“Planning, circulating and experiencing: the urban morphology of the Maya cities of Palenque and Chinikihá in the VIII century”

The Palenque Regional Project directed by Dr. Rodrigo Liendo (IIA-UNAM) has registered in almost twenty years of survey more than 600 archaeological sites within the area under the influence of the Palenque kingdom in the Late Classic periods. In this panorama, Chinikihá is the only other settlement that, along with Palenque, can be considered a regional capital because of its architecture and the epigraphic evidence that indicates the existence of a ruling dynasty. Because of the urban complexity of both cities, I decided to explore how they could have functioned in response to the people’s movement, differential accessibility, buildings hierarchy and association, among other aspects. Starting from an architectural perspective, I want to propose a methodology to understand the ancient Maya urban morphology in order to comprehend the use of space and how would have been to live in a planned city and in a symbolic environment.

Arianna Campiani has a PhD in Pre-Columbian Architecture from the Nacional Autonominous University of Mexico (UNAM). She has collaborated in several archaeological projects in Mexico since 2003, mostly in the Maya area. She joined the Palenque Regional Project in 2008 where she participated in the site mapping and archaeological documentation. She was in charge of the urban and architectural analysis. Arianna is currently a visiting scholar at the Archaeological Research Facility of UC Berkeley, working on a collaborative program between Dr. Rodrigo Liendo at UNAM and Rosemary Joyce at UC-Berkeley, as a Data Base maven. Her interests focus on cityscape, urban morphology and the relationship between the built environment and its inhabitants.