



IMS EXPLORER

Institute of Maya Studies

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Inside this issue:

New Perspectives on the Dresden Codex, by Harvey M. Bricker	2,6
The Wajshikib' B'atz' Ceremonies, by George J. Fery	3
New Explorations in the Mayalands: Chactún, featuring Dr. Ivan Šprajc	4
The Maya's Sacred Ceiba Tree, <i>cont. from pg. 1</i>	5
M.A.R.I. Announces the Launch of a New Series of Reports: <i>La Corona Notes</i>	6
July Programs at the IMS; Membership Application	7
Prehispanic Chiefs in Panama Were Born to Rule; Upcoming Events	8

The Maya's Sacred Ceiba Tree

Ceiba is the name of a genus of many species of large trees found in tropical areas, including Central America, Mexico, South America, the Bahamas, the Caribbean, West Africa, and Southeast Asia. Some species can grow to 70 m (230 ft) tall or more, with a straight, largely branchless trunk that culminates in a huge, spreading canopy, and buttress roots that can be taller than a grown person.

The best-known, and most widely cultivated, species is *Kapok*, *Ceiba pentandra*. The tree figures an important part in the mythologies of Preolumbian Mesoamerican cultures. The Maya civilization believed *Ya'axche*, a concept of the central world tree, is often depicted as a *Ceiba* trunk, which connects the planes of the Underworld (*Xibalba*), the terrestrial realm and the skies (above). The unmistakable thick conical thorns in clusters on the trunk



Article composed by and composite image created by Editor Jim Reed.

The Maya Tree of Life, Tree, (Ceiba tree) has (the Place of Fear). guards the entrance to supports the Heavens is where Humans dwell. In the human soul is referred (sak-nik-nal) implying flower of the Ceiba World the branches of the tree Vision Serpent, who brings knowledge and power.

also known as the World its roots in the Underworld A serpent named Kawak this underworld. The trunk above the Earth, and that ancient Mayan inscriptions, to as "white flower thing" that the soul is the sacred Tree. Winding through is the double-headed

were reproduced by the southern lowland Maya of the Classical Period on cylindrical ceramic burial urns or incense holders (below).

The *Ceiba* tree is the most sacred tree to the Maya and belongs to the *Bombacoideae* family. Among its interesting features are the bulky woody spines that cover the *Ceiba*'s trunk while young; some can be observed even when the tree has reached seven years of age.

When young, a *Ceiba*'s trunk is deep jade green and as it ages, the coloration changes to a pale grayish with green undertones and brown-striped bark.



Art depicting life: The thorny trunks of the *ceiba* tree are represented by ceramic pots used as burial urns or incense holders, which are designed in a strikingly similar fashion. L) Thorns of a young *Ceiba* tree. C) Rectangular urn with *ceiba* motif on lid, Tiquisate area, Guatemala (a Teotihuacanoid culture, circa 300-600 CE). Photo: Kathylen Garret McCampbell. R) A Maya pot inspired by *Ceiba* thorns. Photo: Justin and Barbara Kerr.

IMS Presentation: July 17, 8 pm



A passage in the Dresden Codex Mars table that mentions drought and wildfire.

"Maya Astronomy Through 13 Centuries (not Baktuns!)"

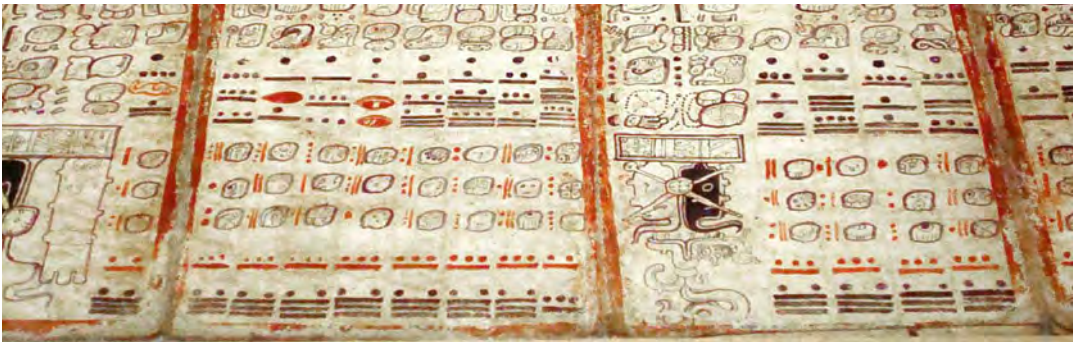
with **Harvey M. Bricker** and **Victoria R. Bricker**

Ceiba trees have umbrella-shaped crowns and the branches extend in layers; the trees lose their leaves during dry season just after flowering. *Ceiba* trees produce a silky cotton-like

continued on page 5



Jim Reed,
Editor



Pages from the eclipse table of the original Dresden Codex, on display in the Book Museum (H. Bricker).

New Perspectives on the Dresden Codex



by **Harvey M. Bricker**

The world war had been going on for several years already, and by then the enemy was occupying large parts of the country. In the old city of Dresden, the capital of Saxony, the head of the library took steps to protect the most valuable books, including the Dresden Codex, from the possible destruction of the library by moving them to the cellars of another building thought to be more resistant.

The bombardment of the old city by the heavy siege guns of the enemy, the Prussian army of Frederick the Great, took place in July of 1760, during the Seven Years War, the world war that in North America is called the French and Indian War. Despite heavy destruction in the city, however, the Dresden Codex and other treasures of the library were undamaged.

Such was not the case nearly three centuries later during another world war. The building that then housed the Saxon State Library, the Japanisches Palais, was nearly destroyed during the Allied fire-bombing air attack of 13 to



The Japanisches Palais in Dresden, built 1715, mostly destroyed 1945, rebuilt 1951-1987. Formerly housed the Saxon State Library. The Dresden Codex was in this building at the time of the fire-bombing in February 1945, that is   now a museum. Photo from a tourist bureau website.



The treasure-room vault of the Book Museum at the new Saxon State and Dresden University Library. The Dresden Codex is in the long case in the center of the room. The white rectangle is a mirror that permits viewing the underside of the codex. Photo from the library's website.

14 February 1945, when more than 200,000 books went up in flames. The Dresden Codex, which had been packed in a wooden crate and moved to a sub-basement, was not one of them, but it was somewhat damaged by groundwater that had entered the basement through foundation walls damaged by the bombing.

The Dresden Codex, a treasure-house of information about the Precolumbian Maya, survived the high explosives of two world wars, and it is once again preserved in a newly constructed Dresden library – the Saxon State and Dresden University Library – where it can be viewed by visitors to the library's Book Museum. High-resolution scans of the entire codex have recently been published along with a German-language commentary by Prof. Dr. Nikolai Grube of the University of Bonn.

In September 2012, coincident with the publication of Grube's book and the considerable interest in the end of the 13-baktun Maya calendrical era, an international symposium was convened at the Dresden library by Prof. Dr. Grube and the Director-General of the library, Prof. Dr. Thomas Buerger. The symposium, "New Perspectives on the Dresden



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Codex," brought together scholars from Mexico, Guatemala, the United States, Denmark, Germany, and Spain. Scholars from Florida were well represented: Gabrielle Vail, from New College, and Susan Milbrath, Victoria Bricker and Harvey Bricker from the University of

continued on page 6



Editor's note: The Wajshikib' B'atz' Ceremony led by Tat Rigoberto Itzep Chanchovac that Mary Lou Ridinger and I attended in February 2010 was really intense. Tat had us up at 4 am, and the ceremony started promptly at 5 am in the cold and darkness. It ended when the sun came up, which brought warm and light. That year, Tat's ceremony was broadcast live on Radio Maya for all of the Maya in the Highlands to witness and be a part of.

The Wajshikib' B'atz' Ceremonies: Initiating the Sacred Tzolk'in 260-Day Calendar by George J. Fery

The conduct or rituals in accordance with the sacred Prehispanic calendar has long been a characteristic of the Maya of Momostenango, or "town of altars" in K'iche', an essentially farmers community, located in the county of Totonicapan in the Highlands of western Guatemala.

The community supplement income from farming with blanket weaving and local community services. It is one of the eight predominantly monolingual K'iche'-speaking municipalities that make up the Departamento or county; K'iche', along with Kaqchikel, Tz'utujil, Poqomam-Pokqomchi', Uspantek and Q'eqchi' are members of a linguistic Eastern Group subgroup known as Quichean.

With its exceptionally large number of outdoor shrines still in use by thousands of adherents of the indigenous religion, Momostenango is one of the most important religious sites in the Highlands. There are primary and secondary ceremonial



George captures the moment when Editor Jim Reed made offerings of cornmeal during a nighttime rose petal ceremony led by Kaqchikel spiritual guides at an altar above Copan. GJF

altars spread in and around Momos, but there are also particular altars on mountaintops around the valley, located at the four cardinal points from the central altars. Ceremonies and rituals take place at all of these altars throughout the year.

As with other traditional cultures past and present, the Maya are interested not only in the quantity of time but also in its qualities and meaning in human affairs. The foundation of the sacred calendar, is composed of endless cycles of differing length and portent of 260 named and numbered days. The length of cycles has no obvious correlation with astronomical events, and the name of its days and divinatory interpretations are largely lacking in astronomical references; in divinatory practices however, both calendars, solar (365 days) and sacred (260 days) are used in either conjunction or opposition.

Ceremonies on the day Wajshikib' B'atz' (8-B'atz') are the most important in the Highland Maya's ceremonial calendar. These rituals, together, but to a lesser extent, with the preceding day, I-Tz'i', include prayers, supplications and gifts of candles, incense, flowers, indigenous liquor and tobacco.

It is important to note that the structure of beliefs is essentially based on the principle of binary opposition that interplay between two worlds and their deified representations.

Calls to the Deities of the Mundo and the ancestors aim at gaining the



The main altar in central Momostenango is strategically located to face the church. GJF



The right way to do rituals, the correct offerings to make, the precise prayers to which gods, are shared from generation to generation. GJF



It is very satisfying to witness the resurgence in spiritually-minded family and clan ceremony that is increasing in the Highlands each year. GJF

protection of the Nawals of individuals, whose closest translation could be: the individual's energy, but should not be confused with "soul". All the prayers, supplications, gifts and divination rites are directed toward the individual's Nawals, since those are acquired from conception to death through birth and multiple life events. Seekers help to overcome life's daily struggles through prayers and supplications with the Nawals of the Nan'tats during ceremonies.

The day 8-B'atz' is also the culmination and closing of sixty ceremonies conducted by the newly initiated priest-shaman and his spiritual mentor, and his presentation to the sacred hills and valleys, to the Ancestors and highest deity, the Ajaw – together father and mother of the universe. 🏞️ 🌑 🌒 🌓



A team led by archaeologist Ivan Šprajc, has announced the discovery of an ancient Maya city called Chactún, “Red Stone” or “Piedra Grande”. Located in the southeast area of Campeche, it represents one of the largest sites of the Mexican Central Lowlands. The site covers 22 hectares and contains many monumental structures. This is one of 80 sites identified in the region by LIDAR since 1996. Chactún consists of three complexes with plazas, palaces, residential areas and at least two ball courts. Nineteen stelae have been found. One bears the name of a ruler, K'inich B'ahlam. This site will help in understanding the relationship between the Río Bec and Chenes region.

New Discoveries in the Mayalands: Chactún

Stela 14.

Discovered in early June, the archaeologists believe that the city was at the center of a vast region between 600 and 900 CE. The extent of the site is huge and contains a number of monuments, with at least a dozen of them bearing inscriptions.

Undiscovered for centuries, Chactún remained hidden in the jungle of the northern Biosphere Reserve of Calakmul, which is part of an area over 3,000 square kilometers, located between the Río Bec and Chenes region. This area until now, has remained as a total blank on the archaeological map of the Maya region.

The team's research was supported by INAH and funded by the National Geographic Society and two European companies.

“It is one of the largest sites in the Central Lowlands, comparable in extent and magnitude of its buildings with Becan, Nadzcaan and El Palmar in Campeche,” said the Šprajc, who works for the Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Some sites in the area, like Uxul and Kings Wall, had previously



Stela 1.

Scenes from a 4-1/2 minute INAH video at: www.youtube.com/embed/WQguDtdNbl. Here Šprajc explains details of fallen Stela 18 that they encountered in the southeast plaza.

been described by explorers such as Karl Ruppert, in the 1930s. However, Chactún was largely ignored by scientific expeditions until now.

In 1989, the region was declared part of the Biosphere Reserve and archaeological exploration was made possible.

“With aerial photographs examined stereoscopically, we find many features that were obviously architectural remains. From there we took the coordinates and the next step was to locate the ancient routes used by tappers and loggers to reach the area,” explained Šprajc.

To reach the camp where the team of archaeologists stayed overnight, they headed off the main road and into the bush at a spot

16 km outside of the town of Xpujil, Hopelchén. The dirt “road” is passable only with four-wheel drive trucks and team members had to stop continually to cut back the vegetation that blocked their path.

Curiously, despite its proximity to Río Bec, the building style appears to have closer associations with Petén architecture.

The site comprises three monumental complexes. The west, covers an area of over 11 hectares, while the southeast and northeast together account for a further 11 hectares. The tallest pyramid, 23 m high, is located in the west complex.

The stelae and altars, some of which still have the remains of stucco on them, best reflect the

splendor of the city in the Late Classic (600-900 CE).

Of the 19 stelae recorded so far, three are well preserved. One gives a name to the place, saying that the ruler K'inich B'ahlam “fixed the Red Stone (or Stone Great)” in 751 CE. 🏰

Source: All images from www.inah.gob.mx. Text from www.pasthorizonspr.com. Submitted by Scott Allen and Laura Haass.



The ancient Maya metropolis is one of 80 sites that have been identified by the Archaeological Survey Project in Southeastern Campeche, which began in 1996. The location of these sites was based primarily on recognition from large-scale aerial photography. Once the team located the site, they made a survey using a LIDAR “total station” to create very detailed three dimensional maps.



The Maya's Sacred Ceiba Tree

continued from page 1

fiber within their fruits, such fruit pods are called by the Maya people *pochote*, a highly valuable fiber for clothing since Prehispanic times.

Even today, Maya people honor the *Ya'axche* as an energy connection with the Cosmos, Earth, and the Underworld; ever present in ceremonies and as a medicinal plant. This beautiful tree is where the Maya Gods abide, and so do many forest supernatural creatures and energies.

Nicholas Hellmuth's Search for Ceiba Flowers

Posted 11/26/2012 by FLAAR. Check out all of Nick's informative and downloadable reports at: www.maya-archaeology.org

"I have seen Guatemalan-like ceiba trees flower outside my hotel in Israel (we are a consultant to high tech Israeli firms in advanced digital imaging). But in 49 years of visiting Guatemala, I have never seen a *Ceiba pentandra* tree flower. Recently, I found out why.

"First, the tree flowers only at night; to be precise, the flowers open between 6:30 pm and 7 pm. Second, many of the flowers get knocked off the tree by the frenzy of hundreds of bats which fly crazily around to lap up the yummy sweet nectar in each tiny flower. While we were photographing the ceiba flowers, we had to wear hats to keep from having our heads dented by the literal hail storm of flower buds being knocked off as the bats crash-landed to suck on the flowers (not to mention bat feces and bat urine).



Synchronicitree? The World Tree (Kien-Mu or Jian-Mu) is the central axis, the link between Heaven and Earth in China. It is the Ceiba tree and is home to the Lord of the Sky (Serpent/Dragon) and the Goddess of Earth.



The Ceiba's seed pods produce a light and strong fiber (*pachote*) used throughout history to fill mattresses, pillows, tapestries, and dolls. The Ceiba fiber has recently been replaced by synthetic fibers.



"Fortunately, these bats were content to suck on the flowers, not to suck on our exposed necks. A single tree had easily over one thousand flowers open up, simultaneously, in the space of less than 20 minutes.

"Third, a mature ceiba tree may flower only once every several years. And fourth, each individual tree decides when, or whether, it wishes to flower. An identical ceiba tree 10 meters away will act totally different and have a completely independent annual cycle.

"But after decades of not being in the right place at the right time to witness a ceiba tree in full bloom, last November, I experienced two different mature ceiba trees (each one over two hundred years old).

"Plus, we hope to return with a zoologist specialized in studying bats to do close-up photography of the bats in action (fortunately they are not vampires; two species of vampire bats, however, live nearby).



The Ceiba is also the national tree of Guatemala. The most important Ceiba in Guatemala is known as La Ceiba de Palín, Escuintla, which is over 400 years old.



Ceiba pentandra flowers. In 1525, Hernán Cortés ordered the hanging of Aztec emperor Cuauhtemoc from a Ceiba tree after conquering his empire. (P. Latham)

The Ceiba's seedpods are found within its fruits' cotton-like fibers that help to propagate and disperse seeds in the wind. The Ceiba tree seed is processed to extract oils used to make soap and fertilizers.

At the time, it was not quite full moon, so we survived safely (other than being drenched with bat droppings, which is all part of Mother Nature).

"Note: November is neither a normal nor expected month for ceibas to flower; the normal month is January onward. Not every individual ceiba tree does what the botanical textbooks and peer-reviewed botanical journals state they are supposed to. This is why we at FLAAR research institute, get out of our university offices and libraries and do actual field work.

"If you want to see ceiba trees, come to Guatemala. If you are in Guangzhou, China, there are several hundred beautiful spine-covered 15-year old ceiba trees lining the main highway near the Guangzhou airport and along the main road paralleling the river through the city. I have seen scores of these ceiba trees while doing consulting on digital printing technology with Chinese ink and printer factories."

New Perspectives on the Dresden Codex

by **Harvey M. Bricker** *continued from page 2*

of Florida – all of whom have been IMS speakers on past occasions.

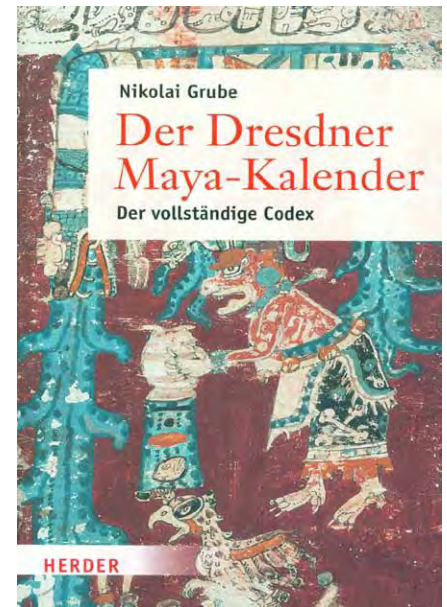
The symposium was held in a conference room just across the hall from the Book Museum. During breaks in the proceedings, we could just step across the hall and continue the discussions while examining the document itself. What a wonderful, unprecedented opportunity this was!

When Victoria and I were invited to speak to the IMS in July, we thought we would tell the group in Miami essentially what we had told our colleagues in Dresden last fall. There are plans to publish the papers from the symposium, probably in Europe, but we do not now know when or how this will be done. Meanwhile, we can share with the IMS members at least one of the “new perspectives” on the Dresden Codex.

The cover of the new book by Nikolai Grube containing high-resolution scanned images of the entire Dresden Codex and a German-language commentary on the codex. (Verlag Herder, Freiburg, 2012, ISBN 978-345-1333323)

Our presentation to the IMS will center on one important fact: although the codex is a Late Postclassic book, in existence at the time of the Conquest in the 16th century, it provides some very specific information about the Classic Maya civilization of preceding centuries.

Considering the astronomical knowledge and practice of the Precolumbian Maya, which we have studied in detail, it is possible to track these matters through the Classic and Postclassic from at least the 7th century AD. We can recognize the 8th century (Late Classic) as a high point of Maya astronomy, and one specific 8th-century innovation bridges the temporal gap between



the carved stone monuments of the Classic period and the Dresden Codex. For Maya astronomy, the codex is a kind of time machine that lets us travel back through the centuries, a journey we will discuss in more detail for the IMS in July. 🏹

An Announcement from M.A.R.I.

M.A.R.I.: Studying the indigenous cultures of Mexico and Central America since 1924



The project link is on M.A.R.I.'s home page at: <http://mari.tulane.edu/PRALC/research.html>

The Launch of a New Series of Short Reports: *La Corona Notes*

In partnership with our friends over at Mesoweb, M.A.R.I. (Middle American Research Institute) has launched a new series of short reports called *La Corona Notes*, featuring interpretations and data from the Proyecto Arqueológico Regional La Corona.

In an attempt to mitigate the usual lag between discovery and publication, the series will provide project members a venue to rapidly circulate ideas, decipherments, or discoveries deemed interesting and useful to a wider public about the ancient Classic Maya polity of Sak Nikte', today represented by the site of La Corona and its surrounding settlement.

The first note in the series is “The Importance of La Corona” by project directors Marcello Canuto and Tomás Barrientos Q. Upcoming contributions to the series will

● feature epigraphic studies of
● La Corona’s inscriptions,

Marcello Canuto (Tulane University) and UT Professor David Stuart examine glyphs blocks on Hieroglyphic Stairway 2. Courtesy of www.utexas.edu.

including the new texts from Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, that were recently discovered just last year.

It slowly became clear to all of the researchers that La Corona had been an unusual Classic Maya polity. The large quantity and exquisite quality of its sculpted monuments were not typical of such a modestly sized and isolated site. Clearly, the Kaanal dynasty of Dzibanché and Calakmul had invested deeply in La Corona through multiple marriages, repeated ball game ceremonies, and frequent visitations, as well as the raising of La Corona princes at the Kaanal court.

The series editors are Marcello A. Canuto of Tulane University, Tomás Barrientos Q. of the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, and David Stuart of The University of Texas at Austin.

The *La Corona Notes* series will disseminate the latest results and



interpretations resulting from research on the Classic Maya center of La Corona in northern Petén, Guatemala. In the spirit of the *Copan Notes*, this series is meant to produce short informal papers (ca. 500-1000 words) by project members.

This series will publish new notes as they are produced and in no particular order. For questions or comments, please email us at: lacorona.project@gmail.com. 🏹

July 10, 2013: IMS Explorer Session:

**“The Wajshikib' B'atz' (8 B'atz') Ceremonies:
Initiating the Sacred Tzolk'in 260-Day Calendar”**

with George J. Fery



8 B'atz' ceremonies culminate once the sun comes up. Here George captures a moment of silent reverence expressed by Tat Rigoberto Itzep after an intense ceremony in 2010.

Editor's Note: See George's program article on page 3. George is an IMS Fellow and an avid Maya enthusiast. I know George and his story well and have a backlog of his excellent photography . . . please allow me to introduce Señor Fery:

In June 2010, IMS members Pat Manfredi and Jim Reed took part in a Maya Conservancy quest to facilitate taking 13 Guatemalan Maya Spiritual Guides to reactivate the connection to the sacred fire at Izapa, Mexico (so called “place where time began”). The adventure culminated in a beautiful ceremony atop the most sacred group shrine in Momostenango, led by K'iche' Spiritual Guide Tat Rigoberto Itzep Chanchovac. Upon hearing that modern Maya ceremony, including fire rituals, were still being practiced today, George was more than intrigued; He dove right in and accompanied me to the 8 B'atz' in October 2010. He has attended every 8 B'atz' since then, making friends and studying the Maya calendars with Tat . . . George has a sacred story to tell.



Generation after generation, the modern Maya continue to teach the ancient ways of the sacred fire. Photo: G. Fery.

July 17: IMS Presentation:

“Maya Astronomy Through 13 Centuries (not Baktuns!)”

with Harvey M. Bricker and Victoria R. Bricker



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10 April AD 756

The Lunar Series on Stela M at Copan, which is related to the eclipse table in the Dresden Codex.

The Dresden Codex contains several explicitly dated tables dealing in large part with astronomical matters. These tables and related almanacs are the principal sources of information about the development of Maya astronomical knowledge in the Classic and Postclassic periods. These records show that there were two high points in Precolumbian Maya astronomy, a major one in the eighth century (Late Classic) and a subsidiary one in the tenth century AD (Terminal Classic).

The achievements of these two centuries had earlier roots, some of which are known from the carved monuments of the Classic (and now from the painted walls of Xultun). They had later applications in the centuries just before the Spanish Conquest, as seen particularly in the Madrid Codex, and even after it – for example, in the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel.



A sky map depicting a horizon pair of zodiacal constellations as they are represented in the Paris Codex.

All meetings are 8 pm • Institute of Maya Studies • Miami Science Museum • Maya Hotline: 305-279-8110

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Prehispanic Chiefs in Panama Were Born to Rule

New discovery provides evidence for inherited power, points to complex culture.

Archaeologist Julia Mayo works at a site called El Caño near the Pacific coast 90 miles southwest of Panama City. During five years of excavation, she has uncovered the burials of gold-laden chiefs from a still-unnamed civilization that flourished for several centuries before the Spanish arrived in the early 1500s. Now she can say how the chiefs got their power.

Mayo, a National Geographic research grantee, began to excavate a large circular funerary pit from the Pre-Hispanic era.

She's exhumed more than three dozen individuals, and three offered an answer: Boys in this culture seem to have enjoyed rank and privilege from the moment of their birth.

Her first clue came with a glimmer of gold that appeared



Two images of a fierce crocodile god appear on a boy's gold arm cuff. Photo courtesy Julia Mayo.

in 2009 when she uncovered three miniature pieces of gold in a burial. The meaning of the artifacts suddenly came to her: They were so small because they belonged to a baby. A boy who was born to rule.

During Mayo's most recent field season, which ended in late June, she found additional, more convincing evidence: gold arm cuffs, inscribed with images of the culture's crocodile god, which adorned the skeleton of

someone young – a 12-year-old male, according to anthropologist Aioze Trujillo of the Universidad Complutense in Madrid.

Close by lay the remains of a supreme chief. Discovered in 2011, he wore gold breastplates, beads, bells, mysterious figurines in fantastical shapes, and arm cuffs also inscribed with images of the crocodile god.

Father and son? Mayo plans to do genetic tests to find out, but she's already convinced that the pair attests to inherited power. This has great implications for El Caño. "One of the characteristics of complex chiefdoms is that social status is passed down from father to son," she explains. "That means this cemetery represents a society that was much more sophisticated than previously believed."

Source: Condensed from an article by A.R. Williams released 6/20/13 at: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>. Submitted by Scott Allen.

Upcoming Events at the IMS:

July 10 • 8 pm: *IMS Explorer Session*
"Wajshikib' B'atz' Ceremonies: Initiating the Sacred Tzolk'in 260-Day Calendar" – with our good friend and fellow Maya adventurer **George J. Fery**. He has been there and done that, and has a sacred story to share.

July 17 • 8 pm: *IMS Program*
"Maya Astronomy Through 13 Centuries (not Baktuns!)" – with the most dynamic duo in Maya studies: **Harvey** and **Victoria Bricker**.

August 14 • 8 pm: *IMS Class*
"Maya Hieroglyphs: Gateway to History" – with **Marta Barber**.

August 21 • 8 pm: *IMS Program*
"Between Sea and Sky: Trade, Movement, and Urbanism in Ancient Oaxaca, Mexico" – Dr. Sarah "Stacy" B. Barber considers how ancient people navigated Oaxaca's landscape and what role those movements played in the development of region's vibrant urban societies.

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

September 7: *20th Annual Symposium*
"The World of the First Ahaws" – Theme of a one-day symposium at the Pre-Columbian Society of Washington, D.C. Research that has taken place during the last two decades at sites ranging from the Pacific coast of Guatemala to the Yucatán peninsula and Belize is forcing a new appreciation for the widespread and astonishing precocity of the Preclassic Maya.

Indeed, it can be argued that the Preclassic Period was the first fluorescence of the Maya, and that the Mirador Basin was home to the first true state-level political system of the New World. Addressing this topic will be David Anderson, Barbara Arroyo, Jaime Awe, Francisco Estrada-Belli, Stanley Guenter, and Richard Hansen (moderator).

For details and registration information (on-line registration is now possible), please go to the Pre-Columbian Society's website at: www.pcswdc.org

Through September 8:
Museum Exhibit
"Wari: Pre-Inka Lords of Peru" – At the Kimball Art Museum, in Fort Worth, TX. Get more info at: www.kimbellart.org

Through December 7:
Museum Exhibit & Lectures
"Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed" – The Maya Society of Minnesota is partnering with the Science Museum of Minnesota to present public lectures and workshops in conjunction with the Museum's new exhibit in St. Paul, MN. More info at: www.smm.org.

Editor's Tip: *Online all the time*
"Mesoamerica and Ancient America Lectures, Conferences and Exhibits" – Mike Ruggeri maintains the most comprehensive list available of upcoming events. Be sure to bookmark his site at this tiny URL: <http://bit.ly/1aKJzE>



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