



YIITS'ATIL KA'AN  
U TÁAN YICH YÓOK'OL KAAB YÉETEL U TÁAN YICH KA'AN

UTZUJOK RI KAJULEW  
UWACHIB'AL RI LOQ'OLAJ ULEW RACHI'L RI UWACHIB'AL RI LOQ'OLAJ KAJ

XYAALAL CHOXA CH'OCH'  
LOQ'LAJ RUUCHICH'OCH' UT RU LOQ'LAJ CHOXA

COMOSMOLOGÍA MAYA  
PAISAJE TERRESTRE Y PAISAJE CELESTIAL

MAYA COSMOLOGY  
TERRESTRIAL AND CELESTIAL LANDSCAPES

The main topic of the EMC focuses on Maya cosmology in the wider sense: Maya perception of space and of the cosmos and their reflections in archaeological and epigraphic sources as well as in colonial and contemporary ethnographical documents. Astronomically oriented objects and structures used for astronomical observations will also be given attention. Another key point involves models of Maya urbanism and their connection with the architectonic configuration of space and the symbolic parallels between Maya macrocosms and microcosms as well as vertical and horizontal arrangements of space, including the underworld of caves, terrestrial and celestial realms of universe and mediatory elements, such as trees, mountains and artificial structures. The main topic includes the conceptualization of space by its mythological, ritual and eschatological aspects. Newest information, critical reinterpretations of older theories based on new research and innovative methodological approaches will be given preference.

El simposio se enfocará en el tema de la cosmología maya en un sentido muy amplio: la percepción maya del espacio, la visión del cosmos y su reflejo tanto en las fuentes arqueológicas y epigráficas como en los documentos etnográficos coloniales y contemporáneos. También se prestará atención a los objetos orientados astronómicamente y estructuras utilizadas para las observaciones astronómicas. Un otro punto de enfoque son los modelos del urbanismo maya relacionados con la configuración arquitectónica de espacios, con la revisión del paralelismo simbólico entre el microcosmos y el macrocosmos maya o entre la distribución vertical y horizontal de espacios incluyendo el inframundo, las cuevas, los niveles terrestres y celestiales del universo junto con los elementos mediadores como los árboles, montañas y estructuras artificiales. El tema principal incluirá los aspectos mitológicos, calendáricos, rituales y escatológicos de la conceptualización del espacio. Se dará preferencia a la información más novedosa, a las reinterpretaciones críticas de las teorías más antiguas basadas en las investigaciones recientes y a los procedimientos metodológicos innovadores.



## PROGRAM

### Monday Nov 17

#### Registration

08.00 – 10.00

Location: Šafárikovo námestie 1 – Aula (Central Hall) of Comenius University (CU), main building

#### Welcome address

10.00 – 10.30

Location: Šafárikovo námestie 1 – Aula (Central Hall) of Comenius University (CU), main building

**Jaroslav Šušol** – *Dean of the Faculty of Arts, CU*

**Jana Lenghardtová** – *Vice-rector of the University of Economics*

**Luis Alfonso de Alba** – *Ambassador of Mexico in Austria, Concurrent to the Slovak Republic*

**Milan Kováč** – *Head of Department of Comparative Religion, CU, main organizer*

#### Opening lecture

10.30 – 12.00

Location: Šafárikovo námestie 1 – Aula (Central Hall) of Comenius University (CU), main building

**Harri Kettunen** – *University of Helsinki*

**Alfonso Lacadena** – *Universidad Complutense de Madrid*

12.00 – 14.00 **Lunch break**

#### Workshop sessions

14.00 – 19.00

Location: Konventná 1 (University of Economics)

#### Welcome Reception

**Concert of Mexican folklore music group « El Caminante » and Latino Music Party by DJ Pata de Rata**

20.00 – 24.00

Location: Vajanského nábrežie 12, Moyzes Hall / Moyzesova sieň

### Tuesday Nov 18

#### Workshop sessions

09.00 – 13.00 / 14.00 – 18.00

Location: Konventná 1 (University of Economics)

#### Screening of David Lebrun film: **Dance of the Maize God**

19.30 – 21.30

Location: Gondova 2 (Faculty of Arts, CU), room n. G127

# Wednesday Nov 19

## **Workshop sessions**

09.00 – 13.00 / 14.00 – 18.00

Location: Konventná 1 (University of Economics)

# Thursday Nov 20

## **Workshop sessions**

09.00 – 14.00

Location: Konventná 1 (University of Economics)

## **Wayeb General Assembly**

15.30 – 17.30

Location: Gondova 2 (Faculty of Arts, CU), room n. G236

**Exhibition opening and welcome address**  
**« Mysterious Maya: Slovak Investigations of the Most Advanced Civilisation of Ancient America »**

19.00 – 23.00

Location: Žižkova 12 (Slovak National Museum – Museum of Archaeology)

**Antonio Roberto Castellano** – *Ambassador of Guatemala in Austria, Concurrent to the Slovak Republic*

**Drahošlav Hulínek** – *Director of Investigations of Slovak Archaeological and Historical Institute (SAHI)*

**Milan Kováč** – *Director of Archaeological Project SAHI - Uaxactun, Curator of the Exhibition*

**Welcome Reception to the Symposium and Visiting of the Exhibition**  
**Concert of Mexican folklore music group « El Caminante »**

Friday Nov 21

## Symposium

Location: Radlinského 11 (Slovak University of Technology)

## Registration

8.00 – 9.00

## Welcome address

9.00 – 9.30

**Alojz Kopáček** – *Dean of Faculty of Civil Engineering, Slovak University of Technology*

**Peter Valent** – *Director of Slovak Archaeological and Historical Institute (SAHI)*

**Milan Kováč** – *Head of Department of Comparative Religion (CU), main organizer*

## Morning session

*Chair: Erik Boot*

9.30 – 10.00

**James L. Fitzsimmons** (Middlebury College)

*Searching for the Classic Maya "Upperworld": A View from Epigraphy, Architecture and Material Culture*

10.00 – 10.30

**Karl Taube** (University of California at Riverside)

*Centering the World: Ancient Maya Temples and the Creation of Sacred Space*

10.30 – 11.00

**Rogelio Valencia Rivera** (Universidad Veracruzana)

*Maíz y atole son su trono: K'awiil y la Montaña de Sustento*

11.00 – 11.30 **Coffee break**

11.30 – 12.00

**Edwin Braakhuis** (Utrecht University)

*Watery Underworld or Realm of the Rain Deities: The Aquatic Environment of the Tonsured Maize God*

12.00 – 12.30

**Erik Velásquez** (Universidad Autónoma de México)

**& Vera Tiesler** (Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán)

*El anecúmeno dentro del ecúmeno: La cabeza como locus anímico en el cosmos maya del Clásico y sus insignias físicas*

12.30 – 13.00

**Dmitri Beliaev & Albert Davletshin** (Russian State University for the Humanities)

*A Stairway to Heaven for the King: Royal Palanquins in Classic Maya Text and Image*

13.00 – 14.30 **Lunch break**

## Poster section presentations

14.30 – 15.30

**Carlos Morales-Aguilar** (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)  
*El orden del espacio en la arquitectura preclásica de El Mirador, Petén, Guatemala*

**Amanda Delgado** (Leiden University)  
& **Maurice Pico** (ENAH)  
*Motion Expressions and Space in Yokot'an Ritual Speech*

**Harald Thomaß** (Universidad de Hamburgo)  
*Con palabras se camina en el paisaje celestial: Gráficos para el análisis del lenguaje ritual de los especialistas rituales de Yucatán*

**Evgeniya Korovina** (The Institute of Linguistics, RAS, Moscow)  
*It is Impossible to Point to the Serpent: Rainbow in Mayan Languages and Legends*

**Valentine Losseau** (Anthropologie sociale et ethnologie EHESS – Collège de France (Laboratoire d'Anthropologie sociale), CEMCA, Mexico)  
*Transfigured Forest : Reflexivity in the Contemporary Lacandon Mayan Landscapes (Chiapas, Mexico)*

## Afternoon session

*Chair: Verónica A. Vázquez*

15.30 – 16.00

**Milan Kováč, Jakub Špoták, Tomáš Drápela** (Comenius University);  
**Tibor Lieskovský** (Slovak University of Technology)  
& **Vladimír Karlovský** (Observatory and Planetarium of M.R. Štefánik)  
*Skywatchers from Uaxactun: New Perspectives on the Astronomical Significance of Pre-Classic Architectural Alignments*

16.00 – 16.30

**Ivan Šprajc** (Research Center of Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts)  
*Lunar Orientations in Maya Architecture*

16.30 – 17.00

**Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos** (Yale University)  
*Landscapes of Creation: An Interpretation of Mesoamerican E-Groups*

17.00 – 17.30 **Coffee break**

17.30 – 18.00

**Kathryn Marie Hudson** (University at Buffalo);  
**Mallory E. Matsumoto** (University of Bonn) & **John S. Henderson** (Cornell University)  
*Up, Down and All Around: Verticality as Demarcative Practice in the Construction of Copán's Historical Landscape*

18.00 – 18.30

**Guillermo Bernal Romero** (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)  
*Palenque: Imágenes y Palabras del Reino de este Mundo*

## Saturday Nov 22

### Symposium

Location: Radlinského 11 (Slovak University of Technology)

#### Morning session

*Chair: Jaroslav Zralka*

9.00 – 9.30

**Jan Kapusta** (Institute of Ethnology, Charles University, Prague)  
*Pilgrimage and Living Mountains among the Contemporary Highland Maya*

9.30 – 10.00

**Héctor Xol Choc** (Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala)  
*Loq'laj choxaal loq'laj ch'och' - Cielo sagrado, tierra sagrada. El uso y el contexto de difrasismos relacionados con la tierra y el cielo en los idiomas mayas de las Tierras Altas*

10.00 – 10.30

**Rhonda Taube** (Riverside City College)  
*Bounded Place and Segmented Time: The Function and Meaning of Space in Contemporary K'iche' Maya Rituals*

10.30 – 11.00 **Coffee break**

11.00 – 11.30

**Frauke Sachse** (Department for the Anthropology of The Americas, University of Bonn)  
*Worldviews in Dialogue: Precolumbian Cosmologies in the Context of Early Colonial Christianisation in Highland Guatemala*

11.30 – 12.00

**Jesper Nielsen** (University of Copenhagen) & **Mette Fritz Hansen**  
*How the Hell? The Colonial Demonization of the Maya Underworld*

12.00 – 12.30

**Lorraine A. Williams-Beck** (Universidad Autónoma de Campeche)  
*The Center as Cosmos in pre-Hispanic and Early Colonial period Campeche*

12.30 – 14.30 **Lunch break**

#### Afternoon session

*Chair: Sven Gronemeyer*

14.30 – 15.00

**Jared Katz** (University of California at Riverside)  
*A Blustery Melody: An Analysis of the Classic Maya's use of Music as a Mediatory Art Form*

15.00 – 15.30

**Nikolai Grube** (University of Bonn)  
*Hunting in the Forest of Kings*

15.30 – 16.00 **Coffee break**

16.00 – 16.30

**James E. Brady** (California State University)

*The Translation of a Maya Cosmogram onto an Uncooperative Terrestrial Landscape*

16.30 – 17.00

**Fátima del Rosario Tec Pool** (Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, México)

*Venerar el inframundo. Tráfico y deposición ritual de cerámica en las cuevas mayas (del Preclásico al Clásico terminal)*

17.00 – 17.30

**John F. Chuchiak** (Missouri State University)

*Caves of Life and Caves of Death: Colonial Yucatec Maya Rituals and Offerings in Caves and Cenotes, 1540-1750*

### **Closing address and flag ceremony**

17.30 – 18.30

**Closing festivity and farewell party  
with Mexican folklore dance group « Magisterial »**

20.00 – 02.00

Location: Vajanského nábrežie 12, Moyzes Hall / Moyzesova sieň  
(Faculty of Arts, CU)





## WORKSHOPS

### Beginners Workshop

#### How to read Maya Hieroglyphs?

**Tutors: Ramzy Barrois (Ecole du Louvre), Eva Jobbová (University College London) & Jakub Špoták (Comenius University Bratislava)**

Thanks to the incredible imagination and ingenuity of Maya scribes, Maya hieroglyphic writing is one of the most complex writing systems in the world; it is visually fascinating, grammatically sophisticated, but creative and playful at the same time. Its decipherment took more than two hundred years, and in fact still continues to this day. It allows reading the history of the ancient Maya in their own words, and has also completely changed our view of many aspects of their culture.

This workshop offers an intensive introduction to the study of Maya hieroglyphs. It includes short lectures about the basic principles of reading the script, mathematics and calendrical information. The majority of time will be dedicated to working on Maya texts, when the participants will be deciphering Maya hieroglyphs on their own with the assistance of tutors. We will look at snapshots of the lives of royal court members from

different sites, discovering their interactions and the society they lived in through texts coming from the center of the Maya area (present day Guatemala and Mexico).

No previous knowledge of Maya culture or their writing system is required, and while the workshop in general will be run in English, explanations can be also provided individually in French, Slovak, Czech and Spanish.

After this three day workshop, participants will be able to understand the basic structure of Maya texts, recognize and read calendrical information, and know where to look for verbs and nominal phrases, such as names and titles of Maya kings and queens.

This is an intermediate workshop open to those who have basic knowledge of Maya writing: some calendrical knowledge and the ability to structure hieroglyphic inscriptions and understand their syntactic components are prerequisites to fruitful participation on this workshop level. This intermediate workshops will be taught in English.

## Intermediate Workshop

### **Godly Stories and Earthly Matters: Hieroglyphic Narratives on Gods and Men**

**Tutors: Christian Prager & Elisabeth Wagner (University of Bonn)**

The workshop constitutes two parts of which the first will concentrate on reading and understanding hieroglyphic narratives from the Codices Dresden, Paris and Madrid with a special focus on God B or Chak, the Rain God, and God C or K'uh. The second part focuses on the relation of humans and gods as recorded on various monuments commissioned during the reign of K'inich Ahkul Mo' Nab, the godly king of Palenque. In this workshop emphasis will be put on hands-on work with inscriptions distributed as study material among participants to be divided in work groups while presentations provided by the tutors will be kept limited and short. Guided by the tutors, the individual work groups will concentrate on the analyses of the hieroglyphic narratives. From the accounts of single inscriptions, we advance the idea of comparing different sources to get a comprehensive overview of Classic Maya discourse on gods and men. Participants will obtain further insights into Classic and Postclassic Maya religious belief systems and will deepen their knowledge of the Maya writing system.

## Advanced Workshop

### **Methods in Maya Hieroglyphic Studies**

**Tutors: Harri Kettunen (University of Helsinki) & Alfonso Lacadena (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)**

The objective of this workshop is to discuss the methods involved in Maya epigraphy with a special focus on examining the graphic and lexical origins of Maya writing, especially as relates to the topic of this year's conference. Besides the Maya script, the workshop explores writing systems in the greater Mesoamerican cultural sphere, along with studying the topic in the framework of world's writing systems in general. The participants will be examining the lexical origins and visual characteristics of a range of signs and connecting them to their potential real-life counterparts. Analyses will be carried out by examining relevant dictionaries and other linguistic resources, along with iconographic source materials. The sessions also include lectures on various topics related to the theme of the workshop.

Participants are asked to bring laptops along to the workshop, if possible, in order to obtain the reference materials in digital format (ca. 3GB) at the onset of the workshop. It is not necessary for each participant to have a laptop (or any other type of an electronic reader) as long as there is at least one available for each group. The outcome of the workshop is a more profound

understanding of the Maya writing system and, more importantly, tools to carry on epigraphic endeavors in the future.

## Special Workshop

We are offering a Special Workshop this year that is open to participants on all levels. Some prior knowledge about Mesoamerican art and writing will be useful, but is not a prerequisite.

### **U Uich Ku: Tracking Maya Deities in the Codices and Ethnohistorical Sources**

**Tutors: John F. Chuchiak IV (Missouri State University) & Guido Krempel (University of Bonn)**

This special workshop offers a basic introduction to the interdisciplinary study and use of information concerning Maya deities in the prehispanic Maya codices and in the late Post-Classic and colonial Maya ethnohistorical sources.

The workshop will include short presentations and lectures about the basic ethnohistorical and epigraphic sources available for the study of Maya deities. The major colonial sources of information concerned with Maya deities will be thoroughly examined and the tutors demonstrate how to work with these various types of sources in order to unravel the mysteries of the Maya deities, their

diagnostic elements in imagery and writing, distinct aspects, and their importance for the Maya.

The workshop will also examine the nature of colonial “graphic pluralism” or the Maya preservation of information about the cults of their deities through the continued use of the Maya hieroglyphic script, and the concurrent adaptation of Latin letter based alphabetic literacy.

A final aspect of the workshop includes the creation of individual working groups that, with the guidance of the tutors, will each individually concentrate on the analysis of various individual selected Maya deities – their depictions in imagery and writing – by means of utilizing the interdisciplinary materials presented in the workshop.

By comparing and utilizing the different types of sources presented, workshop participants will gain a basic understanding of Maya deities and better appreciate the value of the use of interdisciplinary methods in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Postclassic and Colonial Maya religious belief systems concerning Maya deities and their images.

No previous knowledge of Maya culture or their writing system is required. While the workshop in general will be run in English, explanations can be also provided individually in German and Spanish.



## SYMPOSIUM ABSTRACTS

**Dmitri Beliaev (Center for Mesoamerican Studies, Russian State University for Humanities) & Albert Davletshin (Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies, Russian State University for Humanities)**  
*A Stairway to Heaven for the King: Royal Palanquins in Classic Maya Text and Image*

Christopher Jones (1987) was the first to identify palanquins in Classic Maya iconography. Later, Simon Martin (1996) discovered various references to transportable thrones in hieroglyphic texts, among others, those which mention the capture of palanquins during military campaigns. Ever since, scholars consider Maya palanquins to be colossal effigies of Maya rulers' supernatural protectors. Captured palanquins of defeated kings are regarded as symbols of military power. Based on the reinterpretation of epigraphic and iconographic evidence, we will demonstrate that from the Maya point of view palanquins were symbolic representations of the celestial space and their principal function was to visualise for people the divine king's presence in the heavenly sphere. In several cases, the palanquin basement depicts a stairway leading from the earth to heaven, which is featured as Cosmic Monster or 'Starry Deer Crocodile'. We reinterpret the so-called "niche stela" theme of Piedras Negras as representing rulers during their accession ceremony. When

taking the power, the Maya divine king k'uhul ajaw literally ascends to heaven. According to the suggested interpretation, the personal names of particular palanquins we know from the Tikal inscriptions rather refer to various particular celestial beings than to supernatural protectors of kings. We will also present evidence for the phonetic reading of the Palanquin Glyph as PIIT "litter", identification of the courtly title "palanquin carrier", and discuss possible interpretations of the Palanquin Event Glyph.

**Guillermo Bernal Romero (Centro de Estudios Mayas, Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, UNAM)**  
*Palenque: Imágenes y Palabras del Reino de este Mundo*

Esta ponencia ofrece una visión sobre las concepciones del tiempo y los escenarios míticos, legendarios e históricos significados en el señorío de Palenque. Nuevos textos glíficos, imágenes y descubrimientos arqueológicos en la legendaria capital de *B'aakal* permiten comprender de manera más profunda ese complejo universo de creencias. Como un complejo cosmograma, el Grupo de las Cruces, la Acrópolis Sur y el Grupo XVI de Palenque señalan escenarios arquitectónicos que representan alturas celestes, fértiles llanuras, montañas, abismos insondables y océanos primigenios habitados por dioses y

antepasados. Enfatiza la naturaleza continua de las épocas que llamamos mítica, legendaria e histórica, devenir pautado y uniformado por los ciclos temporales. Como resonancias o reflejos que llegaban al tiempo histórico, los ritos colectivos recreaban y actualizaban los sucesos del tiempo primordial. A menudo, las ceremonias asumían un carácter fundacional o eran definidas como renovaciones del orden sagrado del Mundo, como las ceremonias periódicas de sustitución de incensarios. De esta manera, situado en el eje de la espiral del tiempo, el *k'uhul ajaw* era vértice y vórtice representativo de la continuidad y permanencia histórica de su señorío.

**James E. Brady (California State University)**

*The Translation of a Maya Cosmogram onto an Uncooperative Terrestrial Landscape*

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. More recently, a second field investigation by the Rio Bravo Archaeological Project has documented another cave located in the midst of public architecture. Finally, a field survey in 2014 documented three additional caves within the Programme for Belize project boundaries. These discoveries have verified extensive use of the landscape by the ancient Maya.

**Edwin Braakhuis (Utrecht University)**

*Watery Underworld or Realm of the Rain Deities: The Aquatic Environment of the Tonsured Maize God*

The abundance of aquatic motifs in Maya art is often explained in terms of a ‘watery underworld’, a collocation referring not only to pools and rivers in the karstic underground, but also to a descent of the souls of the dead into a dark and aquatic ‘Place of Fright’. In this descent, the chief representative of the dead is a Tonsured Maize God identified with Hun-Hunahpu. The aquatic realm and the Tonsured Maize God’s involvement in it can also, however, be viewed quite differently, by shifting the focus to a Mayan ‘Tlalocan’ embracing the rivers and the sea. Iconographic and ethnographic data will be reviewed suggesting that this realm of the pluvial powers was also a world of the dead that included a paradise and could be reached through streams and rivers.

It will be shown that the iconography of the Tonsured Maize God largely conforms to this view of a Mayan 'Tlalocan', concurring in this with the maize hero mythology of the Gulf Coast.

**Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos (Yale University)**

*Landscapes of Creation: An Interpretation of Mesoamerican E-Groups*

E-Groups were among the earliest public architectural arrangements in the Maya Lowlands and elsewhere in southern Mesoamerica. Their formal design, which remained essentially unchanged for almost two millennia, has inspired protracted debate, related to their astronomical orientations, their functions, and the cosmic connotations of their layout. In this paper, I explore an interpretation of E-Groups as architectural landscapes that materialized the locations of major creational events. This interpretation is partly based on ethnographic comparisons of modern Mesoamerican ritual spaces, particularly modern Wixárika (Huichol) ceremonial centers, which effectively complement the available archaeological data. The mythical landscapes of E-Groups could have provided ritual foci for social interaction and religious performance in early Maya communities.

**John F. Chuchiak (Missouri State University)**

*Caves of Life and Caves of Death: Colonial Yucatec Maya Rituals and Offerings in Caves and Cenotes, 1540–1750*

Caves and cenotes served as important sacred spaces where the Maya could access the underworld and make contact with their gods through certain rituals and offerings. Maya temples and shrines were also often built in close proximity to caves or cenotes, further emphasizing the sacred nature of caves and their important connection to the cosmology of the ancient and colonial Maya. Therefore, cave shrines and cave worship remained important factors in both pre-Hispanic and colonial Maya cosmological concepts of the underworld, sickness, life and death. Dry caves, without water, served for the colonial Maya as places of sickness and death, while water filled caves and cenotes opened a direct connection to the rain god Chac, the bringer of sacred water and life. The mouths of caves themselves were believed to be the entrance to the Maya underworld, called Xibalba, where the death gods Ah Puch, or Cizin, and Uac Mitun Ahau dwelled. This presentation examines the nature of colonial Maya cave worship and illustrates how caves and cenotes with their cosmological connection to the underworld became associated to both Maya conceptions of life and death, ensuring that they remained important sacred spaces in which colonial Maya rituals continued to be performed. Ethnohistorical documentation concerning cave rituals and other offerings occurring in caves signals the central importance of caves and cenotes to both the worship of the Maya rain god Chac and the colonial Maya understanding of the nature of illness and death. By examining the ethnohistorical evidence for Maya cave rituals and the extant information on Maya ritual specialists this presentation

illustrates the continuities and changes that occurred in the cosmological connections of Maya cave worship throughout the colonial period.

**James L. Fitzsimmons (Middlebury College)**

*Searching for the Classic Maya 'Upperworld': A View from Epigraphy, Architecture, and Material Culture*

As many scholars have pointed out, the ancient Maya probably conceived of layers of the Underworld, much like the majority of Central Mexican peoples at contact (e.g., see Fash 1991; Garber et al. 1998; Grube and Nahm 1994; Joyce 1992; Lopez-Austin 1988). From the Codex Vaticanus, we know that the Aztecs conceived of nine levels of the Underworld and thirteen layers of the Upperworld, in addition to a mortal realm of human beings. Nine-level pyramids in the Lowlands, such as Tikal Temple I, the Temple of Inscriptions at Palenque, or the Castillo at Chichen Itza, might reflect similar ideas about nine levels of the Underworld during the Classic Period and Early Postclassic (e.g., see Miller and Taube 1993); there is, of course, ample evidence for such beliefs during the Late Postclassic in the highlands. But what about the Maya Upperworld? This is a topic that is rarely touched upon in depth within the academic literature (Fitzsimmons 2009), due in part to the relative silence of texts like the Popol Vuh or the Ritual of the Bacabs on Maya notions of 'paradise(s)' versus Underworld locations. Did the ancient Maya conceive of compartmentalized, celestial landscapes similar to those

conceptualized by the peoples of Postclassic Central Mexico? Are these landscapes reflected in Precolumbian Maya toponyms, architecture, or colonial and contemporary ethnographic documents? This paper will examine the evidence for this—and explore just how abstract ancient Maya ideas about celestial realms really were.

**Nikolai Grube (University of Bonn)**

*Hunting in the Forest of Kings*

The world of the ancient Maya was built on metaphors of culture and wilderness, *kaaj* and *k'áax*, village and forest. The chaotic world of the forest was understood as an extension of the underworld. This dangerous world was entered only by brave men, farmers, hunters, and warriors. The hero twins were the hunters par excellence; they established role models for male braveness and virility. While the Maya perception of the forest has received considerable attention, the metaphor of hunting has barely been explored. Large hunting expeditions are a common topic in Maya art. For the Maya, war also was a kind of hunt, and prisoners were carried back and presented to the king like bound prey. The metaphor of the hunt also extends to the ballgame, where prisoners are tied into balls like pieces of game. Ball courts were hunting grounds where players dressed as animals shot each other, not with blowguns, but with balls. The presentation will explore the metaphor of hunting in the forest as one of the principal metaphors for male virility and gender models.

**Kathryn Marie Hudson (University at Buffalo); Mallory E. Matsumoto (University of Bonn) & John S. Henderson (Cornell University)**

*Up, Down, and All Around: Verticality as Demarcative Practice in the Construction of Copán's Historical Landscape*

Maya historical landscapes were made manifest through architectural construction processes that intertwined the physical and metaphysical realities of particular polities. Although landscapes are most commonly defined in terms of physical markers to which meanings are assigned, a consideration of historical landscapes – defined here as the spatial and cosmological mapping of significant historical events – indicates that the reverse process is also possible. Cultural significances can also motivate the construction of landscapes, and markers can be designed to reflect preexisting symbolic meanings. This process is well represented in the Maya world and is particularly apparent in the architecture of Copán.

This paper will explore how Copán's built environment reflected conceptualizations of the historical landscape through its use of verticality and stacked construction. Temple 16 (Structure 10L-16) and the Hieroglyphic Stairway (Structure 10L-26) are the outcomes of processes of vertically oriented construction and reconstruction that will be examined as case studies in the creation and marking of historical landscapes. The simultaneously creative and destructive aspects of burying and superimposing in the construction of Maya architecture will be considered, and

particular attention will be given to the ways in which these construction processes juxtaposed cosmology and the mythical past with the constructed present. This reconsideration generates new insights into worldmaking at Copán and illustrates the existence of historical landscapes that existed alongside – and within – the more obvious physical landscapes.

**Jan Kapusta (Institute of Ethnology, Charles University in Prague)**  
*Pilgrimage and Living Mountains among the Contemporary Highland Maya*

Pilgrimages have played an important role in Maya culture since pre-Columbian times. Even today, sacred journeys to significant mountains and caves are made by the traditionalists of Akateko and Chuj communities. In this paper, I describe a pilgrimage and sacrificial ritual in connection with mountain veneration during the Year Bearer ceremony. Anthropologists, divided into culturalists and historicists, tend to interpret the “masters” of the mountains as expressions of essential cultural continuity or ethnic power relationships, respectively. In order to span the theoretical division, I turn to phenomenal and existential aspects of the subject. In the eyes of the highland Maya, mountains are not just mediators between Earth and Sky, the representations of a bipartite concept of the world. Through pilgrimage and sacrifice, humans communicate and interact with non-human, yet autonomous, living and volitional beings. I argue that rather than a descent to the underworld or ascent to the heavens, the ritual is primarily a



journey to a specific mountain – delicate and powerful nonhuman being that brings rain, gives crops, and provides the renewed world with energy. As such, mountains are not treated as mere social or cultural representations, but as actors that affect people's lives, and as actual determinants of existence. Drawing from my fieldwork experience from San Rafael La Independencia, Guatemala, and recent theoretical developments in the anthropology of ontology, I try to present Maya cosmology as a part of a particular lifeworld which is characterized by the lived experience of human negotiation with other beings of the cosmos.

**Jared Katz (University of California, Riverside)**

*A Blustery Melody: An Analysis of the Classic Maya's Use of Music as a Mediatory Art Form*

The music of the ancient Maya can be used to reexamine and further elaborate our interpretation of how they understood the connections between the terrestrial realm, the underworld, and the celestial world. This paper analyzes the integral connection that the Maya drew between music and wind. The paper is divided into three sections. The first describes general connections between music and wind. Due to its ephemeral qualities, music could be used as a mediatory art form to contact ancestors and deities in other realms. The second section furthers the interpretation of iconography on a Classic Maya tripod vessel housed at the Miho museum. I argue this vessel

depicts the Maya's mythological origin story of music, using later Mixtec and Aztec iconography and mythology to strengthen this argument. The Maya believed wind brought music into the terrestrial realm from another world, most likely Flower Mountain, the paradisiacal realm of ancestors, demonstrating music originated in another world and held other worldly qualities. In my third section, by analyzing music's presence in caves, I discuss how music could control the rain bringing winds. Many instruments were discovered in caves, the source of wind for the Maya. I use iconography, archaeological evidence, and ethnographic work to analyze why music had such an integral link to caves and the underworld. Overall, this paper argues that by better understanding music's connection to wind, we can gain a different perspective of how the Maya conceptualized the three realms, and used music to draw connections between them.

**Milan Kováč; Jakub Špoták; Tomáš Drápela (Comenius University) & Tibor Lieskovský (Slovak University of Technology) & Vladimír Karlovský (Observatory and Planetarium M.R. Štefánik)**

*Skywatchers from Uaxactun: New Perspectives on the Astronomical Significance of Pre-Classic Architectural Alignments*

Our paper is based on the recent work made in the framework of the SAHI archaeological project Uaxactun, in particular the new excavations of Pre-Classic complexes and new measurements of their orientations. These measurements will be completed by new

ones using state-of-the-art technology and relating to the earlier known Uaxactún compounds of the Pre-Classic period. The measurements and orientations will subsequently be compared to the local orientations of the Classic period, as well as to other orientations in the central and north-eastern Petén region of the Pre-Classic period. As a result, we will present the development of architectonic orientations in one of the most ancient Maya cities with a very long confirmed continuity of development. We will apply the present-day theories and hypotheses to the acquired data, and will seek to critically evaluate it according to the assumed contemporary priorities of the Maya society, in particular regarding their mythological and ritual aspects connected with the observation of celestial bodies. Our research will focus on factors, such as authenticity of data, the definition and significance of Maya cardinal points, the problems accompanying the assessment of orientation, as well as identification of key celestial bodies and constellations confirmed by known sources and their possible architectonic embodiment in Uaxactún. On the basis of new hard data applied to contemporary models of the night sky, we will seek to apply the obtained results to the social and religious context of the ancient Uaxactún and ideally to the entire Pre-Classic Maya society.

**Jesper Nielsen (University of Copenhagen) & Mettelise Fritz Hansen**  
*How the Hell? The Colonial Demonization of the Maya Underworld*

In the present paper we discuss how the 16th century application of Euro-Christian and Classical models upon Mesoamerican worldview and religion came to affect some of our most important descriptions and depictions of several central concepts in Maya worldview and in Amerindian cosmology more broadly speaking. Our focus is the early colonial sources, such as the Popol Wuj and Diego de Landa's *Relación*, that provide information on the underworld, its inhabitants and its role in Maya concepts of the afterlife. As first pointed out by Michael Coe (1975), the formation of the Maya Hell was very much a product of the preconceived ideas about the underworld in the minds of friars like Landa. A fundamental issue at play here is the Judeo-Christian tradition's definitive distinction between ultimate good and evil, both in terms of supernatural entities and locations; something that cannot be identified in pre-Columbian Mesoamerican religions, cosmologies and ideas of the sacred landscape. Here we seek to delve deeper into the process of the forced transformation of an originally rather ambiguous Maya underworld into a Euro-Christian scheme centered on sin, punishment and the abode of evil himself, Satan. Looking beyond the Euro-Christian dialectic perception of the underworld as the diametrical opposition to the heavenly sphere, we may be able to grasp new aspects of a pre-Columbian Maya understanding of the world below.

**Frauke Sachse (Department for the Anthropology of the Americas,  
University of Bonn)**

*Worldviews in Dialogue: Precolumbian Cosmologies in the  
Context of Early Colonial Christianisation in Highland  
Guatemala*

The sixteenth-century conquest of the Highland Maya was followed by a vigorous programme of christianisation. Responding to the church's strategy to evangelise in the vernaculars, mendicant missionaries produced catechisms, sermons and other doctrinal materials in the Mayan languages. Indigenous authors soon adopted alphabetic writing and the Spanish text genres to record their own narrative traditions. The most extensive body of doctrinal and colonial Highland Maya texts has been preserved for K'iche', the language of the former kingdom of Utiatlán. Sources from the hands of K'iche' authors include the famous Popol Wuj, several land titles, calendars, dance dramas, as well as notarial and confraternity documents. The corpus of missionary K'iche' literature is particularly rich and includes Domingo de Vico's *Theologia Indorum*, which had a strong impact on the conversion of the Highland Maya. Missionary and indigenous K'iche' sources are intertextually related, which makes this corpus an exceptional resource for studying the colonial encounter of two religious systems and worldviews. While mendicant missionaries appropriated and accommodated lexical concepts from prehispanic Highland Maya religion, converted indigenous authors negotiated both

cosmologies to defy the new system and maintain religious tradition. This paper examines how missionary authors communicated the concepts of the Christian worldview and analyses how these new conceptualisations of Heaven and Hell were mapped onto prehispanic notions of cosmology and otherworld dimensions.

**Ivan Šprajc (Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences  
and Arts)**

*Lunar Orientations in Maya Architecture*

Archaeoastronomical studies accomplished so far in Mesoamerica have shown that civic and ceremonial buildings were largely oriented to the positions of some celestial bodies on the horizon, particularly to the rising and setting points of the Sun on certain dates of the year, allowing the use of observational calendars that facilitated a proper scheduling of agricultural activities and the associated rituals in the yearly cycle. Some orientations to Venus extremes have also been detected, while the Moon, in spite of being the second most brilliant celestial body, and even if its importance in prehispanic cultures is amply documented, did not appear to figure among the celestial targets motivating architectural orientations. However, the results of a systematic research recently carried out in the Maya Lowlands reveal the existence of a considerable number of buildings that must have been deliberately aligned to the rising and setting points of the Moon at its major standstills, phenomena frequently

recorded in other ancient cultures. Such interpretations of this group of orientations is supported by contextual evidence: it is particularly significant that most of these alignments are found along the northeastern coast of the Yucatan peninsula, i.e. precisely in the area for which we have abundant historical and iconographic data indicating the importance of the cult of the goddess known as Ixchel during the Post-Classic and whose associations with the Moon are undisputable.

**Karl Taube (University of California at Riverside)**

*Centering the World: Ancient Maya Temples and the Creation of Sacred Space*

One of the most prevalent aspects of ancient Maya culture are temples, frequently with elaborate iconography and texts. Although it could be assumed that such massive and public structures are timeless, they were created with concerted effort and sacrifice, including the offering of fine objects of jade, shell and other materials, but also human blood and flesh to the world center and four directions. In many cases in ancient Mesoamerica, this theme of human sacrifice appears as four or five trees emerging out of a supine, sacrificed individual, which could also be understood as the four cosmic pillars of the world, widely considered a house in Mesoamerican thought. Although generally acknowledged for ancient Mesoamerica, including the Aztec as well as the Maya, the concept of "planting" human remains an essential source of growth and sustenance even

today, including with such public projects like bridges and churches.

**Rhonda Taube (Riverside City College)**

*Bounded Place and Segmented Time: The Function and Meaning of Space in Contemporary K'iche' Maya Rituals*

Numerous scholars have recognized the significant role of dance, festival, and other public ritual performances in Mesoamerican community foundation ceremonies. These and other events often create and differentiate the social, political, and religious boundaries of a particular population. This paper explores the continuing significance of these events among the K'iche' Maya in highland Guatemala today and the methods and means of linking community reality with its ideality through public ceremonial life. In this paper, I discuss the role of public rituals in establishing a bounded space and segmented time in contemporary highland Maya towns, for example setting up the world tree in the center of town or processions demarcating the extent of the community and its sanctified locales. I place special focus on Momostenango, a community of interest to numerous scholars both for its continuation of such ancient traditions as the sacred 260-day calendar, and equally, its reception of globalization and North American mass media. Clearly, recent events have shaped the indigenous response to external pressures and demands regarding both space and place within highland Maya communities. Through the use of unified spatial orientation and

shared action, events which seem to be primarily about revelry and reckless abandon in fact create organized levels of complex and constructed orientational space and sacred geography. In addition, the particular use of space during this period reveals personal motivations, distinguishes important social bonds, and at the same time provides an appropriate backdrop for communion with ancestors, saints, and the divine forces of creation.

**Fátima del Rosario Tec Pool (Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, México)**

*Venerar el inframundo. Tráfico y deposición ritual de cerámica en las cuevas mayas (del Preclásico al Clásico terminal)*

En este trabajo se expone la evidencia recolectada en cuevas del norte de la península de Yucatán y del norte del Petén guatemalteco durante expediciones y temporadas de campo de los últimos años, incluyendo depósitos de ofrendas (cerámica quebrada y esparcida, restos óseos, etc.) y modificaciones arquitectónicas al paisaje subterráneo, en su mayoría relacionadas con un lapso de tiempo que va del Preclásico tardío al Clásico terminal. Con el fin de contextualizar la información de una mejor manera, y poder crear, comparar y contrastar inferencias de forma sistemática; se introduce un marco conceptual comprensivo para tener una manera de clasificar los patrones de fenómenos tales como extracción, elaboración, transporte, intercambio, transformación y deposición (ritual y /o

casual). Finalmente, junto con un enfoque ritual se consideraran también perspectivas económicas para explicar la preferencia por vasijas domésticas entre los hallazgos.

**Rogelio Valencia Rivera (Universidad Veracruzana)**

*Maíz y atole son su trono: K'awiil y la Montaña del Sustento*

K'awiil, uno de los principales dioses entre los mayas prehispánicos, aparece representado con frecuencia en tapas de bóveda, sobre todo en la región norte de la península de Yucatán. Estas imágenes representan la abundancia de alimento pues regularmente aparecen con epítetos que representan dicha abundancia, tales como *ox wi'il*, "mucha comida", *waah ha'*, "comida y bebida", y otros. En la mayor parte de dichas representaciones K'awiil aparece junto a sacos llenos de semillas que regularmente son de maíz o de cacao. En algunas ocasiones, varias de estas tapas aparecen en el mismo edificio, dotándolo de una cierta significación. El presente artículo pretende dar una explicación a la presencia de este grupo de representaciones en conjunto con otras características del edificio donde están localizadas. En particular la Estructura A-1 del sitio de Dzibilnocac, en el cual aparecieron, junto a varias tapas de bóveda, representaciones de K'awiil en los esquineros del edificio, los cuales aportan información adicional que sustenta la tesis de este trabajo, la cual consiste en definir al edificio como la montaña de la que proviene el sustento, lugar que aparece descrito en varios mitos de la creación en el área maya.

**Erik Velásquez García (Universidad Autónoma de México)  
& Vera Tiesler (Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán)**

*El anecúmeno dentro del ecúmeno: la cabeza como locus  
ánimico en el cosmos maya del Clásico y sus insignias físicas*

Los mayas clásicos proyectaban las potencias cósmicas en el cuerpo humano y sus partes constituyentes. En el pecho o epigastrio habitaban seres numinosos de carácter telúrico (las entidades anímicas *o'hlis* y *wahyis*), mientras que la cavidad craneana, el cabello y el nombre personal eran los centros anímicos de la entidad *b'aahis* (Houston y Stuart 1998) y de la fuerza *k'ihn* (Wichmann 2004), ambas calientes y solares. Los orificios del cráneo como la boca, las fosas nasales y las fontanelas eran puertas liminares entre el ecúmeno y el anecúmeno; por allá transitaban componentes anímicos, como las fuerzas *k'ihn*, *sak iik'aal* y otra expresada mediante el logograma T533. En este trabajo también queremos abordar las nociones ideológicas de la testa a partir de su representación física y sus modificaciones, pues la "piel social", como cápsula de las energías anímicas, constituía un poderoso espacio de convergencia y de exhibición, siendo objeto central de creencias y prácticas destinadas a la persona (Houston et al. 2006). Debían proteger y estabilizar, alinear y dotar de energía vital, en ocasiones castigar o destruir, en otras enaltecer a personas distinguidas. Bajo esta misma perspectiva puntualizaremos sobre los significados de algunas modificaciones permanentes del rostro y neurocráneo, como son ajustes de la dentición mediante

limados, pulimentos e incrustaciones, modelados cefálicos y perforaciones de los tegumentos para insertar ornamentos. Cada una aducía aspectos trascendentales de la identidad personal, de su pertenencia social e incluso étnica, dando invaluable pistas sobre las antiguas creencias mayas sobre el cuerpo y su puesta en escena.

**Lorraine A. Williams-Beck (Universidad Autónoma de Campeche)**  
*The Center as Cosmos in pre-Hispanic and Early Colonial  
period Campeche*

The center, as the Maya universe's fifth direction, is a little understood component of Pre-Columbian or Post-Contact cosmos. Despite more complete glyphic references in pre-Hispanic Maya codices and graphic illustrations in Post-Contact ethnohistoric literature for the other four realms, often equated with approximate sectorial horizon coordinates or the sun's daily pathway from East to West placed between contextual "north" as zenith and "south" as nadir, center was a pivotal point in celestial, terrestrial, and otherworldly domains as umbilicus through time. This paper will explore a diachronic notion of function and form for center as umbilicus, placing particular emphasis on pre-Hispanic Canpech and Chakanputun provinces, and Early Colonial contexts at Dzaptun/Ceiba Cabecera, Campeche. Pre-Hispanic Dzaptun, renamed "la Zeiba" and Ceiba Cabecera in later Colonial sources, had served as central cog in a hypothesized regional ritual religious pilgrimage circuit prior to

European contact. As one of the earliest “*pueblos de indios*” in the Champoton and Campeche Missions region, Ceiba Cabecera’s congregational town layout and its more prominent architectural features follow pre-Hispanic directional primacy. Two churches, a diminutive sixteenth-century open “*visita*” chapel and later eighteenth-century massive “*iglesia mayor*”, and a Colonial-period water well, are central points of orientation placed strategically adjacent to “Main Street”, whose westerly limit ends in the town’s cemetery. Iglesia Mayor’s architectural components and secular iconographic contents reiterate its place as umbilicus for Campeche’s Early Colonial Mayas’ ritual religious universe. Ceiba Cabecera’s reign as a Colonial religious center ceased around 1795 and the town was later abandoned by 1860.

### **Héctor Xol Choc (Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala)**

*Loq’laj choxaal loq’laj ch’och’ - Cielo sagrado, tierra sagrada. El uso y el contexto de difrasismos relacionados con la tierra y el cielo en los idiomas mayas de las Tierras Altas*

En esta presentación se pretende dar a conocer sobre cómo entienden los *q’eqchi’* y otros mayas de las tierras altas el concepto de *loq’laj choxa ch’och’*, “cielo y tierra sagrada”, o *loq’laj choxaal loq’laj ch’och’*, “cielo sagrado, tierra sagrada”. No se pretende hacer un estudio exhaustivo, sino presentar una visión general sobre la frase y su contexto cultural. La tarea de poder explicar o escribir sobre el pensamiento maya en general es complicado, sobre todo si se hace en un idioma extranjero, ya

que parte de la riqueza conceptual se confunde, pierde o distorsiona al trasladarlo a otro idioma. Además de poder hacer una descripción o explicación de cómo consideran actualmente los mayas de tierras altas el difrasismo *choxa ch’och’*, “cielo y tierra”, se hará un intento por buscar referencias antiguas sobre dicho término (o términos). Entre las fuentes a consultar están los textos jeroglíficos del Clásico, el Popol Wuj, el Título de los Señores de Totonicapán, los manuscritos K’iche’s; los Anales de los Kaqchikeles, un manuscrito Kaqchikel; el Ritual de los Bacabes, los Cantares de Tz’itb’alche’, el libro de Chilam Balam de Chumayel, los manuscritos en Yucateco y el Xajoj Tuun o Rab’in al Achi, escrito en Achi. También consideramos algunas comparaciones con el mundo náhuatl. Nuestra investigación continuará con ejemplos de varios idiomas de las Tierras Altas, en su mayoría del área q’eqchi’, analizando el contexto del uso contemporáneo de este difrasismo y otras frases relacionadas. Al fin trataremos de definir la conceptualización del universo maya por medio del idioma y el uso de los grandes conceptos cosmológicos antiguos en la vida cotidiana contemporánea.



## POSTER ABSTRACTS

### **Amanda Delgado (Leiden University) & Maurice Pico (ENAH)**

#### *Motion Expressions and Space in Yokot'an Ritual Speech*

Motion-related expressions in ritual speech, as performed by contemporary Mayan groups, may convey subtle clues to understand the way in which religious space is conceptualized. In this poster we will illustrate the way in which the Yokot'an (chontal de Tabasco) speakers talk about movement in their ritual speech. The case of study will be prayers to the Tila Lord and to the dead, as performed on ritual offerings, all of which were video recorded and transcribed in ELAN. To unearth the spatial aspects that possibly contributed to mythological or cosmological thinking, a comparison will be made to the motion linguistic structures used in daily life speech. Moreover, we aim to extend the type of data commonly attested in linguistic literature on space (cf. Levinson and Wilkins 2006, Foley 1997), as the differences between everyday talk and ritual speech regarding spatial language have received very little attention.

### **Evgeniya Korovina (The Institute of Linguistics, RAS, Moscow)**

#### *It Is Impossible to Point to the Serpent: Rainbow in Mayan Languages and Legends*

The generic term for rainbow is not reconstructed in Protomayan language or in most subgroups of this family except, for example, the form of Proto-Quiche \*xokaq'ab' 'rainbow'. The principal patterns for the name of this natural phenomenon are composites where one of the parts is a term expressing colour (green, red) or a snake. Composites of the second type can be found in the Akatek, Chorti and Mam. This term is apparently associated with one of the concept of the rainbow in the Maya mythology: in Maya texts (e.g. Kaqchikel, Tzotzil or Chorti), the rainbow is a serpent or the road used by the serpent (and in this case, the snake is under or over the rainbow). This idea is typical for Mesoamerica, but for Maya this idea is related to the idea of the prohibition to point to the rainbow. It is interesting that this combination is also common in the Otomanguean language family (e.g. Mixtec), but practically absent in other mythologies of the world. I present data related to the mythology and terminology of the rainbow in the different Maya cultures on the Mesoamerican background.



**Valentine Losseau (Anthropologie sociale et ethnologie, EHESS – Collège de France (Laboratoire d'Anthropologie sociale) & CEMCA Mexico)**

*Transfigured Forest: Reflexivity in the Contemporary Lacandon Mayan Landscapes (Chiapas, Mexico)*

The Lacandon Forest (Chiapas, Mexico), the traditional habitat of the Lacandon Mayas over the past three centuries, is going through an “esthetization” process whereby the territory turns into a global landscape. The reconstruction of remarkable sites, such as isolated ruins, spectacular waterfalls or natural vistas, revitalization of noteworthy species (Orchidaceae, Aulacorhynchus prasinus, Chamaedorea elegans, etc.) or the creation of panoramas tend to fill all inhabited and perceived spaces. Two spatialization patterns can be observed in the settlement of land:

- a naturalist model, deeply influenced by the biocultural conservation paradigm, based on the dualistic opposition between domestic and wild spaces, between forest and “non-forest”;
- an indigenous model integrating all plots in a cosmological continuum and combining topography and kinship within complex networks.

Territorial and identity claimings gradually turn into aesthetic issues, revealing landscape as both a hybrid object and operative concept authorizing communication between two different semiotic regimes. Is landscape transfiguration possible in a reflexive context? How does this complex situation acquaint us with human and non-human interactions in Lacandon Maya

culture? The process of making landscapes seems to indicate a reflexive and critical conscience of spatialization patterns. The poster is partly based on information and pictures collected under particular circumstances: when I was discovering the Lacandon villages for the first time, I was blind because of a temporary medical condition. The collection was later extended by the results of various linguistic and ethnographic surveys made since 2007.

**Carlos Morales Aguilar (Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne)**

*El orden del espacio en la arquitectura preclásica de El Mirador, Petén, Guatemala*

Recientes investigaciones realizadas en la antigua ciudad maya de El Mirador, en el Petén guatemalteco, han registrado una serie de alineaciones y una configuración simétrica ordenada que data del Preclásico. La traza urbana de El Mirador está orientada en un eje este-oeste en donde se mantiene la armonía entre los espacios sociales y los edificios públicos. Se han identificado modelos de dinámica de ocupación, patrones de disposición espacial y orientación a gran escala que lo convierten en uno de los sitios con mayor evidencia de planeación urbana preclásica del área maya. Los Complejos Tipo E se revelan como los espacios más importantes de las ciudades mayas preclásicas. Varios de ellos y más de una treintena de edificios triádicos fechados para dicho período son una muestra del amplio conjunto de representaciones ideológicas, simbólicas y

calendáricas sobre la visión del cosmos que se encuentran en este importante centro de las Tierras Bajas Mayas. Los antiguos mayas de El Mirador expresaron en su arquitectura muchos de las concepciones ideológicas y símbolos de identidad, donde los conceptos mayas de direccionalidad y simetría son fuertes elementos que rigen la organización de su espacio. Los mayas preclásicos de El Mirador magnificaron una tradición de conocimientos antiguos relacionados con los ciclos agrícolas que fueron plasmados principalmente en la configuración arquitectónica de los espacios. Ciertas construcciones fueron utilizadas como lugares de observación astronómica tales como las pirámides El Tigre, León, Tecolote, Cigarras y La Danta.

**Harald Thomaß (Universidad de Hamburgo)**

*Con palabras se camina en el paisaje celestial: Gráficos para el análisis del lenguaje ritual de los especialistas rituales de Yucatán*

Los mayas de Yucatán presentan su orden cósmico en sus ritos agrarios que requieren una repetición cíclica en el paso del tiempo. En estos ritos los especialistas rituales, los llamados *jmeno'ob* enuncian rezos en que se ponen en contacto con los actores sobrenaturales. Para explicar el paisaje espiritual de los

mayas yucatecos contemporáneos se usa como fuente principal el performance en los ritos agrarios con el enfoque al lenguaje ritual de los especialistas. Estos especialistas rituales exponen en sus rezos (*u payalchi'o'ob*) un orden de los actores sobrenaturales y dibujan un cuadro del cosmos que se manifiesta en el diseño del altar. Frente al altar o debajo de un pasillo de ramas, que forma parte del altar, el especialista ritual expresa en su lenguaje ritual diferentes relaciones con los diferentes actores del rito, humanos y sobrenaturales. Expresándose con los diferentes actos del habla el especialista ritual establece estas diferentes relaciones con los actores del rito, que son los actores sobrenaturales, los participantes humanos, y el mismo especialista ritual.

Presentaré material lingüístico de 15 años de estudio (1995-2010) de la región sur del estado de Yucatán. En forma gráfica explicaré la estructura de los rezos presentando el análisis formal del lenguaje de las estrofas y los versos. Además, también presentaré en forma gráfica el análisis semiótico del contenido de los rezos y el análisis de las diferentes relaciones que se expresan en la pragmática del habla.

## Organizers:

Wayeb - European Association of Mayanists  
Department of Comparative Religion, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University  
Slovak Archaeological and Historical Institute  
Faculty of Civil Engineering, Slovak University of Technology  
University of Economics in Bratislava



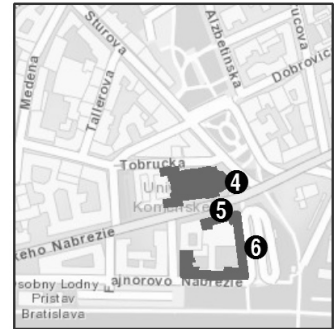
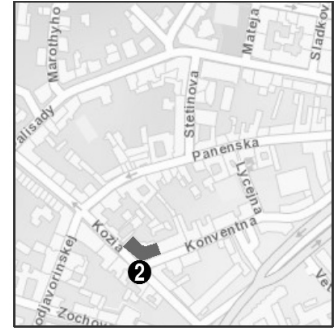
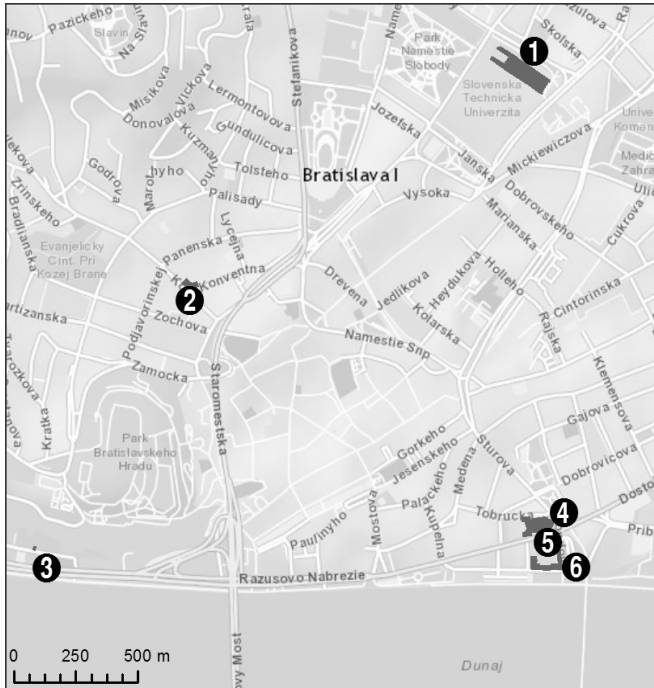
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AGENCY**



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# MAP OF THE VENUES



## 1. SYMPOSIUM

Faculty of Civil Engineering  
Slovak University of Technology  
Radlinského 11 (entrance from Imricha Karvaša street!!)

## 2. WORKSHOPS

University of Economics  
Konventná 1

## 3. EXHIBITION - Mysterious Maya

SNM - Museum of Archaeology  
Žižkova 12

## 4. WORKSHOP REGISTRATION and OPENING LECTURE

Central Hall of Comenius University  
Safárikovo námestie 1

## 5. WELCOME RECEPTION and GOODBYE PARTY

Moyzes Hall (Faculty of Arts, CU)  
Vajanského nábřežie 12

## 6. FILM SCREENING and WAYBE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Faculty of Arts, CU  
Gondova 2