

**NOTE:** In some instances submitted abstracts were reduced to a maximum of nine lines due to space limitations.

**PANEL 1A: Untold Stories of the Maya Royals. Life and Death among Kings and Queens of the Northern Lowlands**  
**Chair: Dr. Vera Tiesler (UCR/UADY)**

*Face to Face with Kings and Queens. Countenance and Permanent Body Adjustments among the Royals of the Northern Lowlands*  
 Dr. Vera Tiesler (University of California, Riverside / Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan)

This talk explores the physical attributes of Maya beauty and public portraiture of royals, some epitomes of the divine, along with a number of permanent body enhancements, such as the artificial head shaping, dental work, and mucous tissue expansion, which was generally performed in the ear lobes. I will confront the burial record with the imagery of well-known rulers of Calakmul, Dzibanché and Ek' Balam, providing food for thought for a more general discussion of the forms and occasions for permanent body enhancement and their roles in public display of aristocracy and power.

*Noble Life Style and Health Afflictions among the Royals of Yaxuná, Ek Dzibanché and Calakmul*

Dr. Andrea Cucina (University of California, Riverside/UADY) and Dr. Vera Tiesler (University of California, Riverside/UADY)

There is little doubt that royals, in a highly stratified society like the Classic Maya, were granted many benefits, which translated into access to food and resources and a lifestyle not easily accessible to commoners. Yet, they were not exempt from ailments related, to some extent, to their social condition. This presentation explores oral health, infectious diseases, congenital malformations, and age-related disorders that affected Classic period royals in the Maya northern lowlands. Results reveal substantial differences with the commoner sector of the society, and heterogeneous patterns between men and women; while they stress the benefits of being members of royalty, they also highlight unexpected postindustrial ailments and others related to endogamy. The confrontation of the skeletal evidence with the discursive reconstruction of rulers' lives not only reveals coincidences but also contradictions. Its joint interpretation provides enriching details and expands our knowledge on the ancient Maya courtly lifestyle.

*The Coming of Kingship at Yaxuná: Contextualizing Burial 23*

Dr. Travis W. Stanton (University of California, Riverside)

During the 1990s the Selz Foundation Yaxuná Project recovered two Early Classic royal burials from the North Acropolis. Given the ceramic complex reflected by the grave goods, it was clear that Burial 23 was the earlier of the two burials, although there was evidence for a later reentry and smoking ritual prior to the end of the period. Recent isotope analysis suggests that the individual found in this tomb was not from Yaxuná. In this paper I discuss evidence collected by the PIPCY project, researching the site since 2007, which indicates that the appearance of royal kings at the beginning of the Early Classic reflects a larger pattern of political and social upheaval at the site. The king buried in Burial 23 likely usurped power at Yaxuná and purposefully reoriented the practice of public gathering for social and ritual events.

*Maya Queens of the Northern Lowlands*

Dr. Traci Ardren (University of Miami)

Royal women comprise a significant percentage of the individuals found in the mass grave known as Burial 24 from Yaxuna. This sacrificial event may have been an attempt to eliminate an entire dynastic line. Violence was deliberately deployed to terminate the reproductive potential of these young royal Maya women. This paper will review the Burial 24 context with special attention given to the figurines and ornaments associated with royal female occupants, and place these women into a broader context given what we know about the lives of Maya queens at nearby centers such as Coba and Chichen Itza. Artifacts associated with the royal women of Burial 24 relate to broader patterns of how queenly power was materialized in death throughout the Classic Maya lowlands, despite their brutal end. A careful reading of these materials illuminates the motivations for this dynastic massacre as well as the personal lives of select Maya rulers.

**PANEL 1B: Mesoamerican Art and Royalty****Chair: Dr. Carl D. Callaway (La Trobe University)**

*Service, Storage, and Sipping – Observing the Formalities of Finery for the Classic Mayas*  
Dr. Jennifer A Loughmiller-Cardinal (SUNY New Paltz)

The long-standing interpretation of Mayan cylindrical vessels that bear hieroglyphic text specifying chocolate, particularly those in which that specification occurs in a PSS, has been that these vessels were used for direct drinking consumption of chocolate-based beverages. Analytic methods of residue detection failed to turn up a single case where such text and content matched for these vessels, and technological evaluation and experimental trials produced outcomes which suggest other problems with direct usability. Although chemical detection of alkaloids (found in such foodstuffs as chocolate, chili, and tobacco products) has been attested for other types of Mayan vessels, these have only been non-labeled or storage-form containers. The mismatch indicates that a new interpretation is necessary for these presumed “chocolate” pots, and suggests a new understanding of the use, purpose, and functioning of both these vessels their texts.

*The “Bone Codex” of Jasaw Chan K’awiil I*

Dr. Carl D. Callaway (La Trobe University) and Dr. Péter Biró (Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität, Bonn)

Linda Schele opened new lines of inquiry into Maya art and epigraphy by posing bold new questions. In honor of her influential research, this paper examines a remarkable burial cache of inscribed bones from the royal tomb of Jasaw Chan K’awiil I (682-734 AD) from Tikal Temple 1, cataloged as Burial 116. Aubrey S. Trick the excavator of Burial 116, first speculated if this cache was a ‘bone codex’. Trick’s collaborator Linton Satterthwaite deduced that several bones could be aligned vertically, side-by-side in single columns, and their respective texts linked via corresponding dates. Advances in Maya epigraphy now allow for a fuller reading of the bones in question. Some texts reveal subjects and themes like-in-kind to those found in existing Maya codices while others are unique in character. Death scenes and texts connecting Jasaw Chan K’awiil I to the sinking of the Maize God’s canoe presage the king’s own the death journey. Additionally, drawings on several bone ‘pointers’ allude to the mythic origins of hieroglyphs and display patron deities of writing.

*Shall You Know Them by Their Deeds or Their Title? The Akj’uhuun in the Classic Maya Royal Court*  
Dr. Robert F. Wald (University of Texas in Austin)

Clarity concerning the title of the important courtier written as AJ-K’UH-na could well serve the broader purpose of gaining insight into how the Maya rulers and their courts functioned. Despite twenty-five years of near unanimity on the title’s usual signs, there is still no consensus on its correct interpretation or translation. While different renderings of Classic Maya words are not rare, seldom have so many been offered as for the particular title of this denizen. While the various lexical arguments will be discussed, the main emphasis will be on a nearly exhaustive set of pictorial representations and on the contexts in which the title appears in written texts. Considering the differences among the various scholars, it is only by examining all the pictorial and linguistic evidence that agreement can finally be reached.

*Staircases and Experience in the Northern Maya Lowlands: The Architecture of Political Control*  
Dr. Maline D. Werness-Rude (ECSU) and Dr. Spencer Kaylee (UW River-Falls)

In northern Yucatan, builders in the ancient Maya world delighted in varying their approaches to structural orientation. Some focused on creating buildings with a single face designed to send clear directional signals. Other architectural forms, however, present two or more faces, thereby engaging with multiple, distinct spaces. Whether these associated spaces are intended to be seen as contiguous or not can impact the types of faces presented and whether or not there is visual accord across different buildings. Focusing our analysis here, we concentrate on how stairs impact such orientations between structures and how they literally structure use patterns. Certainly stairs were important locations for display and ceremony in the ancient Maya world, as many scholars have discussed. We hope to contribute to this discussion an examination of how differences in stair types, riser heights, vantage points and other formal qualities impact the viewer’s experience of space and performance.

**PANEL 1C: Mesoamerican Religion****Chair: Dr. Gabrielle Vail (New College of Florida)**

*The Maize God and World Renewal Rituals among the Postclassic to Contemporary Maya*  
 Dr. Gabrielle Vail (New College of Florida) and Dr. Allen Christenson (Brigham Young University)

This highlights the connections between prehispanic world renewal rituals highlighted in sources such as the Maya codices and those performed by contemporary Maya people living in highland communities in Guatemala. In this community, elaborate ceremonies designed to renew the world take place during the week preceding Easter. Many of the elements incorporated by traditionalist Maya during Holy Week ceremonies have parallels with those undertaken by their ancestors during Wayeb', the five final days of the prehispanic solar year. The Holy Week celebrations coincide with a critical juncture in the seasonal year—the early spring, marking the end of the long dry season in the Guatemalan highlands. During this dry period, the lack of rain causes the earth to become barren and incapable of germinating seeds. Traditionalist Tz'utujil Maya believe that the world dies during Holy Week. To bring the world back to life requires a complex cycle of ceremonies, processions, prayers, and ritual offerings, the end result of which is the birth of the rains, which provide the nourishment needed to grow new crops and sustain human life.

*Cradling the Sacred: Image, Ritual, and Affect in Mesoamerican Material Religion*  
 Dr. Jennifer Scheper Hughes (University of California, Riverside)

The common ritual posture that I identify with the term “cradling” embodies, evokes and performs the emotions of tenderness and affection for objects of the material world and the numina within them. In particular, the ritual act of cradling infant or infantilized effigies of deities elicits in the devotee specific religio-affective postures including warmth, nurture, care, and tenderness for the sacred. The pre-Hispanic material cultural record, in particular from the Olmec and Maya worlds, includes visual imagery and figurative traditions that indicate that diminutive images of deities were held, embraced, and otherwise engaged devotionally as if they were infants or toddlers. The sources examined here suggest that cradling is among the earliest religious rituals practiced in the Americas for which we have evidence. I identify cradling as a devotional posture—the cradler and cradled object constituted a dyadic pair that was a locus of Mesoamerican sacred power. I explore the relationship between materiality and affect and the ritual actions that bind one to the other.

*Inside the World of the Otherworld: Notions of Cause and Effect in Curing Rites of the Ch'orti' Maya*  
 Dr. Kerry Michael Hull (Brigham Young University)

Traditional curing among the Ch'orti' Maya addresses illness by identifying its cause and treating its symptoms. While this approach sounds familiar to most societies, the methods of identifying and healing a sickness are tightly bound to Ch'orti' understandings of Otherworld beings and their malevolent influences on people. In this paper I describe unique Ch'orti' practices and conceptions related to sickness and healing. I examine the process of divination (niroj) to identify which of the myriad of Otherworld spirits is causing the sickness. I also describe the ritual paraphernalia used by healers to assist in their efforts to divine and heal. Furthermore, I detail from first-hand experience the nature of Ch'orti' healing rituals for various types of afflictions. Finally, I locate healing practices into a broader ideological framework of Ch'orti' worldview regarding the supernatural and the tenuous equilibrium that is thought to exist between worlds that requires both reactive and proactive ritual observance to maintain.

*Cosmology, Origin and Parallelisms in the Popol Vuh and the Christian Bible*  
 Dr. Nicholas R. Alemán-Zaldivar (Whittier College)

Algo se ha escrito ya acerca de la cosmología, origen y similitudes del Popol Vuh con la Biblia cristiana. Por tanto, mi ponencia sobre el tema será, más que todo, una continuación de lo que otros críticos han dicho al respecto. Quizás lo “nuevo” que yo aporte o pueda aportar sea la búsqueda del momento histórico en que ocurren ciertos acontecimientos o catástrofes antes que pasaran a formar parte de las leyendas o las mitologías que leemos hoy en día en ambos textos sagrados, como es el caso de “El diluvio universal”. Evidencias arqueológicas muestran que esta historia narrada en el Popol Vuh y en la Biblia cristiana se trata del mismo acontecimiento histórico al cual hace también referencia Platón, según se lee en Los diálogos de Platón.

**PANEL 1D: Maya and Mesoamerican Space and Ethnicity****Chair: David Schaeffer, M.A.**

*Exploring an Important Hypothetical Connection through Space and Time: Contemporary Rilaj Mam (a.k.a. Maximon/San Simon/"Abuelo") and Classic Period God L*

David M. Schaeffer, M.A. (Independent Scholar)

Rilaj Mam plays an important role in the traditional beliefs of Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala, and has been likened to the jaguar-merchant God L, a deity found in the context of Maya creation mythology. Comparisons, however, have been based more on iconography than epigraphic evidence, which this paper looks to expand upon. Among several perspectives, it considers Atitlaneco views on Mam's role in origin beliefs, particularly through the local conception of nuuales, which is compared to the Classic wayob' complex. It focuses on animal "avatars" of Mam and the beasts to which God L seems to relate, including a rare calendar name ("4-Dog"). It gives Tz'utujil traditionalists interviewed during 2013-'14-'15) a voice and discusses locally-held relics. It also builds on interpretations from the nearby Samabaj archaeological site which emphasize the three Atitlán volcanoes as a symbolic "magnet" for ancient pilgrimage and residence (while forming the setting for Linda Schele's resting place).

*Los Rituales de los Antiguos Mayas y la Espiritualidad Contemporánea*

Lolmay Pedro Garcia (Ethnic Maya and Maya Linguist, Chimaltenango, Guatemala)

A partir de 1980 ha habido en el area maya, una proliferación de "guías espirituales" con diferentes tendencias, lo cual he cuestionado mucho basado en las mismas palabras de los "guías" quienes dicen que no todas las personas poseen el DON de ser guía o de realizar trabajos rituales (guía espiritual, comadrona, huesero entre otros). Últimamente también se puede notar que hay una lucha de poder entre las diferentes tendencias actuales, situación que en algunos casos tiene orígenes desde la época precolombina por la diferencia ideológica entre diversos grupos mayas como los k'iches y los kaqchikeles por ejemplo.

El problema que se ve en la actualidad es que los llamados "guías espirituales", a través de los contactos que han tenido con otras culturas y sectas religiosas, han mezclado la espiritualidad maya tradicional con ideas externas que en muchos casos tienen influencia del "New Age", lo cual se refleja en el uso de cristales, la meditación de tipo oriental y la creencia en la presencia de extraterrestres. A pesar de esa situación distorsionada, se mantienen formas, curaciones, predicciones, y uso del calendario cholq'ij, entre otras actividades que se usaban en el pasado. En este trabajo pretendo mostrar la supervivencia y la continuidad de algunos conceptos originales mayas y las transformaciones que han tenido.

*New Perspectives on Ancient Maya Trade: Educating the Public Through the Museum's Collection*

Stephanie K. Lozano, M.A. (Los Angeles County Museum of Art)

This paper presents new perspectives on ancient Maya trade from museum collections, and secondly demonstrates how to educate the public regarding information contained in museum collections. The iconographic analysis of several museum pieces from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art reveals various ways trade occurred within the Maya area. The first analysis was of a set of Maya incense burner stands with imported Maya blue pigment. The second analysis focuses on a Maya vessel's carved image, which notes the gift giving of the valued quetzal plumage between two Maya kings that aided in developing social and political relationships. The third analysis is of a pair of quatrefoil-shaped earrings, which illuminates the constant exchange of ideas such as world view and cosmic order. Museums' collections are valuable and informative but often stay dormant as pieces sit in galleries without much exposure to the public.

*The Mesoamerican Clay Figurine Project of Rio Hondo College: Modeling Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Culture Among Community College Learners of Suburban Los Angeles*

Santiago Andres Garcia, M.A. (Rio Hondo College)

In Mesoamerican archaeology, clay figurines represent an important medium of inquiry because they offer archaeologists a window into the daily activities and identities of common people that large stone works do not. In the summer of 2014, I asked students to model their own views of race, ethnicity, gender, and culture in clay. Ostensibly, to bridge the ancient Mesoamerican past with the present, I facilitated the making of clay figurines, following Gloria Anzaldúa's borderlands paradigm; a theory that seeks to understand the human condition from a mestiza/o experience. This theory has been used by urban educators to understand the lived experiences of people of color in borderland states such as California and Mexico. More so, I sought to understand student experiences in light of migration, assimilation, segregation, patriarchy, and survival. In this paper, I will present the students' clay figurines as the material representations of their narratives of which are based on a recall of their own borderlands experiences.

*The Pyramid of the Moon and the Sun: Model of an Inclusive Gendered Anthropology*

Dr. Theresa Yugar (California Lutheran University)

In Mesoamerican Thought the Pyramid of the Moon and the Pyramid of the Sun are central religious and historic icons. In this presentation, I will reflect on, and examine, these two temples from a gendered perspective. Drawing on research by Mesoamerican ethnographer, Sylvia Marcos, I will offer a reflection of these temples in light of gendered pairs that are peppered in Nahua Thought, traditions, and songs. I am interested in ideologies, myths, and/or traditions that underpin the representation of the Pyramids and pairs themselves. I argue that these temples hold wisdom that could lay the foundation of an inclusive gendered anthropology. In this way, I will reclaim the wisdom of this highly sophisticated civilization that was senselessly destroyed by barbaric and uncivilized Spaniards who came to this bioregion.

**PANEL 2A: Breaking Borders: Interregionalism and Temporal Continuity in Mesoamerican Art****Chair: Jeremy D. Coltman, M.A. (CSULA) and Andrew Turner, M.A. (UCR)***The Skull and Cross Bones Motif: A Mesoamerican Perspective*

Jeremy D. Coltman, M.A. (California State University, Los Angeles)

Recent scholarly discussions of dismembered and disembodied body parts have been couched in terms of ritual violence and warfare, particularly the taking and displaying of these as trophies. Disembodied heads as decapitated trophies dominate most studies in the literature, particularly the well-known tzompantli (skull rack) of the Aztec. There are other body parts to consider. Skulls, crossed bones, and disembodied eyes frequently appear juxtaposed to one another on platforms, skirts, wings of bats, and capes. Other body parts are served up in bowls and plates as the sumptuous repast of sinister beings. Often associated with death, sacrifice, and the underworld, this arrangement of macabre motifs may express a certain degree of ambiguity in which the intertwined realms of creation, birth, and curing intersect. This discussion will focus on how the skull and cross bone motif was articulated among the Classic Maya and will suggest possible alternatives to interpretations that have broadly defined it as one strictly of death and gore. Furthermore, this motif likely influenced later Mesoamerican styles.

*Understanding the Artistic Legacy of Early Classic Interactions*

Dr. Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona)

The question of Teotihuacan abroad has been an important one since the discoveries of burials at Kaminaljuyu that showed significant contacts between this Central Mexican metropolis and the Maya region. While there are significant quantities of data of diverse kinds, one of the most debated is how to interpret the artistic exchanges between Teotihuacan and other regions. Among the questions not yet answered is how to understand some of the artistic paradoxes that these interactions left behind. For example, stelae carved in Teotihuacan-style appear in the Maya region, Pacific Coast, Oaxaca, Veracruz and other parts of Mesoamerica, yet the sculpted stelae does not seem to have been a significant part of the Teotihuacan visual repertoire. At Teotihuacan, murals and more small-scale objects took on a greater role. This paper seeks to address some of this artistic complexity and what it reveals about Teotihuacan interactions as well as how local responses to these contacts are materialized in artistic form.

*The Maya in Central Mexico: Tracing the Stylistic and Iconographic Origins of the Cacaxtla Murals*

Andrew Turner, M.A. (University of California, Riverside)

In the centuries that followed the collapse of Teotihuacan, known collectively as the Epiclassic period (AD 650-900), several smaller sites in Central Mexico such as Cacaxtla, Tlaxcala rose to take advantage of new economic opportunities and make claims Teotihuacan's former power. Since the murals of Cacaxtla came to the attention of scholars in the mid-1970s, there has been much debate surrounding the anomalous occurrence of Maya-style paintings some 700 km from the Maya region. While there has been considerable speculation about the identities of the painters, whether they were foreigners or local artists working in a foreign style, there has been little discussion about the distinctive and nuanced Maya-style traits found in the paintings. This presentation compares Maya features that appear in the murals and other media of Cacaxtla to specific examples found in the Maya region and suggests a probable point of origin for the painters of the Cacaxtla murals.

*The Bringers of Cacao: Portrayals of New World Primates in the Art of the Aztatlán Culture of**Postclassic West Mexico, AD 850/900-1350*

Dr. Michael D. Mathiowetz (Centro INAH Nayarit)

The Aztatlán culture was the most socially complex development in far West Mexico during the Postclassic period and was characterized by the formation of city states along the Nayarit and southern Sinaloa coastal plain with clear social hierarchies,

elite polychrome pottery, copper metallurgy, Mesoamerican ballcourts, Plumbate wares, and depictions of Mesoamerican deities. Yet despite evidence of interactions with Pueblo cultures of the U.S. Southwest and societies in highland Central Mexico and Oaxaca, the Azatlán region has received relatively little attention by scholars. In Azatlán art, the portrayal of spider monkeys (*Ateles Geoffroyi*)—a New World primate—in a geographical area located between 800-1200 km. from their known historic range is a significant anomaly that deserves attention. This study examines portrayals of spider monkeys in relation to the use of cacao in prehispanic West Mexico and in the context of a new religious complex centered upon the solar deity Xochipilli.

*From the Epiclassic to the Aztec-Mexico: the Presence and Use of the Past in Stone Sculptures*  
Ángel González López, M.A. (University of California, Riverside)

The ways in which human societies create a sense of history and incorporate it into daily life vary in time. In the Basin of Mexico for example, during the Late Postclassic, each one of these groups included certain parts of the stories of their ancestors. The uses, causes, and reasons for this social construction depend on the combination of many factors, and as an archaeologist, I am particularly interested in the use of the past and how it was conceived and incorporated into the perspective of the Mexica of Tenochtitlan during the expansionist phase. For many years, the scientific literature has been dedicated to exploring this topic, in particular Mexica objects depicting the “ancient” Xochicalco style, such as the clear examples of fire serpent heads. Despite these much-cited examples, this topic needs to be reexamined by scholars, principally because recent archaeological research has uncovered new and valuable information about the curation of these Epiclassic art styles for hundreds of years. In this paper I will analyze a number of other examples, specifically fragments of stone sculptures that are unpublished, recovered from within the ancient imperial capital.

**PANEL 2B: Maya Epigraphy**  
Chair: Dr. Bruce Love (MAM)

*Mayas Teaching Mayas the Glyphs and the Calendar: the Linda Schele Legacy*  
Dr. Bruce Love (Maya for Ancient Maya)

In July ,1987, in an old ruined church in Antigua Guatemala, Linda Schele (along with Nick Hopkins and Kathryn Josserand) taught the first Maya glyph workshop for indigenous Maya students. More than two dozen attended, representing seven Maya languages. That same year, she and Nikolai Grube began to bring indigenous Maya students and scholars to her famous Maya Meetings in Texas, held annually in Austin since 1977. After Linda’s passing in 1998, Nikolai continued the practice. In 2004 Friends of the Maya Meetings was formed to support those efforts, and that group has now grown into MAM (Mayas for Ancient Mayan or Maya Antiguo para los Mayas). Today our mission is "Mayas teaching Mayas the glyphs and the calendar," and this is happening on an international scale. Please visit our table to learn more and visit our web site at [www.discovermam.org](http://www.discovermam.org). We consider Linda Schele to be our founding mother.

*Beyond Decipherment: A Challenge to Maya Epigraphy After Linda Schele*  
Dr. Nicholas A. Hopkins (Florida State University / Jaguar Tours)

In the decades from the 1970s to the end of the millennium the work of Maya epigraphers was focused on decipherment, extracting Maya texts from the inscriptions on stone and other media. This entailed theories of Classic Maya orthography, lexicon, grammar, and syntax. While there remain many points of disagreement among specialists, there is a consensus that we can “read” the great majority of inscriptions in a reasonable semblance of Classic (or Epigraphic) Maya, the language of their creators. The decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic writing, then, is largely accomplished. However, once the texts can be read, an entirely new challenge emerges: the study of the literary styles of the Classic writers, the genres of created texts, the rhetorical strategies employed, the “schools” and regional variants of the literary tradition. Significant steps have been taken in these directions, and some of the results will be discussed here. Among other discoveries is the fact that many of the aspects of Classic literature have been preserved in formal and sacred speech among the contemporary Maya.

*The Sun in the Water: A Proposal for the Reading of the ha'-k-in Maya Hieroglyphic Sign*  
Dr. Rogelio Valencia Rivera (Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa) and  
Dr. Alejandro Sheseña (Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas)

The present paper offers a possible reading for the ha'-k'in sign (no Thompson number assigned) that appears in very few examples in the Maya inscriptions. This sign is usually used to refer to locatives or places of origin for people from the Maya Lowlands. This sign has been the subject of studies involving names that designate groups of people. Recent discoveries pointed towards a possible reading for the sign, such as the tomb at Cahal Pech, but this reading does not fit the readings of the other uses for the sign. We use evidence from a vast group of examples which point towards a possible relationship of the sign with

caves.

*A Glimpse into the Teaching of Linda Schele*  
Dr. Mark Van Stone (Southwestern College)

As a student of Linda Schele, I want to show in this presentation, through video fragments of her classes, the charisma and methodology that she had as a skilled educator to teach about the Maya Glyphs.

## **PANEL 2C: Body and Bones in the Ancient Americas**

**Chair: Martin Berger, Ph.D. Candidate (Museum of Ethnology at Leiden)**

*The Cosmos within the Body, Embodied Spiritual Energies and Body Modifications among the Classic Period Maya*  
Dr. Erik Velásquez (UNAM) and Dr. Vera Tiesler (UCR / UADY)

The Classic period Maya projected cosmic dominions in the human body and its anatomical constituents. In this scheme, the body of heavy matter (tissues) encapsulated the animic entities, such as the o'hlis, b'aahis, wahyis, k'ahk'is, and ch'ab'is-ahk'ab'is, and the animic forces k'ihn, sak saak(?), and sak ik'aal, the last of which probably circulated in the blood (ch'ich'). Their somatic dimensions provided a powerful space of cosmic convergence and ritual performance centered around the face. The face was targeted by a wide range of Maya physical adjustments and permanent modifications, designed to protect, to gain strength, to impersonate, to epitomize the divine or simply to acquire native identity. In this vein, we'll explore the the spiritual roles of dental mutilations, head flattening and piercings. These give way to a number of ideas on their motives, forms of ritual enactment and public display.

*Royal Bones, Calendar Round Dates and Epigraphy: A Historical Perspective on the Controversy over the Age of the Bones of K'inich Janab' Pakal I*  
Dr. Elaine Day Schele (UT Austin)

The tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal I, an important Classic Maya king of Palenque was discovered by Alberto Ruz in 1952. Also discovered were Calendar Round (CR) dates on the edge of the tomb's lid. There were no Long Count (LC) dates to anchor them in history. According to physical anthropologists, the kingly skeleton was that of a 40 to 50 year old. In every subsequent report, Ruz anchored the first CR date, 8 Ahau 13 Pop to 603 CE. He called the deceased 8 Ahaw, knowing that in some Mesoamerican cultures, people were called by their day name, implying that Ruz thought that 603 CE was the birthday of the occupant of the tomb. However, 16 years, Ruz re-anchored the 8 Ahaw birth date to 665 CE. That same year, Schele and Mathews presented newly deciphered readings on the kings of Palenque at the First Palenque Roundtable, contending that the age of Pakal was 80. This is the story of the debate that developed between scholars that lasted for several decades.

*Tale of Two Cities: Revelations from Pakal and the Warrior Priest's Tombs*  
Helen Burgos Ellis, Ph.D. Candidate (UCLA)

The archaeological discoveries of Pakal's tomb (circa seventh century) in the Maya area at the site of Palenque, and the Lord of Sipán's tomb (circa fourth century) in the Moche area at the site of Sipán, reinvigorated scholarly interest at each of the sites. These tombs have significantly increased our understanding of burial practices of the upper echelons of Maya and Moche society. Most scholarly attention has focused on the sheer display of wealth. I will briefly introduce those, but extend the discussion and explore other issues. In this presentation, I will show how an art historical compare and contrast examination of the apparent function of burial practices, art, and architecture at each of these sites can provide additional information about these societies. In particular, the information relates to the political and religious aspect of the world of the dead and their relationship to the living in both civilizations.

*Mosaic-decorated Human Skulls – a Mesoamerica Artifact Style?*  
Martin E. Berger, Ph.D. Candidate (Museum of Ethnology at Leiden)

In 1932, Alfonso Caso and his team found a human skull decorated with turquoise mosaic tesserae, in their well-known excavation of Monte Albán's Tumba 7. To this day, this is the only artifact of this type to have been found in a documented excavation. Nevertheless, at least twenty turquoise mosaic-decorated human skulls are currently held in museums and private collections. Many of these have been considered forgeries, others are considered authentic. Within this group, there are clear iconographic and stylistic differences, an indication that these 'mosaic skulls' were not all made by the same original culture, or forger. In this presentation, I will present an overview of the corpus of mosaic skulls known to date and trace their object biographies. Through this study of provenance and iconography, I will try to answer the question "Are mosaic skulls a twentieth century invention, or are they a genuine Mesoamerican artifact type?"

**PANEL 2D: Power, Lineage and Fertility in Mesoamerica****Chair: Claudia Camacho-Trejo (CSULA)**

*Conquering the Land of Clouds: Eight Deer Jaguar Claw the Usurper of Tilantongo*  
 Claudia Camacho-Trejo (California State University, Los Angeles)

In the year seven house, Lord Eight Deer Jaguar Claw conquered thirty five towns that extended his exceptional warrior reputation through the surrounding towns of the Mixteca Alta and Nahua regions. This distinction allowed him to achieve legitimization by Toltec priests to become *Tecuhtli*, a ceremony that is depicted in band four folio 52 of Codex Zouche-Nuttall. This legitimacy permitted him to continue his conquering journey, and return to Tilantongo where he was received by 112 Lords of different regions of Mesoamerica. This presentation aims to do an attire iconographic analysis to determine where are these peoples native to, and proposing that Mixtec Codex Zouche-Nuttall is not only a Mixtec genealogy tale, but a pictorial description of Mixtec activities of trade and alliances through Mesoamerica.

*The Significance of Water within the Sacred Landscape of the P'urhépecha of Michoacán*  
 Cinthia Marlene Campos (California State University, Los Angeles)

The P'urhépecha, a unique indigenous group, inhabited Western Mexico of what is modern day Michoacán. The P'urhépecha, after the Spanish conquest, were also known as Tarascans. Within this geographical region, various bodies of water including lakes, springs, and rivers played important roles within the society. Sixteenth century Spanish chroniclers document Pre-Colombian use of water related sacred landmarks for rites of foundation, authority, warfare, and subsistence. Modern ethnographic research has documented continued use of bodies of water in Western Michoacán for religious rites. This paper will compare ethnohistorical records to contemporary use of these sacred features to assess the degree of continuity.

*The Plumed Serpent and the Political Factions of Teotihuacan*  
 Hector Cordova (California State University, Los Angeles)

Virtually all ancient civilizations have used myths to rationalize world order and human actions. Myths affirm systems of stratification in societies, sovereignty, and actions against self-interest. While the exact form of political organization at Teotihuacan remains elusive, information gained from examining the archaeological record and symbolic evidence in monumental art suggests that cults rooted in myths supplied the ideological basis for the foundation of authority for priest-rulers as well. This paper focuses on the schism that many scholars affirm took place in this primate city with roots in the Early Classic (200-400 AD) and climaxing at its greatest affluence and power by 600 AD, but is not yet understood. I submit that factions aligned with the cult of the Temple of the Sun and those that embraced the Plumed Serpent waged a struggle for supremacy invoking divine righteousness. In analyzing the characteristics of the respective temples, the probable theological arguments utilized by these two powerful factions in their struggle for legitimacy, both on a cosmic and secular plane become apparent.

*Animal Sacrifices - A Ritualistic Way to Appreciate Life and Death in Ancient Maya Culture and Modern Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*  
 Marina Vilhena (California State University, Los Angeles)

Despite geographic and cultural variations, certain aspects of human behavior have been repeated from ancient to modern civilizations. Although the practice of human sacrifice is focused on in Mesoamerican studies, animal sacrifices are equally dramatic. By comparing and contrasting rituals of ancient Mayan civilization with traditional ceremonies of the modern Afro-Brazilian Candomblé, we will explore and discuss the patterns of religious beliefs and human behaviors related to the practice of Animal Sacrifice within both cultures. It will also allow us to identify elements of this practice that still influence or serve as parameters for our social-anthropological view of our own world.

*Impact and Results of the Teaching of Linda Schele in the present Maya communities of Guatemala*  
 Antonio Cuxil (Ethnic Maya and Tourist Guide)

Linda Schele started a program in Antigua Guatemala where she taught Maya epigraphy and created a group of Maya instructors with the purpose that they could teach the ancient Maya writing to the Maya of today. This allowed the possibility for contemporary Maya to write their languages with the characters created by their ancestors, the Classic Maya. This paper will discuss how this learning has helped to reinforce the Maya identity in Guatemala.

**PANEL 3A: Olmec Iconography and Symbology****Chair: Dr. F. Kent Reilly III***The Influence of Linda Schele in Olmec Studies*

Dr. F. Kent Reilly III (Texas State University in San Marcos)

This paper will discuss how the approach and methodology applied by Linda Schele in Maya Studies has influenced the iconographic analysis in Olmec Studies.

*An Olmec Vision of Infinity: An Iconology of the Las Limas Monument*

John Grant Stauffer, M.A. (Texas State University in San Marcos)

As mysterious masters of the Olman microcosm, Olmec rulers oversaw the creation and projection of their cosmic visions through both massive and miniscule forms of media. Believed to be incarnate gods, these stewards of life and death exercised authority that transcended the natural world. Acting as a surrogate ruler, the Las Limas monument is charged with a supernatural aura, manifested in the cryptic symbols its incised visage exhibits. As such, this inanimate object bears all of the markings that signify its membership within an elite politico-religious caste. Therefore, this brief analysis constructs a three-tiered interpretation of the monument itself and the iconography it projects to a multi-generational audience. It attempts to both account for the symbolic language it bears and identify the intentions behind its construction. The purpose is to communicate how the Las Limas monument exists as the embodiment of an Olmec perspective of rulership that extends into infinity.

*The Mountain and the Mirror: Bivalent Ontology and Chalcatzingo Monument 1*

Jesse Nowak, M.A. (Texas State University in San Marcos)

Chalcatzingo Monument 1 in Morelos, Mexico is an artistic masterpiece that encapsulates many Olmec and Mesoamerican religious themes. By conducting an iconographic structural analysis that focuses on the expression of a bivalent ontology, this work will explore Olmec ideological tenants of a philosophy of duality, the connection between religious beliefs and the natural world, and the relationship between classic Olmec themes and secular styles. This analysis will explore the question of regional continuity of central Mexico formative cultures with Olmec heartland cosmology and religion. I argue that Monument 1 shows a regional variant of a classic Olmec theme of “presentation”, which focuses on the interplay between the control of natural forces and agricultural proliferation.

*The Identification and Transmission of Olmec Directional Motifs*

Celsiana Gera, B.A. (University of California, Los Angeles)

The Cascajal Block was recently reinterpreted by Reilly and Freidel as depicting images of a ritual layout as opposed to an early Olmec writing system. This new understanding of context, in combination with archeological, historical, and ethnographic sources, will be used to show signs 19 through 22 at the center of the Cascajal Block as representing early forms of directional motifs based on narrative elements incorporated into later pan-Mesoamerican religious thought. These signs, though studied elsewhere in the Olmec record, have received relatively little attention for their position on the Cascajal Block. With regard to this recently interpreted context, they may be seen to lend new levels of insight into Preclassic representational strategies. This makes possible the identification of these signs in the work of later groups, particularly that of the Classic Maya, where elements of the Cascajal signary may be seen in directional contexts originally presented by Linda Schele.

*A Middle Formative Artifact Excavated at Arroyo Pesquero, Veracruz*

Dr. Carl J. Wendt (California State University, Fullerton)

During a recent underwater archaeological survey of the Arroyo Pesquero, members of the *Proyecto Arqueológico Arroyo Pesquero* (PAAP) discovered an extraordinary and unusual archaeological specimen made of mottled brown and white jadeite. This artifact, most likely dating to the Middle Formative period, is significant for two reasons: first, because the object is the first find discovered at the site during a systematic archaeological investigation and thus has archaeological provenience, and second, because of the iconographic elements it possesses and its one-of-a-kind form. This article begins with a short background on the Arroyo Pesquero site, including its discovery, history of looting, and archaeological investigations. We then briefly describe the present investigation and the discovery of the artifact. This is followed by a description of the artifact – its form, iconography, and its possible functions. We conclude with some comments on the specimen within the framework of Middle Formative Olmec iconography.

**PANEL 3B: Serpents and Mythology in Mesoamerica****Chair: Dr. Carlos Rincón-Mautner (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)***Serpents as Vehicles*

Dr. Maria Teresa Uriarte Castañeda (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

Ancient Mesoamericans were able to get transported across different spheres through narcotic consumption or auto-sacrifice. Within these contexts, we know that in the Maya area snakes have taken the role of the “Vision Serpent”, with clear examples such as Yaxchilán Lintel 15. Nevertheless, serpents do not appear only during the vision of some characters, but also serve as vehicles transporting characters standing on the feathered serpent across different places and times. We can see an example of this at Cacaxtla, on the mural painting of Pórtico A. In this presentation we will look over examples of serpents as vehicles in Maya culture, particularly at Cacaxtla and La Huasteca.

*Altepetl, Xicalcolouqui, and Tlalocan: A Cosmological Reassessment and Reimagining of the Water Mountains and “Feathered Serpents of Mesoamerica”*

Dr. Ruben G. Mendoza (California State University, Monterey Bay)

The *altepetl* (ā-tl, water, and tepē-tl, hill) constitutes the central toponym or topographical reference point designating the cities, Nahua communities, kingdoms, and or city-states of Postclassic Mesoamerica. As such, the *altepetl* or “water mountain” was central to defining those cosmological associations attributed to the sacred geography, and thereby, *teocalli* or god houses, of the central highland Nahua, and Mexicanized or lowland Maya. With the *altepetl* as the focal point of this analysis, this presentation will reimagine, and thereby reevaluate, the correlated and symmetric cosmological associations obtaining between the *altepetl* or “water mountain,” *xicalcolouqui* or “stepped fret,” and the netherworld or shamanic realm identified with *tlalocan*, or the “Place of Tlaloc.” As such, the iconographic reappraisal of monuments long thought identified with either *tlaloc* or *quetzalcoatl* at Teotihuacan, Chichen, and Tenochtitlan here constitute those case studies central to this reassessment of the symbolism of the *altepetl*, and thereby, the “water mountains” of Mesoamerica.

*On the Trail of the Shaman and the Serpent – Recent Discoveries on the Sacred Geography of the Northern Mixteca and Tehuacan Valley*

Dr. Carlos Rincón Mautner (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)

In pre-Hispanic times, serpent imagery symbolized both earth and water, elements associated with fertility and sustenance. Such symbols were recorded on boulders, rockshelters and caves, and projected onto landforms, constituting nodes of power in the landscape to which ritual specialists, including rulers, would retreat to perform propitiatory rituals. Evidence for these rituals includes pictograms, petroglyphs and cached artifacts. Recent discoveries at Mixteca and Tehuacan Valley sites will be described and interpreted within the context of local subsistence, timing of appearance, changing social complexity. Such artifacts and associated imagery would in time, be incorporated into a broader canon of beliefs and symbols that reflect the Mesoamerican worldview.

*In the Realm of the Interlocked Serpents’ – Mesoamerican Centers as Metaphorical and Real Places of Memory in the Codices*

Dr. Viola Koenig (Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin)

Mesoamerican codices, lienzo and maps are full of place signs. In the last decades, many of these could be identified with real geographical places. However, tentative identification of some of the most prominent place signs such as “Place of the Interlocked Serpents” shown in the Coixtlahuaca group, or “Place with Frame, Jaguar and Eagle” in the Codex Egerton e.g. could not yet be confirmed and remain tentative suggestions. On the other hand, important centers such as Cholula seem to be exclusively represented in the early colonial documents. The number of existing preconquest codices to examine is limited; however, places signs representing important centers might have been overseen in the past.

**PANEL 3C: Mesoamerican Astronomy and Day Signs****Chair: Dr. Gerardo Aldana (UCSB)***Deciphering Discovery: Accessing Mayan Astronomical Innovation through the Hieroglyphic Record*

Dr. Gerardo Aldana (UCSB)

The Dresden Codex is one of three surviving hieroglyphic manuscripts written by Mayan scribes before contact with Europe. Its partial decipherment early in the development of Maya Studies led to its importance for the interpretation of ancient Mayan

culture and in particular the role of astronomy and calendrics within it. The reconstructed accuracy of the "Dresden Codex Venus Table" as ephemeris was also found to be useful in correlating the Mayan and Gregorian calendars. This paper argues that the latter effort pulled the interpretation of the Venus Table away from the internal logic and hieroglyphic text of the manuscript. When we return to the Table on its own terms, we find that the logic underlying the mathematical content of the "Preface" is held together by the Mayan discovery of a numerical Correction Factor. In conjunction with the Venus Table's consistency with an independent hieroglyphic record of Venus at Copan, the new interpretation suggests that this discovery occurred in the "Observatory" of Terminal Classic Chichén Itza.

*Meteor Showers in the Maya Script: Evidence for Specific Showers at Palenque and Copan*  
James H. Kinsman, B.S. (Independent Scholar)

Observations of annual meteor showers have been recorded in the historical record since 687 BC, although until now no date-specific observations exist in the Americas. Recently the author provided evidence<sup>1</sup> that the Maya recorded at least two showers in the Dresden and Madrid codices. Having now investigated over 800 extant dates in the hieroglyphic inscriptions, the author believes viable dates for a few specific meteor showers are found on prominent carvings from Copan and Palenque. Some meteor shower outbursts may have been connected to mirror events and the Triad Deity GI. The author presents physical evidence for these meteor outbursts, including some of the implications for these showers in light of information previously offered by Linda Schele and Peter Mathews, especially Copan Stela D (1998:165-169)<sup>2</sup>.

*Calendrical Fate in Mesoamerica*  
Robert Gloria, M.A. (Environmental Charter Middle School)

In Mesoamerica during Pre-Columbian times the calendar was interpreted by the soothsayers to determine the fate of newborns. This interpretation was based on a complex relationship between the day numbers, day signs, and patrons and this relationship was manipulated to ensure the best possible outcome for the newborns. The way in which these relationships were interpreted provides additional evidence in favor of the argument developed by various scholars that Mesoamericans maintained a pantheistic view of the world. The influence of the calendar on people as discussed in the Telleriano-Remensis, the Florentine Codex: Book 4, and the ancient calendar by Diego Duran reveals to us the interconnected way in which Mesoamericans perceived the world. Analysis of the above sources demonstrates that a person intimately shared the qualities of the day numbers, day signs, and the associated patrons. One example of this intimate connection is that it was said of drunkards born on 2-Rabbit, that his rabbit manifested itself on him.

*The Power of Venus: Iconography of Visible Planets in Maya Ideology*  
Lauren Copeland (California State University, Los Angeles)

The significance of astronomical features and their influence on Maya rulership and settlement have been examined by archeologists and anthropologists in order to show how celestial bodies influence the command of a region. However, it is crucial to understand both the respect and fear that the Maya had for planets, stars, and other celestial objects. The particular importance of Venus in Maya supremacy is apparent with special observation of the culture's admiration and utilization of the planet in art and writing. Specifically, the various glyphs of Venus in the Maya codices linked with the observations of A.F. Aveni, Victoria Bricker, David Freidel, and Linda Schele show that the alignment and luminosity of the planet and the belief in its powerful influence shaped Maya actions. Although Venus' power was feared, the reverence for the planet is shown through its affiliations with rulers, conflict, and communal organization. Through examining the various glyphs referencing and depicting Venus, it is apparent that the use of prominent celestial bodies in rulership, warfare, and settlement is prevalent throughout Maya culture.

**PANEL 3D: Iconography and Identity in Mesoamerica**  
Chair: Dr. Carey C. Rote

*Pan-Mesoamerican Iconography and Symbolism in the Late Formative Teuchitlan Tradition of Western Mexico*  
Dr. Joshua D. Englehardt (Colegio de Michoacán) and Dr. Verenice Y. Heredia Espinoza (Colegio de Michoacán)

The ceramics of the western Mexican Teuchitlán tradition, although well-defined archaeologically, remain relatively understudied. This paper addresses that lacuna through an examination of Teuchitlán ceramic iconography. The presence of pan-Mesoamerican symbols on many examples yields insight onto processes of intercultural contact, suggesting that interregional interaction involving western Mesoamerica was more complex—and occurred in earlier temporal contexts—than many previous treatments consider. Shared motifs were, however, incorporated into localized representational canons with regionally unique symbolism, suggesting that Teuchitlán artisans were both continuing an areal tradition and exercising artistic agency. Thus, the evidence may

simultaneously indicate a cultural cosmovision shared through incorporation into broader pan-Mesoamerican symbolic complexes and a material reification of regionally specific cultural configurations. In the absence of secure archaeological contexts for many Teuchitlán ceramics, this comparative iconographic approach offers an alternative path to accessing the meanings encoded.

*Behind the Veil: The Probable Groups who Composed the Mixtón Confederation*  
Ricardo Garcia, Ph.D. Candidate (University of California, Los Angeles)

During the Mixton War (1540-1542), a confederation of Indigenous groups almost expelled Spanish settlers from Nueva Galicia and numerous scholars have examined this event. They have written about how this confederation killed Pedro de Alvarado, how the Cazcanes were the most prominent hostile group, and how the Indigenous leaders Acaitli and Tenamaztle fought on opposite sides. Nonetheless, the composition of this confederacy remains shrouded in a secrecy that this study examines by relying on extant Spanish and Nahua sources. The initial conclusion is that Tenamaztle and other Indigenous leaders managed to integrate the Cazcanes, Tecuexes, and Coras into a confederation to oppose the Spaniards, but they failed to overcome rivalries with the Cocas who aided the Spaniards and the Huicholes who remained neutral.

*The Utilization of O-Signs and Q-Signs in the Danzantes Sculptures at the Pre-Columbian Zapotec Site of Monte Alban, Oaxaca, Mexico*  
Dr. Carey C. Rote (Texas A&M)

The Danzantes sculptures at Monte Alban have undergone a number of interpretations since they were first discovered in the late 19th century. They are known as "Danzantes" due to the early attribution of their contorted poses to dance movements frozen in stone (Leopoldo Batres: 1902). Subsequently these denuded and stylized "dancers" were interpreted as representations of medical anomalies and diseases (Mario Pérez-Ramírez: 1963). Another researcher has categorized these sculptures as images of elite Zapotecs performing bloodletting from their genitalia (Javier Urcid: 1992-1993). Other scholars, including Dr. Linda Schele, have interpreted the figures as images of warriors who have been taken in battle. The supposition is that they are shown here, bound, nude and mutilated, in preparation for sacrifice (Michael Coe: 1962 and Heather Orr: 1997). This paper will examine a medically based approach that confirms the Coe/Orr/Schele analysis based on a discussion of the utilization of O-signs and Q-signs as indicators of impending death for the tortured and mutilated prisoners in stone. Arcane death signs as signatories supporting recent analysis by other scholars will be presented within a variable systematic convergence system.

*The Quadripartite Emblem: Ritual, Power, and Royal Maya Women*  
Dr. Karon Winzenz (University of Wisconsin- Green Bay)

A study of the Maya Quadripartite Emblem (Badge) reveals a shift in the gender associations of this quintessential cosmological symbol. In the Early Classic period it is depicted as the headdress of male deities and kings. In the Late Classic, as royal women rose to unprecedented power, the Emblem is most often portrayed with Maya queens and goddesses, worn as a headdress or carried in rituals. An analysis of the Emblem's four motifs reveals that this shift in gender association was compatible with the layered symbolism of this significant icon. Each component was metonymically linked (in part) to biologically female menses and birthing, and to female gendered roles of child care, ancestor veneration, and weaving that developed well before the rise of hereditary Maya kingship.

#### **PANEL 4: The Figurines of Mesoamerica** **Chair: Dr. Mary Miller (Yale)**

Among Linda Schele's enduring interests in Maya and larger Mesoamerican were figurines, especially those from Jaina and Palenque. In this session, students and colleagues of Linda's will look at the figurines of Mesoamerica, with particular attention to new discoveries over the past twenty years. What has long been thought to be characteristic of Jaina Island will be looked at within the larger context of Central Mexico, the Gulf Coast, and Maya archaeology broadly.

In this session, Mary Miller will return to Linda's project, *Hidden Faces of the Maya*, to address the frameworks in which figurines occur across Mesoamerica.

*Mesoamerican Figurines in Historical Perspective*  
Dr. Khristaan Villela (Santa Fe University of Art and Design)

In 1838, a year before John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood left New York on their first expedition to Mexico and Central America, J.F. Waldeck published the earliest known illustrations and discussion of the Maya figurines from the necropolis of Jaina, Campeche. In spite of their diminutive scale, the figurines fashioned by the Maya and other ancient Mesoamerican peoples have

played important roles in the history of the studies of American antiquity. This paper will outline that history, focusing on the role of Mesoamerican figurines in the development of our understanding of Precolumbian chronology, as well their significant place in Maya iconography studies.

*Classic Veracruz Figurines of the Lower Papaloapan Basin*  
Dr. Cherra Wyllie (SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology)

South-central Veracruz was the center of unparalleled ceramic artistry applied to architecture, relief-carved ceramics, and medium to life-sized sculpture. Figurines are an abundant and integral part of this ceramic inventory, although discussion of them is often relegated to archaeological appendices. We see their larger counterparts, on the other hand, viewed as 'works of art' irrespective of contexts. This paper attempts to bridge this divide, examining Classic Veracruz figurines with respect to relative scale, aesthetic properties, archaeological contexts, and proposed function.

*Figurines at Teotihuacan*  
Dr. Matthew H. Robb (de Young Museum)

Ceramic figurines at Teotihuacan are often understood as a visible and material representation of Teotihuacan society. Their abundance - both as whole figures and body parts - in archaeological contexts and museum collections around the world poses daunting challenges for exploring these representations beyond broad generalizations. This paper will take two sets of figurines with precise contexts as a starting point for more detailed interpretations. One, recovered from salvage archaeology at the eastern periphery of the city, includes a number of polychromed female figures. Another, from the Tlajinga 33 compound, includes an enigmatic 'host' figure. Combined, these sets offer insight into how Teotihuacanos may have used such arrays to help preserve social memory of specific events.

*Let's Play!*  
Justin Kerr (Mayavase.com)

The identification of the meaning of figures has been an ongoing task for art historians and iconographers for many years. This paper will speculate on a group of figurines that may represent individuals involved in what we moderns consider as "sport." Eliminated from this group are figures identified as ball players. That is, those persons wearing yokes at waist or chest or carrying hand stones and other paraphernalia that is involved in the ball game. There may be a certain amount of overlap in the distinction between "sport" and "combat." For example we may consider "boxing" a sport, but in Maya terms it is deadly combat. We will examine some objects that may not be considered figurines, but contain a similar message.

*Questioning "Jaina": Figurines Across the Maya World*  
Megan E. O'Neil (Los Angeles County Museum of Art)

This paper questions the ubiquitous use of the label "Jaina" in museums and art historical literature to refer to Maya figurines without archaeological context. Although figurines were scientifically excavated from Jaina Island, and although there is evidence of looting on Jaina Island, it undoubtedly was not the only source of Maya figurines that entered the art market in the twentieth century. Nonetheless, Jaina became the primary label for categorizing Maya figurines, but this designation created a category that in reality does not exist. Indeed, several facets of research suggest that Maya figurines designated as Jaina came from a variety of places not only in Mexico but also in Guatemala and other countries. In this paper, I explore the history of the use of the label Jaina, critique its use, and encourage studies to re-evaluate these attributions.

**PANEL 5A: Maya Relations with the Sacred Earth**  
**Chair: Dr. James Brady (CSULA)**

*The Translation of a Maya Cosmogram onto an Uncooperative Terrestrial Landscape*  
Dr. James E. Brady (California State University, Los Angeles)

Smith and Schreiber, in their review of New World archaeology, state, "For the Classic Maya, studies of sacred landscapes are dominated by research on caves." While this may be true for much of the southern Maya lowlands, little work has been attempted in northern Belize because the area's soft dolomitic limestone does not support the formation of large caves that might have attracted archaeological attention. As a result, archaeologists have given little thought to the possibility that small subterranean chambers might have played an important role in the ancient sacred landscape. The first detailed cave study in northern Belize, Spider Cave at the site of Maax Na, confirmed that a shrine in the central plaza was built in relation to the cave with the discovery of a blocked passage that surfaced near the doorway to the shrine. A second field investigation by the Rio Bravo Archaeological Project has documented another cave located in the midst of public architecture. Finally, a Cal State L.A. field survey in 2014

documented a type of terrestrial feature within the Programme for Belize project boundaries that had not been previously investigated. These discoveries have verified extensive use of the landscape by the ancient Maya.

*The Cave at Las Cuevas: A Ritual Journey*

Dr. Holley Moyes (University of California, Merced)

Archaeologists have paid little attention to architecture in ancient Maya cave sites, though many, if not most caves exhibit some degree of modification. Nowhere is this better exemplified than at the site of Las Cuevas. On the surface, Las Cuevas appears to be a typical Late Classic, medium-sized, center. But, this site has something that most others do not—a large cave system that runs beneath the main plaza. The mouth of the cave sits within a sinkhole directly below the eastern pyramid of Plaza A. The massive cave entrance exhibits formal architectural modifications including platforms with plastered surfaces, stairs, and terraces. These surround a cenote with a natural river flowing at its base. The tunnel system begins at the rear of the chamber, twists and turns, and eventually circles back to the dimly lit entrance culminating at a high window that overlooks the cenote. Throughout the tunnel system blockages and walls restrict access to the deepest and most remote areas. I suggest that architectural modifications to the tunnel system were designed to create a performative space that guided participants through an underworld journey.

*A Reconsideration of Maya Ritual Landscapes: Chultuns as Man-Made Caves in the Southern Maya Lowlands*

Toni Gonzalez, M.A. (California State University, Los Angeles)

Chultuns were investigated at three small groups representing the settlement zone, public space, and core near the main plaza of Ka'Kabish. Puleston asserted that chultuns must have a utilitarian function because they are overwhelmingly found in rural, domestic contexts. This processualist logic denies the possibility of domestic ritual that is so prevalent in Maya ethnography. At Ka'Kabish, Uaxactun, Nakum and other sites. All the chultuns excavated at Ka'Kabish contained multiple burials and objects that were likely left as mortuary offerings. The mortuary function of chultuns was noted by early investigators (e.g., Tozzer, Gann, and Ricketson) but was described as an "occasional" or "secondary" use. While the use of chultuns for burials is a secondary function that terminated further use of the feature, it occurs more frequently than previously appreciated. The presence of multiple individuals suggests the repeated performance of mortuary rituals, which constitutes a process of sacralization of that space. The regular use of these spaces as burial sites is consistent with our hypothesis that chultuns served a ritual function.

*Landscape Archaeology in the Maya Area: A New Lens on an Old Problem*

Melanie Saldaña, M.A. (California State University, Los Angeles)

Non-cave Maya archaeologists appear to be at a loss on how to engage sacred landscapes because they are mired in an ecological materialist mindset. More speculative studies often attempts to read meaning into the built environment by drawing on plans from traditional archeological investigations that were conducted with little or no interest in sacred landscape. This presentation details the results of investigations carried out by the California State University, Los Angeles Archaeological Project at the site of La Milpa in northern Belize in the summer of 2014. The project focused on a sinkhole that had been previously interpreted as a trash pit, possibly serving a lithic workshop. Initial inspection noted a discontinuous line of rocks at the same level in the sidewalls of the sinkhole. Excavations along the side of the sinkhole, in its floor and within a cave-like enclosure revealed a heavy concentration of ceramic, obsidian and other artifacts. The Maya clearly formalized the space surrounding this sinkhole leaving no doubt that this was a noteworthy sacred landmark. Such features abound in the karstic landscape providing surface archaeologists with great opportunities to empirically document the sacred landscape within their site boundaries. Clearly a rethinking of current practices is required.

**PANEL 5B: From Aztlan to Tenochtitlan: Nahua Origins and Cosmology**

**Chair: Dr. Danny Zborover (UCSD)**

*The Tongues of Aztlan: Tracing the Nahua Migrations Through Dialectology*

Magnus Pharo Hansen, Ph.D. Candidate (Brown University).

In this paper I use our knowledge of Nahuatl dialectology and the methods of historical linguistics to trace the population movements of Nahuatl speakers in the classic and postclassic periods. I argue that it is a mistake to equate the mythical concept of Aztlan with the proto-Uto-Aztecan homeland, because Aztlan should rather be considered only the homeland of the proto-Nahuatl people. The migration model supported by Nahuatl historical dialectology sees two main waves of proto-Nahuatl migrant populations leaving an area north of the Valley of Mexico. One wave traced the gulf coast and the other the pacific coast, and both finally converged in the central valleys, creating by their fusion the dialect that we today call "classical Nahuatl". Finally I look at the

archeological correlates of the posited migration routes.

*The Coaxalpan of the Main Temple of Tenochtitlan: The Set of Reliefs from the Plaza during Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina times*  
 Ángel González López, Ph.D. Candidate (University of California, Riverside) and Dr. Leonardo Lopez Lujan (INAH-Mexico)

In the middle of the 15th century, a magnificent pavement extended from the foot of the Great Temple of Tenochtitlan, directly in front of the main façade. Primarily related to myths and rites associated with Tlaltecuhltli, Tlaloc, and Huitzilopochtli, these stones reliefs will be examined in this work. The analysis of this group of sculptures recently excavated by the Great Temple Project (INAH) will provide a new understanding regarding the functions and meanings of this ceremonial space identified as the *coaxalpan*.

*Did the Aztecs conquer the Chontalpa? Evaluating the Historical, Archaeological, and Linguistic Evidence*  
 Dr. Danny Zborover (University of California, San Diego)

As demonstrated well by Linda Schele and others, Mesoamerican political and territorial statements often invoke symbolic figures from the past to unite a factionalized public in the present. In the case of the Chontalpa in southeastern Oaxaca, pictorial and alphabetic documents from the Colonial period highlight the Aztecs' involvement in local affairs just prior to the Spanish conquest. Contemporary documents from core of the Aztec empire, however, neglect to reference the region in their conquest narratives and lists of tributary/strategic provinces. This talk will consider the plausibility of such a hegemonic intervention in the context of local geopolitics, and will further evaluate the historical claims in light of archaeological and linguistic patterns emerging from recent studies in the region.

*Mayahuel and Maguey as Teotl: Establishing a Visual Grammar for Reading Directional Tree Panels in the Codex Borgia*  
 Felicia Rhapsody Lopez, Ph.D. Candidate (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Mesoamerican scribes created a wide variety of texts (from historical to topographical to ritual) containing maguey iconography, which draw upon the cultural significance and scientific understanding of the plant and on the teotl Mayahuel. Using these texts, post-contact Nahuatl sources and Nahuatl linguistics, I identify patterns in meaning and association to present new methods of reading the Codex Borgia directional tree panels, thereby providing tools for further research and decipherment of pictorial texts. Specifically, I identify visual grammatical structures on the Codex Borgia directional tree panels, which allows for the identification of the primary tree on panel 51 as Mayahuel/maguey, rather than corn. In the process of identifying this visual grammar, I draw upon various stories, myths, and histories related to Mayahuel/maguey in order to understand her role as teotl and the nature of "deity" within Mesoamerica more generally.

**PANEL 5C: Reciprocal Relations: Humans and 'Landscape' in Mesoamerica**  
 Chair: Dr. Carolyn Tate (Texas Tech University)

*Symbolic Landscape as a Container of Knowledge*  
 Dr. Carolyn Tate (Texas Tech University)

Middle Formative Mesoamericans built stepped and conical mounds and low-lying U-shaped platforms of clay at La Venta. Were these specific shapes created as symbols of natural features within the biosphere? Were these large three-dimensional forms that served as settings for arrays of similar sculptures the precursors to semasiographic pictography among later civilizations such as the Zapotec, Teotihuacanos, Mixtec and Aztec? This paper draws upon studies in neurobiology and cognitive psychology that investigate human perception of three-dimensional scenes and how the perceptions become long-term visual memory. It argues 1) that the strategy of creating shaped mounds as settings for large, simple sculptural forms was intended to generate shared knowledge and long-term memory and 2) that the basic 3-D forms employed at La Venta between 600 – 400 BC appear in the earliest 2-D semasiographic writing.

*Sacred Geography in the Formative Period: The Water-Mountain at the site of El Manatí*  
 Jordann Davis, M.A. (Texas Tech University)

Archeologists and art historians have increasingly recognized the importance of spatial relationships of objects, monuments, and landforms in the construction and expression of meaning in ancient Mesoamerica. The Gulf Coast site of El Manatí (1700-1000 B.C.) is one of the earliest examples in Mesoamerica of a stylized deposit intentionally placed in relation to a spring or water source and a mound or hill. Drawing upon studies of sacred geography and three-dimensional narratives in ancient Mesoamerica, this paper will explore why Formative Period peoples chose the water-mountain configuration at El Manatí as a site for ritual practice and spectacular deposits. It argues that Mesoamerican concepts of sacred geography, spatial planning, and layered meanings initiated in the Formative Period emerged as a recognition of and reverence for biological interconnectedness and the necessity of

reciprocal relationships between humans and the natural environ for the continuation of human life.

*Poetics in Architecture: The Aesthetics of Space at Palenque*

Jamie Lynn, M.A. (Texas Tech University)

Historians continue to explore the intricate relationship between visual representations and texts in the Maya world. Maya artists used both texts and images as a means of creating a larger visual program with multiple layers of meaning in form and composition. This paper expands our understanding of Maya compositional strategies by analyzing the next appropriate level of visual compositional planning, architecture. It examines the carefully constructed spatial relationships in architectural complexes at Palenque, arguing that the architectural complexes employ specific compositional strategies similar to the poetic devices found in Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions. The analysis considers a range of architectural attributes, including: structural form, alignment, spatial relationships to adjacent structures, and function (conceptually and practically). I will demonstrate that architectural complexes erected during the Late Classic phase at Palenque carefully combined poetic compositional strategies in order to communicate cultural ideologies.

*Ritual Landscape at Chichén Itzá: Recontextualizing the Cenote Sagrado*

Francesca Vega, M.A. (Texas Tech University)

A recent *National Geographic* article, "Secrets of the Maya Otherworld" (Nicklen 2013), reports on some newly-discovered cenotes and affirms that Chichén Itzá's cosmologically-significant features and alignments extended further than previously recognized. This paper considers the impact of these recent discoveries on our understanding of the cosmological role of the cenotes in of the site's design. It contends that the ritual use of the four cenotes and the Castillo, or Pyramid of Kukulcan, was based on a quadripartite cosmological design and an astronomical orientation that appeared in the Terminal Classic period. During this era of social change, when newcomers arrived at Chichén, a new worldview must have taken shape. This paper includes some of my research on reconstructing the Terminal Classic worldview at Chichén, for which I have analyzed and compared reconstructions of Classic Maya worldview with Late Postclassic ethnohistoric accounts, and modern anthropological studies. This proposed Terminal classic worldview serves as the context in which we can view the four cenotes of Chichén.