



# IMS EXPLORER

## Institute of Maya Studies

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Maya enthusiasts providing public education for 43 years

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February 19, 2014 • Maya Ceremonial Era Long Count: 0.0.1.3.5 • 13 Chik'chan 3 K'ayab • G2

Genetic researchers have sequenced the genome of the domesticated turkey and of the Matina variety of cacao, the most widely cultivated cacao type in the world.

## Turkey Mole, Anyone?

In September of 2010, an international group of researchers published a nearly complete genome sequence of the domesticated turkey. A few weeks later, a separate research team of scientists announced the successful completion of the sequence of the cacao tree, whose seeds are the basis for chocolate.

In both cases, scientists sequenced the most commonly-grown version of the food. For turkeys, they used the domestic turkey, and for cacao, the Matina I-6 cultivar, which forms the basis for 99% of commercially cultivated cacao worldwide.

The chocolate work was sponsored by Mars (candy company), the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service, (ARS), and IBM. They have since made the results freely available to all – including



One of the most traditional meals for special occasions in Mexico, especially in the villages, is a fresh-killed guacalote, or wild turkey, with, you guessed it, mole. ([www.examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com))



Photo: Adam Voorhes

“Cacao is intricately intertwined with history: kings and queens were buried with it; wars were fought for it; sculptures of stone

and ceramic were devoted to it; and cacao marked marriages, births, deaths, supplications to the gods, and sacrifices... It's not simply a 'food'; it's also a tool for marking the passage of important life events and ensuring a healthy existence. At one time, the growth of cacao in the shaded valleys and coastal plains of Mesoamerica helped to preserve the environment and protected against deforestation.” ([www.c-spot.com](http://www.c-spot.com))

Mars's competitors – over the Internet, because they felt no single organization has the resources to do, in a timely manner, the breeding work needed to save the species from the various crises it faces. Cacao has not received the genetic attention paid to commodities such as rice, corn and wheat – attention that has dramatically improved yields for these crops. The Cacao Genome Database can be accessed at [www.cacaogenomedb.org](http://www.cacaogenomedb.org).

The turkey genome was done by a group including researchers from Virginia Tech, Utah State University and the University of Minnesota. The study was published in the journal *PLoS-Biology*.

Both sequencing attempts were completed in record time and much more cheaply than previous efforts. The cacao genome was sequenced three years earlier than expected, in just “two years, two months and

**IMS Presentation:**  
**February 19, 8 pm**

**Taíno and Maya: Parallel Cultures**  
with  
**Peter Barratt**



**Taíno Shell Amulet**  
Jay I. Kislak Collection, Library of Congress

ten days,” said Mars scientist Howard Shapiro. The turkey project cost only \$200,000, compared to the millions it took to sequence the chicken genome in 2004.

Team leaders from the USDA included molecular

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**Jim Reed,**  
Editor

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# The First Maya Civilization: Ritual and Power Before the Classic Period

By Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli

Book Review by Joaquín J. Rodríguez III, PE SECB

In this relatively short book (175 p), Francisco Estrada-Belli covers the early history of exploration in the upper region of the Peten in Guatemala, while incorporating new finds and research in the region.

Beginning with the early explorers, Estrada-Belli follows with the latest discoveries at San Bartolo, Nakbe and El Mirador. He then takes us to the sites of Cival and Holmul, where the archaeologist and author describes his team's excavations.

Through his research, Estrada-Belli establishes the region as one of the early cradles of Maya civilization. He writes that from about 900 BCE, the Preclassic site of Cival, and its surrounding region, developed over the next few centuries the artistically, ceremonially and



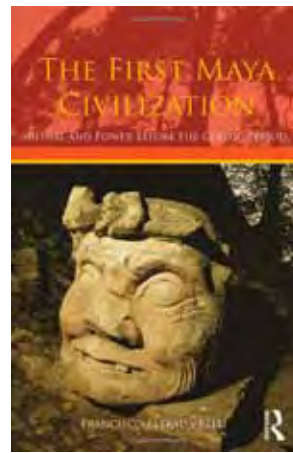
**Then:** Sylvanus Morley and Eric Thompson with their consorts at Chichen Itza during the Carnegie Institution of Washington excavations. (Fig. 1-4 in the book, source: Donald Thompson)



**Now:** Summit Racing supplied the parts for the 1985 Jeep Grand Wagoneer used by archaeologist Francisco Estrada-Belli. "We didn't treat the poor truck very well," explained Estrada-Belli. "Most places we travel don't have roads, and more often than not we had to drive in very rainy, muddy conditions with heavy loads. The 360-cubic-inch engine was very tired after years of abuse, so we needed to have it rebuilt before the 2013 expedition."



Francisco Estrada-Belli, photo by Kenneth Garrett, NGS. Source: The Boston University website.



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Francisco Estrada-Belli.  
Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London.

technologically complex civilization we have come to call Maya.

Excellent images, graphics and maps supplement the great writing. The book guides the reader through the birth of the Maya civilization into the Classic period they created. War, power and ritual among the contending city-states create an exciting backdrop for the birth and growth of the culture.

*The First Maya Civilization* is a must read for all Maya enthusiasts, and indeed for all those interested in the civilizations of ancient America in general.

### In Estrada-Belli's own words

An excerpt from the book's Preface:

"As I was exploring the need for and the difficulties of writing a book about the beginnings of Maya civilization, or whether I should focus on other important subjects for which I had more copious data, I visited El Mirador.

"This two-day visit was a turning point in my thinking about the Maya. It was in many ways an experience like my first visit to Tikal. There, I realized the true grandiosity of what the Preclassic Maya had accomplished. Everything I had seen before, even at Tikal, paled in comparison. I found myself in agreement with many of Richard Hansen's claims about the site. But what was even more shocking to me was that El Mirador, although earlier than any Classic Maya city, had begun significantly later than Cival. Therefore, Cival and possibly many other sites like it, had an important story to tell and I was its primary witness.

"I realized that not all the answers can be found at one site, no matter how great and important it may be. Moreover,

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even though we are far from having excavated a representative portion of El Mirador and Cival, or even found most of the Preclassic cities that are out there, the research on the Early Maya seems to have reached a critical mass that requires and sustains a redefinition of our paradigms." 

**Editor's note:** Months ago, our programming chair, Marta Barber, exchanged emails with Peter Barratt, an independent researcher and island-minded enthusiast, who wanted to share his knowledge about the Taíno culture of the Caribbean. I have seen numerous museum exhibitions in South Florida with a focus on the Taíno, and am personally very interested in the culture. When Peter submitted his program abstract and some chosen images, I was inspired to research the Taíno, and in so doing, discovered a world of very interesting information about their culture that I'd like to share a glimpse of. I've read that, at one point, the Taíno even established a colony in the area around Marco Island on the west coast of Florida. Read on, and be there on February 19 for Peter Barratt's program: *Taíno and Maya: Parallel Cultures*.

## Let's Explore: The Taíno

Civilization has existed in the Caribbean for thousands of years despite the Euro-centric assumption that the "New World" was discovered in 1492. The peopling of the Caribbean is not the product of a single discovery; its history is not mirrored in the narrative of a single expedition. Rather, it has been a lengthy process of assimilation and conquest.

The arrival of the Europeans was a harsh and drastic example of this process. Many different groups have migrated to and within the Caribbean. Cultures have dominated, and cultures have submitted. With each new migration, the Caribbean culture evolved. The culture continues to change, even today, with recent continental gentrification.



An illustration of Taíno canoeists. Using dug-out canoes the Taíno colonized the entire Caribbean. Artwork courtesy of: [www.proyectosalanhogar.com](http://www.proyectosalanhogar.com)



Artist's depiction of everyday Taíno life in the river estuaries. (<http://skullsoftaino.com>)

Each influx brings new characteristics, oftentimes at the expense of the rich traditions of the past. The tropical paradise for which the Caribbean is known serves only as a backdrop to the colorful tapestry of cultures, which have constructed the history of the region.

### The First People to Settle in the Caribbean

The original settlers in the Caribbean most likely came from Central America and settled in Cuba and Hispaniola. Archeologists and ethnologists call them the Casmiroid. They lived in the upland savannas of what is now the nation of Belize and survived primarily



#### Taíno religious objects called Zemís:

Zemis are objects which embedded different spiritual powers. In general, zemis are a representation of deities, the forces embedded in the natural world as well as of ancestors. Artifacts representing zemis were made from wood, stone, shell, coral, cotton, gold, clay and human bones. Some had human shape, others were three-pointed stones. These have the shape of a mountain silhouette, whose final tips are usually decorated with human faces, animals and other mythical beings. Three-pointed zemis are said to imitate the shape of the cassava tuber, which was an essential food staple but also a symbolic element of Taíno life. Among the preferred materials to make

zemis were wood of specific trees such as mahogany (caoba), cedar, blue mahoe, the *lignum vitae*, or guayacan, which is also referred to as "holy wood" or "wood of life". Wooden anthropomorphic zemis have been found all over the Greater Antilles, especially Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. These figures often bore gold or shell inlays within the eye-inlets. Zemi images were also carved on rocks and cave walls, and these images could also transfer supernatural power to landscape elements. Submitted by Peter Barratt.

by hunting. They gradually migrated to the river valleys where they could fish and gather plant foods, which grew in abundance in this rich and fertile environment. They then began to make seasonal trips to the coast where they learned to exploit the resources of the sea. It was from these coastal camps that the migration to the islands of the Caribbean began about 6000 years ago.

The trade winds and the major ocean currents in the Caribbean generally favor east to west and north to south travel, however there is a phenomenon known as the Cuban countercurrent which is a west to east current south of Cuba, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico. The Casmiroids took advantage of this current to cross the approximately 125 miles of open water between Yucatan and Cuba known as the Yucatan Passage and later to cross the narrower Windward Passage between Cuba and Hispaniola.

Cuba and Hispaniola are the largest islands in the Caribbean and as such have resources that are not available on the smaller islands. Here the Casmiroids could enjoy a rich environment similar to that of their ancestors on the mainland. Sloths (which were hunted to extinction), manatees, crocodiles, waterfowl, land crabs and turtles could be hunted in the mangrove swamps and river estuaries, and the numerous bays and offshore reefs provided an abundant supply of fish and other seafood.

### The Emergence of the Taíno

About 500 BCE, a new wave of Native Americans, originating from the river valleys of South America, made the difficult ocean crossing between Trinidad and Grenada, 80 miles to the north and out of sight of land. From there,



# Turkey Mole, Anyone?

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biologist David Kuhn and geneticist Raymond Schnell, both at the ARS Subtropical Horticulture Research Station in Miami, FL, and ARS computational biologist Brian Scheffler at the Jamie Whitten Delta States Research Center in Stoneville, MS. ARS is the principal intramural scientific research agency of the USDA. This research supports the USDA's priority of promoting international food security, and the USDA's commitment to agricultural sustainability.

## The Future of Cacao

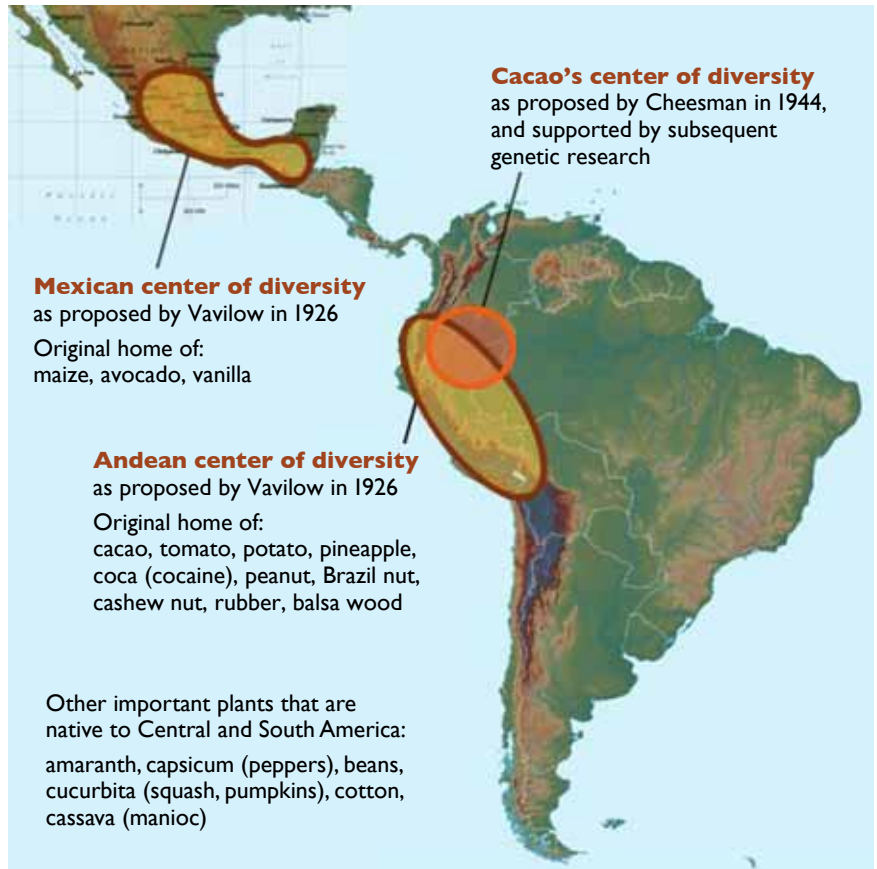
Scientists worldwide have been searching for years for ways to produce cacao trees that can resist evolving pests and diseases, tolerate droughts, and produce higher yields. ARS researchers have been testing new cacao tree varieties developed with genetic markers. Having the genome sequenced is expected to speed up the process of identifying genetic markers for specific genes that confer beneficial traits, enabling breeders to produce superior new lines through traditional breeding techniques.

To the ancient Maya, it was the food of the gods. Nineteenth-century Cubans used it as an aphrodisiac. In the 20th century, American culinary authority Fannie Farmer recommended its "stimulating effect" for "cases of enfeebled digestion."

Throughout history, people have prized cacao – the defining ingredient of chocolate – a tradition that endures in our modern era. This Valentine's Day alone, Americans will drop a projected \$700 million on chocolate. Around the world, people spend more than \$90 billion a year on the treat. And with appetite on the rise thanks to expanding population size and growing numbers of people in the developing world who can afford chocolate, demand may outstrip supply in the near future.

Cacao trees are grown throughout the humid tropics in more than 50 countries, and cacao beans, harvested from the plants' pods, are used to produce chocolate as well as in the confectionary and cosmetic industries. Cacao production is essential to the livelihoods of around 45 million people worldwide, and to the happiness and well-being of millions and millions more. 📌

Sources: Condensed by the editor from various sources, including (turkey and mole text) by Elizabeth Weise, USA TODAY, at: <http://content.usatoday.com>; and ARS text by Dennis O'Brien at: [www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov); and Harold Schmitz and Howard-Yana Shapiro at: <http://bibliotecaearth.net>.



### Mexican center of diversity

as proposed by Vavilow in 1926

Original home of:  
maize, avocado, vanilla

### Andean center of diversity

as proposed by Vavilow in 1926

Original home of:  
cacao, tomato, potato, pineapple,  
coca (cocaine), peanut, Brazil nut,  
cashew nut, rubber, balsa wood

**Cacao's center of diversity**  
as proposed by Cheesman in 1944,  
and supported by subsequent  
genetic research

Other important plants that are  
native to Central and South America:  
amaranth, capsicum (peppers), beans,  
cucurbita (squash, pumpkins), cotton,  
cassava (manioc)

**Theobroma cacao:** The species' origin dates back 10,000–15,000 years. Its birthplace was postulated by E.E. Chessman in 1944 based on the preceding work of two men: a) the observations of F.J. Pound, who discovered enormous diversity among cacao's population while exploring the Amazon Rainforest a few years earlier in 1937-38; and b) botanist Nikolai Vavilov's theory, now generally accepted, that the origin of a species is the place where its members show the highest level of genetic diversity. From these, Chessman reasoned cacao's center of origin was the confluence of the rivers Napo, Caquetá, and Putumayo, leading to the Amazon River, right in the cross-borders area of present-day Peru, Colombia and Ecuador. Source: [www.c-spot.com/atlas/chocolate-strains](http://www.c-spot.com/atlas/chocolate-strains)

## Interesting Images Posted on the IMS facebook Page



An exquisite sculpture of an armadillo (in a private collection in Guatemala); posted by Janet Miess.

Temple of the Jaguars – rear view and annex – Chichen Itza, 1979, by Gerry Wolfson. Plus, there are 8 more!



A captive in stone, Tonina museum in Chiapas; posted by Steve Radzi.



Magnificent Chinkultik, Chiapas; posted by Rod Selva.





Columbus described the Taínos as a physically tall, well-proportioned people, with a noble and kind personality.

L) Taíno society was divided into two classes: *naborias* (commoners) and *nitáinos* (nobles). These were governed by chiefs known as *caciques* (who were either male or female), who were advised by priests/healers known as *bohiques*. C) The Spaniards, who first arrived in the Bahamas, Cuba and Hispaniola in 1492, and later in Puerto Rico, did not bring women in the first expeditions. They took Taíno women for their common-law wives, resulting in *mestizo* children. R) In a letter to the King of Spain, Columbus wrote: “They traded with us and gave us everything they had, with good will... They took great delight in pleasing us... They are very gentle and without knowledge of what is evil; nor do they murder or steal... Your highness may believe that in all the world there can be no better people... They love their neighbors as themselves, and they have the sweetest talk in the world, and are gentle and always laughing?” All illustrations courtesy of: [www.proyectosalnhogor.com](http://www.proyectosalnhogor.com)

## Let's Explore: The Taíno

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they proceeded up the island chain arriving on St. John around 20 CE. Like the Europeans who came to the islands 2,000 years later, these settlers did not find their newly discovered territory to be unoccupied. The Lesser Antilles, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico were already inhabited by a coastal people, gatherers and fishers who lived in small coastal settlements. And like Columbus and the Europeans, the newcomers overwhelmed the pre-existing culture they encountered.

These newcomers were the ancestors of the Taínos. They are known as *Los Archaicos* (Ancient Ones) to today's Taíno descendants and are called *Saladoids* or *Pre-Taíno* by today's academic community.

The Taíno cultivated the land whenever possible and carried on an extensive and far-reaching trade.



In September of 2011, the U.S. embassy returned Taíno artifacts that had been seized in Florida in May of 2008. Agents in Florida, Puerto Rico and Memphis confiscated 66 Pre-Columbian Taíno artifacts, many dating back 2,000 years. They returned them to Dominican Republic authorities and arrested the smugglers.



Caguana Ceremonial ballcourt, outlined with stones (many carved with petroglyphs). The Taíno played a ceremonial ball game called *batey*. Opposing teams had 10 to 30 players per team and used a solid rubber ball. Normally, the teams were composed of men, but occasionally, women played the game as well. The Classic Taíno played in the village's center plaza or on especially designed rectangular ballcourts, also called *batey*.

Archeological digs have uncovered gemstones and shells with drawings of animals only found on the South American mainland. They fabricated ceramic pottery, and made tools and weapons out of shells and stone. The ancestors of the Taíno easily defeated and replaced the existing population of the islands, whose settlements were sparsely populated and widely dispersed.

The Pre-Taínos underwent a Dark Age between 400 and 600 CE. They no longer carried on long distance trade and their ceramics and artwork became less sophisticated. This period of cultural stagnation ended around 600 CE resulting in a new and revitalized culture, which expanded into Hispaniola and eventually replaced and absorbed the Casimiroids of the Greater Antilles.



An abundance of ancient petroglyphs have been preserved on numerous islands, especially carved into large boulders along riverbeds. The Taíno spoke an Arawakan language and did not have writing. Some of the words used by them, such as *barbacoa* (barbecue), *hamaca* (hammock), *kanoa* (canoe), *tabaco* (tobacco), *yuca*, *batata* (sweet potato), and *juracán* (hurricane), have been incorporated into Spanish and English.

Casimiroid and Pre-Taíno cultures blended together and the result was the formation of a new people, the Taíno.

According to Taíno myth the Taínos originated in caves in a sacred mountain in Hispaniola. Modern research has now shown that this myth is essentially correct. Although influenced by trade, hereditary and cultural ties to both Mesoamerica and South America, the essence of Taíno culture evolved locally in eastern Hispaniola and then spread westward to Cuba, Jamaica and the Bahamas and eastward to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. 🏠

Sources: Condensed by the editor from texts at <http://en.wikipedia.org> and [www.stjohnbeachguide.com](http://www.stjohnbeachguide.com). **Peter Barratt** will present “Taíno and Maya: Parallel Cultures” on February 19.



## Palenque and Its Tombs by George Fery

*A painted ancestor, perhaps Kan B'alam, from the Temple XX tomb. Drawing by Merle Greene Robertson.*

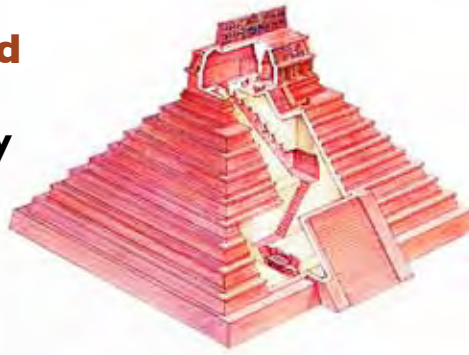
extensively in Groups B and C, close to the Central area. They encountered 67 burials in five domestic groups with over 110 human remains; more were found in the outlying areas of the city.

As a rule, all remains at Palenque show the body lying on its back, arms extended on each side, the skull pointing to the north, while in neighboring Chinikihá, the orientation is to the south; so far, no explanation has been found to explain the difference in burial ritual between relatively close cities.

The manner in which burials were set within or around the household complex suggests that they met specific religious and ritual beliefs. The location of the remains and their proximity to the living, indicate a belief in the relationship between the vital essence of the departed and that of the living.

It's important to note that burial practices entailed a two-part process. When the person passed, the body was placed in the ground or in a tomb for a period of time corresponding to the decay of the body's soft tissues; that is the primary burial. Several months later, the grave was re-opened to clean the bones of any remaining tissue and cover them with an iron oxide mineral pigment. They would then be re-buried with other offerings.

The archaeological record informs us that the same burial may have been visited several times over the years, the skull and long bones removed for



*Above) Passageway to Pakal's tomb within the Temple of the Inscriptions. It is perhaps the most famous tomb in Mesoamerica. (<http://ca-americas.wikispaces.com>)*

*Right) Deep within Temple XX, this royal burial chamber was first detected in 1999 by Alfonso Morales and a team from P.A.R.I. led by Merle Greene Robertson. Using a remote camera, they could see the tomb was decorated with vibrant red wall murals and contained 11 vessels, as well as pieces of jade. INAH researchers finally entered the tomb in 2012.*

unknown rituals, and buried again. It is also of interest to note that at that time, long bones from other individuals were added in some instances; the reason is unknown, nor do we know if they belonged to close or extended family members.

In past times, Maya households were (as they are today), more than simple living spaces. It was customary to bury family members under the floors. The graves and associated burial rituals were closely linked to the social relationship of the immediate and extended family that lived within the housing complex; they weren't necessarily blood relatives.

The living space therefore was perceived as being more than an assemblage of construction materials since it was, for each individual and the group living in the complex, the focus of the extended family memory and identity.

Burial of family and group members within the habitational complex was therefore believed to maintain the cosmic balance of the household for each of its inhabitants. This practice explains the devotion to, and veneration of the living for the remains, since they were believed to bring peace, health and prestige to the family, especially if the departed reached an important social standing during his or her lifetime.



*Above) Scale model of the tomb of K'inich Janhaab' Pakal on display at the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City. (Courtesy of [www.delange.org](http://www.delange.org))*



*Above) Merle Greene Robertson held a cast of one of two heads found under Pakal's sarcophagus in the Temple of Inscriptions. (Chronicle photo by Shelley Eades)*

Pakal started to work on his own massive mausoleum, with its vaulted inner chamber and spectacular monolithic tomb, well before his death on August 28, 683. It is likely that he also commissioned the remodeling of the companion temples to its west, including the Temple of the Skull, Structure XIIsub, and Structure XIIIsub, the resting place of the "Red Queen".

The monumental tomb of K'inich Janhaab' Pakal (615–683 CE) in the Temple of the Inscriptions is by far, the greatest burial monument in the Maya world. 🏛️

February 12, 8 pm at the IMS:  
**Palenque and Its Tombs**  
with George Fery

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

February 12, 2014: Ancient Maya Cities Series Presentation:



Portrait of Ix Tz'ak Ajaw, detail left figure on Tablet from Temple 14. Photo courtesy of Kaylee Rae Spencer; originally by M.G. Robertson, 1991.

### Palenque and Its Tombs with George Fery

From monumental to common, burial customs and rituals in Lakam'ha (Palenque), as in Mesoamerica in general, are traced back to the Preclassic (1200 BCE). Maya houses in any archaeological site may hold one or more burials located in various places, such as below living room floors, or under patio areas. Burials vary from a simple hole in the ground to elaborate structures, and offerings vary in importance and number.



Deep within the Temple of the Inscriptions, George Fery poses next to the sarcophagus inside Pakal's tomb.

A few prominent women are mentioned in the inscriptions at Palenque, although only one, Ix Tzak'bu Ajaw, is associated with being from another location, and having moved to Palenque for her wedding to Pakal. She is referred to as a Tokt'ahn person, possibly the first dynastic seat of Palenque's polity, whose locale is yet unidentified; or was it possibly Uxte'k'hu, another important site in the region?

### February 19: IMS Presentation:

### Taíno and Maya: Parallel Cultures



Lucayan duho (seat), high-back style. Courtesy of: <http://lnmai.si.edu>

### with Peter Barratt

– Independent Researcher; Island Planning Consultants

This presentation explores a culture that was historically parallel to the Maya. Originally from upstream communities on the Orinoco River of South America, the Taíno colonized the entire chain of islands of the Caribbean (including the Bahamas). But they were not the first to visit the islands.

The Ortoiroid peoples had previously entered the islands from South America and the Casimiroids visited from Central America. These people arrived

in the islands between 4000 and 2000 BCE). This study will concentrate on the people who arrived around 200 BCE at Cedros in Trinidad and worked their way up the island chain developing the culture that we know today as Taíno. Most interesting to students of the Maya, they shared many similarities: they played a similar ball game, practiced cranial deformation and shared similar beliefs.



Peter Barratt – Island man with a plan!

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

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- Patron: \$150
- Century: \$100
- Member: \$50



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## Destruction at El Paraíso, Peru

On June 29, 2013, Estequilla Rosales, vice president of the heritage association Kapaq Sumaq Ayllu, heard a noise coming from the far side of the archaeological site she has been helping to protect. The Peruvian 45-hectare complex of El Paraíso is a national cultural heritage site and one of the largest and oldest in Peru.

What Estequilla heard was the sound of heavy machinery in the process of destroying one of the eleven archaeological mounds registered on the site, beneath which lay the remains of a pre-Inca pyramid, up to six meters high.

Archaeologist Marco Guillén Hugo, in charge of research and excavation at the site, reported that he had reason to believe two private building companies were behind the destruction.



L) February 2013: We've previously reported twice in the Explorer about discoveries at El Paraíso (Wikimedia Commons). R) June 2013: The area of the archaeological complex of El Paraíso that was completely destroyed by developers (courtesy of the Peruvian Ministry of Culture).

The Peruvian Ministry of Culture said that although the companies claim to own the land, it is actually under state control, but this does not seem to stop them. The destruction of this pyramid represents an irreparable loss for the culture and history of Peru.

El Paraíso is a pre-ceramic site. Discovered in the 1950s, the occupation period for El Paraíso was relatively short, lasting approximately 300 to 400 years, from 3790 cal BP to 3,065 cal BP. The groups of buildings were made of roughly trimmed local stone

covered in plaster and it is assumed that the Huaca El Paraíso (Sacred Hill of Paradise) was a central ceremonial site for the whole region.

Remains of seabirds, shells and bones suggest that the main food sources were marine, and analysis of the plant remains suggest that most of the agriculture consisted of cotton and gourds for making nets, storage vessels and floats. 🏠

Source: Condensed from an article released 2/13/2013 and a second article dated 9/18/2013 at: [www.pasthorizonspr.com](http://www.pasthorizonspr.com)

## Upcoming Events at the IMS:

February 12 • 8 pm:

*Ancient Maya Cities Series Presentation:*

**Palenque and Its Tombs** – From simple burials to elaborate royal tombs; with our good friend **George Fery**. See his article by the same name on page 6.

February 19 • 8 pm: *IMS Presentation:*

**The Taíno and the Maya: Parallel Cultures** – with **Peter Barratt**.

Mankind has existed in the Caribbean for thousands of years; are there connections to the Maya? See the article on pages 3 and 5 entitled "Let's Explore the Taíno".

March 12 • 8 pm:

*Ancient Maya Cities Series Presentation:*

**Copan and Its Recorded History** – What do the hieroglyphs at Copan reveal? – with our very own, beloved **Marta Barber**.

March 19 • 8 pm: *IMS Presentation:*

**In Gar We Trust: Fish Imagery in Ancient Maya Kingship and Cosmology** – with **Dr. Kevin J. Johnston**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Ohio State University.

## Upcoming Events and Announcements:

February 7-9: *40th Annual LAS Meeting*

**New Perspectives on Two Decades of Research on the Ancient Maya of Belize** – Title of **Dr. Thomas Guderjan**'s keynote address at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Archaeological Society on the campus of Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA. Info at: [www.laarchaeology.org/annual.html](http://www.laarchaeology.org/annual.html)

February 11, 7:30 pm: *MHM/AIA Lecture*

**The Forging of a Classical Maya Kingdom: La Corona and Its Alliance with the Snake Kings of Calakmul** – Theme of a Missouri History Museum/ AIA lecture by **Marcello Canuto**, Tulane University. At the Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, MO. More info at: <http://mohistory.org/node/9238>

March 1-2: *Annual Conference*

**42nd Annual Midwest Conference on Andean and Amazonian Archaeology and Ethnohistory** – at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI. Program

available after Feb. 10 at:

[www4.uwm.edu/letscil/conferences/mcaaae2014/](http://www4.uwm.edu/letscil/conferences/mcaaae2014/)

March 20-23: *Maya Symposium*

**On the Maya Trail: Ancient Travelers, Epic Voyages** – The Middle American Research Institute and Far Horizons are proud to present the 11th Annual Tulane Maya Symposium and Workshop. Keynote speaker will be **Dr. Karl Taube** of the University of California, Riverside. At Tulane University and the New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA. Register now at: <http://mari.tulane.edu/TMS/index.html>

April 23-27: *79th Annual SAA Meeting*

**Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting** – To take place at the Austin Convention Center, Austin, TX. There is a wealth of field trips this year! Advance registration is now open and may be accessed by visiting <http://bit.ly/SAAREg>. The deadline for advance registration is March 20, 2014.



# IMS EXPLORER

Join in the **Explorer-ation!** Scholar or not, we welcome submissions from IMS members. Share what interests you with others. All articles and news items for the **IMS Explorer** should be forwarded to the newsletter editor at: [mayaman@bellsouth.net](mailto:mayaman@bellsouth.net)