

DUMBARTON OAKS
PRE-COLUMBIAN STUDIES

PUBLIC LECTURE

ANN CYPHERS, UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO

Bad-Year Economics and the San Lorenzo Olmec



A common perception of the tropical riverine environment of Mexico's southern Gulf Coast lowlands is that generally homogeneous conditions of abundant water, predictable hydrology and fertile soils made it the "maize basket" that sustained the rise of the Olmec civilization. However, unpredictable fluctuations in the food supply or bad-year economics play an important role in development. In this lecture Dr. Cyphers will offer a panorama of changing upland and wetland subsistence and risk management strategies at the earliest Olmec capital of San Lorenzo, based on ethnographical observations, environmental characteristics, archaeological settlement distributions and subsistence resources and practices.

Dr. Ann Cyphers is the director of the San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán Archaeological Project. She is a senior research scientist at the Institute for Anthropological Research of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. She is the author of several books, such as *Escultura Olmeca de San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán* and *Asentamiento prehispánico en San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán* (with Stacey Symonds and Roberto Lunagómez), among other publications.

Thursday, November 5th, 2009

5:30 P.M. in the Music Room of Dumbarton Oaks

1703 32nd Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20007

The lecture is open to the public without charge. Advance registration is required.

RSVP: pre-columbian@doaks.org or 202-339-6440.