

September 19, 2018 • Maya Ceremonial Era Long Count: 0.0.5.14.18 • 9 'Etz'nab 11 Ch'en • G1

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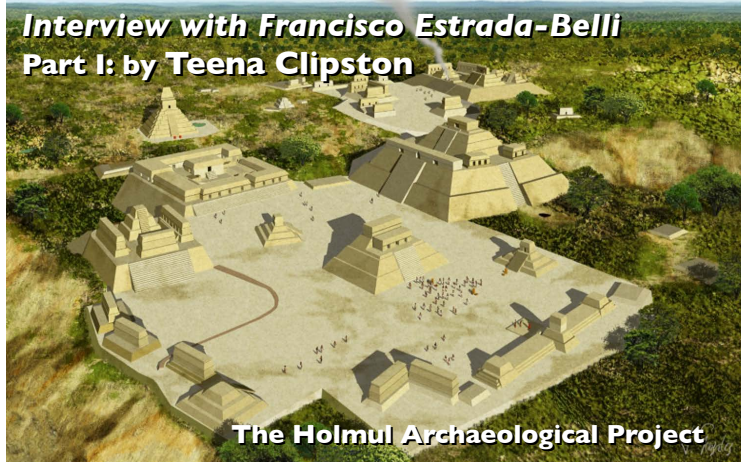
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Rewriting the History of the Maya:

Interview with Francisco Estrada-Belli Part I: by Teena Clipston



The Holmul Archaeological Project

Reconstructed view of Holmul in the final phase of the Classic Period, by J. Gonzalez, PACUNAM.

Biosphere Reserve at sites scattered throughout Peten, in Guatemala. For this interview I made my way into the wild, muddy, untamed jungle to visit Estrada-Belli, who was at work, at the Holmul Archaeological Project, in the north-eastern part of Peten.

There are few men who can successfully challenge existing historiography: such revisionists make daring and bold moves to critically examine previous facts and find new evidence to support their claims. They are strong in their sense of conviction, and relentless in their obsessive pursuit of truth. It can be said that Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli is one of these men.

Estrada-Belli, along with his colleagues in archaeology, are rewriting what we know about the history of the ancient Maya. Their investigation takes place in the Maya

There were three important subjects that I wanted to get his thoughts on: Cultural Evolution (Part I), The Maya – Teotihuacan connection (Part II), and the new use of LiDAR in archaeological excavation (Part III). On each of these topics, Estrada-Belli has played an important part in rewriting our understanding of history: from adopting the theory that cultural evolution is not linear, to the discovery of evidence pointing to the historic role that Teotihuacan played in Maya history. He has also been instrumental in bringing the use of LiDAR technology into the fold for archaeological exploration in Guatemala.

Estrada-Belli was born in Rome, to Italian/Guatemalan parents. Since he first laid eyes on the towering pyramids of Tikal, at the age of seven, he was bewitched by the mystery of the



Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli at the Holmul Archaeological Project. Photo credit: Teena Clipston.

September 19, 6 pm
IMS Presentation:



Polychrome murals at Teotihuacan.

Ancient Capital Cities of Central Mexico with Rick Slazyk and Marta Barber

Maya. You can find him, every season, at the Holmul Archaeological Project, just a few hours away from where his passion for archaeology

continued on page 3



Jim Reed, Editor

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Life-size Model of the San Bartolo Mural at Tang Museum in Saratoga Springs, New York Featuring Artist Heather Hurst

In 2001, Bill Saturno discovered ancient Maya murals in San Bartolo, located in a remote area of tropical Peten jungle in Guatemala.

Earlier this year, Heather Hurst presented a program and unveiled a life-size model exhibit of the San Bartolo mural chamber, called *7000 Fragments: Maya Murals from San Bartolo, Guatemala*, at the Tang Museum.

Hurst, an associate professor of Anthropology at Skidmore College, spearheaded the pop-up installation. It took Hurst, Saturno and others four years of archaeological excavation in tunnels to uncover the *in-situ* wall paintings, five years to conserve the ancient architecture and stabilize the access passages, and the last six years to catalog, analyze and reassemble the collect corpus of mural fragments.

"This is amazing to have the opportunity to see the building full scale, which is something we have not been able to do because it's buried beneath later construction," said Hurst. "You never get a chance to stand back from the mural to see it because you're always in the narrow tunnels. It's great to have a chance to bring it to an audience where people can really interact with it, and walk in and actually explore it on their own and see the murals close up. That's pretty valuable to me in terms of the educational factor."

Hurst said the pop-up installation is part of the Skidmore Faculty Residence. But it also serves an additional goal. "[This is] a proof of concept that we could build such a display in Guatemala," said Hurst. The goal is to keep the site of the original murals sealed so the murals are preserved, so they're not damaged by vandalism or change in environmental conditions.

This past June, an exhibit of the San Bartolo murals opened at the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Guatemala City.

During the symposium of the unveiling, five scholars, Hurst, Saturno, Edwin Román, David Stuart and Karl Taube presented highlights



Above: Heather Hurst unveils the museum model and explains points of interest. The murals are the most beautiful, polychrome murals of all of the archaeological sites found in Guatemala, making it a proposed candidate for UNESCO Cultural Heritage status for its unique value on an artistic level. The murals were found in a structure named the Pyramid of the Paintings, featuring a construction sequence that dates back to the Late Preclassic period (250 BC E–250 CE). Here, the Maya erected a domed building that within its interior are one-of-a-kind murals, painted with beautiful and bright colors. The murals are complex mythological scenes relating to the Maize God and the creation of the world, as well as the enthronement of a sovereign, which is part of the historical process of the Maya. The outside of the building is decorated with stucco masks flanking the stairways and entrance to the site. Of all the structures in San Bartolo, the Pyramid of the Paintings is far and away the most complex and showcases, through its murals, a long tradition of painting and story telling. Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5738/>

of what was found and its significance to Maya studies. The San Bartolo murals (c. 100 BCE) are among the most important Maya artifacts ever found, altering what we know about Maya theology and religious ceremonies, as well as Maya kings, artists and scribes. The murals visually narrate the creation of the world, depicting anthropomorphic and zoomorphic deities, kings, and nature. However, the *in-situ* murals buried within the pyramid are only part of the story: the site once contained many more paintings, but these artworks were intentionally broken into fragments and concealed by the Maya, according to the exhibit.

The project is supported by The Center for Leadership, Teaching, and Learning, The Office of the Dean of Special Programs, and the Tang Teaching Museum. Check out the original report at: <http://www.saratogian.com/general-news/20180425/life-size-model-of-maya-mural-chamber-at-tang-museum>

Heather Hurst is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Skidmore College and specializes in Mesoamerican archaeology with a focus on the study of art production, iconography, materials analysis, identity, and the role of art in society. She has ongoing fieldwork on Maya mural painting in Guatemala, as well as research on Olmec rock art in Mexico. Her publications and illustrated volumes include *The Murals of San Bartolo, El Petén, Guatemala. Part I, The North Wall, and Part II, The West Wall*. Dr. Hurst earned her PhD in Anthropology from Yale University. Her courses include Mesoamerican Archaeology, Archaeological Field Methods, Imaging/Imagining the Past, and Built Environments.



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Rewriting the History of the Maya:

Interview with Francisco Estrada-Belli

Part I: by Teena Clipston

continued from page 1

began. Estrada-Belli received his BA in anthropology and archaeology from the University of Rome, La Sapienza in 1990, and a PhD in archaeology at Boston University in 1998.

The Discovery of Holmul

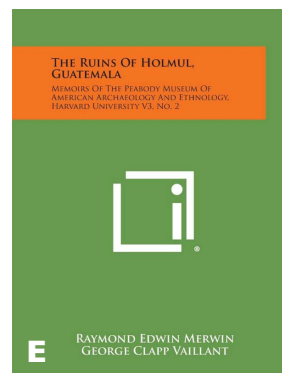
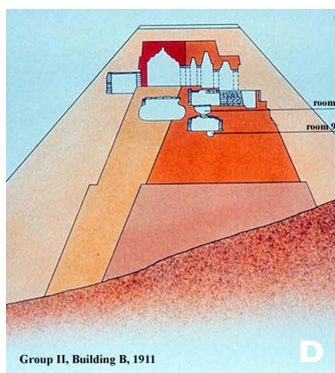
I had planned to begin this story with Estrada-Belli, as a young lad in his twenties, out for his first trek to Holmul, back in 1992. However, I decided to start further back in history, to first tell you the tale of the man who preceded Estrada-Belli in excavations at Holmul and the one who may have sparked the ambition of Estrada-Belli, to make the Holmul archaeological site his own life's work.

So, we shall begin the story in 1909 with Raymond E. Merwin.

In 1909, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University, organized the first of a series of six yearly expeditions to Central America, financed by the Central American Expedition Fund of the Peabody Museum with major contributions by Charles P. Bowditch. Alfred Tozzer, a professor at Harvard, led the expedition with Raymond Merwin as his assistant.

Merwin began his stint with Harvard in 1906, as a graduate student in Anthropology, where he worked closely with the Division of Anthropology and the Peabody Museum. In 1908/09 he became a Fellow in Central American Research. Tozzer and Merwin were sent to Tikal, to finish work started by two even earlier explorers: Alfred Maudslay and Teobert Maler.

Their journey began in New Orleans when they boarded a cargo ship to British Honduras (Belize), where they then traveled up the Belize River to El Cayo, near the border of Guatemala. They had two priorities: the mapping of Tikal in Guatemala, which was first discovered by Modesto Mendez (an army officer) in 1848, and renewing their archaeology permits with the Guatemalan government.



Editor's Corner: I've added a few images to Teena's interview to emphasise Raymond Merwin's important work at Holmul. An interesting tie-in is that our IMS webmaster, Keith Merwin, is the grand-nephew of Raymond E. Merwin. A) Image of Group I from Merwin and Vallient, 1911. B) Raymond Merwin in 1914 at Río Grande Ruins, now known as Lubaantun. Image 2004.24.10000 courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology Harvard University @ www.peabody.harvard.edu. C) Post Classic vessels from a page in Merwin and Vallient's book. D) Rooms and tombs inside Building B, Group II. E) The Ruins of Holmul, Guatemala (1932) is still available for your continuing Maya studies – search for it by name. Images from Boston University at: <http://www.bu.edu/holmul/history/> and Keith's own website in honor of his great uncle at: <http://merwinatholmul.com/index.php/14-holmul>

For the most part, Tozzer spent his time working on permits, and Merwin was left in charge of excavations.

They discovered the ruins of Holmul on their first trip, and in 1910/11, Merwin, acting as the director for the Peabody Museum Expedition, began the first extensive excavation of Holmul. It is thought that Merwin undertook the first stratigraphical study of a Maya ruin, revealing that the Maya built new structures upon previous constructions.

Merwin also discovered the first royal burial in Holmul, and began the first ceramic sequence in Maya studies. The 1911 research revealed elaborate architecture and burial information from the Early Classic Period, as well as remarkable complex structures dated to the Late Classic Period.

Unfortunately for Merwin, due to a run of terrible luck and a prolonged contracted illness, he would never finish his investigation of Holmul, and would retire from fieldwork in 1915. A site map was never created, and explorations, outside of the main plazas, remained to be investigated by future archaeologists. The site was left unattended for some 85 years until treasure hunters hit the site hard in the 1970s, and again in the 1990s.

All of this brings us back around to 1992... and it was in 1992 that Francisco Estrada-Belli first laid eyes on the ancient site of Holmul.

Clipston: I wanted to start in 1992, at the very beginning of your journey into Holmul, with your friend Marco Gross, owner of the Río Mopan Lodge, and how he came to take you here. *cont. on page 5*



The Ancient Maya Site of Chumucbe, Campeche by Karl Herbert Mayer

In 1986, during an archaeological and architectural survey in the Chenes region of the Mexican State of Campeche, Hanns J. Prem, Ursula Dyckerhoff, and Karl Herbert Mayer visited known and hitherto unknown Precolumbian Maya ruins situated in the region of the present-day town of Xkanha, in the municipality of Hopolchén. On March 1, 1986, local informants told the German and Austrian team of the remains of a previously unpublished ruin that is locally named as Chumucbe, that was briefly visited. Sr. Abelardo Tacu Pacheco, born and living in Xkanha, helped guide the group to the ancient settlement.

The toponym Chumucbe is a Yukatek Mayan term which can be roughly translated as “in the middle of the road” (Barrera Vásquez, 1980:147, 46). Located approximately 5 km South-South-West from Xkanha, we were able to reach the location by car. Unfortunately, no exact geographical coordinates could be determined. The ruins were scattered in a very dense vegetation



Fig. 2: Chumucbe, wall remains. Photo: Karl Herbert Mayer, 1986.

Fig. 1: Chumucbe, mound. Photo: Karl Herbert Mayer, 1986.

of bushes and trees, and only a few high mounds and a low wall could be observed.

The main surviving feature is a high masonry wall composed of flat stones, with an estimated height of 10 to 12 m (Fig. 1). On top is part of an upper molding. The ruins are obviously rather extensive, but no standing architecture was detected. There is also a 5 m wide limestone wall, showing a few horizontal layers (Fig. 2).

The site was registered by René Lorelei Zapata Peraza of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) during her 1985 efforts to document Maya sites for a project to establish an archaeological atlas of Campeche. Antonio Benavides Castillo, head of the Centro INAH of Campeche, informed me (written communication 2018) that the modest remains are known to archaeologists in Campeche, however no written report has been published until now, some 32 years after the superficial recording and photographing.

The site is unimpressive and of modest size with a few partially visible standing architectural features exhibiting Chenes-style traits, so the settlement can confidently be dated to the Late Classic period. We hope the site



will be surveyed and partially excavated in the future to reveal the original size of the site and to collect ceramic evidence to confirm its apogee chronology and regional relationships.

Chumucbe is another site of the very poorly understood Chenes region, where, so far, only a little more than 40 sites have been registered (Andrews 1997).

References:

- Andrews, George F.
1997 *Pyramids and Palaces, Monsters and Masks, Vol. 2: Architecture of the Chenes Region*. Labyrinthos, Lancaster, CA.
- Barrera Vásquez, Alfredo
1980 *Diccionario Maya Cordemex, Maya – Español, Español – Maya*. Ediciones Cordemex, Mérida, Yucatán, México. ▲

The Peopling of the Americas: Recent Research and Perspectives

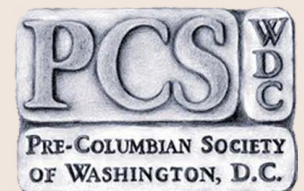
a one-day symposium sponsored by The Pre-Columbian Society of Washington, D.C.

Saturday, September 15, 2018 • 9 am to 5:45 pm

U.S. Navy Memorial & Naval Heritage Center • 701 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Participants include: James Adovasio, Florida Atlantic University; Jon Erlandson, University of Oregon; Kelly Graf, Texas A & M University; David Kilby, Texas State University; David J. Meltzer, Southern Methodist University; and Jennifer A. Raff, University of Kansas.

For more information, including last-minute updates, please visit: www.pcswdc.org



Rewriting the History of the Maya:

Interview with Francisco Estrada-Belli

Part I: by Teena Clipston *continued from page 3*

Estrada-Belli: Marco was a tour operator, and also the owner of the only hotel I knew in Melchor de Mencos – the western Belizian town at the border with Guatemala.

There were a few cantinas and whore houses in Melchor – I knew that much – so when I walked into his place it looked like a legit hotel. That is when I saw a Land Rover parked in his yard. It looked to be from the 1950s. I went in there to ask him if it was his, and if it was running, and whether he would rent it to me for a day, to go to Holmul. He said, “Holmul what?” “Holmul is a place north of here,” I replied. And he said, “Ah I don’t know, I don’t think I have been there, but I hear there might be some bad people up there, growing drugs and stuff.” I replied, “I haven’t heard anything about that.” (Estrada-Belli laughs) “I am a tourist anyway, what do they care.” So, the next day he produced a guide, this guy is now 85 years old. You might have spotted him in the hotel. His name is Emiliano.

Clipston: I think I saw him gardening this morning before I left to come here.

Estrada-Belli: That’s him. He knew that area, because he had some land located right at the edge of the forest. And, of course, we brought in some muscle: his nephew – a young big guy. So we came to Holmul in March of 1992.

Clipston: So you had an interest in Holmul before you met Marco?

Estrada-Belli: My advisor, Norman Hammond, made me aware of Holmul. He suggested I do my dissertation here. One weekend, during our field season in Belize, we were digging in the Orange Walk District, at his site, called Cuello, and he decided to take the students to Tikal. “You know Guatemala, we are just going to drop you off at the border; you are going to find your way to Holmul, and then you are going to tell me if you are going to do your dissertation there.” I said, “Okay”. (Estrada-Belli laughs) He didn’t give me any money, and he didn’t give me any tips, any nothing...

Clipston: (interjects) How old where you then?

Estrada-Belli: I was 29. My mother had given me \$100 dollars in case of emergency. It was a Traveler’s Check. Most people didn’t know what those were. Marco, being an international guy, took it, all of it. And, we went to Holmul. I wandered around for four hours, and it looked like the sun was going down and it was ‘time to get out of here’. The road was bad, even though it was March. It was kind of dry, but it was still bad. I told my advisor: “beautiful site, wonderful site, but *no way* can I do my dissertation here... way too big.” I went ahead and choose an easier location for my dissertation, on the Pacific Coast of Guatemala. I finished it in record time, and I chose to come back here later.

Clipston: There was something about Building B, in Group II, that made you want to come back.

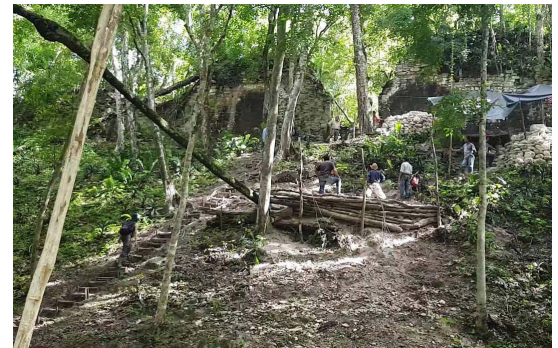
Estrada-Belli: Right. I read about one previous excavation here – the first real scientific excavation on this site. It was in 1909, by a Harvard Fellow, Raymond Merwin, who caught Chagas disease here. He died 17 years later, after being sick for 15 years. He never actually wrote a proper report. His notes were used by one of his friends, which was later published. (*The Ruins of Holmul, Guatemala*, by Raymond E. Merwin and George C. Vaillant, 1932).

There were approximately 22 burials in one building – Building B. Many of them looked early, and I was interested in the Preclassic, or the earlier part of Maya history. That’s why Norman Hammond, sent me here. As it turns out, there is no other building in Holmul like Building B.

Clipston: So you returned because of the burials?



Holmul Witz' Mask, circa 350 BCE. A human head emerges from the mouth of a snake, his hands pulling himself from the mouth of the mountain, or “monster” of the underworld deep within Building B. Photo above by Teena Clipston.



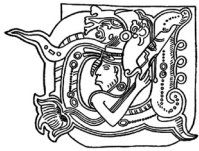
A) The seasonal explorations at Holmul amazed me during my visit. B) Sifting rubble that was removed from a burial. Both photos above by Teena Clipston.

Estrada-Belli: Yes, it was because of the burials. Some of the burials were Preclassic. And when I started work here, there was still really no concept of Preclassic tombs, or Preclassic kings.

Clipston: Did you find any of that evidence in the ceramics as well?

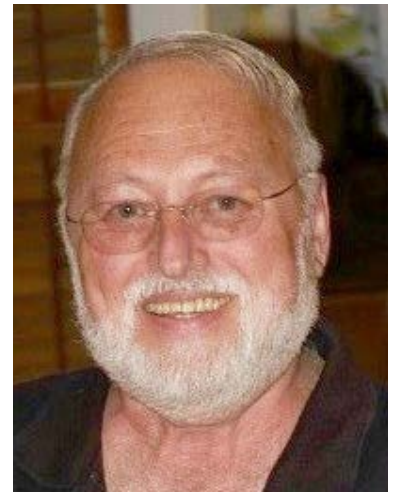
Estrada-Belli: Yes. We found the earliest ceramic that the Maya ever made in Building B.

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Pioneer in Maya Studies:
Mario Ferrante Cultural Historian
In Memoriam

Source: Obituary released 8.18.2018, at: <http://tricotcanary.com/obituaries/services-gerhard-mario-ferrante>



Gerhard Mario Ferrante, age 75, of Miami, FL, USA, and Vienna, Austria, passed on the *Road to Xibalba* on August 6, 2018 in Vienna, Austria. Mario was born in Vienna and was both Austrian and Italian. Memorial Services will be held in Vienna, Austria.

Mario served as a paratrooper in the Italian Air Force and also as a UNESCO volunteer in Africa. His academic studies included Geology, International Studies, and German Literature at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, MN. He did his graduate studies at the University of Miami in Florida. Mario was also fluent in German, English, Italian and Spanish.

Mario worked for 35 years as a museum Chief Curator of Archaeological / Natural History artifacts, Exhibits Director and Conservator of Exhibits. He was also a professor at Nova University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, and Miami Dade College. (Note that the IMS is now affiliated with Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus.)

In addition, Mario enjoyed lecturing at Alliance Francaise, Miami Archaeological Society, Institute of Maya Studies, Egyptology Society of Miami, Tribal Art Society, South Florida Museum of Natural History, Miami Museum of Science, and the Lowe Art Museum.

Mario was a cultural historian, loved exploring, world traveling and was an excellent photographer. Mario is survived by his wife, Joan (Landgren) Ferrante. They met at Bemidji State University and married in 1984. They had no children. After retirement, they enjoyed living 6 months in Europe and 6 months in Florida.

Mario had a great smile, a captivating sparkle in his eyes and a wonderful sense of humor. His students, friends and family loved his ability to share his vast knowledge – all of which will indeed be missed.

Mario loved to quote: “when you travel to other points of the World,

your ideas will change when you return...”.

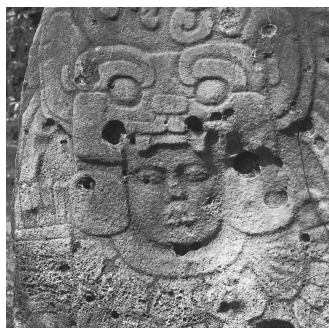
Editor’s note: Mario presented at the IMS on numerous occasions, most recently on 11.15.2006, with a program titled: “A Brief History of Mexico, from the Spanish Conquest to the French Empire and Maximilian”, and again on 4.8.2010, with: “Great Stone Temple Ruins and Monuments of Angkor Wat, Cambodia.”

Unbundling the Past: Events in Ancient and Contemporary Maya History for September
by Zach Lindsey

Sak K'uk presents the Drum Major Headdress of rulership to her son Janaab Pakal.

In the masthead this month, we have noted the Maya glyphic signature of the Gregorian calendar date of September 19, (date of our first IMS fall public presentation with Heather McKillop), correlating to the Calendar Round of the Maya @584283. Here, we combine the two, so you can explore what was going on this time of year in the historical Maya world.

10 Sept. 640 CE: On 9.10.7.13.5 4 Chikchan 13 Yax G4, Sak K'uk', the mother of famed Palenque king K'inich Janaab Pakal, died. Her husband died just two years later. Apparently a shrewd political figure, Sak



Detail of Stela 4 at Tikal, depicting Yax Nuun Ayiin I.

K'uk' brought a twelve-year-old into power and helped him rebuild Palenque. She was also perhaps a bit of a feminist; on the inscriptions on Pakal's sarcophagus, she even describes her husband as *ujuuntan*, “her beloved,” a phrase typically used to describe women or children.

11 Sept. 379 CE:

On 8.17.2.16.17 5 Kaban 10 Yaxk'in G4, while still just a child, Yax Nuun Ahiin I, son of Spearthrower Owl, ascended to the throne of Tikal, though much of the day-to-day ruling may



have been performed by the Teotihuacan-influenced (or descended depending who you ask) Sihyaj K'ahk'. While the nature of the relationship is disputed, this was the heyday of Teotihuacan influence in Tikal.

21 Sept. 706 CE:

On 9.13.14.13.1 5 Imix 19 Sak G9, Piedras Negras ruler K'inich Yo'nal Aak celebrated one k'atun in power. While dates like this may not seem very exciting to modern ears, anniversaries such as this were celebrated much like jubilee days are celebrated in England. For Yo'nal Aak, who had recently had a young daughter and would soon erect a number of important monuments, this particular anniversary seems to have represented the height of his life.

Rewriting the History of the Maya:

Interview with Francisco Estrada-Belli

Part I: by Teena Clipston *continued from page 5*

Teena ascends from
the bowels of a
tomb in Holmul.



Clipston: Would that have been part of the burials as offerings?

Estrada-Belli: No. The burials date to before the time of Christ. The ceramics are 1000 years earlier, 1000 years BCE.

"...the Lowlands were thought to have been completely deserted by humans prior to 800 BCE. Instead, we were uncovering fine ceramics, in many respects finer than those of much later epochs of Maya history, from 1000 BCE. Obviously, I thought, our assumptions must be wrong. Now we have come to regard these ceramics as much more than just traces of an incoming population. They reveal the very seed of Maya civilization in the Lowlands."

– *The First Maya Civilization: Ritual and Power Before the Classic Period*, by Francisco Estrada-Belli.

Clipston: Isn't the Witz' Mask in that same structure?

Estrada-Belli: Yes, it is in Building B. It's the God of the underworld. The word for mountain is 'witz'. It is supposed to represent a cave in a mountain. The monster is the mountain, the cave in the mountain is the mouth. And a man is coming out of it. Some people will look at it and tell you, he is being swallowed by the earth monster but he has both hands on either side of his face and he's pulling himself out. Like a baby being born head first. The Maya believed that their dead ancestors come back as babies. So here is an old man, being born through the mouth of the underworld.

Clipston: OK, so it's like a reincarnation?

Estrada-Belli: Yes, so the cycle of life is never ending. That people will come back. As different people of course. So, basically, our grandchildren have the spirit of our grandparents.

After completing his dissertation, Estrada-Belli returned to Holmul in 2000, with a PhD and funding to support the project.

His first major discovery was made in 2001, when his team located the ancient city of Cival, the city that gave rise to Holmul. It is one of the oldest royal cities ever to be found. This former lost city contains one of the biggest pyramids ever built, and with it, many artifacts were discovered, disclosing a Preclassic construction that stunned the archaeological community. The theory that Cival was built much earlier than El Mirador, suggested that this area could very well be, the cradle of Maya civilization.

Clipston: In your book you mention "departing from a linear perspective, when looking at the history of the Maya".

Estrada-Belli: The old way of looking at pre-history is to look at it in a linear evolution. Pretty much like biological evolution: It's a paradigm right? But when you apply it to culture, it doesn't work. So those at the beginning were not necessarily simpler, or less civilized, or less sophisticated than the ones who came after. There is a whole discussion we can have about that, and why people wanted to believe that in the 50s and 60s, and why today it's just a self-serving Western point of view. The "West" puts its self at the pinnacle of evolution: because you know, we have rockets and nuclear bombs.

"...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, 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."
– *The First Maya Civilization: Ritual and Power Before the Classic Period*, by Francisco Estrada-Belli.

Clipston: So do you believe it to be more cyclical?

Estrada-Belli: It's more like peaks and valleys, or a tree with many branches. There is no single way to look at it. Anthropology has been based on a ladder of evolution, so at the bottom we have the more simple, more savage people, and at the top we have the more civilized, sophisticated and developed people. When I wrote the book, I wasn't going to write with that same theoretical framework. I looked more at the historical perspective.

Clipston: Do you have the evidence to support your theory on that? Meaning that it wasn't linear...

Estrada-Belli: Yes, there is mountains of evidence to support that this is just a point of view of the west: it is a colonizing entity, serving a colonizing frame of mind. There is no truth to it. That applies to culture, that doesn't mean that biological evolution doesn't work. Of course, you know, Darwinian evolution works. It's just not applied to culture... It's a completely different ballgame. 🏹

Source: Author and adventurer Teena Clipston is originally from Kelowna, British Columbia, but now is living it up in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. Visit Teena's Facebook site at: <https://www.facebook.com/teenaclipstonauthor/> and her website at: www.teenaclipston.com *The First Maya Civilization* by Francisco Estrada-Belli is available from your favorite book distributor.

September 19 • 6 pm • IMS Special Presentation
Ancient Capital Cities of Central Mexico
 with **Rick Slazyk** and **Marta Barber**



Joaquin Rodriguez and Rick Slazyk at the Pyramid of the Niches in El Tajin.

Pyramid of the Sun, Teotihuacan, by Rick Slazyk.

The west side platform at the Monte Alban pyramid complex.

While the Maya flourished in Southern Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula, other groups were building bustling cities, developing writing and creating artwork rivaling their neighbors to the south. Unlike the Maya, these were capital cities that ruled from a central axis and became powerful centers of trade, knowledge, and religious rituals:

Monte Alban, El Tajin and Teotihuacan.

President of IMS **Rick Slazyk** AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C, will present his collection of photographs from these sites and discuss the different architectural styles and the layouts of the cities.

IMS Executive Vice President, Programming Chair and Travel Director **Marta Barber** will talk about the people who lived there and the artwork they created.

The IMS is a Community Partner with Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus, Miami, FL
This program will take place at 6 pm in K-422 (in Building K-4, Room 22)
IMS Hotline: 305-279-8110

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

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 Century: \$100
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*Membership in the IMS includes attending one lecture 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!*

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It's not cacao beans, obsidian, salt cakes, nor jade beads!

Modern Maya Money Now Available

The Maya culture in Mexico will now have their own commemorative coin. Released by the Mexican “Casa de la Moneda”, the new coin is part of their Tri-metallic series.

The cost will be 550 pesos (\$28.35 US) with a special case, and 400 pesos (\$20.62 US) without a case, both with an explanatory brochure.

The weight of the coin is 52.304 grams (1.85 ounces) and it has a satin finish with fields of contrast. On the front of the coin, you can see the Pyramid of Kukulcan of Chichen Itza, (a UNESCO World Heritage site), the Maya months of the year, and the words “Chichén Itza, Maravilla del Mundo, Yucatán, México.”

The reverse side features Maya head variant glyphs, the Maya numerals from zero to 20 using the bar-dot notations, and a ballcourt marker depicting two entwined feathered serpents from Chichen Itza, and the words “Numeración Maya”.



As part of the description, the “Casa de la Moneda” website indicates that the coin illustrates the legacy of the Maya culture, and that it is an “exclusive” piece that includes an explanatory booklet in 5 different languages.

The “Casa de la Moneda” is the National mint of Mexico and is the oldest mint in the Americas, established in 1535. Since 1983, coins are only produced in San Luis Potosí.

Source: From an online report by Drafting/Millennium News, released 8/14/2018, at: <https://sipse.com/milenio/casa-moneda-lanza-trimetalica-conmemorativa-cultura-maya-307564.html>

Forwarded by one of the editor's IM friends, Maya enthusiast Jorge Alberto José Fuentes from Tabasco, Mexico. 🏰

Upcoming Events at the IMS:

Sept. 19 • 6 pm: *IMS Special Presentation Ancient Capital Cities of Central Mexico* – with **Rick Slazyk** and **Marta Barber**. Monte Alban, El Tajin, and Teotihuacan, unlike their Maya neighbors to the South, were capital cities that ruled from a central axis and became powerful centers of trade, knowledge, and religious rituals.

Oct. 17 • 6 pm: *IMS Special Presentation Salt in the Classic Maya Economy* – with **Heather McKillop**, Thomas and Lillian Landrum Alumni Professor, Dept. of Geography and Anthropology, Louisiana State University Baton Rouge. Two methods of salt production were used in the Maya area, including solar evaporation and evaporation in pots over fires. Estimates of salt production overall in the Maya world are compared with population estimates.

All IMS events will take place in Room K-413 at Miami Dade College – Kendall Campus. That's Building K-4, Room 13. See map on www.mdc.edu

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

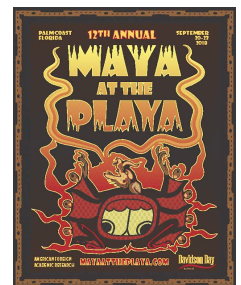
Sept. 15: *Annual PCSWDC Symposium The Peopling of the Americas: Recent Research and Perspectives* – **David Meltzer** of SMU will moderate a day-long program in which leading archaeologists and geneticists will address the still-controversial topic of when and how people first arrived in the new world, their migration routes, and the process by which they spread throughout the North and South American continents. Program details and registration info are now available on the Pre-Columbian Society/DC website: www.pcswdc.org See promo at the bottom of page 4.

Sept. 20–23: *12th Annual M@TP Conference Maya at the Playa* – Sponsored by the American Foreign Academic Research and Davidson Day School in Flagler Beach, FL. **Mat Saunders** has now finalized all of the specifics on their website. Go to: www.mayaattheplaya.com to see the of presenters, their bios, and the daily program schedule. Participants include: Jaime Awe, James Brady, Jeremy Coltman,

Cameron Griffith, Stanley Guenter, Harri Kettunen, Shawn Morton, Gabe Wrobel, and Marc Zender. Enter “IMS” in your registration application, to get the special IMS Members Only discount, at: <http://www.mayaattheplaya.com/index.php/registration>

Editor's Tip: *Online all the time Ancient Americas Events* – Get in the know with **Mike Ruggeri's** “better-than-ever!” comprehensive list of upcoming Ancient Americas Lectures, Conferences and Exhibits: Go to: <https://mikeruggerisevents.tumblr.com/>

Check out and get in on the fun on our IMS Facebook page: Get in on all the action! IMS members post interesting links, as well as photos from their recent adventures. Join the **Explorer**-ation! at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MiamiIMS/>



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