

December 21, 2012: Some Rational Deductions

by John Major Jenkins

continued from page 3

of Maya culture, but I have approached the problem in a different way).

My methodology endeavors to show a meaningful presence, within core Maya institutions, of the astronomical features involved in the galactic alignment. This coordination involves several disciplines – it is an interdisciplinary synthesis – the integrative continuity and complexity of which mitigates the possibility that my observations are all just wishful thinking.

So, it is a false assumption that calculational methodology must be provided in order to prove intention. My methodology documents the secondary effects that are predicated upon and require an ancient awareness of the galactic alignment. The deduction is similar to deducing that Paleolithic humans knew how to have sex, because the secondary effect of that knowledge – progeny – is observable. We don't have any direct evidence for their knowledge

or their “methodology” but the secondary evidence that they knew how to do it is undeniable.

Similarly, the astronomy of the galactic alignment is embedded within the Maya Creation Myth, on the monuments of Izapa, and in other Maya traditions such as the ballgame. A conceptual awareness of the alignment is clear in the iconography and the symbolic representations of astronomy within Maya mythology. This brief response to Milbrath is not the place to go further into the details of my reconstruction; the point is that my investigative methodology does not hinge upon the high level of precision that some criticize as being “impossible.”

In my books I've even stated that 100 years within range of the precise galactic alignment calculated by Jean Meeus would still be compelling enough to justify further investigation.

It Isn't a Coincidence

I've addressed and clarified these issues on the Aztlán listserv, the University of Texas Mesoamerican e-list page and elsewhere, including a brief piece I wrote during recent exchanges with professor John Hoopes (see link below). This online article revisits the suggestion that it is unlikely for the solstice placement of the end date to have been a coincidence, an idea supported by Milbrath in her rebuttal. Munro Edmonson pointed this out in his 1988 book *The Book of the Year*. I have explored and restated the implications of this idea and the interested reader can assess a rational analysis of the situation here: <http://Alignment2012.com/rationalapproachto2012.html>

Official Notice: 2012 Online!

Thanks to our webmaster Frank May, the Institute of Maya Studies now maintains an area of our web site devoted to **Understanding 2012**.

Feel free to post your own comments or questions. Updated periodically, check out our 2012 link on:

<http://mayastudies.org>

Royals Weren't Only Builders of Maya Temples

continued from page 3

has been able to map the Yalbac site, including its structures, looters' trenches and stelae – upright marker stones, sometimes inscribed, erected by the Maya over the millennia.

Over the years, she has dated ceramics found at Yalbac from about 300 BC through 900 AD; her plaza test pit excavations have exposed floors that date to the same period, “a typical occupation history for Maya centers.”

“We also have placed test units throughout the site to get an idea as to monumental architecture construction histories and functions,” said Lucero.

To date she has taken four New Mexico State University field school classes to Yalbac. She will take her first University of Illinois field school class this May for a six-week hands-on course in archaeological survey and excavation. Lucero joined Illinois' department of anthropology last August, after a decade at NMSU.

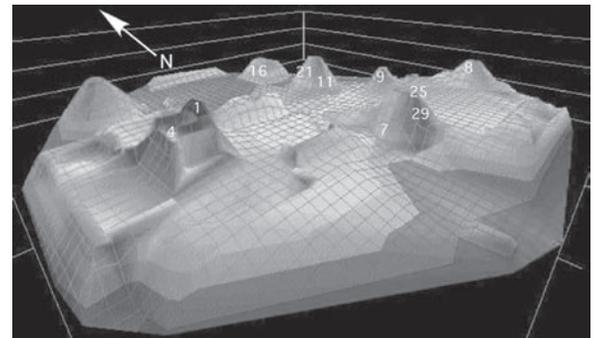
The focus this summer will be on profiling the temple looters' trenches and test excavations. Lucero and 10 undergraduates and

two graduate assistants will collect data from the six temples in order to compare temple frequency, size differences, location, layout, accessibility, history of use, construction patterns, surface decoration and ritual deposits.

“We also will expand the trenches to see if the looters missed caches – artifacts consisting of shell, jade, ceramics, lithics, etc. – that may provide clues as to temple function and purpose.”

Lucero doesn't spend much time worrying about looters. “While looting is still a problem, the relatively new management of the land-owning company, Yalbac Cattle and Ranch Co., which logs the 200,000 acres they own, have armed patrols that protect the area from illegal poachers, loggers and looters.”

“We have been surveying the area for years without any problems,” she said. “Often the loggers show us sites they have found in the process of searching



Yalbac site map, showing positions of temples and other structures. Map generated by Sean M. Graebner, courtesy of the Valley of Peace Archaeology Project

for mahogany, cedar and rosewood.”

Lucero's latest findings are detailed in the journal *Latin American Antiquity* in an article titled “Classic Maya Temples, Politics, and the Voice of the People.”

Lucero is the leading expert on Yalbac and the only archaeologist on the site authorized by the Belize Institute of Archaeology. She has conducted research in the area since 1997, and on the Yalbac site since 2002.

Source: Combined from two articles at www.news.uiuc.edu and www.sciencedaily.com, adapted from materials provided by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Submitted by Mike Ruggier.