

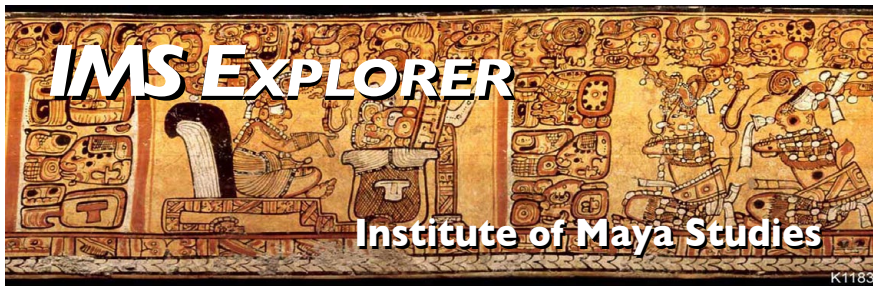


Recommended Reading
by Karl Herbert Mayer:

***Maya Ruins Revisited:
In the Footsteps of
Teobert Maler***
by Photographer
William Frej

Tikal Temple V, 2017.
See more on pages 2 & 5.

Temple V was covered with earth and vegetation when Maler photographed it. Although he could only guess at the details hidden below, he was able to measure and photograph the nearly 200-foot structure. The stairway was unexcavated so climbing the temple required the use of a rope fastened to a tree trunk at the top. Maler noted that the view of the city from there “must have been one of great architectural splendor.”

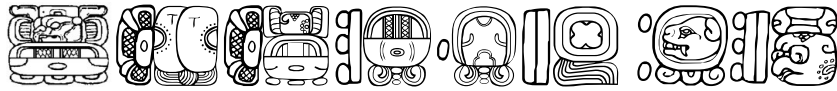


A monthly newsletter published by the **Institute of Maya Studies**

Maya enthusiasts providing public education for 47+ years

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

Volume 48, Issue 12
December 2020
ISSN: 1524-9387



December 9, 2020 • Maya Ceremonial Era Long Count: 0.0.8.1.10 • 2 Oc 13 Mac • G3

The Shamans of the Yucatan: Part 2, by David Bolles

Continued from the November IMS Explorer

The darker side of an *H Pul Ya*

The *H Pul Yaob* are sometimes approached by patrons who want to do harm to some other individual. Once the magnitude of the situation has been clarified by the patron, then the *H Pul Ya* will take what he considers to be the appropriate action. Some of the more talked-about methods are:

1) making of an image, for example of wax, of the individual to be harmed or killed, and then to inflict the damage upon this image. Sticking needles into the region in which the damage is to be done is the method most talked about.

2) taking a *X Tun* (described below) and ritually “throwing” it to pierce some organ of the victim, thereby causing pain or death depending on the intent. Many Maya believe this practice is of common knowledge.

(In both of the above methods, one of the favorite sites for inflicting damage, at least in the folk mind, is the genital parts, especially the male’s testicles.)

3) making incantations such as, I have been told, those given in the *Chilam Balam of Chumayel* on page 2 (*Chac Ix Chuuah cabob ti lakin*; The red wild bees are in the east: see Roys, 1967, page 16 [transcript], and page 65 [translation]) are also employed. In the case of this chant Plumeria flowers are placed in a circle on a path in which the victim is sure to travel while the chant is being said. In addition to the chant as given the name of the victim is mentioned and the method by which he will die.

While these are mystical methods by which the victims are supposedly



The surface of a mesa is defined by the distribution of ritual objects placed on it. Here, at about mid-morning, a pot of *saka'* was brought to the mesa and Don Ramón put cups in all the rings. He poured *báalche'* into the four corner cups and *saka'* in the remaining nine, making a total of thirteen. (From *Waažil kool / jaanlil kool: Feast of the Corn Field*, p. 63). Mesoweb has made available a short, but thorough report on Yucatec Maya rituals by Bruce Love titled: *Maya Shamanism Today*. Go to: <http://www.mesoweb.com/publications/Love/Shamanism.html>

inflicted with some sort of illness, what in fact seems to be going on is that the *H Pul Ya* manages in some way to make suggestions which work psychologically on the victim or in some cases even gets various types of poisons or objects into the victim’s system, mainly through ingestion. (What I haven’t figured out is how the *H Pul Ya* gets access to the person’s food in order to accomplish this.) Ingestion of large quantities of hair or metal objects such as needles by *pul ya* victims has often been talked about, although I do not personally know a person who has suffered this form of *pul ya*.

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Naranjo Stela 24 in the Maya Plaza of The Miami Museum of Science

IMS: A History: Part I



Jim Reed,
Editor

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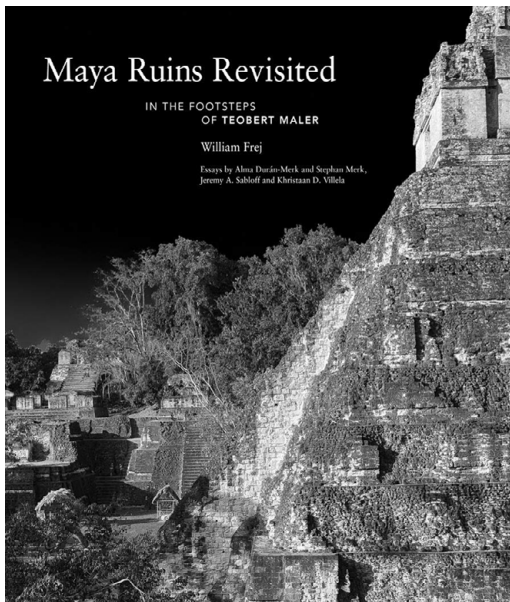
**Recommended Reading
by Karl Herbert Mayer:**

**Maya Ruins Revisited:
In the Footsteps of
Teobert Maler
by Photographer
William Frej**

William Frej traced the extensive and adventurous routes of the German-Austrian Maya pioneer and explorer Teobert Maler, born 1842, and compared his splendid photographs with his own. Maler documented more than 150 ancient Maya ruins and Frej followed his footsteps and devoted many decades of his life to obtain outstanding views of the ruins Maler investigated. The results of the superb work by the author of this magnum opus offers, in large-format graphics, a fantastic corpus of Pre-Colonial Maya architecture and art. Several old Maler pictures achieved a century ago are included to compare them with recent views.

The author took his magnificent photographs without tripod and flash or artificial light. He photographed the first Maya structures in 1971 and the latest photographs featured in this book were shot in 2020. Frej traveled and surveyed a vast Maya region to obtain his photos. It is of interest to mention, that the author selected digital photographs processed as black-and-white chromogenic silver halide prints and this rare method produced excellent images. All the large illustrations are accompanied by explanatory notes and references to provide the reader a better understanding of the various subjects depicted.

The photographs from different epochs exhibit the tremendous damages and destructions made by natural forces and by humans on Maya architecture, façades, and stone sculptures. Frej's images were done over a century later than Teobert Maler's, who died 1917 in Merida, Yucatan. Frej travelled to many sites



With essays by Stephan Merk, Alma Durán-Merk, Tomás Gallareta Negrón, Jeremy A. Sabloff, and Khristaan D. Villela. 292 pp., 2 maps, numerous b/w photos. Published by Peyton Wright Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico, distributed by University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK. ISBN: 978-0-578-63921-5.

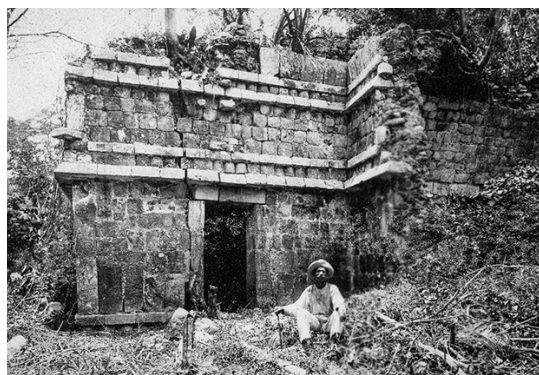


Tantah Columned Building, Campeche, Mexico, Teobert Maler, 1889. Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

of the ancient ruins in the modern Mexican States of Yucatan, Campeche, and Quintana Roo, as well as in Belize, and Guatemala, all investigated, photographed, and measured by the tireless and adventurous pioneer Maler a very long time ago. The book incorporates a preface by the Mexican archaeologist Tomás Gallareta Negrón and contains important essays like “The Ancient Maya and Their Cities” by Jeremy A. Sabloff,

“Picturing the Ancient Maya: Photography of William Frej”; by Khristaan D. Villela, and “Teobert Maler: Documenting Ancient Maya Culture” by Stephan Merk and Alma Durán-Merk. The final appendices relate to Site Site Names and Building Designations, Sources for Teobert Maler Photographs in the Plates Section, and

continued on page 5



L) Ichpich is a small archeological site dating from the Terminal Classic Period with two standing buildings and several visible ruins, by William Frej. R) Ichpich, Yucatan, Mexico, Building of Four Rooms, 1887.

Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.



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The Shamans of the Yucatan:

Part 2, by David Bolles continued from page 1

It must be noted that there are diseases and psychological situations and resulting deaths that are ascribed to *pul ya* even when no *H Pul Ya* was actually involved. For example a young neighbor of ours in Kom Cheen began to feel very poorly shortly before he was about to get married. We happened to see him and his mother at one of the hospitals in Merida and I asked what the problem was. The mother's answer was that the doctors mentioned something about the kidneys. I said to my wife that if it is his kidneys, he will be dead within the month.

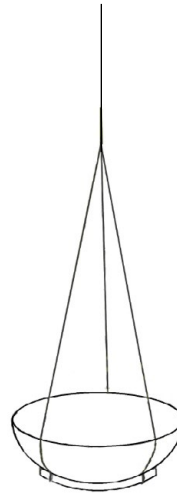
Well, in fact he did die as I mentioned. (My wife recounted later that at the time, she thought I might have some powers of an *H Pul Ya* because I had predicted this death.) In any case, it was decided by the parents of the boy that in fact their son had been cursed, and the suspected patron was a girl who the boy had recently jilted for the girl to whom the boy was about to get married. The police were called in to investigate, but much to the disappointment of the parents, no charges were brought against the jilted girl. The parents still believe though that this girl had employed an *H Pul Ya*.

In another case with a neighbor across the street from our house in Kom Cheen is that his daughter found a freshly unearthed human skull in the backyard. For some reason the neighbor, who was in his seventies, decided that the skull was meant for him, and this was a sign that *pul ya* was at work. The day after the skull was found, his whole family formed a procession to carry the skull back to the cemetery (that is around the corner from our house). At the head was the father carrying the skull in a box and chanting as he went.



Homa

A *Homa* is a small drinking gourd made from the fruit of the *luch* tree (*Crescentia cujete*). They are used to contain whatever potions or liquids the *H Men* may prepare. Another frequent purpose is to hang a pair of them in *chuyub* (hanger), one on either side of the main doorway into a room of a sick person.



Chuyub

The next day, he commented to me, "I don't understand why anyone would want to do me harm." About a month later, he was dead. His daughter told us that her father just laid down in the hammock and gave up. Later, one of our other neighbors mentioned that he thought that skull belonged to his father, whose remains had only recently been disinterred following the custom, because of lack of burial space, of taking the bones out of the grave after two years and supposedly placing them in a bone box.

As often is the case, the family members of this neighbor hadn't gotten around to making the bone box, and so the father's bones were left tied up in a cloth in the little preparatory house which is in the cemetery. This neighbor said that he went to check on his father's remains one day soon after the event of our other neighbor marching back to the cemetery and that the package of the remains was missing the skull.

How the skull might have gotten to where it was found is hard to discern. Perhaps a dog had carried it or worse, maybe somebody had played a cruel practical joke. In any case, our neighbor's death is placed as being the result of *pul ya* even though it seems clear that no such action had actually taken place.

To be continued in the January IMS Explorer.

A cemetery in the Yucatan



Above are photos showing where a coffin has been exhumed (A), the coffin itself next to the back wall of the cemetery (B), and the bone boxes where the bones of the disinterred are placed (C). The family of the deceased is obligated by the town to disinter their family member after two years which is the amount of time it takes for nature to do its work, leaving only bones, and for those people who are buried in synthetic clothing, their clothes. Often, for lack of money, the bone box is not immediately constructed and so the bones are bundled up and hung in the little building where corpses are prepared for burial. If the bundle hangs there for too long, the cemetery caretaker will throw the bundle over the back wall, making it an excellent place for medical students to gather complete skeletons. In any case, there are plenty of skulls available for mischief makers and dogs so that they can travel to unwanted places.



The Duality of Time: Animation and the Bonampak Murals

by Jennifer & Alexander John

Continued from the November IMS Explorer

The duality of time, juxtaposing stasis with movement, is also integral to the way the figural processions turn about all of the three room interiors, both clockwise and anticlockwise, relative to the central point of the room. Standing in the eastern and western rooms, the entering viewer faces the south wall. To their left (on the east wall), the figures turn clockwise, to their right (on the west wall), they turn anticlockwise. The oppositional pull possibly refers to how the two cogs of a wheel, when interlocked, move in different directions, one clockwise, the other anticlockwise. In combination, the wheels define a pincer movement that meets at the centre of the north and south walls.

While the central Bonampak room subscribes to the same underlying momentum, a counter-current drives the mural imagery, consisting of swirling motion comparable to that of a frenzied hurricane achieved by overcrowding of the figures. Nevertheless, even in the metaphorical eye of the storm, the balance of the duality inherent to time holds true throughout the murals; it is the 'idea' behind the opposition and chiasmic structure that Miller and Brittenham first noticed in the murals.

"Who-what-when is subordinate to rhetorical displays of parallelism, chiasmus, and other devices that emphasise similarity and cyclicity as much as historical difference." – Dennis Tedlock (1996:59-60)

"Rooms 1 and 3 bracket Room 2 both literally and figuratively, creating a series of symmetries and alternations: dance-battle-dance; day-night-day; city-wilderness-city; order-chaos-order; perhaps also present-past-present." – Miller and Brittenham (2013:68)

"In sixteenth century Maya literature... such as the Popul Vuh... this arrangement tends to focus attention on the central elements, thus asserting their importance." – Christenson (2003:46-47)

This chiasmic structure frames Maya artistic compositions in the same way it frames texts (John 2018:282-283, 297-339). It has come

Late Classic Bonampak Stela 2 showing Yajaw Chan Muwaahn II getting married (Biró 2011); while the two highlighted ladies are named as different individuals, they complete a single action involving the raising of a bowl containing bloodletting paraphernalia.

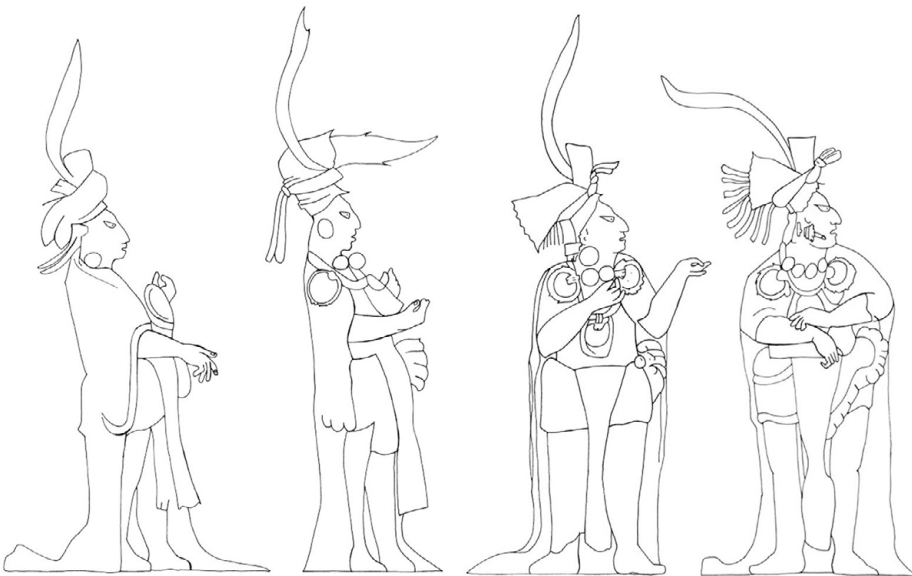


to our attention that the central focal points of each room are often marked with animations. The animations highlight important moments of change, or transformation, comparable to the rising of the sun, the setting of the sun and the moment the ascending arc of the sun starts its descent.

Consequently, the murals reveal the duality placed by the Maya on time, where structure is balanced by change, time being conceived as both a moment and motion. This duality was deep-seated in Mesoamerican thought, present at the center of the cosmic hearth that was set up during creation to "order change" (see Freidel and Schele 1993:2), and forming the core of ancient Maya world view. We add that the three Maya stones of creation refer to the setting up of the duality of three-part time. The Maya stones of creation would be better named the stones of time as they refer to the creation of time when stone "time" was framed by motional 'time' (see John 2018:61-70).

By extension, the unseen, which is invisible like the wind, balances the seen, the visible. Equipped with this new insight into Maya philosophy, we can now return to the Bonampak murals in the January IMS Explorer.

To be continued in the January IMS Explorer, references cited in this issue will appear in time.



L) Animation of a royal messenger turning from the east to south walls, Bonampak East Room 1, east-to-south wall mural details. R) Animation of a high-societal hand gesture, Bonampak East Room 1, south wall mural details. Animations extracted and adapted from Miller and Brittenham 2013:113, fig. 212 (HFs 4-5 and HFs 6-7).

To see the animation go to: https://mayagodssoftime.com/wp-content/uploads/A11-12_Bonampak-Room-1-Dignitaries-HF-4-5-6-7-ANIMATION-4s.mp4



Maya Ruins Revisited: In the Footsteps of Teobert Maler

by Photographer
William Frej *cont. from page 2*

to further reading sources and references.

I strongly recommend that this beautiful, large and well-illustrated book of three kilos weight should be on the library shelves of every Mayanist and Mesoamericanist.

Karl Herbert Mayer, Graz, Austria

William Frej has been photographing indigenous people for over forty years while living in Indonesia, Poland, Kazakhstan, Mexico, and Afghanistan. His photographic work has been featured in a number of exhibitions at galleries and museums in the United States, Mexico and Europe. Frej's photographic work is represented in numerous public and private collections, as well as academic institutions throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. The author lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Merida, Yucatan.

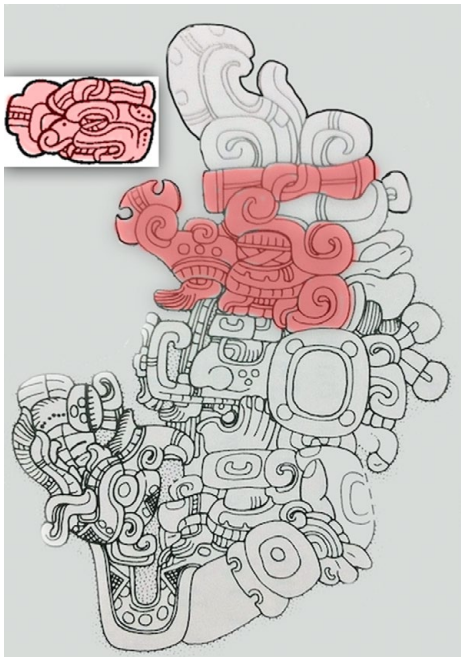


William Frej

When Teobert Maler visited Dzibiltun it was "concealed in a thicket." Today, the buildings are surrounded by tall grass and few people. The one-room temple building, built in a style combining Puuc and Chenes architectural features, remains similar in appearance today as in Maler's time. 🏰

Unbundling the Past: Events in Ancient and Contemporary Maya History for December

by Zach Lindsey



Tikal ruler Yax Nuun Ayiin I as portrayed on Stela 31, with a comparison to his name glyph. Stela 31 was erected to celebrate the 9.14.0.0 k'atun ending. Posted by Jnewkirk.

3 December 711 CE: 1,396,800 days since the beginning of the fourth era of the earth was a good time for the Classic Maya. On 9.14.0.0 6 Ajaw 13 Muwan G9, Maya kings celebrated the completion of the 14th k'atun. K'atun endings were somewhere between a New Years and a century closing in importance, and they involved rituals including the erection of stone stelae in celebration. Memorials for this k'atun ending survive at Piedras Negras, Tikal, Dos Pilas, Pusilha, and Naranjo. These cities were in their golden days, but in some ways, seeds of instability had already been planted. But let's not think too much about that. Rather, 9.14.0.0 was a good day to party!

4 December 642 CE: On 9.10.10.0 13 Ajaw 18 K'an'k'in G9, the youths descended at Palenque. What does that mean? It's one of the



K'inich Kan Bahlam II on the tablet from the Temple XVII at Palenque.

lovely and frustrating things about Maya history that we don't always understand it! Sometimes inscriptions are eroded. Sometimes we can't read the glyphs. Sometimes we can read the glyphs, but we can't translate them. And sometimes we can translate them, but we don't know the meaning. We know future king K'inich Kan B'ahlam was involved, and that he was young, so he is probably one of the youths. Scholars have some great ideas about what happened, but many of them disagree. This is probably because ancient Maya poets put Hemingway to shame with the way they could express profound, complex ideas with a single verb! On the other hand, what was obvious to them is... not so clear to us. 🏰

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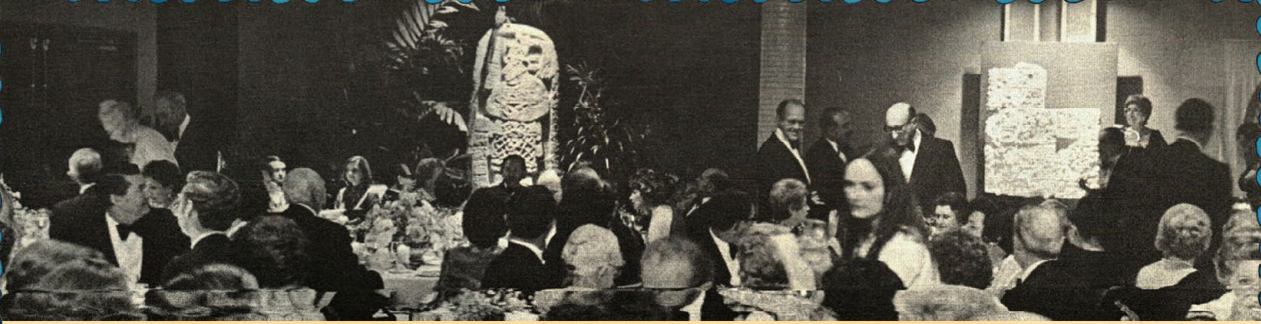
IMS November Streaming Lecture (11.18.2020): *The Dense Human Population, Overexploitation of Resources, and Protracted Severe Droughts: A Recipe for Classic Maya "Collapse"*, by Mark Brenner, University of Florida.

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IMS December Streaming Lecture (12.9.2020): *IMS: A History: Part I*, hosted by Rick Slazyk and Keith Merwin. 🏰

IMS Streaming 2020!



IMS members attend the Preview Dinner to unveil stelae on loan (for the first time) from Guatemala on January 30, 1974. Stela 24 from Naranjo is in the center and Stela 3 from Piedra Negras is on right.

December 9 • 8 pm EST IMS: A History: Part I, along with our Annual Membership Meeting

hosted by **Rick Slazyk and Keith Merwin**

Be there with us as we share what brought us together
and continues to keep us together for 48 Years!

Happy Birthday IMS!

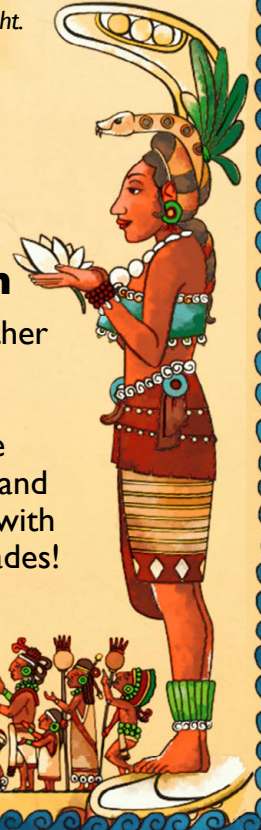
Many are unaware of just how important a venue
The Institute of Maya Studies has been for scholars and
researchers to share their research and discoveries with
IMS members and Maya enthusiasts for nearly 5 decades!

IMS Streaming 2020!

December 9 • 8 pm EST

This is the active IMS Streaming invite:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82997093542>



2020 New Membership and Renewal Application

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ArchaeoEd Podcast

Archaeologist Dr. Ed Barnhart talks about the many cultures of the Ancient Americas

Hello Friends!

A rare upside to this year's quarantine is the time to work on the things you never have time to do. For me, one of those things was developing a podcast!

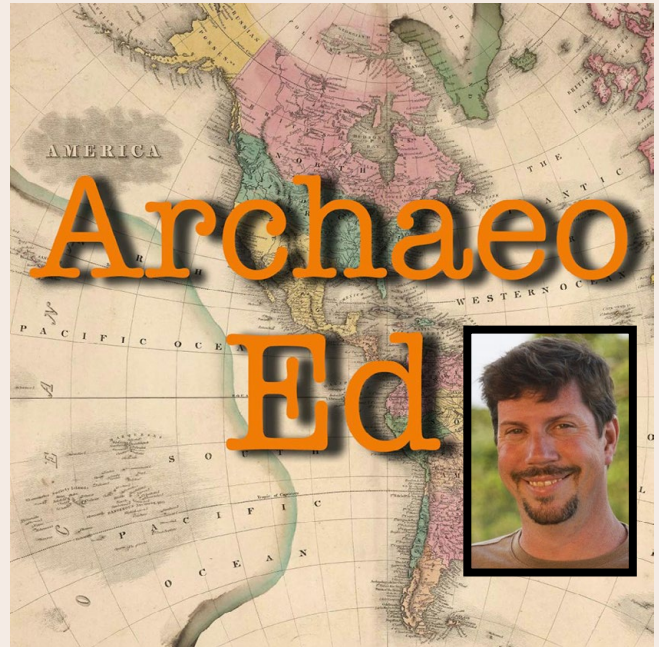
I call it **ArchaeoEd** and it's just me informally discussing topics that I find interesting within ancient civilizations of the Americas. It recently launched and I would love your help getting the word out.

I release a new episode on the 1st of every month! Here's a link to find it.

www.archaeoed.com

It's also available through all the major podcast outlets. Please give it a listen and if you like what you hear – *Subscribe, Like, and Share!* As of Thanksgiving, I've posted six episodes: Tulum, Palenque, Easter Island, ArcheoEd Trailer, The Nazca, and The Hopewell.

And by the way, this new effort will be hosted not through Maya Exploration Center, but from my personal



business called Ancient Explorations. If you'd like to learn more about that, and maybe join me in Cambodia next year, check it out at www.ancientexploration.com

Sincerely, Dr. Ed Barnhart

Director, Maya Exploration Center
President, Ancient Explorations

IMS Streaming 2021

Ladies take the stage!

Every third
Wednesday of a
month, at 8 pm



January 20, 2021 • Mary Lou Ridinger
Jade and Chocolate: Ancient Mesoamerican Trade Routes

February 17, 2021 • Debra S. Walker, RPA
*Making a Home in the Maya Lowlands:
Lifestyles of the
Early Middle Preclassic Period*



March 17, 2021 • Heather McKillop
*The sea-floor survey of Ek Way Nal, Belize
(before our ~~2020~~ 2021? excavations)*

Stay tuned for
Zoom IMS
event link
notices

IMS EXPLORER

Join the **Explor**-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