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2 November 2014

Ancient Cultures of Middle America Week 10

## The Classic Period: Economies and Empires

**REM No Class on Thursday, 6 November 2014**

I will be at Growing Power's 2014 National-International Urban & Small Farm Conference . . .

"Building a Fair Food Economy to Grow Healthy People"

**This week and next we're going exploring**, first to the jungles of the Yucatán Peninsula. Tuesday we're going to have a look at *Maya Lords of the Jungle*. It's an older film, **but still one of the best** for looking at things like the relationship of the Maya raised field agricultural system to the ruling elite and of the empire in general. "Raised fields" are the Maya equivalent of the famous Aztec *chinampa* that we'll see towards the end of the semester. About one-third of the Classic Maya area is swamp, and you'll see what a remarkable system they developed to maximize its productivity—and how that gets transmitted even into the smallest of decorations on the ruler's elaborate headdress. Pay close attention to the Water Lily Blossom and fish discussion, and how they symbolize royal authority. Linda Schele, the epigrapher you've seen several times in the class films, will explain it all to us. And more . . .

"We are talking about the **personal history** of Pre-Columbian MesoAmerica in terms of specific individuals and their relatives," Linda Schele. "In the Preclassic, the masks on the pyramids represent the Gods. In the Classic they are becoming individual divine kings."

As mentioned above, **we will not have class on Thursday, 6 November 2014**. For extra credit, you can have a look at the film that was scheduled for Thursday; it's a comparative look at "**Artisans and Traders**," from the *Out of the Past* series (60 min., 1993, UM DULUTH Library Multimedia CC165 .O97 1993b DVD Disc 2). Remember Week 1, when we were talking about anthropology being **comparative**? With the *Out of the Past* series you get a good look at what that means.

Upload your Extra Credit Film Review in the "Activities" section of Week 14 of your **Moodle** Folder:

Upload Your Extra Credit Lecture / Film Reviews

Next week we'll continue our explorations with the *Lost Kingdoms of the Maya* and have a look at

*The Collapse* of Maya and other Classic sites.

**Week 12 we'll return to finish our in-class walk around Teotihuacán, and we'll at least start to have a walk around Monte Albán and Mitla.**

**Monte Albán** in Oaxaca ranks as one of the great archaeological sites of the world. You have seen Monte Albán in many of the films, and we'll see it several times more this week and in the coming weeks. Monte Albán is one of my very favorite places in the world.

At its peak, in the Classic, Monte Albán was the home of the great **Zapotec** people and their Empire. It is the flagship site and **political and economic** center of one of the very few civilizations in the world that lasted almost a thousand years.



[Monte Albán -- Wikipedia](#)



**Mitla**, “place of the dead,” or “underworld,” is the second most important archaeological site in the State of Oaxaca. Mitla was once also a major Zapotec **religious** center, but was taken over by the **Mixtecs** in the Postclassic. It was still a major flourishing center when the Spanish arrived in 1520. Mitla is especially well-known also for its geometric architecture.



[Mitla -- Wikipedia](#)

We'll see more of Mitla—and its great leader **Eight Deer Ocelot Claw**—in the Postclassic.

Your activities this week are to turn in your Extra Credit materials (*if* you're intending on doing Extra Credit). Details on Extra Credit are in last week's Week 9 Memo.

-  The MA \*EXTRA CREDIT\* (1) bibliography and (2) promissory abstract due by End of Week 10, Friday, 7 November 2014
-  Forum: *Women in Ancient America* (Due End of Week 11, Friday, 14 November 2014)




Remember to check the results of the class Video Responses from earlier weeks when they close. You can find the results in the **Moodle** Blocks where they first appeared. This week have a look at . . .

-  Results--"Forests of the Maya" f2014

### **All things considered, it will be still another Classic week.**

Share your ideas. Discuss them on-line with the others in class . . .

f2014

-  Wiki for Project Collaboration
-  Live chat for Project Collaboration
-  Wiki for Project Collaboration
- QUICKMAIL (see sidebar)

The above items will be found at the top of your **Moodle** folder under "Student Collaboration Space".

This week's **(1) Topics, (2) Reading Assignments Listings, and (3) Activities** are detailed in the Week 10 Block of your **Moodle** folder.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to stop in after class, or post them on **Moodle**, or e-mail [troufs@d.umn.edu](mailto:troufs@d.umn.edu). Better yet, post them on your **Moodle** Discussion and Project forum boards.

Best Regards,

Tim Roufs