come to the island every year to make offerings. “That's because they believe that this was a ceremonial center of the Mexica,” Apodaca said.

Others point to Mexcaltitán's striking physical resemblance to Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital whose ruins lie under today's Mexico City. Some historians say Mexcaltitán's circular shape and cruciform design are similar to that of Tenochtitlán, which Spanish conquistador Bernal Díaz described as “an enchanted vision.”

Local officials are so certain that Mexcaltitán is Aztlán that they've dubbed the state of Nayarit the “cradle of Mexicaness” and changed the state's

official seal to include a diagram of the Aztecs' departure from Mexcaltitán.

But despite the local certainty, historical debate rages on. No definitive archaeological evidence has yet been uncovered to prove Mexcaltitán's connection to Tenochtitlán.

Source: From an original article by Jeremy Schwartz/ Cox News International correspondent, released 8/30/2008 at: [www.chron.com](http://www.chron.com) and 8/31/2008 at: [www.ajc.com](http://www.ajc.com). Submitted by Scott Allen.

### 2012 is Controversial!

The Institute of Maya Studies maintains an area of our web site devoted to **Understanding 2012**. We'll soon be updating the site to include more links to those who are just now making their voices heard. Feel free to discover your perspective. Check out our 2012 link at: <http://mayastudies.org>

## Institute of Maya Studies' Line-up of Presentations!

Note: Due to the fact that many of our IMS members will be on an adventure to the Mayalands at the time, the IMS Meeting scheduled for November 12 has been cancelled.

*Be sure to attend the following major IMS presentation for November:*

**November 19: IMS Meeting (in the Museum Auditorium):**

### “Underwater Archaeology: A Lost City of Belize”

with **Dr. Heather McKillop**

Heather  
McKillop holding  
a post sample from  
Paynes Creek  
National Park,  
Belize.



Views of the K'ak' Naab' underwater site, located within the Paynes Creek National Park. Underwater survey resulted in the discovery and mapping of 56 wooden posts protruding from the seafloor and 506 individually piece-plotted artifacts. In order to avoid walking on the seafloor and to minimize disturbance of the veneer of loose silt on the peat at K'ak' Naab', Research Flotation Devices (RFDs) were used to float on the water surface. A team of archaeologists snorkeling shoulder to shoulder on RFDs traversed back and forth across the site, placing survey flags at the location of each find. The diameter and circumference of each wooden post were measured using a plastic metric sewing tape. Posts were sampled for species identification, radiocarbon dating, and dendrochronology using a sharp knife or machete to cut a cross-section of preserved post below the seafloor.

Heather McKillop is the William G. Haag Professor of Archaeology in the Dept. of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. She earned her B.Sc. and M.A. in Anthropology at Trent University (Canada) and her Ph.D. at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She has published many articles and books on her research. McKillop's current fieldwork focuses on mapping wooden architecture preserved in a peat bog below the sea floor in southern Belize at over 100 salt workshops, for which she has been awarded funding from the National Geographic Society, National Science Foundation, and FAMSI (Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies).

Excellent resources are available by searching “Heather McKillop” at: [www.famsi.org/reports](http://www.famsi.org/reports). (Images used with permission.)

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## Upcoming Events at the IMS:

October 29: *November Board Meeting*  
Note the date! The IMS Board Meeting is taking place one week early. All IMS members are welcome to attend.

November 12: *IMS Meeting: Classroom-style*

**Important note:** Due to the fact that many of our IMS members will be on an adventure to the Mayalands at the time, our meeting for Nov. 12 has been cancelled. Be sure to attend the following major IMS presentation for November:

Nov. 19: *IMS Meeting: Museum Auditorium*  
**“Underwater Archaeology: A Lost City of Belize”** – Dr. Heather McKillop will discuss the discovery and investigation of a massive ancient Maya salt industry including wooden structures preserved in a peat bog below the sea floor in southern Belize. Posts and beams of wooden buildings had been untouched for 1,300 years due to sea-level rise that had protected them and hidden them from modern view, until McKillop’s project. *Be there!*

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](mailto:mayaman@bellsouth.net) or forward by postal mail to: Jim Reed, 936 Greenwood Ave NE, Apt.8, Atlanta, GA 30306

## Upcoming Events and Announcements:

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](http://www.arky.ucalgary.ca/chacmool2008)

November 20–21: *Symposium*

**“Olmec: The Origins of Ancient Mexican Civilization”** – Theme of the

Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies Mexican Center Symposium on the Olmec, in Austin, TX. Get more info at: [www.utexas.edu/cola/insts/llilas/news/current/olmec](http://www.utexas.edu/cola/insts/llilas/news/current/olmec)

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/conferencevents/emc\\_now.php](http://www.wayeb.org/conferencevents/emc_now.php)

Through December 14:  
*Museum Exhibit*

**“La Vida Sin Fin – Day of the Dead 2008”** – Theme of the National

Museum of Mexican Art exhibition in Chicago, IL. This is the largest annual Day of the Dead exhibition in the United States. Get more info at: [www.nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org](http://www.nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org)

February 6–8, 2009: *Symposium*

**“Maya Calendars and Creation”** –

Theme of the Sixth Annual Maya Symposium and Workshop at Tulane University, New Orleans, LA. The 2009 symposium promises to be a memorable weekend spent exploring and discussing Maya creation mythology, divination and prophecy, and calendar systems. Dr. Anthony Aveni will discuss his thoughts on 2012. Get more info at: <http://stonecenter.tulane.edu/MayaSymposium>



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**November 19: IMS Meeting:**

## “Underwater Archaeology: A Lost City of Belize”

with **Dr. Heather McKillop**

*An ancient wooden Maya canoe paddle discovered by McKillop and her team.*