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## From the editors

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

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## FROM THE EDITORS

The last two decades have seen a growing interest in the subject of ancient water management in Mesoamerican studies and in the Maya area in particular. Many projects are now aimed at furthering our understanding of the role that water played in both the ritual and daily lives of pre-Columbian societies as well as in the origins and downfall of civilizations. As a result, several important volumes are also dedicated to this subject (e.g. Lucero 2006; Lucero and Fash 2006; Scarborough 2003; Scarborough *et al.* 2003). The present issue of the CNWA collects papers presented during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cracow Maya Conference convened by Jagiellonian University and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in February of 2012. The 2<sup>nd</sup> CMC was wholly devoted to the topic of ancient Maya water management and several papers dealing with this subject were presented by scholars from Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Poland, Russia and Slovakia. The symposium was also followed by a series of three-day long hieroglyphic workshops. After this event, we have also invited several scholars specializing in the subject at hand, who kindly accepted our invitation and submitted additional papers. The volume has papers dealing with different aspects of water management at various sites located in Belize, Guatemala and Mexico that have recently been investigated focusing especially on the role of water management among Maya and Central Mexican cultures.

The volume opens with a paper entitled *Water in Maya Imagery and Writing*, by Harri Kettunen and Christophe Helmke that introduces us to the iconography, epigraphy and linguistic entries related to water among the ancient Maya. The next paper by Liwy Grazioso Sierra and Vernon L. Scarborough, *Control del agua por los antiguos mayas: El sistema hidráulico de la ciudad de Tikal*, presents the results of research carried out at Tikal during which architectural features related to ancient Maya hydraulic engineering were studied. This work casts new light on the role of water in the origins, the development as well as the collapse of the great Maya city of Tikal. Thereafter, Nicolaus Seefeld presents the results of the archeological excavations conducted in three hydraulic features (*aguadas*) at Uxul, Mexico, in an article entitled *Public Provisions for Dry Seasons: The Hydraulic System of Uxul and its Relevance for the Survivability of the Settlement*. This work attempts to reconstruct the process of water supply for this important Maya site. In the following paper, *Ancient Maya Rain Water Reservoirs in Northwestern Belize*, Estella Weiss-Krejci summarizes the major results of excavations of ancient Maya water features in the Rio Bravo Conservation and Management Area, Belize, a densely settled region during the Late Classic period that was almost completely dependent on water sources during the dry seasons. The following paper, *El manejo ritual y práctico del agua: El caso del Edificio 14 de Nakum, Guatemala* by Wiesław Koszkul and Jarosław Żrałka, is concerned with an interesting drain feature recently discovered in one of the structures at the archaeological site of Nakum, in Guatemala. The authors show that the drain had both practical functions as well as ritual connotations, since the structure may have symbolized a mountain of water and abundance. The subject of ritual and practical use of water is also major theme of the next article entitled *Manejo hidráulico durante el Clásico Tardío en Cancuen, Peten, Guatemala* by Silvia Alvarado Najarro. Its author describes in detail all hydraulic

features documented at the Maya site of Cancuen. She also presents a study of aquatic iconography from this and other neighboring sites showing rulers as important “lords of water”, whose power was based on the control of water and its resources. The shark, the greatest predator of the sea, is the subject of the following paper, entitled *Ah Xok, transformaciones de un dios acuático: Del tiburón olmeca a la sirena lacandona*, wherein Milan Kováč presents the evolution of the shark in myth and folklore from the Formative to the contemporary Lakantun. The last two papers are concerned with Teotihuacan and Aztec cultures of Central Mexico. The first of them, *The Personifications of Celestial Water: The Many Guises of the Storm God in the Pantheon and Cosmology of Teotihuacan*, by Kasper Wrem Anderson and Christophe Helmke presents an extensive study of Teotihuacan Storm god – a prototype of later rain deity *Tlaalok* worshipped by the Aztec. The authors distinguish new and previously unknown manifestations of this important Mesoamerican deity that are linked with cardinal directions and their associated colours. The last article, *Agua y Arquitectura Religiosa: Evidencias arqueológicas de un ayauhcalli del periodo Azteca Tardío en el manantial Hueytlilatl, Coyoacan*, by Stan Declercq and Juan Cervantes Rosado presents an interpretation of an Aztec architectural complex connected with a spring, located at Coyoacan, just to the south of ancient Tenochtitlan in the Basin of Mexico. The above-described feature was used not only for capturing water but it also played important religious functions as the discovery of accompanied burials, offerings and sculptures clearly indicates.

In closing, we hope the present volume constitutes another important contribution to the subject of water, water management and associated rituals among the pre-Columbian societies of ancient Mesoamerica. We hope that these pages prove to be good and inspiring reading!

Jarosław Żrałka and Christophe Helmke

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