

January 18, 2017 • Maya Ceremonial Era Long Count: 0.0.4.2.9 • 11 Muluk 12 Muwan • G4

Explorations and Research at Holtun

by **Michael G. Callaghan** and **Brigitte Kovacevich**
Professors at the University of Central Florida

What are the origins of social inequality? Does it arise within households in relation to variables like age, gender, and division of labor? Does it arise between households in relation to lineage hierarchy, access to resources, or household production? Or does social inequality originate from outside a community? These are the questions we are trying to answer by excavating into Preclassic-period households and monumental architecture at the ancient Maya site of Holtun in Guatemala. While recent finds at the site help us begin answering these questions, they also pose new questions we didn't expect to be asking.

The Site of Holtun

Holtun is considered an intermediate-sized civic-ceremonial center with occupation spanning the Middle Preclassic through Terminal Classic periods (600 BCE – 900 CE). The site is conveniently located on the asphalt road between Santa Elena and Melchor de Mencos in the Department of Peten (Figure 1).

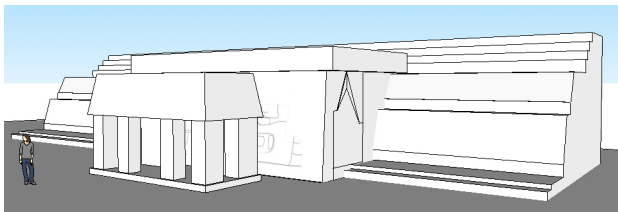


Figure 2: Reconstruction of eastern range structure in E-Group. Illustration by Mary Clarke.



Jim Reed,
Editor

©2017 I.M.S. Inc. The *IMS Explorer* newsletter is published 12 times a year by The Institute of Maya Studies, Inc. The Institute is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. As a member you receive the monthly newsletter and personal access to the Member's Only pages on our website, access to IMS program videos, photo archives, past issues, and more. Get your password by contacting our Webmaster at webmaster@instituteofmayastudies.org. Membership and renewal application on our website.

A monthly newsletter published by the **Institute of Maya Studies**

Maya enthusiasts providing public education for 45+ years

A Community Partner of Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus, Miami, FL, USA

Volume 46
Issue 1
January 2017
ISSN: 1524-9387



Inside this issue:

IMS Message from the President, by Eric T. Slazyk	2
Explorations and Research at Holtun, Guatemala, by Michael G. Callaghan and Brigitte Kovacevich (cont. from page 1)	3
Protection of World Ancient Civilizations Forum, by Antonio Benavides C.	4
The Ceramic Sequence of the Holmul Region, by Michael G. Callaghan and Nina Neivens de Estrada	5
In Memoriam: Maya scholar Erik Boot	6
IMS Feature Presentation; 7 Membership Application	7
Investigating Bejucal, Guatemala; Upcoming Events	8

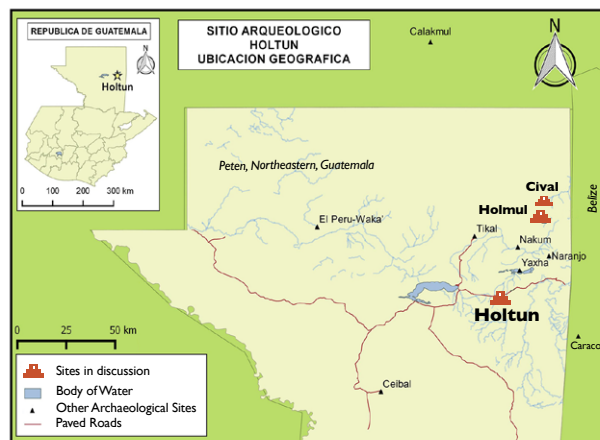


Figure 1: Location of Holtun. Map by Rodrigo Guzmán.

Holtun is about 35 km southeast of Tikal and 12.3 km southwest of Yaxha. The formal site consists of a monumental epicenter built atop a karstic hill positioned along a northeast-southwest axis. According to the most recent mapping of the site, the epicenter consists of 14 groups and 86 structures all showing evidence of stone construction. Major monumental architecture consists of a Middle Preclassic E-Group, Late Preclassic Triadic Group, ballcourt, stone-enclosed causeway, and various patio groups of stone architecture.

Investigations

We have been working at Holtun since 2010 with funding from the National Geographic Society, and the National Science Foundation (BCS1430954).

To date, much of our investigation has focused on

January 18, 6 pm
IMS Presentation:

Lunar Calendars of the Precolumbian Maya
with **Drs. Harvey and Victoria Bricker**

the E-Group ritual compound in what we label "Group F" at the site. E-Groups (named for the first one found in Group E at Uaxactun) are the oldest known monumental architecture in the Maya

continued on page 3

IMS Message from the President

by **Eric T. Slazyk**, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C

Dear Membership,

As this busy year ends, I hope this holiday season, once again, finds all of you well.

Through the efforts of the Board of Directors, our newsletter editor and our webmaster, I can proudly say that IMS has grown and improved this year.

Our modest fund-raising efforts have helped to keep our organization's finances in the black. Through these donations, we were able to provide a Miami Dade College (MDC) student with a travel scholarship to Mexico.

Our organization's prestige was enhanced through our admittance into the SAA.

The organization has strengthened friendships with Mesoamerica's leading archaeologists such as Constantino Manuel Torres, Gabrielle Vail, Marc Zender, Mark Brenner, and Francisco Estrada-Belli; and added friends, such as Will Pestle, Gabe Wrobel, and George Bey III.

Looking back, this year was a year of change for the IMS. Internal organizational changes and a redefined focus will combine for a more lean, efficient and productive group in 2017.

In creating this more lean, efficient and productive group, we have done the following:

- Suspended our regular second Wednesday Explorer meetings to put more emphasis on our main monthly lecture. We do intend to hold a few Explorer meetings this year, possibly quarterly, for student presentations. We will notify the membership accordingly.
- In alignment with the MDC class schedule, we now offer nine IMS presentations: January through June, and September through November. No public lectures will be offered for the months of July, August, and December.
- Additionally, we have changed the lecture time to 6 pm. These changes are an effort to draw more student attendance and participation in the IMS. Reduction of lectures to both the second and third Wednesday programs also helps financially with our bottom line and reduces the load on volunteer staff.

Another organizational change mentioned earlier was the consolidation of the Board of Directors, now a smaller group. Additionally, several committees have been temporarily put on hold to concentrate on improving the following key committees:

- Membership Committee
- Program Committee
- Website Committee
- Mailing Committee

Overall, we have been successful in meeting some of the goals we've

previously set for ourselves but there is still much work to do. We have distilled the scope to the essentials to be realistic with the current resources we have at hand but more so to focus on the most important issues and continue to improve upon them.

In 2017, we'll continue our commitment for the following:

- Providing a relevant and informative monthly newsletter.
- Improving membership and membership renewal methods, (considering PayPal renewal across the board)
- Interacting with our membership via social media and related events.
- Providing quality lectures from top scholars in the field for our General meetings (third Wednesday of the month).
- Maintaining and improving our website by expanding amenities offered to members in all locations through lecture videos, articles, and a growing newsletter and photo archive.
- Building and strengthening our relationship with MDC and its students (encourage participation).

In closing, I would like to mention my personal high point of the year as president – IMS's first student travel scholarship award!

Based on the award candidate selection criteria prepared by the IMS and MDC, three student candidates were short-listed by MDC. The three candidates were then interviewed separately by the IMS. Upon review, Paula Stevenson, an interior design student with a 3.8 GPA was selected as the recipient of the 2016 Student Travel scholarship.

IMS members and Paula (who had not been outside of the U.S.) accompanied a travel group to Mexico where she visited the archaeological sites of Mayapan, Kiuc, Acanceh, Uxmal, Edzna, Balamku, Becan, Hormiguero, Chicanna, and Dzibanche.

In addition to meeting archaeologists Tomás Gallareta, of INAH Yucatan, and Antonio Benavides C., of INAH Campeche, and attending a lecture by James Callaghan, director of the Kaxil Kiuc Bio-Cultural Reserve, she visited several museums in Yucatan and Campeche, and got to experience Day of the Dead celebrations at cemeteries located in Pomuch and Merida.

I truly enjoyed watching Paula experience Mexico and the Maya for the first time. Her excitement and enthusiasm was contagious,



2017 IMS Board of Directors:

Eric T. Slazyk, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C
President/Membership/Website
arcwerks@bellsouth.net

Marta Barber
Executive Vice President/
Programming
imsmiami@yahoo.com

Joaquín J. Rodríguez III, P.E.
Administrative Vice President/
Director of Research
rod44@comcast.net
954-786-8084

Janet Miess, MLS
Secretary/Treasurer/
Library Chair/Website
jmiess@gmail.com

Keith Merwin
Website Chair • webmaster@
instituteofmayastudies.org

Beth Wein
Hospitality • bethwein@ymail.com

Gerald Wolfson
Public Relations
gerald.wolfson@att.net

Jim Reed
Newsletter Editor
mayaman@bellsouth.net



Student Paula Stevenson, with IMS Vice President Marta Barber and IMS President Eric Slazyk, at Chicanna.



Student Paula Stevenson explores Kiuc with Tomás Gallareta of INAH Yucatan.

and a most rewarding and renewing personal experience for myself. I'm looking forward to our next travel scholarship awards in June 2017, when both a MDC student and a professor will be selected.

I thank you for your support in the past and trust in your continued support of the Institute of Maya Studies.

*Eric T. Slazyk, AIA, NCARB,
LEED AP BD+C,
President of the IMS*



Explorations and Research at Holtun

by **Michael G. Callaghan** and **Brigitte Kovacevich**

Professors at the University of Central Florida *continued from page 1*

lowlands and are made up of two structures enclosing a plaza – a western pyramid and eastern range structure.

Earlier in Maya archaeology these groups were identified as celestial observatories, where observers standing on the western pyramid could view the sun rising over the corners and middle of the eastern range structure during the solstices and equinox. More recently, these groups have been identified as centers for early community ritual, civic gathering, or even market exchange.

Investigations into the eastern and western E-Group structures, and the plazas surrounding them, show rapid growth and renovation in the Middle Preclassic with a shift from community-focused worship to individual-focused worship around 100 BCE.

The most compelling support comes from the eastern range structure of the E-Group. Excavations discovered that the structure is composed of three sub-structures (Figure 2, page 1).

The first is a Middle Preclassic stucco platform placed behind a cruciform cut into bedrock. The second is a Late Preclassic vaulted structure containing a looted tomb and monumental stucco masks of the Principal Bird Deity (PBD) (Figure 3).

The third is a Terminal Preclassic shrine placed atop the Middle Preclassic cruciform cut with painted walls and graffiti of early hieroglyphs and male figures. The first sub-structure contained burials and caches dating to the Middle Preclassic period, showing that the development of ancestor veneration



Figure 4: Graffito of nude male figure from shrine. Drawing by Mary Clarke.

and leadership began early at the site. The PBD masks on the second sub-structure show the transition to single rulers occurred during the Late Preclassic, as the bird is a harbinger of kingship. The third discovery, the shrine with elaborate graffiti, was completely unexpected. Only a small portion of the shrine was excavated in 2016, but the many artistic representations uncovered provide tantalizing clues about the development of rulership in the Late Preclassic period.

Especially intriguing is a large nude figure with cranial modification (Figure 4). The ancient Maya only represented nudes in certain contexts, this type of depiction is rare and no other forms exactly like the Holtun example are known. Several hypotheses have been asserted in interpreting graffiti figures in sealed contexts like the shrine at Holtun.

The first argues that it was the result of hallucinogenic states associated with ritual. Another argues that graffiti were part of a training experience for young scribes and that varying heights and qualities of depiction relate to the age and experience of the artist.

A third interpretation is that graffiti figures were war captives and

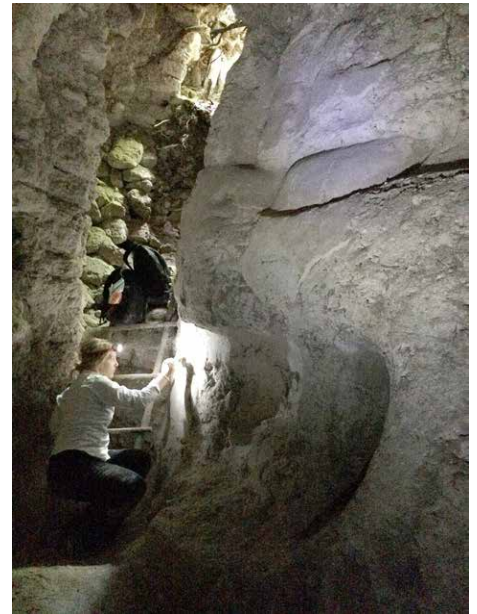


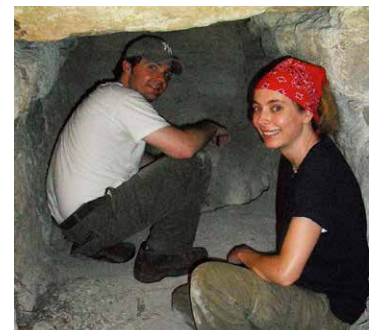
Figure 3: Artist Mary Clarke rendering the image of the Principal Bird Deity mask that appears on the eastern structure of E-Group.

their nudity represented humiliation associated with capture and a prelude to human sacrifice.

We aim to test these hypotheses by fully excavating the shrine next year. Specifically, we will look at what role teaching and learning of young men and/or warfare played in the development of ruler-centered ritual. This research will be aided by the continued discovery of hieroglyphs etched in the stucco of these rooms, adding to a new corpus of Maya hieroglyphs dating between the Late Preclassic and Early Classic periods. We look forward to reporting back to you with our finds next year!

Brigitte Kovacevich Before coming to the University of Central Florida (UCF) as an Assistant Professor in 2015, she taught at Southern Methodist University, Yale University, and the University of Virginia. Her interests include the complex interplay between technology, power, economic systems, social action, and culture change in the past and present. Dr. Kovacevich's recent research has investigated the efficiency of new sourcing techniques on jade and obsidian from Mesoamerica and how that can highlight changes in production and trade patterns.

Michael Callaghan is an anthropological archaeologist who studies Precolumbian Mesoamerican societies in an effort to understand the origins of social complexity. His research focuses on the emergence of complexity as it relates to community ritual, social inequality, craft specialization, and long distance exchange. He has published in *Ancient Mesoamerica* and is co-editor of *The Indalienable in the Archaeology of Mesoamerica* (with Brigitte Kovacevich). Check out a notice announcing his most recent release: *The Ceramic Sequence of the Holmul Region*, page 5.



Michael and Brigitte working together in a Maya tomb. Check out their presence on the UCF website at: <https://sciences.ucf.edu/anthropology/>

Protection of World Ancient Civilizations Forum

By **Antonio Benavides C. / INAH Campeche**

The **Protection of World Ancient Civilizations Forum**

event took place in Beijing, China, October 18-20, 2016, with the participation of international experts from China, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Egypt and Mexico. Also present were archaeologists, historians, restorers and museographers from ICCROM (International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property), from ICOM (International Council of Museums) and from ICOMOS (International Council of Monuments and Sites).

The forum was promoted and financed by the Culture Ministry of the China Popular Republic, News Agency Xinhua and the Cultural Heritage State Administration.

The organizer headquarters was the Palace Museum at the Forbidden City. That big space was the Chinese imperial palace since the Ming dynasty (1368-1644 CE) until the end of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912 CE), so it was the home of China emperors and their courts during almost 500 years, also the political and ceremonial center of the Chinese government.

Built between 1406 and 1420, the complex is surrounded by a wall and displays 980 structures. It is one kilometer in length by 800 meters wide and has an approximate surface of 720 000 m². The building complex is a magnificent example of the Chinese traditional palace architecture and has influenced the cultural and architectonic development of East Asia and other world regions.

This is the reason UNESCO declared the Forbidden City, in 1987, as a World Heritage site. It is also considered as the biggest complex of ancient wooden structures on the planet.

Working sessions included specific presentations of cultural heritage management, diverse conservation challenges and future plans for the register, study, conservation and promotion of that enormous and ancient legacy.

●●●● Different historic

events have shown us that the cultural heritage of ancient civilizations is a mighty force that promotes global pacific development and cultural prosperity. Protection and management of cultural heritage is a relevant factor speeding up international cultural exchange and at the same time helps to mould the memory and identity of a nation.

Nevertheless, the reality of our times shows us the hard challenges and threats to cultural heritage in different regions of the world: disasters caused by wars, cultural conflict intensified by globalization, big effects generated by natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, volcanic eruptions, climatic change, etc.) or terrorism and destruction caused by religious fanatic groups.

As a matter of fact, the conservation of world cultural heritage is now a priority demanding urgent attention.

The forum focused on the protection of ancient civilizations around the globe and considered three subtopics:

- 1) Measures to be implemented for the protection of cultural heritage;
- 2) Plans to initiate programs of exchange and cooperation between those in charge of the ancient cultural sites; and
- 3) Exploring the challenges and opportunities in the protection of world cultural heritage.

After the working sessions, a joint document was prepared to better promote conservation and management of International heritage. The text was signed by the participants and its title is the Supreme Harmony Declaration.

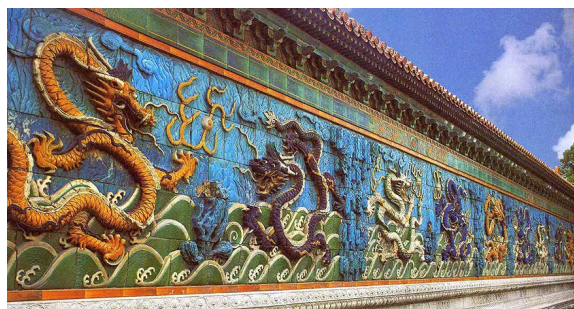
The Mexican delegation in attendance at the forum included Dr. Pedro Francisco Sánchez Nava, INAH's Archaeology National



Dr. Antonio Benavides C., signing the Supreme Harmony Declaration.



Gate of the Holy Harmony, in the Palace Museum (at the Forbidden City). All photos by Dr. Benavides.



Wall of the Nine Dragons at the Longevity Palace.



INAH's members at the forum: Dr. Tomás Gallareta Negrón., Dr. Nelly Robles G., Dr. Antonio Benavides C. and Dr. Pedro Francisco Sánchez Nava.

Coordinator; Dr. Nelly Robles García, ICOMOS member and Oaxaca's Atzompa archaeological project; architect Olga Oribe Bellinger, ICOMOS member; Dr. Tomás Gallareta Negrón, an INAH Yucatan archaeologist working in the Puuc región; and Dr. Antonio Benavides Castillo, INAH Campeche director.



Recommended by the Editor Recently released book:

The Ceramic Sequence of the Holmul Region, Guatemala
by **Michael G. Callaghan** and **Nina Neivens de Estrada**

A vital handbook for archaeologists interested in Mesoamerican ceramic typology

Editor's note: By special arrangement with the University of Arizona Press, IMS members will receive a 20% discount. Use the code **FLR** when ordering!

"I suspect, like most ceramic volumes, this will become 'the bible' for understanding and discussion of the ceramics of the Holmul region for many years, if not decades."

– Dr. George Bey, of Millsaps College; co-editor of *Pottery Economics in Mesoamerica*

From the University of Arizona Press book release notice:

Sequencing the ceramics in Guatemala's Holmul region has the potential to answer important questions in Maya archaeology. The Holmul region, located in northeastern Guatemala between the central Peten lowlands to the west and the Belize River Valley to the east, encompasses roughly ten square kilometers and contains at least seven major archaeological sites, including two large ceremonial and administrative centers, Holmul and Cival.

The Ceramic Sequence of the Holmul Region, Guatemala illustrates the archaeological ceramics of these prehistoric Maya sites in a study that provides a theoretical starting point for answering questions related to mid and high-level issues of archaeological method and theory in the Maya area and larger Mesoamerica. The researchers' ceramic sequence, which uses the method of type: variety-mode classification, spans approximately 1,600 years and encompasses nine ceramic complexes and one sub-complex. The highly illustrated book is formatted as a catalog of the

types of ceramics in a chronological framework.

The authors undertook this study with three objectives: to create a temporal-spatial framework for archaeological sites in the politically important Holmul region, to relate this framework to other Maya sites, and to use type: variety-mode data to address specific questions of ancient Maya social practice and process during each ceramic complex.

Specific questions addressed in this volume include: the adoption of pottery as early as 800 BCE at the sites of Holmul and Cival during the Middle Preclassic period, the creation of the first orange polychrome pottery, the ideological and political influence from sites in Mexico during the Early Classic period, and the demographic and political collapse of lowland Maya polities between 800 and 830 CE.

"This is a superb monograph and important addition to our corpus of Maya ceramics, which too often do not get reported."

– Laura Kosakowsky, author of *Preclassic Maya Pottery at Cuello, Belize*

An interesting tie-in to our IMS webmaster Keith Merwin:

Interest in Holmul was motivated by the well-known results of R.E. Merwin's excavations at the site in his pioneering season of 1911 (Merwin and Vaillant 1932). Aside from being the first scientific excavation of a Maya ruin in the history of Maya archaeology, Merwin's work is well-known for having produced the first ceramic sequence in the Maya Lowlands that has served as a

The Ceramic Sequence of the Holmul Region, Guatemala



Michael G. Callaghan and Nina Neivens de Estrada

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA NUMBER 77

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESS TUCSON 2016

Released November 2016, 256 pp, 8.5"x 11", 13 tables, 90 halftones. \$19.95 (PB) ISBN 978-0-8165-3194-3 Electronic edition available. Go to: www.uapress.arizona.edu or call: 1-800-621-2736



reference for research ever since.

The 1911 research clearly showed elaborate architecture and burial data of relatively early date (Early Classic), while at the same time bringing to light more complex palaces, temples and burials of the Late Classic Period which are among the most spectacular in the Maya Lowlands. R.E. Merwin is Keith's grand uncle!

Michael G. Callaghan is an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Central Florida. He is co-director of the Holtun Archaeological Project, located in the department of Peten, Guatemala.

Nina Neivens de Estrada is a doctoral student at Tulane University. She specializes in ceramic analysis and excavation of monumental architecture. Her research focuses on the typological and modal analysis of early lowland Maya pottery in the central Peten area. 🏠

Dates and Ceramic Complexes within the Holmul Region

Context	Uncalibrated	1-Sigma	2-Sigma	Complex
Cival, Burial 33	2670+/-40 BP	895-840 BCE	900-790 BCE	Pre-Mamom
Cival, Cache 4	2520+/- 40 BP	680-550 BCE	800-520 BCE	Yax Te
Holmul, Building B, Group II, Phase I	2300+/-40 BP	400-340 BCE	-----	Itzamkanak
Cival, Structure I	2170+/-40 BP	260-160 BCE	360-90 BCE	Itzamkanak
Holmul, Building B, Group II, Burial 10	1840+/-40 BP	120-230 CE	80-250 CE	Wayab (Sub)

Table 1.2 from page 27 of the book. References are from Francisco Estrada-Belli.



Pioneer in Maya Studies:
Erik Boot Maya Scholar and Researcher
In Memoriam (compiled by Jim Reed)

Sadly, the IMS announces the passing of a great Mayanist – Erik Boot. The first notice came from his brother Ruud, on December 18:

Dear friends and relations of Erik,

With great sadness I inform you that my brother Erik Boot passed away peacefully yesterday morning after more than a year of an unequal fight against cancer. In his last year, he has been able to meet many of you during conferences and working groups in his beloved field of Maya research and expertise. This was very important to him and in his last weeks, it has been a great source of happiness and comfort.

His funeral took place on Saturday, December 24, in Rijswijk, in the Netherlands.

Kind regards, Ruud Boot

Homage by Carl D. Callaway:

Our dear friend and anthropologist Dr. Erik Boot passed away on December 17, 2017. Erik earned a Ph.D. (2005) from the University of Leiden, the Netherlands, and was a great contributor to the European Maya Meetings and a prolific Maya scholar, whose work *Continuity and Change in Text and Image at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico* remains one of the most in-depth and up-to-date studies of the inscriptions, iconography and architecture of the site. Erik also published innumerable, prodigiously sourced articles on Maya archaeology, epigraphy, art and mythology through the years (sometimes at the rate of 2-3 articles a month). Some of Erik's most recent research projects (as quoted on *academia.edu*) include:

The Classic Maya Hieroglyphic Vocabulary Database (initiated in 1998; first results online in 2002 at Mesoweb, followed by an update in 2009 also at Mesoweb, and the start of Maya Glyph Blog in 2010; further updates and new website in 2015-16), and Regional Variation in the (Standard) Dedicatory Formula on Maya Ceramics (initiated in 2005; first results served as background to workshop hosted at the 10th EMC in Leiden [2005], the Netherlands,

further results forthcoming; preliminary results also posted at Maya Glyph Blog, and in Boot 2014 [Berlin 2010 paper]).

Check out his presence on *academia.edu* at: <https://independent.academia.edu>. Among the papers he recently presented:

- 2013 *Three New Writing Systems: On the Origin(s), Evolution, and Distribution of Scripts in Ancient Mesoamerica* (lecture, October 30, 2014, Brussels, Free University of Brussels, Wayeb)
- 2013 *A Last Solitary Maya Stand, or First Step of "Pan-Maya" Societal Resilience? The Stelae Program at Seibal, ca. A.D. 840-870* (symposium, 18th EMC, Brussels, November 1-2, 2013, Free University of Brussels, Wayeb)
- 2014 *Embellished, Beyond Recognition, or From the Pseu-Pseu-Pseudo? Maya Glyphs from the Heartland, "Maya" Glyphs on the Fringes* (Symposium, "The Idea of Writing: Beyond Speech?"; Leiden, October 24-25, 2014, Leiden University, NINO, LIAS)
- 2014 *Marking System, Pictograms, Incipient Writing, or Something Else: On the Graphic Enhancement of Preclassic to Late Classic Figurines from Central Mexico and Veracruz* Symposium, "The Idea of Writing: Beyond Speech?"; Leiden, October 24-25, 2014, Leiden University, NINO, LIAS)

I am amazed at the papers Erik wrote and the databases he updated these past six months, during his intense battle with a terminal illness. One of the final papers Erik published can be found in the *PARI Journal* 16(3):12-18 2016 and titled: *A Classic Maya Plate in the Collection of the De Young Museum, San Francisco: An Analysis of Text, Image, and "Kill Hole."*

Despite his failing condition, Erik graciously shared with me via letter, added insights into the plate's amphibian imagery and inscription, that immediately led to new insights into the Maize God resurrection



Photo titled "Chaman" by Erik Boot (9/15/2007). Previously displayed as part of an exhibition at the National Museum of Anthropology and History, in Mexico City.

story. For Erik, not even impending death was allowed to get in the way of a new decipherment!

Erik Boot was and will remain a great inspiration to those who worked and studied with him, and his contribution to the field of Maya art, mythology and epigraphy has helped us see further into the scribal mind of the ancient Maya. His dedicated scholarship, humor, friendship and wit will be greatly missed.

– Carl D. Callaway

Words from Evan J. Albright:

I was saddened to learn of the passing of Erik Boot in December. Underdogs have always held great appeal, and I saw Erik as one of those in the field of Maya translation. He was not among the shining stars, but one of the many foot soldiers who continued to plug away despite not receiving the recognition accorded others. The field of Maya studies is filled with individuals just like him and they have made many of the great discoveries. He did it for the love of the subject and I admire that. RIP Erik.

– Evan J. Albright

Words from Janice Van Cleave:

Erik was an incredible source of information and generous in sharing it. He graciously answered several of my emails requesting help. We have all lost a great mind and contributor in Erik's passing.

– Janice Van Cleave

Check out Erik's popular blog at: <http://mayanupdates.blogspot.com> and his almost endless archives at: Maya Glyph Blog (2010-) at: <http://maya-glyph-blog.blogspot.com>

January 18 • 6 pm • IMS Feature Presentation

Lunar Calendars of the Precolumbian Maya

with **Drs. Harvey and Victoria Bricker**,
PhDs Harvard

The knowledge of astronomy among the ancient Maya is well-documented in codices. The Brickers' *Astronomy in the Maya Codices*, published by the American Philosophical Society, extensively covers their findings on the existing Maya codices. Their most recent research concentrates on inscriptions on Maya monuments of the Classic period.

The Brickers note: "The Lunar Series in these inscriptions, which was first recognized by Maya scholars about a century ago, deals with questions like:

- How far along in this lunar month are we today?
- How many days is this lunar month likely to have?
- What is the name of the lunar month?
- How does this lunar month fit into broader calendrical systems?

Our presentation will attempt to explain how Precolumbian chronologists answered these questions and in what form they wrote their answers.

We will begin our presentation with a discussion of the Lunar Series on Stela 36 from Piedras Negras." (see above)

The IMS is a Community Partner with Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus, Miami, FL

This program will take place at 6 pm in K-413 (in Building K-4, Room 13)

IMS Hotline: 305-279-8110

Go to the college website at: www.mdc.edu for directions and campus map.

Jaguar pelt border courtesy of Steve Radzi. See his portfolio of original Maya-themed artwork at: www.mayavision.com



Stela 36 from Piedras Negras features a royal personage on the front and this very important Lunar Series on the posterior.
Photo by Victoria Bricker.

2017 New Membership and Renewal Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

The IMS has gone Green! Join today

You can also become a member by using PayPal and the on-line application form on our website at: <http://instituteofmayastudies.org>

New Renewal

Benefactor: \$350

Patron: \$150

Century: \$100

Member: \$50



Membership in the IMS includes attending two lectures a month; a year's subscription to our downloadable monthly **IMS Explorer** newsletter; and access to all features on our website: past newsletters, videos of IMS lectures, upcoming program announcements, IMS photo archives, and more!

Institute of Maya Studies

The Institute of Maya Studies is totally member-supported! If you are not a member, please take a moment and join us. Membership brings benefits and helps the IMS offer educational programs to the public. If you are already a member, please encourage your friends to join. If you need any assistance, call our Maya Hotline at: 305-279-8110

Members: Be sure to get your password by contacting our Webmaster Keith Merwin at: webmaster@instituteofmayastudies.org

Mail payment to: The Institute of Maya Studies, Inc. • c/o Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus • 11011 SW 104 Street, Miami, FL 33176

The Institute of Maya Studies is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Membership dues and contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the I.R.S.



Investigating Bejucal, Guatemala

On a secluded hilltop in the Peten Guatemalan jungle, archaeologists have discovered a rural pleasure palace enjoyed by Maya kings more than a thousand years ago.

The lofty site included not only an apparent luxury residence but also two pyramids, one of them more than 30 feet high. Inscriptions on stone monuments link the complex to a Maya king the researchers call Great Fish-Dog Turtle, who ruled his kingdom from a city five miles away.

But the site, known as Bejucal, was not always about relaxation. Long before it was a place to get away from it all, it was a sacred center dotted with temples, the researchers report in the *Journal of Field Archaeology*.

At one temple, a sacrificed baby was buried, a Maya ritual for consecrating a holy space, says Thomas Garrison of the

Salvage operations in structure S6-10, one of the two pyramids at Bejucal. Photo by T. Garrison; courtesy of PAEZ.

University of Southern California, who led the Bejucal excavations.

Over centuries, a grand palace complex took shape atop the temples. In the end, Bejucal included two courtyards, each bordered by a pyramid and residential rooms. The ruins of one palace held bits of ceramic painted with colorful designs associated with royalty, objects fit for a king's household.

Perhaps the greatest mystery is a massive stone tomb, built between 350 and 450 CE beneath the bigger of the two pyramids. Two stone stelae stood outside the tomb, though they've since been removed for safekeeping. Mayan hieroglyphics on one stela refer to a ruler who took the throne of the nearby kingdom of El Zotz in 381. That



ruler, the researchers say, was Great Fish-Dog Turtle. Near the tomb was a sacred offering – seashells, bits of jade, a headless bird. Clearly someone important had been buried there, perhaps a king's son, perhaps Great Fish-Dog Turtle himself.

Bejucal is thought to date to the second half of the 4th century CE, in the Early Classic period.

Source: Condensed by the editor from an original article by Traci Watson, released 11/3/2016 at: www.usatoday.com. Submitted by Janet Miess and Mike Ruggeri.

Upcoming Events at the IMS:

January 18 • 6 pm: *IMS Feature Presentation Lunar Calendars of the Precolumbian Maya* – with **Drs. Harvey and Victoria Bricker**, PhDs Harvard. The knowledge of astronomy among the Ancient Maya was well-documented in codices. Now the Bricker's most recent research concentrates on inscriptions on Maya monuments of the Classic period.

IMS Program Note:

In alignment with MDC, we now offer nine IMS presentations in conjunction with their calendar year: January – June and September – November. During the summer months of July and August, as well as December, there will be no public lectures. The programs will continue to be held at 6 pm in Room K-413 at Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus, 11400 SW 104th Street, Miami, FL. For more information, contact our Hotline at: 305-279-8110; or by email at: info@instituteofmayastudies.org

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

January 10-14: *The 2017 Maya Meetings*
Tiillan Tlapallan: The Maya as Neighbors in Ancient Mesoamerica – Tiillan Tlapallan, “Land of Writing and Painting,” is a Nahuatl place of myth and history, evoking the lands far to the east on the Gulf of Mexico. Keynote address by Dr. Marc Zender, Tulane University. The list of presenters includes David Stuart, Stephen Houston, Barbara Arroyo, Karl Taube, Megan O’Neil and Diana Magaloni. Registration is now open at: <http://utmesoamerica.org/maya/2017-maya-meetings>

March 2-5: *Tulane Maya Symposium*
Monumental Landscapes: How the Maya Shaped Their World – Our good friend Marcello Canuto of the Middle American Research Institute (MARI) announces that registration is now open for the symposium. The event will feature the following speakers: Barbara Arroyo, M. Kathryn Brown, Arthur Demarest, Francisco Estrada-Belli, Eleanor Harrison-Buck, Brett Houk,

Takeshi Inomata, Holley Moyes, Merced Terry Powis, Keith Prufer, and Brent Woodfill. The keynote address will be delivered by Dr. Arlen Chase of the University of Nevada, on Friday evening. The hieroglyphic forum will focus on new texts discovered from the site of Naranjo and will be led by Alexandre Tokovinine and Marc Zender. An alternative talk will be presented by Christopher Pool of the University of Kentucky. Registration is at: <http://mari.tulane.edu/TMS/registration.html>

March 31: *Maya Society of Minnesota*
Bloodsport: The Ballgame and Boxing in Ancient Mesoamerica – Lecture by Dr. Karl Taube, University of California, Riverside. Dr. Taube is an exceptional scholar of American Mesoamerica, archaeology, epigraphy and ethnohistory. The corpus of his academic work demonstrates brilliance and depth of mastery. Check out: <https://sites.google.com/a/hamline.edu/maya-society/>



IMS EXPLORER

Join the **Explorer-ation!** Scholar or not, we welcome submissions from IMS members and other Maya enthusiasts. 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