

# Recent Research on Early State Formation in Oaxaca, Mexico

Redmond will be presenting archaeological research that Charles Spencer and she have carried out in southern Mexico on the development of the early Zapotec state, whose capital was the hilltop city of Monte Albán in the Oaxaca Valley. The Zapotec case is of special significance in anthropological archaeology because it is among the handful of first-generation states that evolved in a context of nonstate polities without precedent and with no contact with other preexisting state societies. Their archaeological investigations both outside the Oaxaca Valley and ongoing investigations in the Oaxaca Valley are documenting the conditions faced by Monte Albán's founding rulers around 500 BC, as well as the strategies they pursued, which played a pivotal role in the transition to statehood around 300 BC.

*The Institute for Mesoamerican Studies presents:*

**Dr. Elsa M. Redmond**  
(American Museum of Natural History)

**Friday, November 10th at 3:30 pm in FA 126**



Redmond is an anthropological archaeologist whose interest lies in the evolution of early complex societies in Latin America. Since 1972, she has conducted extensive archaeological investigations in southern Mexico and in western Venezuela. She has contributed insights into the role that warfare, particularly intervillage raiding, played in the emergence of centralized hierarchical societies or chiefdoms ruled by hereditary chiefs in South America. She has also investigated the role of expansionistic conquest warfare in the formation of the early Zapotec state in Mexico's Oaxaca Valley.

Redmond became a research associate in the Division of Anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History in 1991. She received her B.A. in anthropology from Rice University in 1973, her Ph.D. in anthropology from Yale University in 1981, and has taught graduate and undergraduate courses at the University of Connecticut, Yale University, CUNY's Hunter College, and Columbia University.



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