

# MONUMENTALITY IN SOUTHERN CENTRAL AMERICA: COMPLEXITY, INEQUALITY, DEPENDENCY? PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN AND OTHER-THAN-HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

HYBRID COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE BY THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN AND LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

**NOVEMBER 8 – 9, 2023**

CO-FUNDED BY:



## THE BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

hosts the Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom”, which aims to overcome the binary opposition of “slavery versus freedom”. We approach the phenomenon of slavery and other types of strong asymmetrical dependency from methodologically and theoretically distinct perspectives.

Monumentality is a widely used term in archaeology, both as a descriptive category for objects and structures that stand out in landscapes, and as an interpretative category, used to theorize on the ways in which societies are organized. However, the understanding on what constitutes 'monumental' varies considerably. In this workshop, we aim to explore southern Central American monumentality through large-scale transformations of landscape and enduring materials, such as stone, which creates and represents communities' resilient relationships with their surrounding world. When seen as a result of human–nature relationships, monumentality is not interpreted as a result of social stratification among human societies. Rather, it can be seen as an attempt to anchor dependency relationships with the surrounding (meta-)physical world.

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## VENUE

### **BASA Museum**

Department of Ancient American Studies and Ethnology  
University of Bonn  
Oxfordstraße 15, 53111 Bonn  
and **online via Zoom**

## CONTACT

### **Conference Organizers:**

Dita Auziņa	BCDSS, University of Bonn
Alexander Geurds	Leiden University
Nikolai Grube	BCDSS, University of Bonn

Please **register** for the conference **by November 3, 2023** via [email](#) and state whether you will attend in person or online.

Please visit our [workshop website](#) for more information.



## Wednesday, November 8, 2023

9:30 AM CET – **Welcome by Nikolai Grube**

### **Panel I: Monumentality as an archaeological marker of dependency?**

9:45 – 10:30 AM

Monumentality: an archaeological marker for human and other than-human dependencies?

**Dita Auziņa**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

10:30 – 11:15 AM

Toward new understandings of monumentality across the Isthmo-Colombian Area

**Alexander Geurds**  
(Leiden University)

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM

Monumentality in pre-classic Maya world

**Nikolai Grube**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

Discussion

12:15 – 1:15 PM – Lunch Break

### **Panel II: Monumentality of Landscape and Environment (Chair: Alexander Geurds)**

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM

Converting monumental landscape to human dimensions

**Gloria Lara Pinto**  
(Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Francisco Morazán, Tegucigalpa)

2:00 PM – 2:45 PM

Monumental environmental changes in pre-Columbian Panamá: The striking example of the jumbo squid

**Karen Holmberg**  
(New York University)

2:45 PM – 3:30 PM

Platform-shell mounds and sculptural scenes in Darién, Panama: human and non-human expressions of monumentality in the tropical forest (900 - 1500 CE)

**Natalia Donner & Lucy Gill**  
(Leiden University, University of British Columbia)

## Wednesday, November 8, 2023

3:30 – 4:00 PM – Coffee Break

### **Panel III: Monumentality of Stone (Chair: Alexander Geurds)**

4:00 – 4:45 PM

El arte rupestre como fuente arqueológica monumental en las sociedades preestatales del sur de Centroamérica

**Martin Künne**  
(FU Berlin)

4:45 – 5:30 PM

Costa Rica: Composite Monumentality in the Diquís: The Antigua Finca 7 archaeological site

**Francisco Corrales**  
(Department of Anthropology and History, National Museum of Costa Rica)

Discussion

### **7:00 PM Conference Dinner in Bonn (only for speakers and organizers)**

## Thursday, November 9, 2023

### **Panel IV: Settlement Patterns (Chair: Nikolai Grube)**

9:00 – 9:45 AM

Hinterland monumentality at Tzikin Tzakan, Petén, Guatemala: questioning core-periphery dichotomies in a Classic Maya community

**Paul Graf**  
(BCDSS, University of Bonn)

9:45 – 10:30 AM

Monumentality in the Honduran Mosquitia

**Chris Begley**  
(Transylvania University, US)

10:30 - 11:00 AM – Coffee Break

11:00 - 11:45 AM

Looking from above: Monumentality in Central Costa Rica during 800-1500 CE  
**Yajaira Núñez-Cortés**  
(Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panama)

## Thursday, November 9, 2023

### **Panel IV continued:**

11:45 AM – 12:30 PM

Nicaragua. Ciudad Perdida. Un poblado prehispánico jerarquizado en Santa María de Nueva Segovia, Nicaragua.

**Sagrario Balladares N; Leonardo Lechado R y Kevin González H**  
(Centro Arqueológico de Documentación e Investigación CADI-UNAN- Managua)

12:30 – 1:30 PM – Lunch Break

### **Panel V: Monumentality, Networks, and Material Culture (Chair: Dita Auziņa)**

1:30 – 2:15 PM

The monumental roots of a market economy in Pacific Nicaragua, circa AD 500

**Adam Benfer**  
(Johnson County Community College)

2:15 – 3:00 PM

Settlement patterns and networks in northeast Honduras: complexity during the Selin (AD 300–1000) and Cocal (AD 1000–1525) periods

**Mike Lyons**  
(University of Bonn)

3:00 – 3:30 PM – Coffee Break

3:30 – 4:15 PM

Feasting and monumentality in Northeastern Honduras  
**Whitney Goodwin**  
(University of Missouri Research Reactor)

4:15 – 5:00 PM

The Izalco–Usulután Ceramics of Central America Exploring Non-Architectural Monumentality Through Feasting Ceramics During the Late Preclassic

**Adrien Martinet**  
(University of Bonn)

### **Final Discussion & future planning**