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**THE NATURE OF INTERACTION AT LA SUFRICAYA, GUATEMALA: EVIDENCE FROM
STABLE ISOTOPIC ANALYSIS OF HUMAN TOOTH ENAMEL**

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Abstract

Excavation of the Early Classic site of La Sufricaya revealed both murals and smaller artifacts that suggest that this elite center had connections with the great urban power of Teotihuacan in Central Mexico. Enamel from six individuals interred at La Sufricaya was used in stable strontium, oxygen, and carbon isotopic analyses in order to shed light on the role of this smaller center and in doing so to further understanding of Mayan regional and international interactions.

Stable isotopic analyses are used to identify migrant individuals in archaeological populations. Of the six individuals examined from La Sufricaya four were found to have foreign strontium isotopic ratios. Several lines of evidence indicate that these individuals were migrants from the nearby Northern Lowlands suggesting complex regional relationships within the Maya region. There is no evidence to suggest that there were physical interactions with Teotihuacan but material evidence points to political ties to Teotihuacan through Tikal. La Sufricaya may have been a small center, however, both material culture and isotopic data imply that it was firmly entrenched in the political landscape of the time.