

BIOSKETCHES

Jaime Awe is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Northern Arizona University, Member Emeritus of the Belize Institute of Archaeology, and Director of the Belize Valley Archaeological Reconnaissance Project. During his extensive professional career, he has conducted research and conservation at all the major archaeological sites in Belize, and his Western Belize Regional Cave Project was the first to apply a regional approach to the study of subterranean sites in the Maya area. In December 2017, he received a Field Discovery Award from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in recognition of his ongoing discoveries and investigations at Xunantunich Belize. Awe has also published numerous articles in various books, journals, and magazines, and his research has been featured in several national and international television documentaries. He presently resides in Flagstaff, Arizona and he continues to conduct archaeological research in western Belize.

James Brady is best known for pioneering the archaeological investigation of Maya caves. Between 1981 and 1989 he directed excavations at Naj Tunich (*National Geographic*, August 1981, *Archaeology* Nov/Dec 1986) and from 1990 to 1993 he directed the Petexbatun Regional Cave Survey (*National Geographic*, February 1993). Moving to Honduras, Brady headed a three year archaeological investigation of the Talgua region (Cave of the Glowing Skulls, *Archaeology* May/June 1995). Since 2001, he has led a Cal State L.A. field school to Peten, Guatemala. He co-directed a project studying Ulama, a modern survival of the ancient Aztec ballgame Ullamaliztli (*Archaeology* Sept/Oct 2003; *Smithsonian Magazine*, April 2006). From 2008-2010 he directed the investigation of Midnight Terror Cave in Belize and currently he is working at Chichen Itza.

Dr. Brady is widely published with over 125 publications to his credit. He has edited, with Keith Prufer, *In the Maw of the Earth Monster: Mesoamerican Ritual Cave Use*, from the University of Texas Press and *Stone Houses and Earth Lords: Maya Religion in the Cave Context*, from the University Press of Colorado.

Dr. Brady's research has been supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, the Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, two grants from the Explorers Club and three grants from the National Geographic Society. He has also won two Fulbright Fellowships, a Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship and a Samuel H. Kress/Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study of the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art. He was a visiting professor at the University of Copenhagen in the Fall of 1998. He joined the Department of Anthropology at California State University, Los Angeles in 1998 where he has been named Distinguished Faculty Alumnus (2006), Outstanding Professor (2008), and Presidential Distinguished Professor (2014-2015), the university's highest faculty honor.

Dr. Brady's work has received considerable media attention. He has appeared in television programs on National Geographic Explorer, The Discovery Channel, A & E, The Learning Channel, and The History Channel. He has also been featured in *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, *Archaeology Magazine*, *Science News*, *New Scientist*, *Américas*, *The Economist* and *Smithsonian Magazine* as well as a host of newspapers including the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Allan B. Cobb has been working with archaeologists in Mesoamerica since 1989 as a caving specialist. The many projects Allan has worked on have taken him to Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, and Mexico. He has explored and mapped caves for projects as well as providing logistical support to get archaeologists and students into and out of caves. In addition, Allan has

assisted projects in developing methodologies and techniques for studying caves. He is currently working with the Gran Aquifero Maya Project in Yucatán and Quintana Roo.

Jeremy Coltman is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Anthropology, University of California, Riverside. Recent research interests include Classic Maya legacies on later cultures of Mesoamerica, a topic now in the process of becoming an edited volume. Coltman has conducted fieldwork in Belize and for the past two years, has been working at Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Mexico. His dissertation is on the solar cult of war at Early Postclassic Chichen Itza.

Cameron Griffith is currently a faculty member in the departments of Geosciences and Anthropology, Sociology, and Social Work at Texas Tech University and a research associate in the Garrison Institute on Aging of the TTU Health Sciences Center. He has done archaeological work in Belize with the BRASS, BVAR, and WBRCP projects, at the surface sites of El Pilar, Baking Pot, Cahal Pech, Pook's Hill, Caracol, and Cahal Witz Na. Cameron has also done extensive research in numerous cave sites in Belize and Honduras, such as Actun Tunichil Muknal, Actun Ka'am, Actun Yaxteel Ahau, Cueva Corralito, Cueva Especial, and Gordon's Caves #'s 1-4. Some of his research interests and skills include GIS, remote sensing, agent-based modeling, the anthropology of tourism, applied computational demography, and rock art. Cameron is also currently involved in two separate research endeavors investigating the anti-diabetic properties of Chaya, a medicinal plant from Mesoamerica.

Stanley Guenter studied archaeology at the University of Calgary, La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, and Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, before receiving his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the latter in 2014. He has worked with three projects in Guatemala, at the sites of El Peru-Waka, La Corona, and a number in the Mirador Basin, as well as at Cahal Pech in Belize with AFAR, at Lake Minnewanka, in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, Canada, and at Phnom Kulen in Cambodia. Stan's work involves combining archaeological, epigraphic, and ethnohistoric data to better understand ancient civilizations and their history, and to compare this with paleoenvironmental data to better understand how ancient societies affected and were affected by their changing climates.

Harri Kettunen - Harri Kettunen has carried out interdisciplinary research projects on Mesoamerican related topics, combining archaeology, anthropology, iconography, epigraphy, and linguistics. His publications include textbooks on Maya hieroglyphs, methodological studies on Maya iconography, and interdisciplinary articles on Mesoamerican related topics. Harri is currently working as an Academy of Finland Research Fellow at the University of Helsinki.

Maxime Lamoureux-St-Hilaire presently is a George Stuart Residential Scholar at the Boundary End Center, NC. Max received his Ph.D. from Tulane University (2018) and his M.A. from Trent University (2011). Max is most fascinated by how ancient governments worked and in trying to understand what this can tell us about our own political and economic systems. Specifically, he studies the nuts and bolts of Classic Maya royal courts as evidenced by their regal palaces. Recently, Max has excavated the regal palace of La Corona, Guatemala, although his archaeological work has also allowed him to dig big holes in Mexico, Belize, Honduras, and Québec.

Shawn Morton is a Lecturer in Anthropology at Northern Arizona University. Much of his work has focussed on aspects of public performance and ritual within the ancient cityscape and broader landscape of the Maya region, including extensive work in the deep cave contexts of Belize. He is currently a co-Director of the Stann Creek Regional Archaeology Project.

Holley Moyes is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Merced and Associate Dean of the School of Social Science, Humanities, and Arts. As an archaeologist of religion her interest is in how ideologies affect social processes and human decision-making. She specializes in ritual cave use and her volume *Sacred Darkness: A Global Perspective on the Ritual Use of Caves* (University Press of Colorado, 2013) is a testament to the ubiquity of ritual practice in caves over time and space. Although she has conducted research in Tibet, Israel, Turkey and the American southwest, most of her field research focuses on ancient Maya ritual cave sites and their role in the development, maintenance and demise of the Classic period political system. She worked with the Belize Regional Cave Project where she helped to develop archaeological cave recording methods and is currently the principal investigator for the Belize Cave Research Project which has documented over 30 caves sites over the last seven years as well as the Las Cuevas Archaeological Reconnaissance. Investigations at the Las Cuevas site in Belize provide an opportunity to examine ritual behavior during the tumultuous Late Classic period when Maya society was undergoing radical socio/political changes due to internal and external stresses.

Dominique Rissolo - *Biosketch not submitted*

Jennifer Saracino received her Ph.D. in Art History and Latin American Studies from Tulane University (New Orleans, Louisiana) in May 2018. Her research is centered on cross-cultural encounters and interactions between the indigenous population and Europeans and their impact on the visual and material culture (particularly maps and cartographic representations) of Central Mexico in the early colonial period. Her dissertation focuses on the Mapa Uppsala, the earliest known map of Mexico City painted by indigenous artists after Spanish Conquest. She is currently Assistant Professor of Art History at Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida.

Brent K.S. Woodfill is an Assistant Professor at Winthrop University and a Research Associate at the Smithsonian Institution. He is the director of the multidisciplinary Proyecto Salinas de los Nueve Cerros, which combines archaeology, ethnography, ethnohistory, ecology, geology, and community development to understand the economic, political, and religious importance of the eponymous archaeological site and current neighbors. He received his Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University after conducting fieldwork at caves and mountaintop shrines at the base of the Guatemalan highlands. He has previously taught at Georgia State University, the University of Louisiana, and Slippery Rock University.

Gabe Wrobel is an associate professor of anthropology at Michigan State University, specializing in bioarchaeology. He directs the Central Belize Archaeological Survey Project, on which he and his students investigate mortuary contexts primarily in caves and rockshelters. He has also conducted bioarchaeological research in Egypt and the southeastern US, and has recently joined a collaborative project studying the population history of Papua New Guinea.

Marc Zender received his PhD from the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology of the University of Calgary in 2004. He has taught at the University of Calgary (2002-2004) and Harvard University (2005-2011), and is now an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Tulane University, New Orleans, where he has taught linguistics, epigraphy, and Mesoamerican indigenous languages (e.g., Yucatec and Ch'orti' Maya, Classical and Modern Nahuatl) since September 2011. Marc's research interests include anthropological and historical linguistics, comparative writing systems, and archaeological decipherment, with a regional focus on Mesoamerica (particularly Mayan and Nahuatl/Aztec). He is the author of several books and dozens of articles exploring these topics. In addition to his research and writing, Marc is the editor of *The PARI Journal*, and (with Joel Skidmore) co-maintainer of Mesoweb, a major

Internet resource for students of Mesoamerican cultures.

LECTURE ABSTRACTS

Children for Cha'ak: Archaeological, Iconographic and Ethnohistoric Evidence for Ancient Maya Child Sacrifice

Jaime Awe – Northern Arizona University

During investigations of Actun Tunichil Muknal, my Western Belize Regional Cave Project recorded the remains of several children. Although some of these remains provided no visible evidence of trauma, we concluded that they represented those of sacrificial victims. While this interpretation has been questioned by some colleagues, I argue here that there is considerable archaeological, iconographic and ethnohistoric evidence that child sacrifice, particularly in association with rain ceremonies, was a tradition of considerable antiquity in Mesoamerica, and especially prevalent during the Terminal Classic period in the Maya lowlands.

Length – 1 hour

Chichen Itza's Subterranean Cosmogram: Exploring Cenotes, Caves & Water

James Brady - Cal State L.A.

The Gran Aquifero Maya (GAM) project initiated an investigation at Chichen Itza designed to define the site around its aquatic and subterranean resources. It has long been known that the principal pyramid, El Castillo, is bisected by a line drawn between the Sacred Cenote on the north and the Cenote Xtoloc on the south. Additionally, De Anda's previous work at Cenote Holtun, located 1.6 miles west of Chichen Itza, found that a line drawn between Holtun and Cenote Kanjuyum on the east passed through the center of El Castillo, so Chichen Itza defined itself around a cosmogram formed by its water features. Additionally, Balankanche and other caves with water are being restudied as cenotes and these are all tied to the core of Chichen Itza by *sacbeob* indicating that they are part of the site proper. Finally, GAM is discovering a large number of man-made caves that are rewriting our ideas of the sacred landscape of the site.

Length - 1 hour

Demystifying the High Priest's Grave: Investigations in the Cave/Cenote below the Osario

Allan B. Cobb - Cave Specialist

One of the most enigmatic publications in Maya cave archaeology has been Edward H. Thompson's investigation of the High Priest's Grave at Chichen Itza in 1896. Thompson discovered a masonry shaft running down the center of the pyramid that gave access to a cave/cenote beneath the structure. This was the first account of a cave with a pyramid built over it and Thompson suggested that the cave contained seven chambers, hinting at the possibility of a Chicomoztoc. J. Eric Thompson in editing and publishing the report in 1938 notes that there are a number of discrepancies in this early account and over the years, archaeologists have grappled with the meaning of the discovery.

The Gran Aquifero Maya project undertook a restudy of the pyramid, shaft, and cave. The stone floor at the base of the shaft was found to be the top of a small platform that predated the construction of the pyramid. Evidence suggests that the cave had been subjected to a termination ritual and no Chicomoztoc configuration was found.

Length - (30-45 minutes)

Conquering and Integrating the Wilderness: Ancient Maya Negotiations with the Natural Environment

Jeremy Coltman – UC Riverside

It was over 75 years ago that Carl Sauer gave the first formal definition of landscape, which took both nature and culture into account. Landscapes are more than mere political organization but also serve as political order. For instance, rituals of foundation brought order to wild and untamed environs with the surrounding mountains, caves, and lakes replicating the primordial landscape and providing markers for settlement. But what of the ruler's relationship with the untamed and dangerous wilderness? Was he capable of subduing it and integrating it into the constituted political whole? This talk will focus on the relationships between rulers and the natural environment and how the ordered landscape did, and did not, integrate the surrounding wilderness.

Length - 30 minutes

Revisiting the Revisited Caverns of Copán b/w Dancing in the Shadows: MMSS in the Greater Mundo Maya Context

Cameron S. Griffith - Texas Tech University

In 1896-1897 George Byron Gordon investigated a series of caves in the Sesesmil River Valley of Honduras, north of the city center of Copán. Gordon's expedition is considered to be the first archaeological exploration of caves in the region, yielding numerous artifacts as well as evidence for a plethora of different mortuary practices. Since Gordon's day there have been at least five different official scientific investigations of caves in the vicinity of Copán, in addition to numerous unofficial visits/explorations, including looting activity and resource procurement.

In July of 2018, as part of the Proyecto Arqueológico Río Amarillo, Copán, a handful of caves around Copán were revisited yet again. This reconnaissance and reassessment endeavor yielded additional information about the use of subterranean space by ancient Copáneros, and shed new light on the artistic phenomenon known as Monumental Modified Speleothem Sculpture (MMSS). In this presentation I present some of these recent findings, which enhance our burgeoning knowledge base for this relatively obscure ancient Maya art genre.

Length – 30 minutes

Defining Days and Clarifying Nights: A Review of the Nature of the Classic Maya Calendar and the Correlation Question

Stanley Guenter - American Foreign Academic Research

Many of the Calendar Round dates in the inscriptions from Naj Tunich cave have non-Classic forms, with haab coefficients a day earlier or later than in the standard calendar of the Classic period. These have been increasingly interpreted as evidence of regional calendars or of nighttime events, following a suggestion by Peter Mathews forty years ago that the tzolkin and haab calendars began at different parts of the day. Most recently these suggestions formed the basis for a new correlation of the ancient Maya calendar with our own Western Gregorian calendar, one that would require there having been a three day calendar reformation in the Maya area between the Classic era and the arrival of the Spanish. This presentation will review these hypotheses in light of the evidence of modern and ancient Maya civilization as well as cross-cultural comparisons and patterns in calendars and their reformation in world history.

Length – 1 hour

Sweatbaths and Caves in Mesoamerican Thought

Maxime Lamoureux-St-Hilaire - Tulane University and Harri Kettunen - University of Helsinki

Sweatbaths, often referred to as *temazcals*, are one of the most pervasive architectural institutions in Mesoamerica. They are found in both hot and cold climates and across cultural frontiers, from the highlands of Mexico to the southern Maya lowlands. We begin this presentation with a worldwide overview of the history of sweatbaths, including cross-cultural parallels, to then take a closer look at Mesoamerican *temazcals*. We explore how these small, yet important buildings, have played central roles in Mesoamerican communities for the past millennia. To provide a full spectrum of these emblematic buildings we review evidence from archaeology, ethnohistory, ethnography, epigraphy, and linguistics. In particular, we explore parallels between Mesoamerican perceptions of sweatbaths and caves, both spiritually and architecturally. We also discuss the distinct roles that sweatbaths played and still play in Mesoamerica, from daily hygiene, ceremonial birthplaces, and healing spaces to economic facilities for the production of dye.

Length - 1 hour

And The “Eh’s” Have It: The Canadian Legacy in Belizean Cave Archaeology

Shawn G. Morton - Northern Arizona University

For the ancient Maya, the cave context was both a portal to the halls of death and the source of life itself. It was a place of deprivation and sacrifice, and the path to unimaginable wealth. It was the exclusive domain of kings, and the common temple of peasants. As a result, caves are complex contexts of study, demanding in both body and mind. Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that the study of this context has attracted some of our discipline’s greatest talents. While the names of Mercer, Thompson, Brady, and others provide plenty of biographical fodder for us to dwell on, in this talk, I intend on getting patriotic. I want to focus on my countrymen. Canadians and Canadian institutions have long played a prominent role in the archaeology of Belize, and

particularly in the cave context. Beginning with research conducted by the Royal Ontario Museum in the 1960s which produced such seminal works as *Excavations at Eduardo Quiroz Cave* and *The Prehistory of Actun Balam* — and developing into one of the first truly regional studies of this context in the Maya area under the Western Belize Regional Cave Project, the Canadian legacy in the archaeology of the deep-cave environment continues to be felt, and to inspire spin-off projects and new research.

Length - 45 minutes

Holley Moyes - *Title, Abstract, and Length Not Submitted*

Dominique Rissolo - *Title, Abstract, and Length Not Submitted*

Representations of Sacred Portals in Early Colonial Pictorial Manuscripts of Central Mexico

Jennifer Saracino - Flagler College

In pre-Hispanic Central Mexican pictorial tradition, caves not only localized geographic features of the natural landscape, but they could also signify sacred sites of ancestral emergence or portals to other realms. This pictorial tradition continued into the early colonial period, imbuing documents with indigenous perceptions of place and ensuring the continuity of these pre-Hispanic associations to the sacred landscape. This talk begins with a general overview of the representation of caves as sacred sites in indigenous pictorial documents made after Spanish Contact. The second half of the talk then focuses on representations of sacred sites in the depicted landscape of the Mapa Uppsala, the earliest known map of Mexico City painted by indigenous artists after Spanish Conquest. In this presentation, the author discusses findings from a recent research trip that provide evidence of pre-Hispanic associations with features of the natural landscape in this cartographic representation made for the Spanish king Charles V.

Length - 30 minutes

War in the Land of True Peace: The Fight for Maya Sacred Places

Brent K.S. Woodfill - Winthrop University

For the ancient and modern Maya, the landscape is populated by powerful individuals who are manifested in geographic idiosyncrasies like caves, mountains, springs, and abandoned cities. They own the surrounding land, and in order to plant, harvest, build, and travel through their territories, the Maya regularly visit them and perform rituals asking for permission. As a result, these places have been used as points of domination and resistance throughout the past several millennia and into the twenty-first century.

The narrow strip at the base of the Guatemalan highlands has always been one of the most important regions of the Maya World, both for its strategic location and for its exceptional resource base—fertile soil, petroleum, and the only non-coastal salt source in the Maya lowlands. Multiple foreign groups have attempted to incorporate the region into expanding hegemonies and empires, each of them has used the Maya need for access to these places as a tool of domination. Inevitably, however, the local Maya push back to reclaim the sacred places for their

own.

Length - (45-60 min)

What Bones Tell Us and Why We Don't Always Agree About What They Are Saying

Gabriel Wrobel – Michigan State University

Bioarchaeologists study the lives and deaths of ancient individuals uniquely through direct observation of those individuals. Bones and teeth contain data allowing us to access a wide range of information about individuals' lived experiences, as well as the circumstances surrounding their deaths and subsequent treatment of their bodies. Yet, these data rarely speak for themselves, and instead we rely on context-based interpretations to tell what the data actually mean. In this presentation, I will focus on bioarchaeological studies of bones from caves in the Maya area, discussing the types of data that have been revealed and also how and why researchers have often disagreed in their interpretations of them. Rather than providing definitive answers, we will shine a light on the process of scientific inquiry.

Length – 1 hour

Creatures of Darkness: Bats in Classic Maya Art and Writing

Marc Zender – Tulane University

Abstract not submitted

Length – 1 hour

HIEROGLYPHIC WORKSHOP ABSTRACTS

An Introduction to Aztec Hieroglyphic Writing

Marc Zender – Tulane University

The decipherment of Nahuatl hieroglyphic writing began in the nineteenth century with the pioneering work of Joseph Aubin (1849), and the system has received a great deal of attention from scholars during the past 150 years. Valuable sign catalogs have been generated (Barlow and MacAfee 1982; Berdan and Anawalt 1992; McGowan and Van Nice 1979), as have insightful phonetic decipherments (Nuttall 1888; Dibble 1940; Nicholson 1973), and a remarkably detailed reconstruction of Late Aztec political geography (Barlow 1949; Berdan et al. 1996). Yet it is only recently that scholarship has departed from a reliance on Colonial-era Roman glosses of Aztec hieroglyphs and begun a systematic analysis of the structure, functions, and orthographic conventions of the Aztec logosyllbary itself (Lacadena 2008). Although this new approach has had its detractors (Prem 2009; Whittaker 2009), it continues to be productive of new insights (Lacadena and Wichmann 2008; Zender 2008). We now have an emic critique of colonial glosses (Lacadena 2017) and the recent recognition of a class of semantic determinatives that bear comparison to various highly-abbreviated writing systems of the Old World, such as Mycenaean Linear B (Zender 2017). This intermediate-level workshop summarizes recent work on this important indigenous Mesoamerican writing system.

Length – 5 hours

***This will take place on Thursday from 9:00am-12:00pm and then resume at 1:00pm and last until 3:00pm.**

Writing in the Dark: The Inscriptions of Naj Tunich

Stanley Guenter – American Foreign Academic Research, Harri Kettunen – University of Helsinki, and Marc Zender - Tulane University

The Late Classic hieroglyphic texts from Naj Tunich cave, in southeastern Peten, Guatemala, form the most extensive corpus of inscriptions relating to ancient utilization of caves in the Maya world. This workshop, open to all, is designed to examine these texts in light of the most recent studies of not only epigraphy and linguistics but also the insights of archaeology and the anthropology of modern Maya ritual cave use. The workshop will last three hours with a break.

*** This will take place on Sunday from 9:00am-12:00pm.**