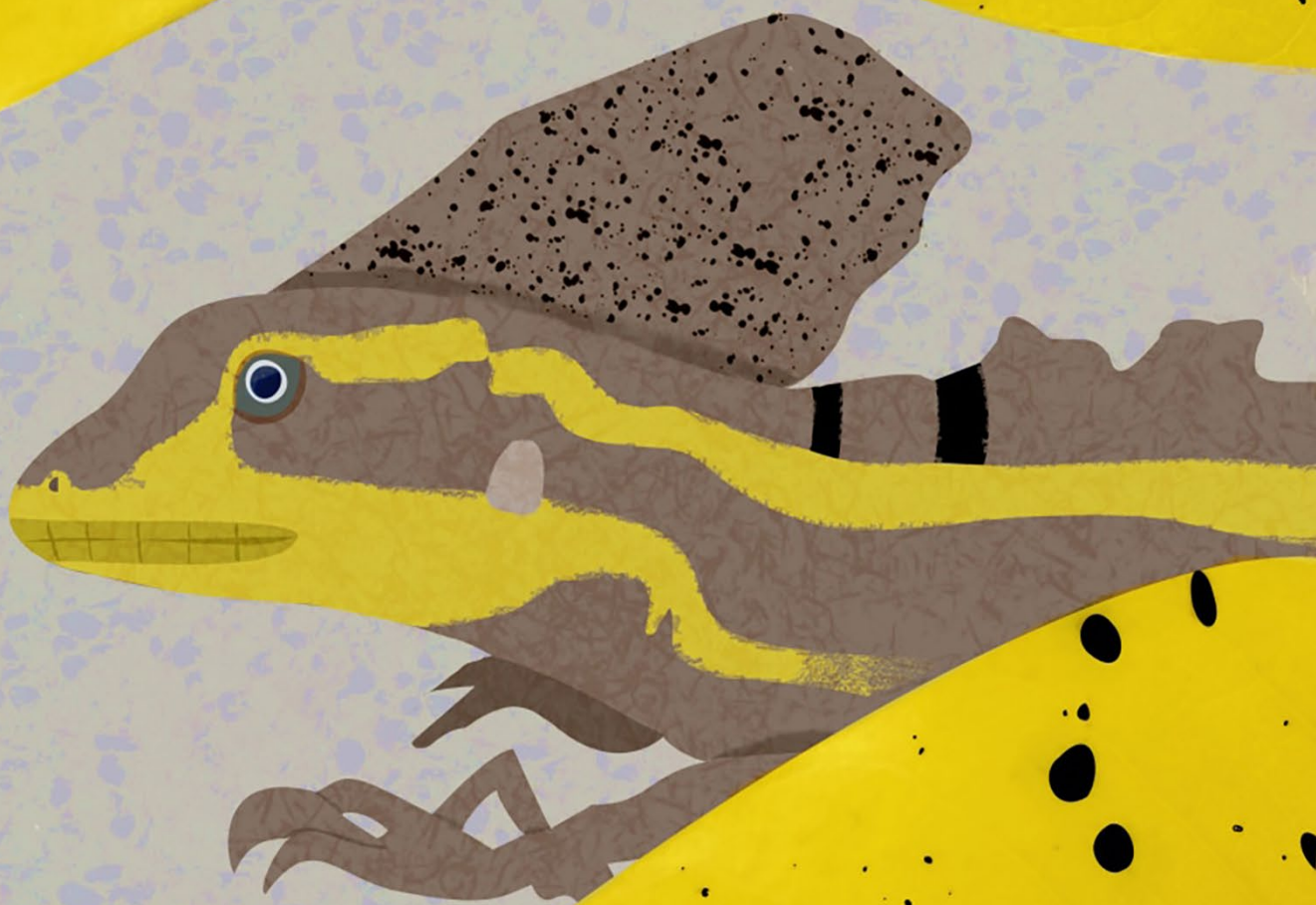


You! and the Wildlife of Quintana Roo!

**Our own Unbundler, Zach Lindsey,
is writing and illustrating a children's
book. *Life couldn't be better!***



The brown basilisk has large hind feet with narrow flaps of skin on the distal edge of each toe. The fact that they move quickly across the water gives them the appearance of “walking on water” aka “the Jesus Lizard”! Female brown basilisks lay about 2–18 eggs, five to eight times a year. Eggs hatch after about three months.



July 21, 2021 • Modern K'iche' Maya Long Count: 0.0.8.12.14 • 5 Ix 12 Xul • G2



The Gault School of Archaeological Research is pursuing multiple lines of reasoning to get closer to the truth. Ongoing research on the continental shelf examines what would have been prime territory for early settlers – the now-submerged coastline. Evidence is growing that water craft played a major role in the peopling of the Americas. Check out our website at: <https://www.gaultschool.org>

Dogma and the Peopling of the Americas

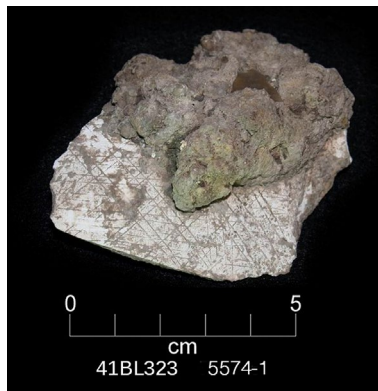
by **D. Clark Wernecke**

Executive Director, The Gault School of Archaeological Research

The American philosopher of science, Thomas Kuhn, wrote that the image of the scientist is that of an uncommitted searcher after truth, but that while the scientific endeavor may be open-minded the individual scientist often falls short. Even though science can be deeply committed to the hard-won knowledge of the world around it as it is understood at any one moment, it is this commitment to a paradigm that sets the rules for further research. As we try to match the paradigm to the data, sometimes there is a mismatch and, in trying to work out where we screwed up – and if the expected outcome isn't there, we must have screwed up, right? – we learn new things that often gradually lead to new paradigms (Kuhn 1963).

When José de Acosta wrote that the people of the New World must have walked there it was based on data he gathered in person (Acosta 1590). As a Jesuit priest he knew that everyone on Earth died except for Noah and his family who ended up in Central Asia. He also thought the natives he saw were primitive, though he qualified this by saying that they didn't possess the compass, so were not seafaring. He even made some

An incised stone from the Gault Site – the oldest ones from Gault are amongst the oldest dated art in the hemisphere.



faunal notes – he saw wolves and, since only an insane person would bring wolves with them on a boat, they must have walked. It was not bad scientific technique for 1590.

Over the years others added details that seemed to strengthen the argument while also rejecting ideas that did not match the data – that the people of the New World were descendants of the Lost



Jim Reed,
Editor

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Dogma and the Peopling of the Americas with D. Clark Wernecke

Tribes of Israel, Phoenicians, or Egyptians. The advent of professional archaeology in the early 20th century changed things in the Americas as
continued on page 3

The Hidden Coastal Culture of the Ancient Maya by Erik Vance

For thousands of years, ancient Maya kings ruled a vast inland territory in Mexico and Belize. But just how inland was it, really?

The Maya culture is often associated with farming and extraordinary inland cities full of fascinating architecture. New research shows that the people were also sophisticated mariners. Illustration by Mark Garrison.

Dominique Rissolo, a former presenter for the IMS, looks at a recently cleared pyramid at Vista Alegre that was constructed with the same techniques used in distant port communities. Courtesy of Jeffrey Glover and Dominique Rissolo.

Vista Alegre, a ruin of a town near the northern tip of the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, was once a bustling outpost. Dozens of canoes crowded the harbor, loaded down with dyes from the west, jade from the south, and obsidian from mountains hundreds of kilometers away. The sound of trumpeting conch shells periodically sliced the air – an alert from sentries scanning the horizon from platforms attached to stone structures. The call signaled an incoming boat – to trade or, perhaps, to plunder.

Within the town, the smell of fish hung heavy in the air as fishermen hurried about with their catches slung across their backs. They passed a man outside his hut hacking a pile of decorative shells into portable sizes for the next outgoing canoe. In another hut, a woman was using salt from a town to the south to dry freshly caught fish that would then be shipped to cities far away. And all the while, smoke from a signal fire atop a pyramid guided exhausted ocean travelers to safe harbor.

Today, a thousand years later, the town isn't much to look at. Centuries of accumulated dirt and vegetation cover the pyramids. Trees growing on various structures have succumbed to gravity, tumbling and taking with them massive stone blocks once perfectly fitted together.



Though part of the ancient Maya world, Vista Alegre lacks the grandeur of many sites. In fact, were it not for a single pyramid in the middle of a handful of crumbling structures, you might miss its human past altogether. But this small port town at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico was once part of a complex network of coastal commerce that dominated the ancient world but has been understudied by academics and ignored by the public. Because, unlike Chichen Itza, Palenque, or Bonampak in the interior of the country, time has nearly erased coastal ports like Vista Alegre from history.

It's part of a growing collection of archaeological sites revealing a complex and cosmopolitan network of sea traders with their own culture and traditions, who are at once both separated from and deeply tied to their more famous compatriots deep in the Yucatan jungles.

"Our knowledge of markets and the role of markets is changing in the Maya area," says Jeffrey Glover, an archaeologist at Georgia State University. Glover stands on a cluster of exposed blocks at the top of Vista Alegre's steep central pyramid with its commanding view of the coastline. Looking out, he seems to see the town as it once was, even describing it in the present tense. "There are a lot of people there that need stuff and that want stuff. And they're probably getting gold from as far south as Panama and Costa Rica, with turquoise that's coming from the American Southwest."

Glover and his colleague Dominique Rissolo have been exploring this small site for more than a decade. When they first came to this undeveloped coastline over two hours northwest from Cancun by car and then boat, they expected a small town dependent on the fortunes of the much larger Chichen Itza – a nameless cog in the machinery of a great city only 125 kilometers away. But that's not what they found. Vista Alegre predates the larger city by hundreds of years.

The people here ate differently, had different fashions, and traded an astounding diversity of precious things from around Mesoamerica.

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Jeffrey Glover, right, works on a site map of the port town of Vista Alegre while a colleague looks on. Photo courtesy of Jeffrey Glover and Dominique Rissolo.

continued on page 3

Dogma and the Peopling of the Americas

by **D. Clark Wernecke** *continued from page 1*

Executive Director, The Gault School of Archaeological Research

researchers began to take up the question of where the first people came from and when. As in any paradigm shift, some had a personal stake in the old model. Reputations can be made and broken when our understanding of the underlying evidence changes.

By the time the site of Monte Verde was discovered near Puerto Montt, Chile, in the 1970s, the field was ready for change. Enough cracks had appeared in the previous model of people walking to the Americas from Asia 13,500 years ago that there were a lot of doubts if not vocal dissenters. A National Geographic expedition brought a group of the leading experts to the site to view the evidence in situ and they pronounced it good science – Monte Verde dated to at least

1,000 years before we had been taught that people walked here. The idea that the Clovis culture in North America, 13,500–12,700 years ago, represented these first peoples was unsustainable.

The floodgates were open. Scientists excavated new sites and went back to look at sites that had been rejected by the majority in the past. The Paisley 5 Mile Caves, where human coprolites 14,300 years old have been found, were first described by archaeologist Luther Cressman in 1938-9. Sites such as Meadowcroft Rockshelter (16,000–19,000 years) and the Gault Site (16,000–20,000 years) were discovered by archaeologists interested in more recent deposits who kept excavating deeper.

New sites were sought out by archaeologists given the new criteria, like the sites found on the Delmarva peninsula by Darin Lowery or, more recently, Chiquihuite Cave (28,000 years) in Zacatecas, Mexico.

While the Clovis-First hypothesis no longer fits the data there are still a few who cling to it or try to find new ways to adapt the hypothesis to fit the data. We have come to a paradigm shift in science – the old hypothesis no longer works but we are still in the process of forming new ones. This is an exciting time for those who study the earliest peoples in the Americas as we bring more



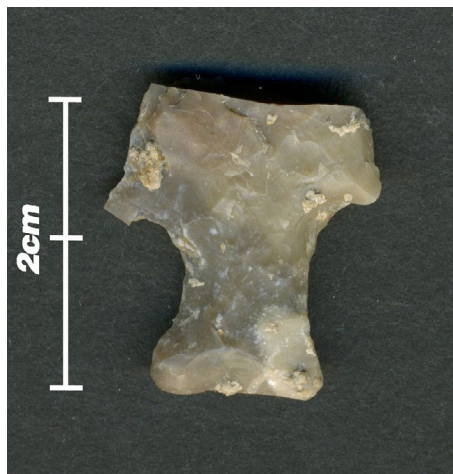
Researchers working in Area 15 revealing the deepest excavation at the Gault Site.

data to light and try to figure out what it all means – to archaeology, to our own deep history, and to humans in general as we learn more about where we have come from and where we might be going.

Check out the website of the Gault School of Archaeological Research at: www.gaultschool.org

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The one of the projectile points from the strata dated 16K–20K years ago.

The Hidden Coastal Culture of the Ancient Maya

continued from page 2

And there was something else here that the archeologists did not expect. The town's central 10.6-meter-high pyramid is oddly steeper than others in the region – made possible by an unusual concrete recipe that connects its stones and is usually found hundreds of kilometers to the west. This innovation, presumably gleaned from passing travelers, allowed them to build a pyramid tall enough to let them see for a great distance in all directions, but with fewer blocks than typical pyramids.

“It blew me away when I saw it. I hadn't seen anything like that anywhere in this region,” says Rissolo, a researcher at the University of California, San Diego. “There's a certain kind of



Today, the ruins of Vista Alegre are barely visible but still reveal much about the ancient maritime Maya. The complete article and a video can be found at this hyperlink: <https://www.hakaimagazine.com/features/hidden-coastal-culture-of-the-ancient-maya/>

cosmopolitan nature to the site, where people are exposed to different styles and different traditions.”

continued on page 8 🏠



K'u Kachinas by Luminous Antonio

supernaturals known
as Kachinas
appearing as plants
animals
clouds
stars
and sky
side with Hopis to pull
up corn from arid earth
bring clouds and rain
cure diseases

freezing March winds sweep
across Hopi mesas at night
below ground
people
crushed together in kivas
hear rapping on the roof
announcing Kachinas
mudheads and clowns
throwing oranges, popcorn
and radishes to eager takers
wearing collars and clothing
of tree branches
around the neck and wrist
and ankles
stamping and chanting
ancient rhythmic stories
calling through from a place
long distant
in the underworld
as far away as timeless
shaking the earth
opening the heart
soothing the soul

in the morning
of the next day
all that can be seen
is a line of kachinas
winding out of the village
along a dirt path
straw-like weeds frozen
from winter
teardrops recalling some
other past



My travel has always been inspired by archaeological sites, hidden histories, ancestral connections. I wrote a 200-page book on Sacred Sites and Power Places that is called *Integrative Archaeology* – understanding, visiting, and connecting with the healing, wisdom, and power of the ancient sites. Whatever you divine is valid and will doubtless be useful to you – and maybe others. What lies beneath the amorphous layers of time draws our curiosity and will help define our future.

– Luminous Antonio, Sedona, Arizona



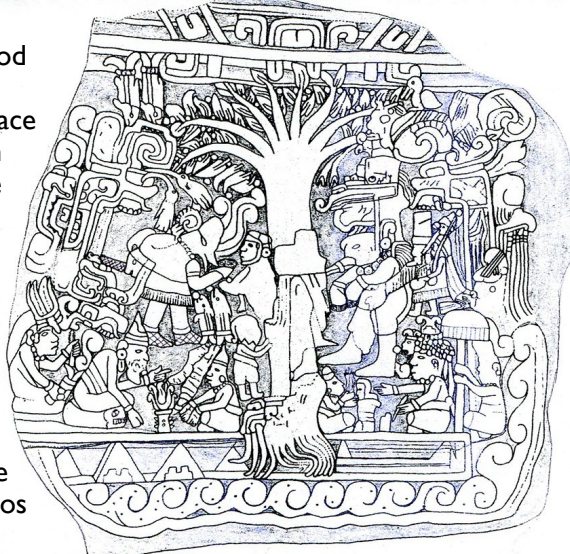
Izapa: Sacred Ceremonies – Sacred Sculpture

by V. Garth Norman

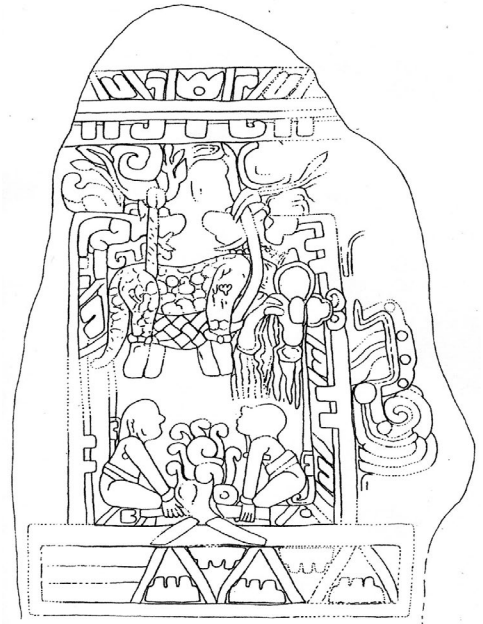


Twelve Maya Elders plus their leader, Tat Rigoberto Itzep Chanchavac, kneel to give thanks for Mother Earth first kneeling East, then North, then South, then West.

The Izapa Temple Center is a Mesoamerican Formative period site (1500 BCE – 400 CE) that scholars agree was the birthplace of the Sacred 260-day Tzolk'in calendar. I have worked at the site of Izapa for 45+ years and in recent years, together with my wife Cheryl, have been deeply involved with ceremonies performed by K'iche' Maya spiritual elders at Izapa. I have written many books and published many papers on the numerous stelae at the site and here offer photos that correspond and relate to images carved on the stelae. See a video and more on my website at: www.vgarthnorman.com



Stela 5 Tree of Life / World Tree (Izapa Plaza A – North side) positioned on August 13 – the 1st day of the Sacred 260-day count. A Fire Ceremony is at bottom left with two men facing the burning fire, plus two men on the far right following the ritual and one recording the ritual. The God Quetzalcoatl stands in the air on the right side of the Tree.



Stela 12 (Izapa Plaza B – West side) = New Fire Commemoration to begin the September 21 Maya New Year.



Three Maya Elders create a circle with the four cardinal directions to represent the creation of the earth.

Program note:
Garth Norman
 will be our
IMS Zoom
 presenter on
August 18

Stela 10 (Izapa Plaza B) = Childbirth at the end of the Sacred Maya 260-day count. The Spirit child descends from the clouds through the Tree of Life to its mother who will give birth under the tree.

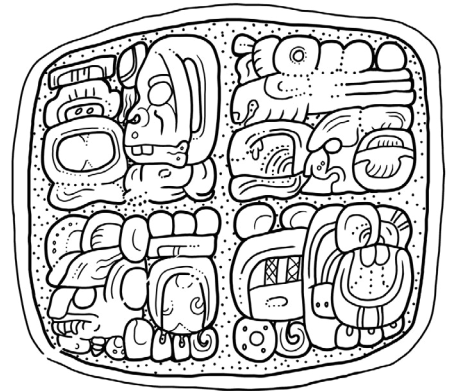


Twelve Maya Elders (3 on 4 sides of the circle = 12) count to 260 for the 260-day gestation period before the birth of a human being – the Summum Bonum of all creation! 🏠

Unbundling the Past: Events in Ancient and Contemporary Maya History for July by Zach Lindsey

4 July 640 CE: On 9.10.7.9.17 I Kaban 5 Yaxk'in G8, Waxaklaju'n U Baah Kaan died. At one point, Waxaklaju'n U Baah Kaan was powerful enough to change the course of Maya politics, but today, he's remembered only through two brief references – and one of those is partially eroded! The apparent loser of a civil war between the Snake dynasty, Waxaklaju'n U Baah Kaan probably did not have a peaceful end. In fact, the expression used to describe his death, *tiy tuun*, may suggest he was killed with a rock. His failure in a star war and death four years later are pivotal events on a hieroglyphic staircase commissioned in Caracol. This war between family members sent ripples across the Maya world and split the Snake dynasty so profoundly they moved their capital from Dzibanche

The lower half of Xunantunich Panel 3. We only know the fate of Waxaklaju'n U Baah Kaan because of a chance find at Xunantunich, but at one point he was an incredibly important ruler. This inscription doesn't do him any favors, though – written by his enemy in the civil war for the soul of the Kaan dynasty, this inscription talks about his death in fairly short terms. It says that, on 5 Yaxk'in, Waxaklaju'n U Baah Kaan was killed "by the rock." Then, three days, eight weeks, and two years later, they played ball. Not exactly the most reverential memorial for ol' Waxaklaju'n U



Original artwork by Zach Lindsey.

to Calakmul. Much as in World War I, politics across the Maya region were forced to take sides. The new political map created by the civil war set the stage for the titanic battles of the late 600s and early 700s which, in turn, led to the collapse of many dynasties. Turns out a family can do worse than a few awkward conversations at Thanksgiving – quite a bit worse!

30 July 4690 BC: On 9.0.0.0.0 8 Ajaw 18 Pax G9, the gods celebrated the completion of the 9th baktun – but not the one during our world.

Referenced 5,000 years after the fact on Altar I at Piedras Negras, this date refers to a mythical event. Unfortunately, it's eroded like most of Altar I, so it's hard to know much about the meaning of the event for the people of Piedras Negras. It may have only been important because the altar was dedicated toward the end of the 9th baktun in our era, and there was a synchronicity in dates. Whatever it meant, it was 576,000 days before the beginning of the present world... a pretty long time ago!

Recommended Reading: Authors contributing to this July IMS Explorer Integrative Archaeology

by Luminous Antonio

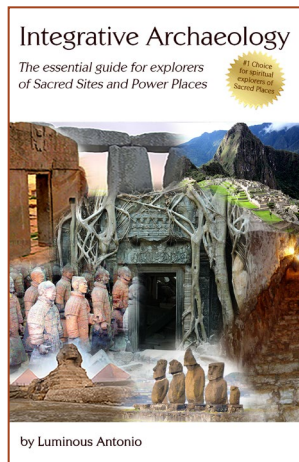
Integrative Archaeology is for the millions of people who travel each year to holy places, ancient temples and pyramids, archaeological sites, natural sites, and unique spiritual locations around the world.

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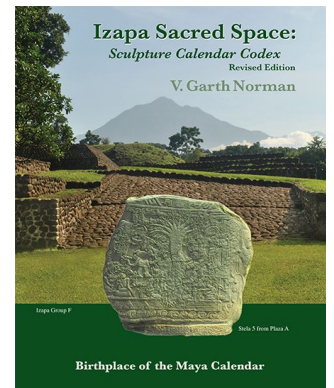
version of the book will be released soon; meanwhile

check out her website at: LuminousAntonio.com



Izapa Sacred Space by V. Garth Norman

Izapa Sacred Space: Sculpture Calendar Codex Izapa Temple Center, in Southern Mexico near the Pacific Coast, is the birthplace of the Maya 260-Day Sacred Calendar. Ancient astronomers, mathematicians, and builders created this unique site. *Popol Vuh* correlations exist with monuments there including Stela 25 and Stela 5, Izapa's Tree of Life. Izapa is located at 14.8° North Latitude where the Sun Zenith Passage occurs on August 13 and April 30 marking 260 days (9-month human gestation cycle). Izapa is related to Nazca, Peru, located at 14.8° South Latitude. Ancient Pacific trading vessels transported Izapa's astronomy, calendar, standard measure, and cosmology to Nazca. The 260-Day Calendar markings can be found in numerous Central, North, and South American sites – all which date to after Izapa's time – suggesting that Izapa was indeed the origin of the 260-day Calendar. Order the book on Amazon.





The Prehistory Research Project at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at the University of Texas at Austin is the academic branch of GSAR. It is dedicated to archaeological research and education regarding the earliest peoples in the Americas. The Project works nationally and internationally with much of the local research in the past at the famous Gault Archaeological Site north of Austin which yielded many surprises.

July 21, 2021 • 8 pm ET • IMS Zoom Live Streaming Event

Dogma and the Peopling of the Americas

with D. Clark Wernecke



In 1590, a Jesuit priest took one look at the New World and decided that, since the people seemed pretty primitive to him, they must have walked from Central Asia where Noah and what remained of the human race began anew. The data available at the time seemed to fit, as did later attempts to figure out how people got to the Americas. Archaeology did not become a professional discipline until the early 20th century and, even in these earliest days, there was data that did not seem to fit this model of the peopling of the Americas. Bit by bit the model was changed to incorporate new information but still clinging to the central tenet that people must have walked to the Western Hemisphere. Beginning in the 1970s a trickle and later a torrent of new archaeology clearly showed that not only did the first people in the Americas not walk here but they were here much earlier than we had previously suspected.

Clark Wernecke is the Project Director for the Prehistory Research Project at the University of Texas at Austin and Executive Director of the Gault School of Archaeological Research, a nonprofit dedicated to research and education regarding the earliest peoples in the Americas. Dr. Wernecke started his academic career with a degree in history from SMU followed by an MBA from Northwestern University, an M.A. in Anthropology from Florida Atlantic, and finally his PhD from the University of Texas at Austin. He came back to archaeology after a career in business and has worked in the Middle East, Mesoamerica, the American Southeast and Southwest, and Texas. Dr. Wernecke's primary specialty is that of archaeological project management but he has also written extensively on architecture and paleoindian art.

Wednesday, July 21, 2021 • 8 pm ET • Be there with us!

Access and save this live streaming hyperlink to join the event:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86091308819>

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The Hidden Coastal Culture of the Ancient Maya

continued from page 3

As we walk the grounds, Rissolo regularly leans down to pick up bits of pottery, some 1,500 years old. It turns out that Vista Alegre was just one of dozens of small settlements that rim the Yucatan Peninsula at about 40-km intervals, the distance a team of paddlers can move a goods-laden boat in a day. None of the coastal communities had the grandeur of the bigger Maya cities, but when put together, they paint a vivid picture of commerce in the region.

“This entire coastline is unpopulated,” says Rissolo, looking west toward the Gulf of Mexico. “From an archaeologist’s perspective, there’s really a great opportunity to study how the ancient Maya organized themselves on the landscape.”

On the way back to the harbor, they decide to take a little detour. Locals say there is perhaps evidence of a settlement on the nearby island of Holbox, an emerging vacation spot for off-the-beaten-path tourists. One archaeologist documented the site in the 1950s, but no other scientist has visited the place. Rumor has it there are a few stone structures and maybe a shrine. Somewhere. Glover pulls out a drone and attempts to launch it.

Glover eventually gets the drone airborne and battles the wind for a while, taking video he hopes will later reveal the site. It’s bizarre that there could be an undocumented

Dominique Rissolo and Jeffrey Glover use a drone to search for an archaeological site on Holbox Island, off the Yucatan coast. Photo by Erik Vance.



ancient settlement 100 meters from our boat and we can’t see it.

“We don’t even know if it’s in the interior. Is it at the edge of the mangroves? The coastline is just so complex,” Rissolo mutters.

Eventually the researchers give up – Glover is wary of running out of battery power and crashing the drone into the water. They fire up the engine and motor toward the mainland.

Tomorrow promises to be another perfect day in paradise. Boatmen will cart tourists to the island, just as they have for decades, while the fishermen load up their nets to leave at first light – just as they have for thousands of years. 🏠

IMS Streaming 2021

Join in the Exploration!

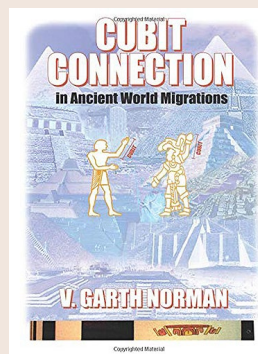
We have two Zoom programs in August, at 8 pm ET

August 18, 2021 • V. Garth Norman

Measure & Geometry Design in Ancient Maya Art & Architecture

Garth Norman’s August 18 Zoom presentation will be an interesting followup to Ed Barnhart’s April presentation on “Ancient Maya Geometry”. The April audience brought up expanding the study to decipher standard units of measure required for the proposed geometric design systems.

“Garth Norman’s *Cubit Connection in Ancient World Migrations* (2018) provides dramatic evidence of standard measurements that began in Izapa’s ancient sculpture and architecture as early as ca. 1600 BCE), with gradual extensive use throughout Mesoamerica that eventually were taken to build the antiquities in North and South America.”



August 25, 2021 • George Fery

Easter Island’s Mighty Ancestors – The End of the Land

The tragedy of Easter Island is wrapped in the “mind-made” faith of another world, with dreadful consequences. What happened to the people of this sixty-five-square-mile island in the middle of a million-square miles in the South Pacific, is called by Easter Islanders *Te Pito o Te Henua* or The End of the Land. The silent stone giants are today the only witnesses to tragedies found in other cultures under similar circumstances.

IMS EXPLORER

Join the **Explor**-ation! Scholar or not, we welcome submissions from IMS members and other Maya enthusiasts. Share what interests you with others. All articles and news items for the **IMS Explorer** should be forwarded to the newsletter editor at: mayaman@bellsouth.net