

# Ninth Annual South-Central Conference on Mesoamerica



Co-Hosted by



San Antonio  
Museum  
of Art



October 19-21, 2018



## **Conference Organizers**

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Cover image:

Platter with a Seated Nobleman (Platón con Noble Sentado), c. AD 600

Maya culture, Guatemala, Northern Petén

Earthenware with pigments

San Antonio Museum of Art, Bequest of Mrs. A.A. Seeligson, Sr., 98.12.10

**Keynote Address**  
**Ancient Maya Life, Death, and Identities:**  
**A View from Yaxuná, Yucatan, Mexico**

**Dr. Vera Tiesler**  
*Autonomous University of Yucatan*

Dr. Vera Tiesler is the Chair of the School of Anthropological Sciences at the Autonomous University of Yucatan, Mexico. Her academic interest lies in illuminating the human conditions of the Maya and of past society in general. To this end, she correlates bioarchaeological information with other material and documentation. During her career, she has conducted work on some 250 Maya burials. Her publications discuss living conditions and life-style among Maya social classes, social aspects of age and gender, physical appearance and body enhancement, violence, sacrifice, and ancestor veneration.



**Friday, October 19, 2018**

**6:00 pm**

**Reception to follow in the Great Hall and Luby Courtyard**

**\*\*Seating will be on a first come first serve basis\*\***

**Saturday, October 20**

*Presentations will be held in the John L. Santikos Auditorium*

**8:00 Registration opens**

**8:15 The San Antonio Museum of Art: Welcome and Introduction to the Collection**

*Michelle Rich (Dallas Museum of Art)*

**8:30 Posthumous Pots: Postclassic Ceramic Contexts and Chronology at Ka'kabish, Belize**

*Kerry L. Sagabiel (Northern Illinois University) and Helen R. Haines (Trent University)*

**8:45 Investigating Ancient Maya Resiliency at Xunantunich, Belize**

*G. Tucker Austin and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)*

**9:00 A Focus on Photogrammetry: The Monuments of El Perú-Waka' from Many Angles**

*Hannah Julia Paredes Kilnoski (The College of Wooster), Mary Kate Kelly (Tulane University), and Olivia Navarro-Farr (The College of Wooster)*

**9:15 Visual Analytics in Archaeology: Recording the Maya Sites of Xno'ha and Tz'unun in Northern Belize**

*Benjamin E. Baaske (Texas A&M University), Robert Warden (Texas A&M University), Thomas H. Guderjan (University of Texas at Tyler), C. Colleen Hanratty (Maya Research Program), Joshua J. Kwoka (University at Buffalo, SUNY), Alex Pastrana, Hollie Lincoln (St. Cloud State University), Carlos Quiroz (St. John's College), Kevin Austin (Maya Research Program), Aubrey O'Toole (University of Newfoundland), Jessie Leonard (Brandeis University), Rianna Bowen (Goodwin and Associates)*

**9:30 Assessment of Ancient Maya Settlement at the Almon Plett Site via Digital Imaging Processing**

*Eric Fries (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)*

**9:45 Emerging Perspectives: A New Analysis of Preclassic Niche Monuments**

*Catherine Nuckols-Wilde (University of Texas at Austin)*

**10:00 Break**

**10:15 Spatial Layout, Status, and Domestic Ritual at a Middle Formative Residential Complex at Tlalancaleca, Puebla**

*Alexander Jurado and Tatsuya Murakami (Tulane University)*

**10:30 A Terminal Early Formative Symbol System in the Maya Lowlands: The Iconography of the Cunil Phase**

*Jim Garber (Texas State University) and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)*

**10:45 Jade Adornments among the Middle Preclassic Maya: New Data from Paso del Macho, Yucatan**

*Evan Parker (Tulane University), George J. Bey III (Millsaps College) and Tomás Gallareta Negrón (INAH)*

**11:00 Early Monumentality and the Development of Dynastic Rulership at Cahal Pech, Belize**

*Claire E. Ebert and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)*

**11:15 New Insights on Preclassic Monumentality from Early Xunantunich, Belize**

*Zoe Rawski (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

**11:30 The Dawning of Maya Civilization: Examining the Archaic to Preclassic Transition in Western Belize**

*Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University), W. James Stemp (Keene State College), and Claire Ebert (Northern Arizona University)*

**11:45 Lunch break**

**1:00 Walking the Light Fantastic**

*Lynda Manning-Schwartz (Independent Scholar)*

**1:15 The Origins of the Nahua Veintena Glyphs Reconsidered**

*Kristopher Driggers (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley)*

**1:30 The River of Gold and the Flow of Power: Death and Gender from the Coclé to the Mixtec**

*Katharine Schumann (University of Houston)*

- 1:45    Revisiting Lowland Maya Population Estimates in the Age of LiDAR**  
*Luke Auld-Thomas and Marcello A. Canuto (Tulane University)*
- 2:00    Airborne LiDAR and Ancient Maya Urbanism at El Palmar, Mexico**  
*Kenichiro Tsukamoto (University of California-Riverside)*
- 2:15    Efficacy of Ground Survey Methods for Verifying LiDAR Data at El Palmar, Campeche, Mexico**  
*J. Reed Miller (University of California-Riverside), Quintín Hernández Gómez, Javier López Camacho, and Kenichiro Tsukamoto (University of California-Riverside)*
- 2:30    LiDAR Survey in Kom, Yucatan, Mexico**  
*Rossana May Ciu (Kaxil Kiuic A.C.), Tomás Gallareta Negrón (INAH), and William Ringle (Davidson College)*
- 2:45    Investigating the Maya Polity at Lower Barton Creek, Cayo, Belize**  
*G. Van Kollias III (Brandeis University) and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)*
- 3:00    Break**
- 3:15    The 2016 LiDAR Survey and Understanding Maya Settlement and Early Anthropocene Landscape Modifications at a Small Maya Center**  
*Thomas Guderjan (University of Texas at Tyler), Joshua Kwoka (University at Buffalo, SUNY) and C. Colleen Hanratty (Maya Research Program)*
- 3:30    Turn to Stone: Limestone Extraction and Processing Practices in the Puuc**  
*Kenneth Seligson (University of Southern California) and William Ringle (Davidson College)*
- 3:45    Stone Tool Resources in Northwestern Belize**  
*Hollie Lincoln (St. Cloud State University)*
- 4:00    Use-Wear of Late Postclassic Obsidian Blades from Utatlán, Guatemala**  
*Kirsty Escalante (Tulane University)*

**4:15    Reevaluating Current Perspectives on the Ancient Maya Procurement of High Quality Dark Brown Chert in Southern Campeche, Mexico**

*Kelsey J. Sullivan and Kenichiro Tsukamoto (University of California-Riverside)*

**4:30    Out of Maya Tombs: Political Organization and Rulership at the Classic Maya Kingdom of Buenavista del Cayo as Understood through its Royal Burials**

*Jason Yaeger and Bernadette Cap (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

**4:45    Break**

*BBQ prepared by Jason Dady will be available for purchase in the West Courtyard. Cash Bar.*

**7:00    Out of the Maya Tombs screening**

Followed by a question and answer session led by

*David Lebrun – Film Writer and Director*

*Michelle Rich – Dallas Museum of Art, Ellen and Harry S.*

*Parker III Assistant Curator of Arts of the Americas and Maya Archaeologist*

*Jason Yaeger – UTSA President's Endowed Professor of Anthropology and Maya Archaeologist*

**\*\*Seating will be on a first come first serve basis\*\***



## Out of the Maya Tombs

*Written and Directed by  
David Lebrun*



Over the last century, exquisitely painted ancient Maya ceramics – almost all illicitly looted from royal tombs – have made their way into public and private collections across the globe. These amazing works of art open an extraordinary window on the Maya past. However, the zeal to collect these objects has resulted in the destruction of archaeological evidence that could tell us as much or more about the ancient Maya world.

The documentary *Out of the Maya Tombs* enters the world of the vases to explore the royal life and rich mythology of the Maya, as well as the tangled issues involved in the collection and study of looted art. The story is told by villagers, looters, archaeologists, art historians, dealers and curators. For each, these vases have a radically different value and meaning.



**Sunday, October 21**

*Presentations will be held in the John L. Santikos Auditorium*

**8:30 Registration opens**

**8:45 The Geographical Importance of Mesoamerican Territory for the Aztec Expansion**

*Raquel Urroz (UNAM)*

**9:00 The ‘Bone Codex’ of Jasaw Chan K’awiil I**

*Carl Callaway (Austin Community College) and Peter Biro (Independent Scholar)*

**9:15 The Captive Bone and Ossified Selves in Three Manuscripts of Colonial Guatemala**

*Servando Z. Hinojosa (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley)*

**9:30 Let Them Eat Chaya: Cultural Revitalization through Culinary Offerings in Belize**

*Lauren Miller Griffith and Cameron S. Griffith (Texas Tech University)*

**9:45 Borders? We Don’t Need No Stinking Borders**

*Brett A. Houk and Brooke Bonorden (Texas Tech University)*

**10:00 The Xicaque and the Decline of the Misiones of Leán y Mulia: 1751-1821**

*Roberto Rivera (Family Tree DNA)*

**10:15 El Jobillo: A Classic Maya Neighborhood?**

*Jocelyne M. Ponce (Tulane University) and Francisco J. Pérez (Universidad del Valle)*

**10:30 Chemical Investigations of Natural Element Concentrations in Marine Sediment in Punta Ycacos Lagoon, Belize**

*Cheryl M. Foster and Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

**10:45 Maya L-Shaped Structures: New Evidence from Xunantunich**

*Jessica Devio (Washington State University)*

**11:00 Salt in the Market Place Economy of the Classic Maya**

*Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

**11:15 Chemical Analysis Results from Two Mounds at the Ancient Maya Salt Works, Paynes Creek National Park, Belize**

*Rachel Watson and Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

**11:30 Chemical Analyses of Obsidian as a Proxy for Salt Distribution**

*E. Cory Sills (University of Texas at Tyler) and Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

**11:45 Portable X-Ray Fluorescence of Obsidian from Postclassic Placencia Village, Belize**

*Rebecca Appert and E. Cory Sills (University of Texas at Tyler)*

**12:00 Lunch Break**

**1:00 POK-TA-POK the Maya Ballgame at Cancuén**

*Fabian Dominguez (Harvard University Extension School)*

**1:15 The Emergence of Imagery: The Palma's Place in the Public Iconographic Program of El Tajín**

*Cierra Frances Linander (Alvin Community College) and Rex Koontz (University of Houston)*

**1:30 A Maya Ethnography-Based Model for Archaeological Ritual Precincts**

*Garrett Cook (Baylor University)*

**1:45 Understanding the Architectural, Ritual and Temporal Dynamics of a Maya City: A Perspective from Xnoha, Belize**

*C. Colleen Hanratty (Maya Research Program), Thomas Guderjan (University of Texas at Tyler), Carlos Quiroz (St. John's College), Hollie Lincoln (St. Cloud State University), Kevin Austin (Maya Research Program), Benjamin Baaske (Texas A&M University), Hannah Plummer, Jessie Leonard (Brandeis University), Alex Pastrana, and Alexander Parmington*

**2:00 Images of Polity at Wari Camp, Belize**

*Laura Jane Levi and Sarah Boudreaux (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

- 2:15 Making Communities Move: Reclassifying the Drainage at Wari Camp, Belize**  
*Christian Sheumaker (University of Texas at San Antonio)*
- 2:30 Asking the Wrong Question, Getting the Right Answer: Common Property Management and the Sacred Landscape of a Maya Community**  
*Michael P. Saunders (Tulane University)*
- 2:45 A Possible Ehecatl Figure from West Mexico**  
*Christopher Kilgore (University of Houston)*
- 3:00 Middle Preclassic Ceramic Production in the Mopan Valley, Belize: A Preliminary Petrographic Analysis**  
*Alessandra Villarreal (University of Texas at San Antonio)*
- 3:15 X-Ray Toads and “The Enema Pot” - Revisited**  
*Mike McBride (Independent Scholar)*
- 3:30 Recent Investigations in the Elite Maya Residential Complex of Group B at Xunantunich, Belize**  
*Michael Petrozza (University of Texas at San Antonio), M. Kathryn Brown (University of Texas at San Antonio), Jason Yaeger (University of Texas at San Antonio), Rachel Horowitz (Appalachian State University), Kit Nelson (New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts)*
- 3:45 The Actun Balam Vase: An Anatomy of a Masterpiece and the Anarchy of Perception**  
*Margaret Greco (San Antonio College)*
- 4:00 It’s Not Graffiti, It’s Art! Artistic Training and Scribal Practice at El Castillo, Classic Xunantunich, Belize**  
*Leah McCurdy (The University of Texas at Arlington) and M. Kathryn Brown (University of Texas at San Antonio)*



## Ten Favorite Reasons to Visit the Museum

**1** Members see it first, see it free.

**6** You can see the world without leaving the city.

**2** So many conversation starters.

**7** If you're feeling old, we've got older (5,000 years older).

**3** We put the art in PARTY every 2nd Friday.

**8** It's like hitting the refresh button.

**4** A Botero Venus, a Korean Buddha, an Indian Yogini... we've got it all!

**9** Art makes you smart!

**5** This is your art collection, San Antonio.

**10** It's the perfect place to impress your date.



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## SCCM Attendee Museum Perks



**PLATTER WITH A SEATED NOBLEMAN (PLATÓN CON NOBLE SENTADO)**, circa 600  
Maya culture, Guatemala, Northern Petén  
Earthenware with pigments  
San Antonio Museum of Art, Bequest of Mrs. A.A. Seeligson, Sr., 98.12.10

**Admission is free! Just keep your conference badge visible.**

**Enjoy special access to the Ancient Americas galleries 3:00–5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.**

### 20% OFF

**In our Museum Shop where you'll find special conference themed merchandise.**





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MAYA.<sup>®</sup>  
☛ C O F F E E ☛

*Welcome!*  
**MUSEUM DINING**



**BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER**

TUESDAY - SATURDAY 8 A.M. - 10 P.M.

SUNDAY 8 A.M. - 8 P.M.

CLOSED MONDAY

**MUSEUM MEMBERS SAVE 10% ON DINING PURCHASES**

*Located in the Historic Berretta Hops House*

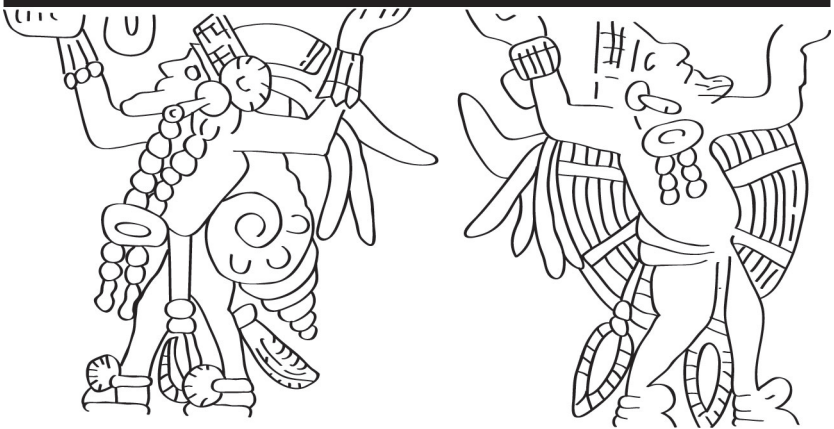
*Jason Dady*  
RESTAURANT

**Join us for the**  
**10th Annual**  
**South-Central Conference**  
**on Mesoamerica**

**Hosted by Louisiana State University**

**Fall 2019**

**For more information on ways  
to support the SCCM please visit our  
website at  
[www.southcentralmeso.org](http://www.southcentralmeso.org)**





## **Abstracts**

*(In order by first author's last name)*

**Appert, Rebecca and E. Cory Sills (University of Texas at Tyler)**

*Portable X-Ray Fluorescence of Obsidian from Postclassic Placencia Village, Belize*

The Placencia Village site is a Postclassic (A.D. 900-1500) ancient Maya settlement located at the tip of the Placencia Peninsula in southern Belize. The site was previously excavated by the Point Placencia Archaeological Project directed by the late Dr. Jefferson MacKinnon. The excavations yielded numerous obsidian blades. We assayed the blades using portable XRF equipment at the UT-Tyler Social Science Lab. In this paper, we report the methods, results, and implications of portable XRF obsidian analyses. The ancient Maya of the Postclassic Placencia Village site participated in an extensive trade network where obsidian was acquired from Maya highland sources.

**Auld-Thomas, Luke and Marcello A. Canuto (Tulane University)**

*Revisiting Lowland Maya Population Estimates in the Age of LiDAR*

Estimating ancient population size from archaeological data is a notoriously complex procedure, but it remains important for understanding social and environmental processes. This paper revisits ancient Lowland Maya population in light of a 2,144 sq. km. lidar survey undertaken in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, which documented highly variable settlement densities at local and regional scales. Using this dataset, we estimate a Late Classic population of 7-11 million people in the Central Maya Lowlands. We present a methodology for estimating population from regionally-extensive datasets, and examine settlement variability by comparing the generally rural La Corona region with the city of Tikal.

**Austin, G. Tucker and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)**

*Investigating Ancient Maya Resiliency at Xunantunich, Belize*

Despite more than a century of intensive archaeological research, the Classic Maya Collapse continues to be highly debated amongst archaeologists. This presentation targets our understanding of the Classic Maya Collapse and human responses to contributing stressors at the ceremonial center of Xunantunich, Belize. Research from the 2018 field season presents evidence of human response to the collapse in the form of minor architectural development and reorganization. This research helps us understand how the Maya of Xunantunich restructured their physical environment in resilience to social, political, and environmental change.

**Awe, Jaime J. (Northern Arizona University), W. James Stemp (Keene State College), and Claire Ebert (Northern Arizona University)**

*The Dawning of Maya Civilization: Examining the Archaic to Preclassic Transition in Western Belize*

Despite more than a century of archaeological research, archaeologists still know precious little of the cultural character of the earliest people who gave birth to Maya Civilization. Besides questions of their origins, which continue to confound us, few researchers have bothered to investigate early settlements in the Maya area, or to examine cultural continuities and discontinuities between Archaic peoples and Preclassic Maya communities. By comparing what we know of the Terminal Early Formative Cunal phase Maya with that of the Belize Archaic, we hope to begin a discourse on this very intriguing subject, and to highlight topics for future research in Western Belize.

**Baaske, Benjamin E. (Texas A&M University), Robert Warden (Texas A&M University), Thomas H. Guderjan (University of Texas at Tyler), C. Colleen Hanratty (Maya Research Program), Joshua J. Kwoka (University at Buffalo, SUNY), Alex Pastrana, Hollie Lincoln (St. Cloud State University), Carlos Quiroz (St. John's College), Kevin Austin (Maya Research Program), Aubrey O'Toole (University of Newfoundland), Jessie Leonard (Brandeis University), Rianna Bowen (Goodwin and Associates)**

*Visual Analytics in Archaeology: Recording the Maya Sites of Xno'ha and Tz'unun in Northern Belize*

Visual analytics in archaeology pertains to the visualization of analytical methods in the context of archaeology. Feeding this visualization are various methods of digital documentation, such as laser scanning and photogrammetry. In the context of this study, archaeological sites were documented primarily using photogrammetry, more specifically the technique of structure from motion (SfM). Structures at Xno'ha were recorded on daily intervals during excavation. Once excavation opened at Tz'unun, structures at either site were recorded once every two days. This study explores a new recording methodology through the application of digital recording techniques in an archaeological context.

**Callaway, Carl (Austin Community College) and Peter Biro (Independent Scholar)**

*The 'Bone Codex' of Jasaw Chan K'awiil I*

In 1962 Tikal excavators found a burial cache of inscribed bones from the royal tomb of Jasaw Chan K'awiil I (682-734 AD). Initially archaeologists proposed the cache was a 'bone codex' whose passages could be aligned vertically, side-by-side with texts read via sequential dates. Advances in epigraphy now allow for a greater understanding of the bones in question. While not a continual series of unified texts from a single manuscript, the bones do display select passages and scenes, that were sourced from specialized hand books containing: stellar almanacs, god histories, family rites and royal obituaries—information utilized by the scribe-king.

**Cook, Garrett (Baylor University)**

*A Maya Ethnography-Based Model for Archaeological Ritual Precincts*

Ethnographic research on Momostecan pilgrimage in highland Guatemala maps shrines and patterns of seasonal visitation. This emic model demonstrates linkages between the east and masculine solar and maize deities with planting season rituals, the center with the planet Venus, a vertical north south alignment of the milky way, and the patron deity complex of the dominant patrilineage, as well as the green corn season, and the west with feminine personifiers, the mature maize harvest, fertility, and the wife giving elite patrilineage. Archaeological parallels are suggested.

**Devio, Jessica (Washington State University)**

*Maya L-Shaped Structures: New Evidence from Xunantunich*

L-shaped structures have been identified at multiple sites in the Maya area. There has been some debate over the nature of these structures and whether they served as domestic structures or served communities in some other manner. Extensive data collection from a Late-to-Terminal Classic L-shaped structure found near Early Xunantunich have yielded new data on the nature of these structures based on artifacts, botanical data and spatial associations with Early Xunantunich. This paper discusses some of the current findings with an emphasis on the botanical remains to assess whether such structures served domestic functions.

**Dominguez, Fabian (Harvard University Extension School)**

*POK-TA-POK the Maya Ballgame at Cancuén*

Cancuén was a significant ceremonial center in the southernmost region of the Maya territories that was abandoned at approximately 800 AD. This discussion will summarize the indigenous representation of the Maya Ballgame by analysis of three ballcourt marker monuments from Cancuén. These stones were carved at the site in the generation before it was abandoned. They display iconography and inscriptions that merit detailed study which evidences that the ceremonial ritual of the Maya ballgame did occur in a historical context and was not merely a game. Detailed drawings of these monuments will be provided.

**Driggers, Kristopher (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley)**

*The Origins of the Nahua Veintena Glyphs Reconsidered*

This paper reexamines Kubler and Gibson's classic argument about the origins of the Nahua veintena signs in light of new evidence: namely, the early deployment of these signs in calendars invested in polemics about the history of image worship. Tracing the historical trajectory of these signs, from their scant attestations in the Aztec period through their gradual adoption in Early Colonial manuscripts, I argue that many of the veintena signs were most widely used after mendicant historians reinterpreted these signs as survivals from an early period in Aztec religion when native ritual centered primarily upon

the worship of the stars.

**Ebert, Claire E. and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)**

*Early Monumentality and the Development of Dynastic Rulership at Cahal Pech, Belize*

We present the results of recent investigations at Cahal Pech, Belize that documented a Middle Preclassic period (~900-300 BC) E-Group complex. Located in an open public plaza, the monumental complex likely functioned as a forum for public events that supported the creation of early ranked social hierarchies. In the Late Preclassic (300 BC-AD 300), the E-Group was replaced by an ancestor shrine and buildings demarcating public civic space from private elite space. These shifts in monumental construction temporally track the development of ideological manifestations of power and provide evidence for the formalization of dynastic rulership by an emerging elite class.

**Escalante, Kirsty (Tulane University)**

*Use-Wear of Late Postclassic Obsidian Blades from Uatlán, Guatemala*

This paper focuses on the results of a use-wear study of Late Postclassic (AD 1250-1525) obsidian blades from two sites in the Uatlán/Q'umarkaj region of highland Guatemala: Ismachi and Pakaman. Analysis of a random sample of ten blades revealed signs of intensive use on all of the blades as well as microscopic hair or fiber attached to the edge of 40% of the sample. After comparing these archaeological examples of use-wear to experimental studies, I argue that the attached hairs may indicate some blades were animal processing tools, though it is probable that the blades had multiple functions.

**Linander, Cierra Frances (Alvin Community College) and Rex Koontz (University of Houston)**

*The Emergence of Imagery: The Palma's Place in the Public Iconographic Program of El Tajín*

This presentation establishes specific iconographic connections between the palma object-type and the public iconography at El Tajín. We identify palma iconography related to Tajín's niched structures, though scholars have long noticed the stylistic similarity between palmas and the site. However, little has been said about how the palma and Tajín visual culture articulate; the various relationships between Tajín, palma style, and iconography have not been examined as a whole. We explore a particular important example, the Palma with a Waterbird at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, as a case study in these relationships.

**Fries, Eric (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)**

*Assessment of Ancient Maya Settlement at the Almon Plett Site via Digital Imaging Processing*

The Almon Plett Site is a Maya minor center located in the Aguacate region of western Belize.

Local clearing of vegetation for pasture and farmland has exposed a large number of archaeological features in this region. Using a variety of digital image processing techniques, archaeological features around Almon Plett were extracted from satellite imagery. Combined with pedestrian survey and preliminary test excavations, the resulting data were analyzed to evaluate the settlement pattern associated with Almon Plett and other nearby minor centers, and compare it to settlement patterns at other sites across the southern Maya Lowlands.

**Foster, Cheryl M. and Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)**

*Chemical Investigations of Natural Element Concentrations in Marine Sediment in Punta Ycacos Lagoon, Belize*

Soil chemical analyses of soils are useful for determining activity areas at archaeological sites, as humans alter the natural chemical properties of sediments. However, chemical testing of soils in archaeological contexts in the Maya area is a relatively recent application. This project investigates the elemental composition of marine sediment below the sea floor in Punta Ycacos Lagoon, Belize by using ICP-AES to test for elemental measurement and density maps to show concentrations. My findings provide a baseline for comparisons with sediment chemistry at underwater archaeological sites elsewhere in the lagoon system and give rise to several future research topics.

**Garber, Jim (Texas State University) and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)**

*A Terminal Early Formative Symbol System in the Maya Lowlands: The Iconography of the Cunil Phase*

Excavations in the upper Belize Valley have produced substantial evidence of a Terminal Early Formative occupation (Cunil 1100-900 BC). This paper addresses the symbolic and iconographic aspects of the Cunil remains as they relate to other areas of Mesoamerica. In particular, we intend to show that the Cunil Phase occupants were active participants in a Pan Mesoamerican ideological interaction sphere. The presence of a uniquely lowland Maya symbol system in the Terminal Early Formative is a departure from the traditional view that the lowland Maya were “latecomers” as far as participation in and or contributions to this Pan-Mesoamerican system.

**Greco, Margaret (San Antonio College)**

*The Actun Balam Vase: An Anatomy of a Masterpiece and the Anarchy of Perception*

The science of archaeology is particularly vulnerable to ethnocentric assumptions that guide the interpretation of imagery as artifact. The account of the discovery of the Actun Balam Vase by David Pendergast in 1969 reveals a reliance on the perceptual model of the “masterpiece” to distill meaning. Indeed, this model still flows as an undercurrent of shared sensibilities among fragmented scholarly disciplines focusing on ancient Maya aesthetic artifacts. This paper dissects the anatomical assumptions of the “masterpiece” in relation to its antithesis in action,

the anarchy of “looting.” A nuanced cultural perception of imagery emerges as an alternative conduit for interdisciplinary dialogue.

**Guderjan, Thomas (University of Texas at Tyler), Joshua Kwoka (University at Buffalo, SUNY) and C. Colleen Hanratty (Maya Research Program)**

*The 2016 LiDAR Survey and Understanding Maya Settlement and Early Anthropocene Landscape Modifications at a Small Maya Center*

Xnoha is a small Maya city in northwestern Belize near the eastern edge of the Alacranes Bajo. Its strategic position has enabled us to monitor significant events in the temporal dynamics of regional geopolitics in the Classic Maya world. Xnoha's scale has also enabled testing of models of Maya cities. However, the most fascinating component of Xnoha is the discovery of hundreds of spatially defined compounds bounded by albaradas in the uplands surrounding the central precinct. These are found in upland residential groups in the cardinal directions (NEWS) from the Kawik or central precinct. This paper focuses on a summary of the upland, bounded residential features. We summarize our current information after the 2018 field season and consider the meaning of these features in terms of scale, population size, land tenure and household production. While it is too soon to assess the impact of these features on our understanding, we are just now searching for ethnographic analogies to help us do so. It is clear, though, that the Classic Period, the Maya had entered the early Anthropocene by modifying every aspect of the landscape they encountered and making it as much theirs as it was nature's.

**Hanratty, C. Colleen (Maya Research Program), Thomas Guderjan (University of Texas at Tyler), Carlos Quiroz (St. John's College), Hollie Lincoln (St. Cloud State University), Kevin Austin (Maya Research Program), Benjamin Baaske (Texas A&M University), Hannah Plummer, Jessie Leonard (Brandeis University), Alex Pastrana, and Alexander Parmington**

*Understanding the Architectural, Ritual and Temporal Dynamics of a Maya City: A Perspective from Xnoha, Belize*

Over the past seven field seasons, the Blue Creek Archaeological Project has conducted extensive investigations of the residential and public architecture at the site of Xnoha, Belize. These excavations have revealed complex architectural sequences and ritual activities dating from the Late Preclassic to the Terminal Classic time periods. This paper will summarize the data recovered from these excavations with particular focus on the site's architectural features and ritual deposits recovered from chultuns, caches, and burials.

**Hinojosa, Servando Z. (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley)**

*The Captive Bone and Ossified Selves in Three Manuscripts of Colonial Guatemala*

Classic and Post-Classic Mayas linked human skeletal remains to enduring personal forces and attempted to both capture and recognize specific people through their bones. One way they did

this was by curating individual bones said to belong to an ancestor or enemy. The strong interest in preserving, revering, and even asserting control over illustrious persons through their bones appears in the Rabinal Achi, the Pop wuj, and the Anales de los kaqchikeles, three colonial manuscripts from Guatemala. In each document the bones of important individuals ossify an ancestral self, affirm the authority of other agents and, ultimately, drive the narrative.

**Houk, Brett A. and Brooke Bonorden (Texas Tech University)**

*Borders? We Don't Need No Stinking Borders*

Having fled the Caste War in Mexico, the San Pedro Maya settled small villages in the forests of western British Honduras and northeastern Petén from the 1850s to the 1930s. Archaeological and archival information demonstrate that the western “border” of British Honduras was a colonial concept that was willfully ignored by the San Pedro Maya. In this paper, we explore how the colonial concern for the frontier and the San Pedro Maya’s disregard for it, among other factors, eventually led to the forceful eviction of the Maya from their villages.

**Jurado, Alexander and Tatsuya Murakami (Tulane University)**

*Spatial Layout, Status, and Domestic Ritual at a Middle Formative Residential Complex at Tlalancaleca, Puebla*

Fieldwork recently undertaken at Tlalancaleca, Puebla, explored a residence dating to the Texoloc phase (650-500 BC) of the Middle Formative period. Horizontal excavations exposed a residential platform and several wattle and daub rooms flanking a central patio. This paper reports preliminary interpretations of domestic ritual and the status of inhabitants. In addition, the layout of this residential complex is compared to residences at contemporaneous sites in the Puebla-Tlaxcala valley for insights into the spatial organization of Formative period dwellings.

**Kilgore, Christopher (University of Houston)**

*A Possible Ehecatl Figure from West Mexico*

This presentation focuses on a particularly sophisticated example of Late Preclassic West Mexican ceramic sculpture: a dancing figure with complex zoomorphic headdress. While West Mexican sculpture was once seen as illustrative of everyday activities, it is now seen as embodying certain religious practices. I hope to create a more specific iconographical reading, based on Mesoamerican deity systems, for the object in question. I hope that the presentation will provide new insights into the religious and cultural practices in the object's particular social and political context.



**Kollias, G. Van III (Brandeis University) and Jaime J. Awe (Northern Arizona University)**  
*Investigating the Maya Polity at Lower Barton Creek, Cayo, Belize*

Over fifty years of settlement research in the Belize River Valley has made the region one of the most intensively investigated areas of the Maya Lowlands. LiDAR research conducted by the Belize Valley Archaeological Reconnaissance Project identified the previously unknown center of Lower Barton Creek in the southern extent of the Belize Valley, resolving a major gap in our understanding of settlement histories in the region. In this paper, we present the results of settlement survey and excavations in the Lower Barton Creek site core, contextualizing the site's occupation within the ancient socio-political dynamics of the Belize River Valley.

**Levi, Laura Jane and Sarah Boudreaux (University of Texas at San Antonio)**  
*Images of Polity at Wari Camp, Belize*

At the ancient Maya center of Wari Camp, Belize, it is possible to discern two separate programs of community building and polity formation. Each invoked distinctive spatial imagery and each pursued distinctive political agendas. Despite such profound differences, each engaged in remarkably similar kinds of ritual processes. This paper examines the significance of ritual continuity in the face of dramatic historical transformation. The lessons of assemblage thinking are suggested to reconcile apparent contradictions between intentionality and tradition. However, other theoretical approaches seem better suited to understanding how power differentials contribute to the dynamism of human landscapes.

**Lincoln, Hollie (St. Cloud State University)**  
*Stone Tool Resources in Northwestern Belize*

Whether for ritual, utilitarian or domestic tasks, stone tools were used on a daily basis by the ancient Maya. Heavy reliance on such items implies that the stone resources were likely quite important as well and influenced how people moved across the landscape. Important chert bearing locations in Belize, such as Colha have been well documented for their distinct coloring and qualities which were highly utilized, distributed, and are easily recognizable across the Maya landscape. This paper assesses the qualities and availability of chert across the Northwestern Belize landscape and spatially relates them to consumer communities.

**Manning-Schwartz, Lynda (Independent Scholar)**  
*Walking the Light Fantastic*

Maya scholars have long recognized that the Milky Way is the highway that royal souls walk after death, winding through the watery underworld of Xib'alb'a into the light of day, from death to life again. Astronomers have always shown the Milky Way as fuzzy, grey areas on star maps, nestled among bright constellations named for ancient, forgotten Greek myths; but modern photographic technology now allows us to see the Milky Way in all its seasonal glory. Join me

on a trip into the Land of the Dead and meet the Lords of the Night and Earth.

**May Ciau, Rossana (Kaxil Kiuic A.C.), Tomás Gallareta Negrón (INAH), and William Ringle (Davidson College)**

*LiDAR Survey in Kom, Yucatan, Mexico*

In 2017 an extensive LiDAR flight produced data for studying complete communities as well as their hinterlands in large sections of the Bolonchen District, in the Puuc Region of Yucatan, where the ancient Maya ruins of Kom are located. LiDAR images enhanced the visibility of low linear features like causeways and foundation braces, depressions or holes in the ground related with underground cisterns, and mines and quarries for construction purposes. Also, underground kilns that were used for lime production are clearly visible. The ground survey produced additional information related with chronological data that allowed us to identify three main occupations.

**McBride, Mike (Independent Scholar)**

*X-Ray Toads and “The Enema Pot” - Revisited*

This presentation is a review and update of previous research done on an important example of Ik’ Site polychrome vases. The vase presented yields much information about Yajaw-te’ K’inich, the 8th century Ajaw, a subordinate lord, K’inich Lamaw Ek’, as well as a ritual event in which they participated. Additional information contained in the painted scene identifies the vase painter, Tubal Ajaw, and suggests an association between toad transformation via the use of ritual enemas, and a war event.

**McCurdy, Leah (The University of Texas at Arlington) and M. Kathryn Brown (University of Texas at San Antonio)**

*It’s Not Graffiti, It’s Art! Artistic Training and Scribal Practice at El Castillo, Classic Xunantunich, Belize*

Re-framing modern graffiti as a valuable genre of artistic practice has been the mission of many artists. Their message focuses on the importance of artistic expression, intention, and skill, whatever the media and wherever the installation. In this presentation, we look at what we call “graffiti” of the ancient Maya with the goal of re-framing previous conceptions and offering insights into ancient Maya artistic expression, intention, and skill. This presentation focuses on finds in a newly excavated room and the whole corpus of “graffiti” discovered thus far at the Tut Building of El Castillo acropolis.

**Miller Griffith, Lauren and Cameron S. Griffith (Texas Tech University)**

*Let Them Eat Chaya: Cultural Revitalization through Culinary Offerings in Belize*

In tourism research, the adventurous traveler who tries all things local is often juxtaposed with “the ugly American,” who is uncomfortable with new experiences and demands the comforts of home. The former eats street food, the latter seeks a McDonalds in each new locale. The reality of how tourists engage with local foodscapes is, of course, more complex. Currently, various eateries in Belize are championing traditional foodstuffs as a path to sustainable development and cultural preservation, but will tourists bite? Our text analysis of Trip Advisor reviews of San Ignacio restaurants sheds light on how tourists feel about such fare.

**Miller, J. Reed (University of California-Riverside), Quintín Hernández Gómez, Javier López Camacho, and Kenichiro Tsukamoto (University of California-Riverside)**

*Efficacy of Ground Survey Methods for Verifying LiDAR Data at El Palmar, Campeche, Mexico*

Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) imagery can provide an incredible quantity of data regarding settlement patterns, connective features, and site extents to archaeologists in the Maya lowlands. However, efficient field methods are required to verify these extensive data before they can be studied in detail. During July 2018, I conducted ground-truthing survey of LiDAR data at El Palmar, Mexico, using the Emlid Reach RTK-GNSS, QGIS, and a digital tablet. Though limitations exist, this system was extremely effective in identifying multiple types of features under a variety of vegetative cover, and utilizes technologies that are both efficient in field and widely accessible.

**Nuckols-Wilde, Catherine (University of Texas at Austin)**

*Emerging Perspectives: A New Analysis of Preclassic Niche Monuments*

Preclassic niche monuments portray anthropomorphic figures emerging from high relief cavities. No study to date has viewed these monuments within a broader consideration of recent archaeological data, matrices of exchange, and patterns of communication. Most recent studies characterize them with poorly defined labels such as “Olmec style” or “epi-Olmec”, which only confuse the matter. In this paper, I will present a new analysis of the corpus of niche monuments, taking into consideration new data concerning their temporal placements to interpret the ways in which these monuments functioned within the larger matrix of sociopolitical exchange during the Preclassic period.

**Paredes Kilnoski, Hannah Julia (The College of Wooster), Mary Kate Kelly (Tulane University), and Olivia Navarro-Farr (The College of Wooster)**

*A Focus on Photogrammetry: The Monuments of El Perú-Waka' from Many Angles*

The Proyecto Arqueológico Waka' (PAW) at the site of El Perú-Waka', Petén, Guatemala, initiated a program of photogrammetric recording this 2018 season focused on documenting its stelae. In this process, a series of photos are entered into Agisoft PhotoScan, a software that creates 3D models using these images. These models will be used to create drawings of the monuments and may be used to produce replicas. Photogrammetry has the potential to advance discovery and make information more accessible. This paper focuses on El Perú's Stela 44 in terms of the methodology employed, preliminary results, and possibilities for future developments.

**Parker, Evan (Tulane University), George J. Bey III (Millsaps College) and Tomás Gallareta Negrón (INAH)**

*Jade Adornments among the Middle Preclassic Maya: New Data from Paso del Macho, Yucatan*

Jade tadpole spoons and clamshell pendants represent some of the most symbolically charged items of wealth and power in formative Mesoamerica. The Tzimin jades are a newly discovered cache of these items from the Middle Preclassic (900-350 BC) Maya village of Paso del Macho that offer additional context for assessing the function and significance of jade adornments during this time. Based on material characteristics, the timing of the deposition, and their location, these items are associated with cosmogenesis, the Middle Preclassic fertility complex, and the formation of early cooperative social compacts for the agricultural pioneers of the Puuc.

**Petrozza, Michael (University of Texas at San Antonio), M. Kathryn Brown (University of Texas at San Antonio), Jason Yaeger (University of Texas at San Antonio), Rachel Horowitz (Appalachian State University), Kit Nelson (New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts)**

*Recent Investigations in the Elite Maya Residential Complex of Group B at Xunantunich, Belize*

Group B at the archaeological site of Xunantunich in Belize, is an elite residential complex. The group was first investigated in 1938 by Sir J. Eric S. Thompson, since then the group has been studied sporadically by numerous investigators. However, in 2016 extensive ongoing research at the group has been conducted by the Mopan Valley Preclassic Project of the University of Texas at San Antonio. Our research thus far has uncovered an intriguing chronology of events including abandonment, post-abandonment reoccupation, and evidence of warfare. This presentation will provide a brief overview of the group's history, our research, findings, and interpretations.

**Ponce, Jocelyne M. (Tulane University) and Francisco J. Pérez (Universidad del Valle)**  
*El Jobillo: A Classic Maya Neighborhood?*

Some significant social and spatial units of organization and analysis include neighborhoods, wards and zones. These intermediate scale units are important to understand Maya social organization and integration, especially in dispersed or sparsely populated regions such as La Corona's in northwest Petén, Guatemala. This paper assesses criteria regarding the identification of such units in the archaeological record. Results of spatial analysis, testing and excavations of architecture are used to determine the role of the settlement cluster of El Jobillo as a potential neighborhood and its social significance within a broader regional context.

**New Insights on Preclassic Monumentality from Early Xunantunich, Belize**  
*Zoe Rawski (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

The Maya Preclassic was a dynamic period during which some of the lowlands' grandest monumental architecture was erected. As early centers were carved out of the jungle, natural features were frequently incorporated into the built landscape. In this paper, we share insights from recent excavations of a monumental platform at the site of Early Xunantunich in order to explore the ways in which the Maya merged their built and natural environment by modifying the natural landscape. We contextualize the architectural history of this important early platform within the broader ceremonial center, incorporating new data on the structure's complex form.

**The Xicaque and the Decline of the Misiones of Leán y Mulia: 1751-1821**  
*Roberto Rivera (Family Tree DNA)*

At SCCM In November of 2016 I presented a paper named "The Xicaque of Central Honduras." That paper examined what Xicaque culture was before the arrival of Europeans to the Americas. It presented the types of interactions documented between the Xicaque and Spanish settlers. It presented a short narrative of Xicaque ethnohistory during the first half of the 18th century I want to take this opportunity to present the best documented period of Xicaque ethnohistory. The conclusion to a century long period that saw an enduring Xicaque resist the Spanish until 1821.

**Posthumous Pots: Postclassic Ceramic Contexts and Chronology at Ka'kabish, Belize**  
*Kerry L. Sagabiel (Northern Illinois University) and Helen R. Haines (Trent University)*

Ka'kabish, Belize is 10 km northwest of Lamanai and, like Lamanai, was occupied in the Postclassic. Four chultun burials in site center, several hinterland burials, and a cache containing Postclassic ceramic vessels have been excavated at Ka'kabish. This paper will use ceramic cross-dating, ceramic seriation, non-ceramic artifact analysis, and radiocarbon dates from these primary contexts, along with ceramics from secondary contexts, to propose a working Postclassic ceramic chronology for Ka'kabish. Ceramic links with the northern Yucatan will be explored along with implications for trade, immigration, and emulation.

### **Making Communities Move: Reclassifying the Drainage at Wari Camp, Belize**

*Christian Sheumaker (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

Communities have long been contested domains in archaeological interpretation. In this paper, I will employ practice and structuration theories in order to glean “communities of practice” formed by movement, both ritual and mundane. Embracing interactional, ideational, and spatial components of community formation, these movements were situated within Wari Camp’s vast drainage system, an ancient Maya community in northwestern Belize. These daily rhythms shaped and in turn were shaped by communal habitus that highlighted group commonalities while minimizing group differences.

### **Salt in the Market Place Economy of the Classic Maya**

*Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

Two methods of salt production were used in the Maya area, including solar evaporation and evaporation in pots over fires. Mapping wooden buildings and artifacts on the sea floor at the Paynes Creek Salt Works in southern Belize indicated salt was produced in salt kitchens by the brine-boiling method for transport by canoe to inland marketplaces during the Classic period (AD 300-900). Salt cakes were made in standard sizes for marketplace trade as currency equivalencies as occurred historically elsewhere. Estimates of salt production at the Paynes Creek Salt Works and elsewhere in the Maya world are discussed.

### **Asking the Wrong Question, Getting the Right Answer: Common Property Management and the Sacred Landscape of a Maya Community**

*Michael P. Saunders (Tulane University)*

The concept of landscape is increasingly utilized as an analytical tool across disciplines, especially in the context of (past or present) coupled social-ecological systems. I explore how one such landscape – at once social and ecological, human and nonhuman – is constructed and sustained. Specifically, I discuss how ideas concerning common-property resources are fundamental to a recursive relationship between the physical and cognitive aspects of a Maya landscape, showing how sacred ‘oversight’ of local resources engenders effective common property management while, in turn, ideas of communal management transform into sacred the mundane actions that shape (and sanctify) the local biophysical landscape.

### **Turn to Stone: Limestone Extraction and Processing Practices in the Puuc**

*Kenneth Seligson (University of Southern California) and William Ringle (Davidson College)*

Muluchtzekel is a large site in the Puuc Region of the northern Yucatán with construction episodes dating to the Preclassic and Classic Periods. It is strategically located on the border between the hilly Bolonchén district and the Valle de Santa Elena. The high frequency of masonry architecture at the site suggests that the limestone industry would have been a key component of the site’s economy, as well as a critical concern with regard to environmental

resource management practices. This paper presents recent research on limestone quarrying and processing practices at Muluchtzekel and elucidates the industry's significance to the site.

**The River of Gold and the Flow of Power: Death and Gender from the Coclé to the Mixtec**  
*Katharine Schumann (University of Houston)*

The idea that metalworking traditions were transmitted into Mexico through the Panamanian isthmus is not new. However, could the cultural significance of gold objects as burial items have been transmitted along with crafting methods? This presentation identifies parallels in the societal function of gold objects between the Mixtec and Coclé civilizations, especially considering gender roles among the elite. Recent reevaluations of Sitio Conte and Tomb 7 of Monte Albán reveal evidence that the iconography of metalwork could illuminate the nature of elite status for females, while exceptions to typical funerary norms could suggest the existence of high-status gender-variant individuals.

**Chemical Analyses of Obsidian as a Proxy for Salt Distribution**

*E. Cory Sills (University of Texas at Tyler) and Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

Portable X-ray fluorescence was used to acquire geochemical data of obsidian blades recovered from the submerged Paynes Creek Salt Works, Belize. The salt works are remarkable due to the preservation of wooden architecture in a peat bog along with ceramics associated with salt making known as briquetage. Obsidian is scarce at the salt works unlike the near-by settlement of Wild Cane Cay where it is abundant. Assaying of 40 obsidian blades recovered from archaeological survey at the Paynes Creek Salt Works is useful for establishing coastal and inland trade relationships since salt does not preserve in the archaeological record.

**Reevaluating Current Perspectives on the Ancient Maya Procurement of High Quality Dark Brown Chert in Southern Campeche, Mexico**

*Kelsey J. Sullivan and Kenichiro Tsukamoto (University of California-Riverside)*

Archaeologists have considered dark brown chert, a distinctively high-quality lithic material used by the ancient Maya of southern Campeche, Mexico, a non-local resource. The identification of high quantities of this material at several newly identified large-scale lithic workshops at the site of El Palmar, however, demonstrates that this tool stone was actually sourced and worked directly in the region. In this paper, we discuss the implications of these new findings and use the results of the 2018 field season at El Palmar to reevaluate the previously reported perspectives of this lithic resource at important regional polities including Calakmul and Río Bec.

**Airborne LiDAR and Ancient Maya Urbanism at El Palmar, Mexico**

*Kenichiro Tsukamoto (University of California-Riverside)*

Archaeological applications of Airborne Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) has broadened our perspectives on spatial configurations of ancient Maya cities. Airborne LiDAR mapping in



2017 and subsequent 2018 fieldwork at the archaeological site of El Palmar, Mexico detected attributes that are recognized as characteristics of ancient cities in the world, including monumental architecture, possible marketplaces, lithic workshops, causeways, vast intensive agricultural lands (raised fields), terraces, and over 70 carved monuments with inscriptions. These results suggest that El Palmar was a major player of social, political, and economic dynamics among Maya polities during the Classic period (AD 400-820).

### **The Geographical Importance of Mesoamerican Territory for the Aztec Expansion**

*Raquel Urroz (UNAM)*

This presentation examines Prehispanic Mesoamerica as a geographic, historical and cultural area, and the society and space of Aztec influence. Discussion of concepts of the state and empire by Mesoamerica specialists is highlighted, starting from diverse theoretical positions in which the power occupies a central position. The Mexica expansion on a territory is the central theme, gradually a regional reconstruction is elaborated which covers practically all the territory in which the Mexica presence was given.

### **Middle Preclassic Ceramic Production in the Mopan Valley, Belize: A Preliminary Petrographic Analysis**

*Alessandra Villarreal (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

Recent ceramic studies have shown that petrographic analysis can be operationalized to detect variability in production recipes, distribution of production groups, and material choices. A methodology that combines petrography with other forms of analysis and collaboration with local potters has proved to be ideal in investigating Preclassic Maya economic organization. The study I present here incorporates the petrographic analysis of five local clay sources as well as Middle Preclassic ceramics from both domestic and public contexts in the Xunantunich area of the Mopan river valley, Belize. These results have important impacts on our understanding of the early Mopan occupation.

### **Chemical Analysis Results from Two Mounds at the Ancient Maya Salt Works, Paynes Creek National Park, Belize**

*Rachel Watson and Heather McKillop (Louisiana State University)*

The analysis of soil chemistry at archaeological sites is an effective established method for determining activity areas. The chemistry of samples from the two mounds at the Paynes Creek Salt Works, Witz Nabb and Killer Bee, were analyzed to determine the function of the mounds. We have proposed that these mounds are the by-product of brine enrichment techniques of leaching seawater through salty soils to concentrate the sodium levels. Comparison of our results with ethnoarchaeological examples is used for identifying activities areas within the mounds and at the submerged sites within the Punta Ycacos Lagoon.

## **Out of Maya Tombs: Political Organization and Rulership at the Classic Maya Kingdom of Buenavista del Cayo as Understood through its Royal Burials**

*Jason Yaeger and Bernadette Cap (University of Texas at San Antonio)*

When documented through careful archaeological excavation, royal burials and their associated funerary architecture and monuments yield invaluable insight into ancient Maya ideology and political organization. Here we describe a series of royal burials and tombs excavated at Buenavista del Cayo, Belize, including a royal tomb recovered in summer 2018. We use this data to discuss the establishment and development of rulership at the site, the external connections between the rulers of Buenavista and adjacent polities, and the ways in which royal political authority was reinforced through architecture and ritual activities at the site.