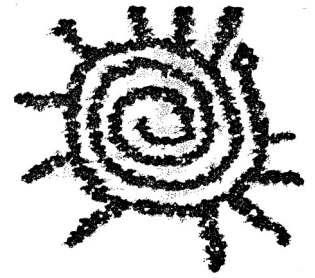




The Phoenix Chapter of the
Arizona Archaeological Society
invites you to join us for
a Zoom meeting on
Tuesday, Jan. 12, at 7:30 pm*



Ancient Macaws in Mimbres, Chaco and the Hohokam by Pat Gilman, Ph.D.



Macaw in Tree. Courtesy Pat Gilman



Mimbres Classic Black-on-White Bowl
with a woman and a man, both wearing bird
masks and working with macaws or parrots
(From Mattocks site, Gilman and LeBlanc 2017)

Scarlet macaws were the most spectacular item in the ancient southwestern United States obtained from farther south in Mexico. They were present and contemporary at Mimbres Classic and Chacoan sites from about A.D. 1000 to 1130. They were present even earlier in the Hohokam region. Does the presence of macaws in these three regions indicate a similar use and meaning? Does it suggest social relationships between people in the various regions?

Pat Gilman argues that people used macaws and parrots differently in the three regions. For example, about 30 scarlet macaws were concentrated at Pueblo Bonito, although one or two were present in each of three other Chaco Canyon sites. In contrast, perhaps as many as 15 scarlet macaws were spread among at least 8 Mimbres Classic sites, some of them within the Mimbres Valley core and some not. Mimbres macaws were buried with a person or buried by themselves beneath a room floor, in Great Kiva fill, or in a midden, while most of the Chaco macaws were on floors or in room fill.

These differences support the idea that there was little commonality between Mimbres and Chaco in terms of how scarlet macaws were used and probably therefore their role within the social and religious systems. However, the Mimbres and Chaco macaws all belong to the same rare genetic group, suggesting they had the same breeding source. These patterns show the complexity of studying exotic items within their varying social contexts.

About the speaker: Patricia Gilman earned a Ph.D. at the University of New Mexico in 1983 and later retired from the University of Oklahoma. She has done archaeological fieldwork and research in the Mimbres region of southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona for more than 40 years. Her initial interests were architecture and the transition that ancient people made from living in pit-houses to inhabiting pueblos.

Recently Dr. Gilman and her colleagues have been investigating the presence of scarlet macaws in Mimbres sites, their dates and DNA, and how they might have been brought to the southwestern United States from the tropical forest of southern Mexico.

*The waiting room for the ZOOM meeting will open at 7 pm for those who want to enter early and say hi to friends they haven't seen for months before the meeting starts. There will be time for Q&A after the talk.