Knowledge of the Mayan civilisation has been greatly increased in the last thirty years (see for example [3] and [8]).Modern techniques such as high resolution radar images, aerial photography and satellite images have changed conceptions of the Maya civilisation.Tikal is probably the largest of the cities and recent studies have identified about 3000 separate constructions including temples, palaces, shrines, wood and thatch houses, terraces, causeways, plazas and huge reservoirs for storing rainwater.Of course astronomy and calendar calculations require mathematics and indeed the Maya constructed a very sophisticated number systems.Farming with sophisticated raised fields and irrigation systems provided the food to support the population.The rulers were astronomer priests who lived in the cities who controlled the people with their religious instructions.

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