



WAYEB Newsletter

European Association of Mayanists

Number 13, 4 September 2007

Dear Wayeberos,

Wayeb hopes that you had a nice summer and a good start into the new "academic year". With this newsletter we would like to update you all on the latest news about the 12th EMC in Geneva and about other future Wayeb-related events.

If you have not renewed your Wayeb membership 2007 yet, you may do so by using our online portal. We would appreciate it very much if you continued your membership to support our work. Thank you very much.

Best regards,

Frauke Sachse

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1. NEW MEMBERS

Please, give a very warm welcome to our new members:

Edwin Braakhuis, The Netherlands
Olivia Bourrat, France
Garth Denning, United Kingdom

h.e.m.braakhuis@kpnplanet.nl
olivia.bourrat@hotmail.fr
garth.denning@ntlworld.com

2. 12 EMC 2007 IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

THE MAYA AND THEIR SACRED NARRATIVES: TEXT AND CONTEXT OF MAYA MYTHOLOGIES
3-8 December 2007

The European Association of Mayanists WAYEB, in association with the section of History of Religion of the University of Geneva, and the Swiss Society of Americanists, invite scholars and students to attend the 12th European Maya Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, from December 3 -8, 2007. The conference combines a Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop (December 3-6) and a Research Symposium (December 7-8).

SYMPOSIUM (DECEMBER 7-8)

The Symposium will take place at the Uni Bastion, room B106, Place de l'Université 3, 1205 Geneva (Map and access: <http://www.unige.ch/visite/batiments/fr/bastions.html>)

Keynote speakers include Allen Christenson (Brigham Young University), Nikolai Grube (University of Bonn), Simon Martin (University of Pennsylvania Museum), Karl Taube (University of California, Riverside), Fátima Tec Pool (Instituto de Cultura de Yucatan), and Hector Xol Choc (Universidad Rafaël Landívar).

You may download a complete programme and list of abstracts from the WAYEB website

MAYA HIEROGLYPHIC WORKSHOP (DECEMBER 3-6)

The Workshop combines an opening lecture (Monday afternoon) and a series of workshops (Tuesday to Thursday). Several groups from beginners to advanced levels will be available. All groups will be taught and supervised by experienced tutors. A hard copy of the introductory workbook written by Harri Kettunen and Christophe Helmke is available to participants in English, Spanish or French for an additional fee. The workbook can also be downloaded at no extra charge from our website.

Please, download the complete programme of the Workshop from the WAYEB website.

Opening lecture (Monday December 3rd, 3pm)

The opening lecture will take place at the Museum of Ethnography (MEG), Boulevard Carl-Vogt 65, 1205 Geneva (Map and access: <http://www.ville-ge.ch/musinfo/ethg/adresse.php>).

Simon Martin (University of Pennsylvania Museum)

The opening lecture will serve as a general introduction for all participants of the EMC Hieroglyphic Workshops. It will give those who are beginners some general idea of Maya hieroglyphic writing and will provide participants with the latest information and new directions in Maya Studies.

Workshops (December 4-6, from 9am to 6pm)

The Workshops will take place at the Maison des Associations, Rue des savoises 15, 1204 Geneva (Map and access: <http://www.lafea.org/contacts.htm>).

Workshops are divided into three separate levels: Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced. We strongly recommend that participants register for a workshop that suits their individual level of experience to benefit most in the three days. Please, note that this year, an additional Special Workshop on the Popol Vuh is offered which is generally open to all participants. Some prior knowledge of Maya art, writing and mythology would be helpful.

Participants will be assigned to their workshops on Tuesday morning.

BEGINNERS WORKSHOP

Tutors: *Pierre-Robert Colas* (Vanderbilt University), *Geneviève Le Fort* (University of Neuchâtel), *Sebastian Matteo* (University of Brussels ULB), *Christian Prager* (University of Bonn), *Alexandre Tokovinine* (Harvard University).

The Beginners Workshop is open to all participants with no prior or little knowledge of Maya writing. This workshop does not have a regional or thematic focus but concentrates exclusively on teaching "newcomers", in a structured and didactic way, how to read Classic Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions. Every participant will be provided with a comprehensive special booklet – in addition to the official EMC workbook.

The participants will be divided in smaller groups and will be given step-to-step guidance by the tutors in English. Explanations can also be provided in Spanish, German and French on an individual basis.

At the end of the three days, participants will be able to understand the basic structure of a text, decipher the calendrical information, reconstruct the chronology, point at verbs and nominal phrases, and much more.

INTERMEDIATE WORKSHOPS

1: "Sacred Narratives and Their Manifestation in Local Classic and Postclassic Maya Traditions"

Tutors : *Erik Boot* (Rijswijk, The Netherlands), and *Elisabeth Wagner* (University of Bonn)

The discovery in March 1999 of the hieroglyphic bench inside Temple XIX at Palenque has changed our perspective on one of the most important sacred narratives of the Classic Maya, that of creation. This year the intermediate workshop will focus on hieroglyphic texts that contain sacred narratives, specifically (but not exclusively) those narratives related to creation and the calendar round date 4

Ajaw 8 Kumk'uh, as manifested in local Classic and Postclassic Maya traditions. As such in this workshop it is possible to analyse the sacred narrative of creation from the perspective of Palenque as well as from the perspective of Quirigua. It thus becomes clear, based on presently available hieroglyphic texts, how kings in different local traditions employed the sacred narrative of creation within their strategies of political legitimization. Other examples of this narrative of different local origin will be available for study from for instance Caracol, Tikal, Naranjo, Tortuguero, Coba, and Chichen Itza, written down on stone monuments as well as on portable objects. These localized manifestations of the sacred narrative of creation extend to include (for the advanced members in this group, if interest arises) specific passages from the Dresden Codex as well as alphabetic passages from the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel.

The workshop will open with an introductory presentation on the subject and the material available for study. During the workshop several other short explanatory presentations are planned. As in previous years, a source book will be made available. A list of recommended literature as well as a preliminary list of hieroglyphic texts to be studied becomes available online as soon as possible.

2. "The Ballgame"

Tutors: *Christophe Helmke* (University of Copenhagen), *Harri Kettunen* (University of Helsinki), and *Ramzy Barrois* (CEMCA, Guatemala)

This workshop will focus on texts associated with the Maya ballgame. Participants will explore inscriptions that are either linked to the ballgame itself or to the rituals associated with the game. During the workshop we will also take a look at the iconography related to the ballgame, along with information regarding the archaeology of ballcourts and associated structures.

To participate in this workshop, experience in general epigraphic analysis, basic Maya grammar, and calendrics is required. A special reference book on the ballgame will be made available to the participants. During the course of the workshop, several presentations will be given to facilitate epigraphic and iconographic analysis.

ADVANCED WORKSHOP

"Classic Maya Mythologies"

Tutor: *Marc Zender* (Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, Harvard University)

Underlying Maya cosmology, history and religion are several key mythological narratives explaining the origins of the world, humanity and civilized/moral behavior. Classic Maya writing and art provide our most important windows into these narratives, identifying key mythological characters by name, attribute or association. Occasionally these figures have survived in more or less recognizable form in colonial or modern traditions -- as with the Storm God (Chaak) and the Creator God (Itzamna in Colonial sources). More often they have not, and the sum total of our knowledge of their role in the mythology comes from careful study of the texts and art in which they occur. Such is the case with K'awiil, Juun Ixiim and God L, complex entities who defy the simple labels of "Lightning God," "Maize God" and "Merchant God of the Underworld."

Beginning with a review of what is currently known about the major gods, places and events of Maya mythology, this seminar-style workshop focuses on an investigation of what might be termed the "lost gods" of this canon. Recent discoveries concerning the Principal Bird Deity, the Wind God, and Gods D and N are highlighted. A secondary but equally important focus stems from questions about the nature of the mythological narratives, particularly with respect to subtle variations in theme and focus in different regions. Was there ever a unified Maya mythology?

SPECIAL WORKSHOP

"The Popol Vuh—A Window Into Maya Theology"

Tutors : *Allen Christenson* (Associate Professor at the Brigham Young University, Department of Humanities, Classics, and Comparative Literature), and *Frauke Sachse* (University of Bonn)

This workshop will introduce participants to the Popol Vuh, the single most important source for ancient highland Maya myth and history to have survived the Spanish Conquest in the early sixteenth century. The text was compiled by anonymous members of the K'iche'-Maya nobility who claim to

have based their work on earlier written sources as well as oral tradition in an effort to preserve their cultural heritage in the face of intense persecution. Through a combination of lectures as well as directed research by the participants themselves, this workshop will attempt to unravel the mythic theology of the ancient Maya past. This is a unique opportunity to learn about the Maya view of the universe through their own words. Such a study is essential in understanding not only the ancient Maya, but in understanding living Maya language, culture and ceremonialism as well.

Lectures will include a general introduction to the history and decipherment of the text; modern Maya ritual and myth as it reflects the theology of the Popol Vuh; how this theology relates to the iconography of ancient Maya monuments, ceramics, and hieroglyphic codices; a study of the texts poetic structure as a key to unlocking its myths' fuller meaning; and a brief look at linguistics in an effort to understand the original Maya concepts that may be hidden in translations and to identify possible non-highland Maya influences. For the first time, participants will be able to utilize a unique resource, the newly-published CD-Rom version of the Popol Vuh edited by Allen Christenson. This includes high resolution images of the oldest known version of the manuscript (published for the first time), transcriptions of the text in both ancient and modern K'iche'-Maya orthographies, grammatic translations in both English and Spanish, a literal line-by-line translation in English, a complete audio version of the text ready by native Maya speakers, extensive annotated commentary, a large collection of illustrations from Maya art (including photographs of hundreds of photographs of ceramic vessels compiled by Justin Kerr), geography, people, maps, flora, fauna, etc., all fully searchable electronically. Ample time will be given for participants to pursue their own research and interests in connection with the Popol Vuh with as much (or as little) help from the directors as desired. It promises to be a fantastic few days.

Note : if you bring your laptop, you'll be able to play with Allen's CD-Rom !

REGISTRATION

Separate registration is available for both events, if you just want to attend the Symposium or the Workshop. If you register now for the entire week you'll get a reduced rate. Online Registration will be available until November 15, 2007 only. After that date, registration will only be possible on day of arrival, cash payment only.

Fees for WAYEB members:

	until 15 November	on day of arrival
Workshop	€ 40	€ 50
Symposium	€ 40	€ 50
Both events	€ 75	€ 90

Please, check the WAYEB website for more information about venues, accommodation and travel details.

Looking forward seeing you all in Geneva!!

3. REEA CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS, 2008

RITUAL AMERICAS: call for panels and papers

Dear Wayeberos,

Colleagues in Belgium are organising the 2nd REEA (Red Europea de Estudios Amerindios) Conference in April 2-5, 2008.

It will run various symposia at the same time. They would love to have a Maya symposium headed and organised by Wayeb. Anybody interested?

Please read the announcement attached (<http://www.societedesamericanistes.be/>) and tell me if you want to propose a symposium theme and / or a paper. The deadline to submit a symposium is September 20.

Best,
Geneviève

If you are interested, please contact:
Dr. Geneviève Le Fort
Dachsweg 12
CH-3075 Rüfenacht
+41-31-331 53 58
glefort@mus.ch

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Frauke Sachse (Wayeb President)
Abt. Altamerikanistik & Ethnologie
Universität Bonn
Römerstr. 164
53117 Bonn, Germany
+49-228-2619300
sachse@wayeb.org
president@wayeb.org

Please, visit our website: www.wayeb.org, .com, .net, .eu