

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274071590>

# The Hidden World or the Maritime Maya

Chapter · January 2011

---

CITATIONS  
0

---

READS  
901

**3 authors:**



**Jeffrey B. Glover**

Georgia State University

24 PUBLICATIONS 223 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE



**Dominique Rissolo**

University of California, San Diego

79 PUBLICATIONS 757 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE



**Jennifer Mathews**

Trinity University

37 PUBLICATIONS 265 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

# Chapter 11

## The Hidden World of the Maritime Maya: Lost Landscapes Along the North Coast of Quintana Roo, Mexico

Jeffrey B. Glover, Dominique Rissolo, and Jennifer P. Mathews

### Introduction

At the northeast tip of the Yucatán Peninsula – where the Caribbean meets the Gulf of Mexico – lies a wild and largely unexplored coastline that bore witness to one of the greatest seafaring traditions of the ancient New World (Fig. 11.1). Maya traders once plied the waters of the Laguna Holbox in massive dugout canoes filled with goods from across Mesoamerica (Thompson 1949; Edwards 1973, p. 201; Romero 1991; Romero and Gurrola Briones 1991, 1995; Leshikar 1996). Each port was a link in a chain connecting people and ideas, and supporting the ambitions of city and state. Maritime trade and interaction on the Caribbean coast of the Peninsula reached its florescence on the eve of Spanish contact during the Postclassic period (AD 1100–1521). The once bustling towns of Xcaret and Xamanha were the ports of embarkation for Cozumel – one of the most important pilgrimage destinations and centers of commerce during this late period (Andrews and Andrews 1975; Sabloff and Rathje 1975; Con Uribe and Jordán 1992). While accommodating a steady stream of travelers and traders, these sister centers no doubt supported, and were supported by, their near-coastal hinterlands, which comprised one of the most densely populated maritime cultural landscapes in the Maya area (Silva Rhoads and Hernández 1991; Goñi 1998; Martos López 2002). To the south, Tanchah and Tulum dominated Postclassic coastal interaction. Evident in the region’s mural art is a rich synthesis of broader Mesoamerican ideas and influences, which speak to the connectedness and multicultural fluency of coastal peoples at this time (Miller 1977, 1982).

While the Postclassic period is most often associated with Maya seafaring, in fact, the strengthening of maritime economies and the establishment of circum-peninsular trade routes occurred during the preceding Terminal Classic period (AD 850–1100). It was during this time when the major city of Chichén Itzá

---

J.B. Glover(✉)

Department of Anthropology, Georgia State University, P.O. Box 3998, Atlanta,  
GA 30302-3998, USA  
e-mail: jglover@gsu.edu

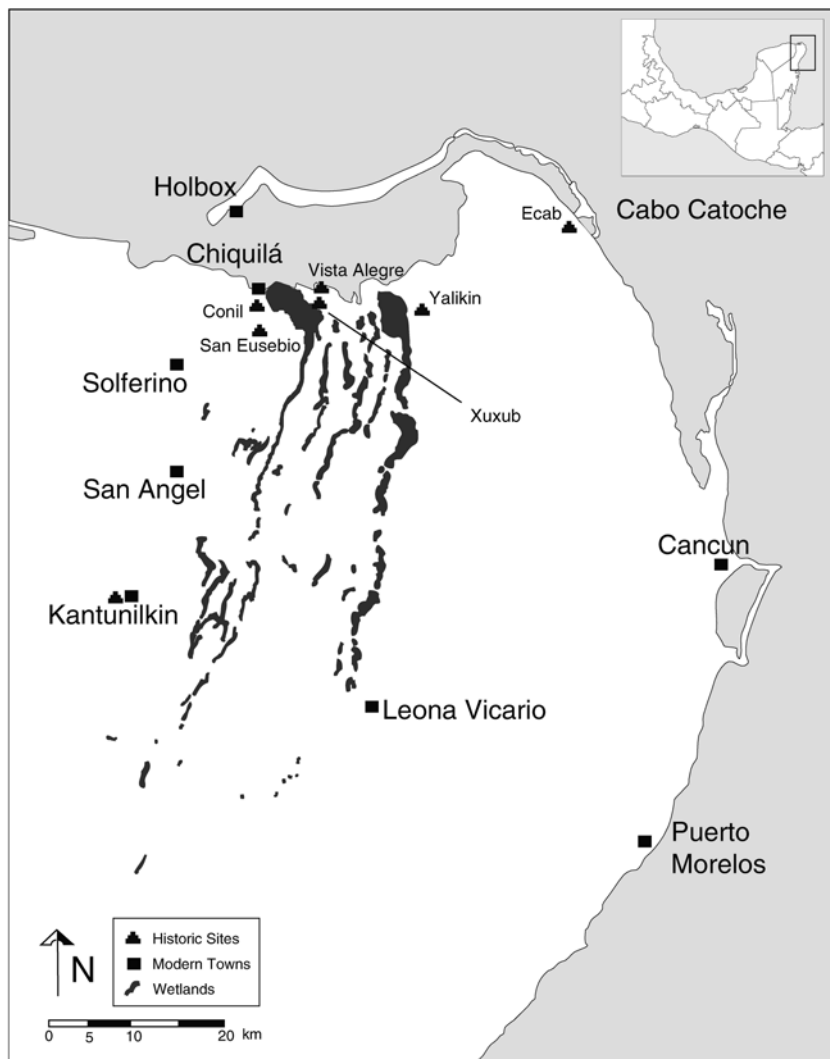


Fig. 11.1 Location of the Costa Escondida (maps by Jeffrey B. Glover 2010)

32 demonstrated an increased reliance on maritime commerce to maintain and extend  
 33 its control over much of the Yucatán Peninsula (Andrews 1978; Robles Castellanos  
 34 and Andrews 1986; Cobos 2004). Coastal settlements, however, have a deeper  
 35 history in the Maya area, with occupations dating back to at least the Middle  
 36 Preclassic period (800–400 BC), and the Costa Escondida Project, a long-term,  
 37 interdisciplinary research effort, is focusing on the dynamic relationship between  
 38 the Maya and their coastal landscape over the past 3,000 years.

39 Along this forgotten stretch of coastline lies the ancient port site of Vista  
 40 Alegre. To date, our preliminary research efforts have focused primarily on this

mangrove-shrouded, inner-coastal island site in northern Quintana Roo. Although our studies have demonstrated that this strategic locale has long been attractive to ancient Maya travelers, Vista Alegre's story is not one of continuous, uninterrupted occupation. The Maya of Vista Alegre were faced with the extraordinarily complex and harsh coastal environment of the Laguna Holbox, which is characterized by a mosaic of nonarable zones, including mangrove, estuary, flooded forest, and saw grass/palmetto. These marginal zones were unfavorable for maize agriculture, which was the staple for ancient Maya society. For this population to not only exist, but thrive in this adverse environment, required highly specialized subsistence strategies involving perennial access to freshwater, exploitation of marine resources, and cultivation of niche plant species. Furthermore, little is known about this port center's shifting alliances with inland and coastal groups over the site's occupational history, or how the populace of such a site responded to the periodic hurricanes and tropical storms that ravaged the coast. To best contextualize this complex interrelationship between human (maritime) activity and geographical and biological features and events as evident in the material record, we have adopted Westerdahl's (1992) maritime cultural landscape approach.

Westerdahl (2006, pp. 59–61) notes that maritime societies are often characterized by “a striking rapidity of transport and spatially more extended communication lines than terrestrial or agrarian culture.” Consequently, maritime sites exude a kind of dynamism – an almost accelerated cosmopolitanization – expressed in the material culture, as well as upon the landscape itself. When vibrant centers of coastal commerce and interaction, such as Vista Alegre, exist within the larger social-cultural context of more dominant inland polities, their uniqueness becomes more obvious, and the need to apply holistic and perhaps even more heuristic approaches becomes apparent.

## **A Diachronic Perspective on Maya Maritime Cultural Landscapes**

While Westerdahl's maritime cultural landscape approach has not been explicitly applied in the Maya area, more general landscape studies have a long history of scholarship in the region. Researchers have moved from viewing landscapes, like space in general, as passive backdrops for human actions, to recognizing that they played an integral role in the lived experience. Landscapes are constituted through the dialectical relationship between human agents and the built and natural environment in which they live (Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Given and Knapp 2003; Smith 2003a). As such, landscapes have been incorporated into the growing movement arguing for a re-spatialization of social theory (Soja 1989; Pred 1990; Ashmore 2002; Smith 2003a). It is with this theoretical perspective that scholars have investigated the natural and cultural world of the Maya. This is a world deeply imbued with meanings that stemmed from generations of inhabitants creating a landscape “pregnant with the past” (Ingold 1993, p. 153), which, in turn, was constantly recreated through each succeeding generation's actions and memories (Ingold 1993).

83 The fact that the landscape is involved in all aspects of human life, from the mundane  
84 to the extraordinary, has allowed scholars to take a range of approaches when  
85 trying to elucidate the linkages between social processes and the landscape. In the  
86 case of the ancient Maya, these approaches have most often focused on aspects of  
87 the sacred landscape, such as the concept of temples as metaphorical flowery  
88 mountains and the connection of these mountains with caves, both natural and  
89 constructed (Brady 1997; Brady and Ashmore 1999).

90 Although Mayanists have referenced coastal settlements in this more general  
91 discourse on past landscapes, the maritime cultural landscapes of the coastal sites  
92 have not been the focus of study. We argue that coastal sites were atypical, and  
93 perhaps even idiosyncratic, both in terms of how they were imagined and “lived in”  
94 by the Maya. The north coast of the Peninsula is a complex physiographic mosaic  
95 that is categorically distinct from the more open, inland expanses upon which the  
96 northern lowland Maya could inscribe their worldview. No doubt, the physically  
97 delimiting aspects of this incredibly diverse environment would have had a deter-  
98 ministic effect on more localized concepts of landscape. Such geo-cultural and  
99 conceptual “borderlands” offer an opportunity to consider ideational landscapes  
100 (more characteristic of the Mesoamerican discourse), while adopting the integrative  
101 and holistic (and imminently practical) maritime cultural landscape approach.

102 To understand the maritime cultural landscape of the inhabitants of Quintana  
103 Roo’s north coast, a broader survey of the coastal landscapes of the ancient  
104 Maya is appropriate. We use the plural of landscape, because there was certainly  
105 not a uniform perception of the coast, just as there is not a single coastal ecosystem.  
106 Maritime cultural landscapes are rooted in local experiences, which are inextricably  
107 linked to particular histories as well as adaptive strategies, and would understand-  
108 ably change through time. However, there did exist among the Maya a more  
109 broadly shared, general perception of the sea (Finamore and Houston 2010). Along  
110 with the sea itself, another unifying factor that linked these coastal inhabitants was  
111 the merchants who plied the waters from the Bay of Honduras to the Gulf of  
112 Mexico in large, dugout canoes. Their outsider experiences would have had a major  
113 impact on the ways in which coastal peoples viewed their place in the larger Maya  
114 world. At the time of European contact (ca. early sixteenth century), there were  
115 powerful merchant families who inhabited and controlled coastal trade centers  
116 separated by great distances, like those of Nito, Honduras, and Xicalango, in mod-  
117 ern day southern Campeche, Mexico (Scholes and Roys 1948).

118 According to early European accounts, the coastal Maya saw themselves as  
119 more “refined” than inland peoples (Scholes and Roys 1948, p. 60). This coastal  
120 identity, surely reinforced by the specialized lifeways including everything from  
121 craft to cuisine, seemingly has its roots in the Terminal Classic period (AD 850–  
122 1100) when circum-peninsular trade intensified along with a growing “international-  
123 ization” of Maya cultural beliefs and values. What evidence do we have for the  
124 Maya of the Costa Escondida being integrated into these broader networks during  
125 the Terminal Classic? Is there evidence through the built environment and material  
126 culture for a distinct coastal identity that differed significantly from that of their  
127 inland neighbors? Using the maritime cultural landscape perspective, the connections

between the materials obtained on land and the activities that bridged this 128  
terrestrial-marine divide come into focus. 129

## **The Costa Escondida Project** 130

Recent archaeological investigations along the north coast of Quintana Roo have 131  
included the completion of an architectural map of Vista Alegre, a preliminary test- 132  
pitting program there, and a 22-km long canoe-based reconnaissance of coastal 133  
environments including mangrove, forest, and estuary. This brief survey of the 134  
north coast has revealed a number of small ancient and historical sites and cultural 135  
features, and has allowed us to begin ground-truthing remote sensing imagery. 136  
Taken together, our efforts are now beginning to shed light on the broader political 137  
and economic systems that were so integral to life at this ancient port. 138

### ***Description of Vista Alegre*** 139

The boundaries of Vista Alegre are essentially defined by its geographic setting, as 140  
an estuary encircles the majority of the island. The southern portion of the site 141  
includes mangrove, *tintal* (dyewood ecosystem), and tidal flats, while expansive 142  
wetlands lie to the east and west. The island covers 16 ha, while the site itself is 143  
within a forested area of relatively “high” topographic relief (less than 2 m asl). In 144  
general, the overall physiographic setting of Vista Alegre is ideal for a port site with 145  
sheltered bays flanking the island (Fig. 11.2). Being located within this protected 146  
area of Laguna Holbox is significant, as we ourselves have been buffeted by the 147  
*nortes*, winds that often close the small, modern port at neighboring Chiquilá. 148

In 2005 and 2008, we registered and mapped a total of 29 structures, including 149  
platforms, mounds, and a principal pyramidal structure, which dominates the central 150  
plaza (Fig. 11.2). The steep-sided pyramid measures 11 m tall and appears to 151  
have been heavily damaged by both looters and hurricanes. The fill of the structure 152  
consists of concrete. This construction technique, which is unusual in the surrounding 153  
region, enabled the site’s inhabitants to construct a pyramid that was tall and 154  
steep with a minimal volume of building material. Although Maya pyramids generally 155  
had a ritual function, this structure also likely served as a *mirador* or lookout. 156  
From the summit of the pyramid, it was easy to view the surrounding coastline, as 157  
well as to closely monitor the approaching and departing canoes of maritime traders. 158  
During our survey of the southern portion of the site, we also documented a 159  
wall or *sacbe* (raised causeway) that traverses the island. The east and west termini 160  
of the wall/*sacbe* extend into the water of the estuary and possibly functioned as 161  
docks at natural harbors, a feature found at the coastal sites of Isla Cerritos and 162  
Emal further to the west (Gallareta Negrón et al. 1989; Kepecs 1999). In addition, 163  
we discovered an *andador* (a narrow walkway) that connects Vista Alegre to a 164

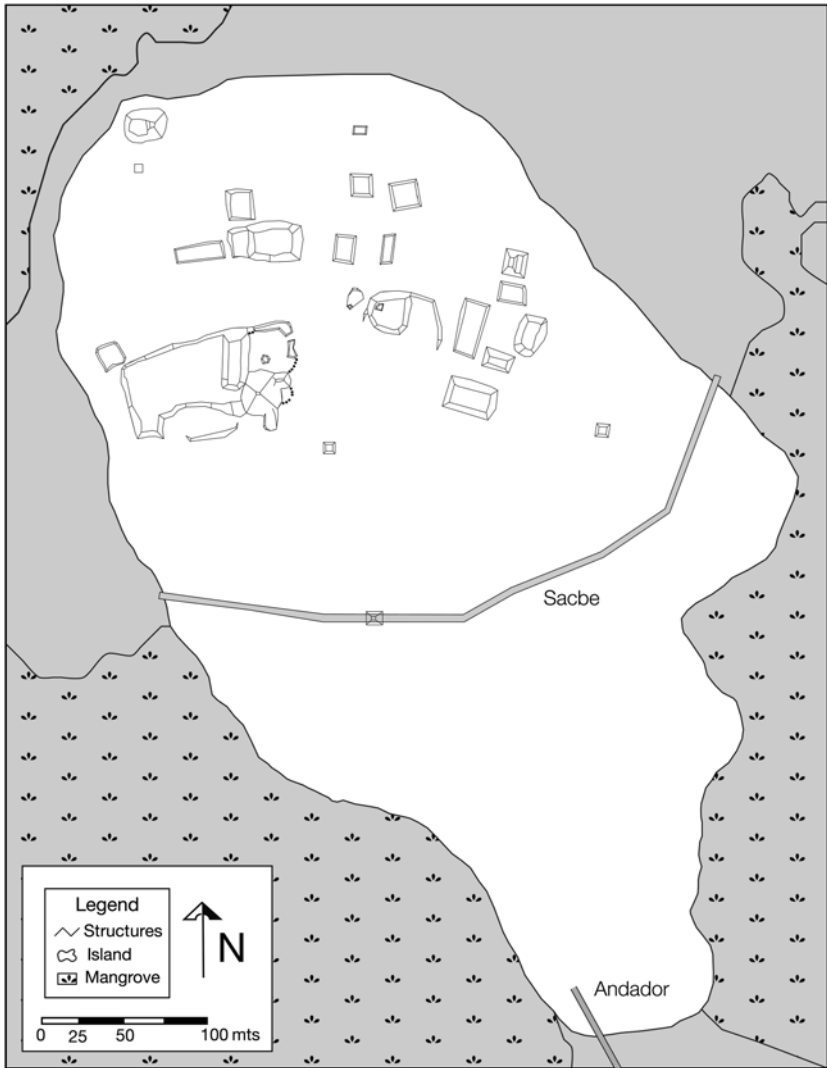


Fig. 11.2 Map of Vista Alegre and surrounding area (maps by Jeffrey B. Glover 2010)

165 structure 1.4 km to the south (on the mainland) named Templo Perdido. The walk-  
166 way extends southeast across *tintal*, mangroves, and tidal flats before entering the  
167 higher forest to the south. This collapsed and looted temple sits atop a natural rise  
168 on the landscape, a rarity in this environment. Given the paucity of structures  
169 recorded around Templo Perdido, it is possible that this area served as the agricul-  
170 tural support zone for Vista Alegre, although more survey work and soil chemistry  
171 analysis are needed to confirm this.

*Chronology of Vista Alegre*

172

Our preliminary archaeological fieldwork and ceramic analysis have revealed four major periods of occupation at the site ranging from the Middle Preclassic period (800–400 BC) to the Postclassic (AD 1100–1521). The site, however, was not continuously occupied, nor did the function of the port remain constant through time. In the Maya area, and Mesoamerica more broadly, the analysis of the stylistic attributes of ceramics is key for chronology building. The ceramic data provide a relative chronology that is then pegged to our calendar through radiocarbon dates or through their association with monuments with datable inscriptions. Where contexts are not stratified and associated with carbonized remains or are not associated with datable inscriptions, ceramic cross-dating is the norm and that is how the dates below were determined. In addition to being chronologically sensitive, attributes associated with paste, form, and surface decoration of ceramic vessels are key for interpreting interregional interaction and cultural affiliation, when combined with other architectural or artifactual datasets.

173  
174  
175  
176  
177  
178  
179  
180  
181  
182  
183  
184  
185  
186**Vista Alegre I (800/700 to 450/400 BC): The First Settlers**

187

Middle Preclassic ceramics have been reported at nearby inland sites (Amador 2005; Rissolo et al. 2005); so we were not surprised to find evidence of them at Vista Alegre. However, we were startled to find the types of Middle Preclassic ceramics that we did. In the northern Maya lowlands, Early Nabanché ceramics are ubiquitous, but at Vista Alegre we found Mamom materials, including a Savana Orange (Mars Orange ware) sherd, along with Joventud-slipped figurine fragments (Fig. 11.3). These ceramics and figurines are better known at sites in Belize and the eastern Petén region of northern Guatemala, and to our knowledge, none have been found in the northern lowlands. While we know goods were traveling long distances during the Middle Preclassic (Ball and Taschek 2003; Garber et al. 2004; Pool 2007), trade does not appear to be the mechanism responsible for the arrival of these goods at Vista Alegre. Preclassic figurines, in particular, are proposed to have ritual significance at the household or community level during this time (Lesure 1997; Blomster 2009, p. 120), and therefore would not have been items of economic trade (although see Cheetham 2009 for contradictory evidence in regards to Olmec figurines). The Vista Alegre materials instead provide evidence of people migrating from the eastern Petén-Belize regions of the southern lowlands. It seems likely that this initial population was attracted to the site because of its environmental similarity to the mangrove-fringed coastal areas of Belize, and to its access to trade routes. However, the movement of populations from the eastern Petén-Belize area into the Yalahau region does not fit any of the current models proposed for the region's earliest settlers (Andrews 1990; Rissolo et al. 2005; Stanton and Ardren 2005), and pushes the initial settlement of the region back by as much as 150 years. In future field seasons, we hope to better define this earliest component of the site's history.

188  
189  
190  
191  
192  
193  
194  
195  
196  
197  
198  
199  
200  
201  
202  
203  
204  
205  
206  
207  
208  
209  
210  
211



**Fig. 11.3** Drawing of middle preclassic figurine (drawing by Jennifer Taschek)

212 This, in turn, will allow us to better understand if and how these earliest settlers  
 213 interacted with inland Early Nabanché-using groups.

#### 214 **Vista Alegre IIa (AD 100/150 to 400/450): Yalahau Connections**

215 Following these pioneering settlers, there is some uncertainty about the occupational  
 216 history of the island until the Terminal Preclassic period (AD 100–400). At this time  
 217 there was a robust settlement at the site, which is not surprising given the presence  
 218 of dense inland populations (Amador 2005; Glover 2006). While it is clear that  
 219 people at the site were interacting with inland populations given the broadly shared  
 220 use of Carolina, Sierra, and Tanchah ceramics (the three dominant groups found at  
 221 inland sites during this time period), it is evident that Vista Alegre was part of  
 222 broader interaction networks. For example, at Vista Alegre and other coastal sites  
 223 to the west, we find ceramic types from the southern lowlands (Caribal and San Felipe  
 224 groups) that are not present at inland sites in the region (Ball 1978; Amador 2005).

225 To better understand the relationship that Vista Alegre had with other coastal  
 226 sites during this period, we must first examine the major site of Conil, located  
 227 immediately to the west [referred to as Chiquilá by Sanders (1955, 1960)].  
 228 According to Sanders' (1960) work at Conil, there was a major Terminal Preclassic

and Early Classic component, during which the majority of the architecture was constructed (Sanders 1955, pp. 189–190). Given the size of the largest structure at the site (93 m north/south by 76 m east/west and 6 m tall; Glover 2006, p. 524), all signs indicate that this would have been a powerful center during the Vista Alegre IIa period. Was Vista Alegre a satellite settlement of Conil during this time period, or was it linked to an inland site to the east? We hope to address this question by implementing a test-pitting program at Conil, which will allow us to determine whether the heavy representation of local polychromes (Timucuy group, *Tituc Orange-polychrome: Tituc Variety*) at Vista Alegre, as compared to the inland sites, is also present at Conil. The prevalence of these polychromes into the next occupation period is significant as it is evidence of the resilience of the Vista Alegre population in the face of what seems to be a major regional depopulation of inland sites during the Early Classic (Glover 2006). Was Vista Alegre alone in this resilience or did Conil share its good fortune?

### Vista Alegre IIb (AD 400/450 to 650): Coastal Resilience

As the nearby inland sites were largely depopulated during the Early Classic (Glover and Stanton 2010), we were surprised to find evidence of continued occupation and elite activities at Vista Alegre into the Early and Middle Classic periods (AD 400–650). Of particular interest is a vessel fragment, which appears to be part of a small, distinctly flared cup, originally produced in southern Veracruz. This cup was the kind of personal object that elite merchants might have carried with them to drink a toast with a host or fellow traders (Jennifer Taschek 2008, pers. comm.). Despite this resilience, by the sixth and seventh centuries, we find no pan-Lowland decorative finewares, and ceramic materials in general drop off considerably. This suggests a declining onsite population during the later part of the Early and Middle Classic periods, and a general site abandonment by AD 650.

Such a late date for the abandonment indicates that Vista Alegre, along with a series of other small north coastal sites studied by Ball (1978) and Eaton (1978), somehow survived the extensive depopulation occurring farther inland during the late third to fourth and fifth centuries AD. While this preliminary occupational history needs to be confirmed by further study, this has important ramifications for the durability as well as viability of littoral settlements during times of general stress or crisis.

### Vista Alegre III (AD 850/900 to 1100): Itzá Influence

After an apparent hiatus of approximately 200 years, a group of people resettled the island during the Terminal Classic period (ca. AD 850). But who were these people, where did they come from, and how did they participate in the burgeoning circum-peninsular trade dominated by Chichén Itzá? While our preliminary data provide some clues to these questions, they raise many more.

268 We know from previous research that the control of portions of Yucatán's north  
269 and east coasts was critical to Chichén Itzá's rise to prominence in the Terminal  
270 Classic, as it allowed the site to become a major player in the circum-peninsular  
271 trade routes that ran from Veracruz down to the Gulf of Honduras (Robles  
272 Castellanos and Andrews 1986; Kepecs et al. 1994; Kepecs 1999). Evidence of  
273 Chichén Itzá's important role in trade is well documented, exemplified by the long-  
274 distance elite artifacts found during the dredging of the Sacred Cenote (Tozzer  
275 1957; Coggins and Shane 1984). The Itzá's interest in the central north coast is  
276 attributed to the presence of the largest salt pans (*salinas*) in the Maya area, and the  
277 specialized salt-producing communities located along the margins of the *salinas*  
278 (Eaton 1978; Andrews 1983; Kepecs et al. 1994; Kepecs 1999; Andrews and Mock  
279 2002). The archaeological correlates for this control have been attributed to the  
280 presence of ceramic types ascribed to the Sotuta sphere, green obsidian from the  
281 Pachuca source in Hidalgo, Mexico, and certain iconographic and architectural ele-  
282 ments (Kepecs et al. 1994; Kepecs 1999; Smith 2000, 2003b). While the political  
283 implications of the presence of Sotuta ceramics are complex (Stanton and Gallareta-  
284 Negrón 2001), at sites where Sotuta materials replace Cehpech materials (associ-  
285 ated with Puuc sites in the western portion of the Peninsula and the major site of  
286 Cobá in the east during the Classic and Terminal Classic periods) and are found in  
287 association with Pachuca and other central Mexican obsidian, Chichén Itzá's control  
288 is strongly implied.

289 One classic case study of Chichén Itzá's control comes from Isla Cerritos,  
290 a small island site located 500 m off the north coast of Yucatán at the mouth of the  
291 Río Lagartos estuary, home to the most lucrative *salinas* in the Maya world. It was  
292 the focus of archaeological investigation in the 1980s by Anthony P. Andrews and  
293 others (Andrews and Gallareta Negrón 1986), and more recently by Cobos (2006,  
294 2007) of the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán. Located approximately 90 km  
295 north of Chichén Itzá, the site is in an advantageous position to control traffic in and  
296 out of the estuary, an ideal situation for a group looking to control the salt trade.  
297 While settlement at the site dates from the Late Preclassic, the majority of construc-  
298 tion and period of greatest population occurred during the Late/Terminal Classic  
299 period. The beginning of this phase, marked by the Chacpel ceramic complex  
300 (AD 750–900), corresponds to the presence of Cehpech ceramic material, a few  
301 imported goods (including Silho group Fine Orange Ware), and simple, domestic  
302 constructions (Robles Castellanos 1987; Gallareta Negrón et al. 1989). Building at  
303 the site and its population exploded during the second part of this phase, which is  
304 supported by radiocarbon dates that cluster between AD 860 and AD 1020 (Andrews  
305 et al. 1988; Gallareta Negrón and Andrews 1988) and correlate with the expansion  
306 of Chichén Itzá's long-distance connections. Accompanying this growth is the  
307 replacement of the Cehpech material with Sotuta ceramics, and the bulk of the  
308 imported obsidian. The fate of Isla Cerritos' inhabitants seemed tied to those at  
309 Chichén Itzá, as its importance waned with the decline of the great city.

310 While the data from Isla Cerritos provide an important comparative dataset for  
311 our research at Vista Alegre, we are certainly in agreement with Stanton and  
312 Gallareta Negrón (2001) who caution against uncritically equating the presence

of Sotuta ceramics at a site with a sign of Chichén Itzá's dominance. We do think, however, that given the particular assemblage at Vista Alegre, such an argument is sound. When a nonlocal ware appears as the domestic utility ware (in this case *Balantun Black-on-slate*) at a site during a time when there appears to be few if any local people living in the area, then we feel confident in concluding that actual people with close ties to Chichén Itzá were the ones who resettled the island during Vista Alegre III times. This argument is bolstered when the other Sotuta materials (Silho, Tohil, and Dzitas) are taken into consideration. Additionally, we have recovered more obsidian at Vista Alegre than all of the interior sites in our region combined, and we have the only known examples of Pachuca obsidian (14% of our sample).

While it is possible that the site was reoccupied as a state-sanctioned outpost to monitor trade as it rounded the northeast corner of the Peninsula (see Kepecs 1999, p. 420 for discussion of Itzá-sponsored settlement between Chichén and Isla Cerritos and Emal), there are certainly other possibilities that we will explore as we move forward with our investigations. In another scenario, perhaps entrepreneurs from other coastal or inland sites to the west recognized a gap in the circum-peninsular trade route and reestablished the community. Did this repopulation start out as an independent venture and later fall to Chichén's expansionistic ambitions? Furthermore, why was Vista Alegre chosen over Conil, which had a larger Terminal Preclassic and Early Classic settlement? Was it the shelter of the harbors or the presence of possible springs at Vista Alegre? These too are questions that we look forward to addressing with our future investigations.

Based on our preliminary ceramic data at Vista Alegre, we are inclined to look beyond Chichén Itzá for evidence of where the initial population originated. While the abundance of the *Balantun Black-on-slate* and Dzitas slate wares are strong indicators of close ties with the Itzá, we do not have any evidence of Sisal (the Sotuta non-slipped domestic utility ware) or Dzibiac (the Sotuta slipped service ware) ceramics, both of which were abundant at Chichén and Isla Cerritos (see Cobos 2007, p. 86). At Vista Alegre, it appears that the Vista Alegre Striated group materials take the place of the Sisal group, and that Ticul Thin Slate might replace the Dzibiac materials. Both Vista Alegre Striated and Ticul Thin Slate, given the brownish slip in our collection, indicate connections to the south, possibly the area around Cobá (Robles Castellanos and Andrews 1986; Robles Castellanos 1990, pp. 178–179). While Vista Alegre Striated sherds along with Balantun and Dzitas are found at the major coastal sites of Isla Cerritos, Emal, and El Cuyo to the west of Vista Alegre (Ball 1978, pp. 114–115; Robles Castellanos 1987, pp. 103–104), Ticul Thin Slate sherds are rare at Isla Cerritos (Cobos 2007, p. 89) and Emal (Ball 1978, p. 116) and are nonexistent at other northern coastal sites (Ball 1978, p. 120).

While the ceramic data paint a complex picture in regards to Vista Alegre's external relations, there are a number of parallels between the site layout of Emal and that of Vista Alegre that turn our focus back to the west when looking for the population that resettled the island. The wall on the south side of Emal is much like our *sacbe*/wall feature, and there are other general similarities in the site's layout (Kepecs 1999, Fig. 9.10) that we hope to explore in the future.

358        Regardless of who resettled the island during the Terminal Classic, it is clear that  
 359 the community was integrated into the political economic network centered at the  
 360 Itzá capital. Our work will hopefully provide further insight into this complex issue  
 361 and will complement the recent work done by Cobos (2006, 2007) on Isla Cerritos,  
 362 as well as the work being done around Yaxuná (Stanton and Magnoni 2009) and at  
 363 Xuenkal (Ardren et al. 2009). In so doing, our future research strives to provide  
 364 insight into Chichén Itzá’s expansionistic strategies, how these either took advan-  
 365 tage of or repressed the growing entrepreneurial spirit emerging along the coast  
 366 during the Terminal Classic, and, based on our Vista Alegre IV materials (see  
 367 below), eventually failed, as evidenced by the Postclassic materials.

### 368 **Vista Alegre IV (AD 1100 to 1521): Pilgrimage Locale**

369 Although abandoned at the close of the Terminal Classic or early portion of the  
 370 Postclassic period, Vista Alegre maintained its ritual significance for coastal inhab-  
 371 itants and traders. This is evidenced by the pilgrimage ceramic assemblage (Chen  
 372 Mul modeled *incensario* fragments and Payil Red vessels) and the presence of a  
 373 carved serpent-head balustrade (Fig. 11.4). Once again, understanding the relations  
 374 between Vista Alegre and Conil becomes paramount. As the Itzá’s grip on coastal  
 375 trade weakened, did the people of Vista Alegre reestablish themselves at the  
 376 Terminal Preclassic site of Conil? Was this a pre-Hispanic form of “rebranding”?  
 377 Or, did some of the growing inland populations reoccupy Conil in direct competi-  
 378 tion with those at Vista Alegre, or simply fill the gap left by the abandonment of



**Fig. 11.4** Postclassic serpent-head balustrade (photo by Dominique Rissolo)

Vista Alegre? These are complex questions, and a tighter control on the chronology of both sites is a critical first step if we are to begin to understand these past processes.

We know from previous research that the reoccupation of sites within the Yalahau region was a common practice during the Postclassic (Hoover 2003; Glover 2006). Of the inland sites, San Ángel evidences the strongest connection with east coast sites during the Postclassic as seen in its murals and architecture (Gallareta Negrón and Taube 2005). As discussed elsewhere (Rissolo and Glover 2006), Sabana Zanja may have been a corridor linking San Ángel to the north coast. This evidence shows that people with connections to the powerful trading centers of the east coast were making inroads toward the north coast, but what impact, if any, this had on Vista Alegre remains to be discerned.

What we do know is that Conil was a sizable community at the time of contact (Andrews 2002), and that circum-peninsular trade continued to grow in its significance from the Terminal Classic until the time of contact. Given the supposed size of Conil during the Postclassic, it does not make sense to have two ports of trade located just 7 km apart from one another. Our preliminary ceramic data indicate that this occupational overlap did not exist, but that instead Vista Alegre perhaps became a ritual pilgrimage site during the Postclassic period. We know that Postclassic traders visited coastal shrines as they made their way around the Peninsula (Scholes and Roys 1948, p. 90; Andrews et al. 1975; Freidel and Sabloff 1984), and conceivably Vista Alegre became an important part of the sacred landscape and a reminder to travelers of a haven that their ancestors once used. If this was the case, how was the nearby shrine site of Yuukluuk (Sanders 1955) integrated into this sacred maritime cultural landscape? Or was the site more commonly visited by local populations who were making offerings to their past ancestors or deemed the site significant due to its past ties with the great city of Chichén Itzá? While these scenarios are purely speculative, an understanding of the spatial patterning of the Postclassic materials as well as looking at sources for the ceramics are two avenues of investigation that we hope to pursue to better understand Vista Alegre's continued allure; while abandoned it was not forgotten.

### **Vista Alegre, the North Coast, and the Historic Era**

Like the Pre-Columbian occupational history, the historical era is dynamic and is characterized by ebbs and flows of populations as outside forces, as far away as Europe, exerted varying influence over the region. The north coast of Quintana Roo witnessed the impact of Spanish contact from its earliest moments. The "official discovery" of the Yucatán is attributed to Francisco Hernández de Córdoba who, on 1 March 1517, landed near the site of Ecab on the northeastern tip of the Peninsula. Bernal Díaz described the site as the "Gran Cairo," although subsequent archaeological reconnaissance has yet to find a site worthy of that description in the area. In 1518, Juan de Grijalva briefly visited Cozumel and the north coast site of Conil, but did not spend much time on the mainland. Hernán Cortés also stopped by

421 Cozumel and Conil in 1519 on his way to Veracruz and his conquest of the Aztec  
422 empire (Prager 2001, Fig. 578). The Spaniards' attention was diverted from the  
423 Yucatán by the conquest of Central Mexico, until the expedition of Francisco de  
424 Montejo between 1527 and 1529. Montejo stopped at Cozumel before making his  
425 first mainland camp near Xelha, which he named Salamanca de Xelha. His group  
426 of *conquistadores* marched up the east coast visiting the sites of Xamanha (Playa  
427 del Carmen), Polé (Xcaret), Moc-chi (Mulchí), and Belma. They then moved along  
428 the north coast stopping at the site of Conil. From Conil they moved into the contact  
429 province of Chikinchel, reaching the city of Loché before returning to Salamanca  
430 de Xelha (Chamberlain 1948; Andrews 1985, p. 140; Kepecs 1999). While this  
431 attempt failed, Montejo's nephew and son were eventually successful in "conquer-  
432 ing" the Peninsula with the establishment of Mérida on 6 January 1542 amidst the  
433 ruins of the recently sacked Maya city of Ti'ho (Chamberlain 1948, p. 213;  
434 Andrews 1985, p. 140), and by 1544, the Peninsula had been "secured" by the  
435 Spanish forces (Chamberlain 1948, p. 234; Restall 1998).

436 With the pacification of the Peninsula, *encomiendas* (land grants given to  
437 Spaniards) were established, as was the practice of the Spanish. The *encomienda*  
438 system was brutal, oppressive, and led to a violent reaction by the Maya inhabitants  
439 of the Peninsula. In 1546, the Great Revolt began, initiated by Maya in the eastern  
440 parts of the Peninsula, who were further from the capital's control. While these  
441 Maya rebels met a harsh end, by 1547, the Spanish stranglehold on the region was  
442 damaged (Chamberlain 1948, pp. 237–252). "The great revolt had reduced the  
443 eastern and southern provinces to a state of chaos exceeding anything that had  
444 existed heretofore" (Chamberlain 1948, p. 251). Combined with the massive  
445 depopulation occurring from European-introduced diseases, the northeast portion  
446 of the Peninsula was hard hit. From an area that had been densely settled during  
447 Montejo's first *entrada*, the area appears to have lost about 90% of its population  
448 in the century following contact (Andrews 1985, p. 140). There were only six  
449 *encomiendas* in northern Quintana Roo (Kantunilkin, Conil, Ecab, Polé, Zama  
450 [Tulum/Tancah], and Cozumel), none of which were terribly successful due to their  
451 meager populations (see Andrews (1985) Roys (1957) for a discussion of popula-  
452 tion decline estimates). In terms of assessing the continued importance of the coast  
453 in the early phase of the historic period, it is important to note that all but one  
454 (Kantunilkin) of the *encomiendas* were located on the coast.

455 The depopulation and relative poverty of the area, however, led to looser Spanish  
456 control on the area. This, in turn, made the northeastern tip of the Peninsula an ideal  
457 place for budding pirates to call home (Andrews 1985, p. 140; Andrews and Jones  
458 2001). There are numerous accounts of pirates burying their booty on the east coast  
459 islands and mounting offenses from the Cabo Catoche area (Le Plongeon 1889;  
460 Apestegui 2002, p. 192). The pirates also turned to extracting *palo de tinte*, known  
461 as dyewood or logwood, from the area around Ecab by the middle of the 1600s  
462 (Edwards 1957, pp. 152–154). The dye was used in cloth manufacturing in Europe,  
463 and the tree grew well in the ubiquitous wetlands of the area. There is even a discus-  
464 sion of mid-nineteenth century pirates establishing small sugarcane farms along the  
465 north coast (Stephens 1962 [1843]). "Unable to govern, protect, and attend to the

spiritual needs of the dwindling population of northern Quintana Roo, the Spanish decided to abandon the region in the mid-17th century” (Andrews 1985, p. 140). From a Spanish perspective, the region became a backwater, only inhabited by small groups of “wild, pagan Maya” and a home for numerous pirates marauding the ships of the Caribbean. The region did not factor prominently in the following two-and-a-half centuries of Yucatecan history, yet this is just another example of the changing maritime cultural landscape as new populations interact with the land and sea of this region.

It was not until the 1847 outbreak of the Caste War that northern Quintana Roo reentered the history books. The centuries of frustration harbored by the indigenous Maya against their position in the new “world order” finally reached a boiling point (Reed 2001). Beginning on the eastern frontier of the settled territory, the war began rapidly and raged intensely for 2 years. There were massive losses on both sides. The department of Valladolid lost about 75% of its population between 1846 and 1850, and Yucatán, in general, lost almost 40% (Reed 2001, p. 141). By 1850, a stalemate had begun; the eastern frontier had been mostly secured, and the rebellious Maya established an independent territory in the untamed forest of the East.

With the threat of hostile *indios* generally lessened in the northeast corner of the Peninsula, development began in the form of large land grants that replaced smaller land holdings such as Xuxub, where the American Robert Stephens was supposedly killed by a group of Cruzob Maya in 1875 (Sullivan 2004). The Mexican government issued two such grants that covered northern Quintana Roo. These land grants were part of a larger plan by the Mexican government to regain some economic and political control over the area. The government was eager to exploit the riches waiting in the forest of Quintana Roo, such as lumber and *chicle*, the sap from the chicozapote tree (*Manilkara zapota*). *Chicle* was the main ingredient used in chewing gum production until World War II, when it was replaced by artificial products (Fedick 2003, p. 347; Mathews 2009). While wanting to bring the rebel Maya under State control, the government was also tired of seeing the British from neighboring British Honduras (modern Belize) pilfer lands that were the property of the Mexican State. While Yucatecos lobbied that the two substantial land grants should still be considered part of Yucatán State, their pleas fell on deaf ears, and on 24 November 1902, President Porfirio Díaz created the Territory of Quintana Roo (Careaga Viliesid 1990, pp. 141–145; Reed 2001, p. 303).

One of the grants was given to La Compañía Agrícola El Cuyo y Anexas in 1876 and covered a total of 1,800 km<sup>2</sup>, including the area along the southern shore of Laguna Holbox. La Compañía Agrícola established offices at the indigenous town of Labcah, now known as Solferino, along with their offices in the port of El Cuyo, Yucatán. Along the north coast, the company focused on sugarcane production and constructed a sugar processing plant at San Eusebio, about 3 km inland from the port of Chiquilá and about 10 km northeast of Solferino. The plant was the most modern of its kind on the peninsula, and it was principally non-Yucateco Mexicans, Afro-Caribbean peoples, and Koreans who were harvesting the cane under the direction of Cubans (Careaga Viliesid 1990, pp. 126–127; Reed 2001, p. 288). Edwards (1957, p. 175) claims that the real source of wealth for the company was

511 through the administration of salt pans near the port of Chiquilá on the shore of  
 512 Laguna Holbox. Andrews (1983) in his authoritative volume on Maya salt produc-  
 513 tion mentions small, historic salt pans on Isla Holbox but none near Chiquilá. We  
 514 would be inclined to believe that Edwards (1957) had his facts crossed as La  
 515 Compañía Agrícola had offices in El Cuyo, which is still the hub of major salt pro-  
 516 duction on the Peninsula. Yet, if there were productive salt pans near Chiquilá,  
 517 which is the location of the contact period port of Conil, then that has obvious impli-  
 518 cations for the pre-Hispanic economy of the region. The company was also involved  
 519 in the production of cacao, bananas, and cotton, logging, cattle ranching, as well as  
 520 *palo de tinte* extraction (Edwards 1957, p. 175; Andrews 1985, pp. 140–141;  
 521 Careaga Viliesid 1990, p. 127) and constructed a railway connecting Solferino and  
 522 Chiquilá (Sanders 1955, p. 182; Xacur Maiza et al. 1998, vol. 8, p. 352). It may have  
 523 been during this time when a canal was dug at the north end of the wetland Sabana  
 524 Zanja and a logwood processing plant constructed on the north coast a couple of  
 525 kilometers to the east of Chiquilá (Andrews 2002, personal communication).

526 The second land grant was first given to Faustino Martínez in 1889, a businessman  
 527 from Mérida. Due to his fear of hostile Maya, he did nothing with his grant, and it  
 528 was acquired by La Compañía Colonizadora de la Costa Oriental de Yucatán in 1896,  
 529 a part of the Banco de Londres y México, the first private bank in Mexico (Careaga  
 530 Viliesid 1990, pp. 126–127; Reed 2001, p. 288; Mathews and Lizama-Rogers 2005).  
 531 La Compañía Colonizadora had a tract of land stretching from Cabo Catoche to  
 532 Ascension Bay. They established bases in Puerto Morelos, Colonia Santa María  
 533 (modern Leona Vicario), Yalikin, El Meco, Porvenir, and Las Vegas (Andrews 1985,  
 534 pp. 140–141; Careaga Viliesid 1990, pp. 126–127). The company constructed  
 535 narrow-gauge railways across the Peninsula, which were used to transport lumber and  
 536 *chicle* from camps in the bush to the bases and eventually to the coast for shipment.

## 537 In Closing

538 These narrow-gauge railways are just one extant example (Fig. 11.5) of how these  
 539 extractive industries were materialized and inscribed on the landscape (Mathews  
 540 2009). Over the course of our coastal surveys, we have recorded a variety of evi-  
 541 dence associated with the diverse range of activities associated with the major land-  
 542 holding companies that constituted the late nineteenth and early twentieth maritime  
 543 cultural landscape. These include the remnants of short-lived *chiclero* camps, the  
 544 historic canals still visible in the remotely sensed imagery, the remains of the dock  
 545 facilities at Yalikin with wooden pier posts still extending out of the water, the  
 546 Xuxub rancho with its collapsed smoke-stack and crumbling architecture, and the  
 547 massive smoke-stack of San Eusebio that is still standing. This historical palimpsest  
 548 does not yet provide us with the fine-grained data needed to study the diverse eth-  
 549 nicities that constituted the population on the peninsula (Maya, Cuban, Korean,  
 550 European, Afro-Caribbean, Mexican), but this is certainly something we plan to  
 551 investigate as we move forward with the historical research.



**Fig. 11.5** Small section of the Yalikin narrow-gauge railway in a flooded mangrove forest (photo by Dominique Rissolo 2006)

Returning to our consideration of the pre-Columbian period, the ceramic data provide not only chronological information but also important clues as to the far-reaching networks in which the Maya of Vista Alegre were engaged. These connections stand in sharp contrast to those evidenced at the inland sites and speak to the different lived experiences of coastal inhabitants. The ceramics are only one part of the story and must be combined with the architectural and survey data; as it is not the objects that are of interest, but the people moving and using those objects that we seek to understand. Through the survey data, we have a clearer picture of the options, or lack thereof, for maritime traders as they plied the waters of Laguna Holbox. When combined with the architectural data from Vista Alegre, features such as the wall/*sacbe* and the *andador* allow us to begin to understand how the goods and people moved through this landscape, which is critical as we attempt to recreate the maritime cultural landscape.

With this preliminary background research completed, we are in a strong position to begin the interdisciplinary phase of the project, which is critical if we are to fully understand the changing maritime cultural landscapes from the Middle Preclassic to the early twentieth century. What challenges did the first settlers face as they established the community of Vista Alegre on this small patch of barely elevated ground? What attracted them to this place, and how did they make a living? During the subsequent Early and Middle Classic periods, what kept people at Vista Alegre after the abandonment of inland sites and why did the settlement eventually fail? What made this an attractive port site in the Terminal Classic and why did this occupation also fail? How was the “conquest” experienced in this area and what

575 was the lived experience of the diverse participants in the later extractive industries?  
 576 While we have been able to address some of these questions in this chapter, our  
 577 adoption of the maritime cultural landscape perspective and its focus on human–  
 578 maritime interaction will serve us well as we move forward with our research.

579 **Acknowledgments** We thank the Consejo de Arqueología of Mexico's National Institute of  
 580 Anthropology and History (INAH) for granting us permits to conduct this research. Our research  
 581 would not have been possible without support from Georgia State University, Waitt Institute,  
 582 Trinity University, the Explorers Club, and the Foundation for Advancement of Mesoamerican  
 583 Studies, Inc. In Quintana Roo we are grateful for the continued support of Adriana Velázquez  
 584 Morlet, Karina Romero Blanco, and Carlos Esperón. We would also like to thank the people of  
 585 Chiquilá and San Ángel: Justino Hernández Tinoco, Roberto Echevaria, Abel Mendezaba Orduña,  
 586 Alfonso Martínez Márquez, Feliciano Mukul Yah, Gerardo Mendezaba Orduña, Apolinar Caixba  
 587 Chagarla, Leonardo Ramirez, Don Chepe, Don Silvilio Noh Gasca, and Anselmo Noh Olivar. And  
 588 special thanks to Don Ramón Baas May, Don Tiburcio, Manuel Guillermo, Roque Tzuk Dzib,  
 589 Abimael Cupul Tzuk, María Tzuk, Concepcion Tzuk Dzib, Modesto Chel Xi, Josue Nohoo Pat,  
 590 Joel de Jesus Aguilar Barajas, Erin Andrews, Robert Bryant, Fabiola Moreno Hoesz, Stacey  
 591 Whitacre, Stephanie Croatt, Victoria Beltrán Kuhn, Kurt Heidelberg, Athena Smith, Travis  
 592 Stanton, Vera Tiesler Blos, Christopher Götz, Jorge Humberto Toledo Barrera, Lucia Gudiel,  
 593 Derek Smith, Zachary X. Hruby, Joseph W. Ball, Jennifer Taschek, Fabio E. Amador, Sam  
 594 Meacham, and Carrie Furman. This project has benefited greatly from all of your help.

## 595 References

- 596 Amador, Fabio Esteban Berdugo 2005 Ancient Pottery in the Yalahau Region: A Study of  
 597 Ceramics and Chronology in Northern Quintana Roo, Mexico. Doctoral dissertation,  
 598 Department of Anthropology, University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY.
- 599 Andrews, Anthony P. 1978 Puertos Costeros del Postclásico Temprano en el Norte de Yucatán.  
 600 *Estudios de Cultura Maya* 11:75–93.
- 601 Andrews, Anthony P. 1983 *Maya Salt Production and Trade*. The University of Arizona Press,  
 602 Tucson, AZ.
- 603 Andrews, Anthony P. 1985 The Archaeology and History of Northern Quintana Roo. In *Geology*  
 604 *and Hydrogeology of the Yucatan and Quaternary Geology of Northeastern Yucatan Peninsula*,  
 605 W.C. Ward, A. E. Weidie and W. Back, editors, pp. 127–143. New Orleans Geological Society,  
 606 New Orleans, LA.
- 607 Andrews, Anthony P. 1990 The role of trading ports in Maya Civilization. In *Vision and Revision*  
 608 *in Maya Studies*, Flora S. Clancy and Peter D. Harrison, editors, pp. 159–167. University of  
 609 New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM.
- 610 Andrews, Anthony P. 2002 El antiguo puerto maya de Conil. In *Estudios de Cultura Maya*,  
 611 pp. 135–149. Centro de Estudios Mayas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México,  
 612 México, D.F.
- 613 Andrews, Anthony P., and Grant D. Jones 2001 Asentamientos coloniales en la costa de Quintana  
 614 Roo. *Temas Antropológicos* 23:20–35.
- 615 Andrews, Anthony P., and Tomás Gallareta Negrón 1986 The Isla Cerritos Archaeological  
 616 Project, Yucatán, Mexico. *Mexicon* 8:44–48.
- 617 Andrews IV, E. Wyllys, and Anthony P. Andrews 1975 *A preliminary study of the ruins of Xcaret,*  
 618 *Quintana Roo, Mexico, with notes on other archaeological remains on the Central East Coast of*  
 619 *the Yucatan Peninsula*. Middle American Research Institute Publication 40, New Orleans, LA.

- Andrews, Anthony P., Tomás Gallareta Negrón, Fernando Robles Castellanos, Rafael Cobos Palma, and Pura Cervera Rivero 1988 Isla Cerritos: An Itza Trading Port on the North Coast of Yucatan, Mexico. *National Geographic Research* 4:196–207. 620  
621  
622
- Andrews, Anthony P., and Shirley B. Mock 2002 New Perspectives on the Prehispanic Maya Salt Trade. In *Ancient Maya Political Economies*, Marilyn A. Masson and David A. Freidel, editors, pp. 307–334. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, CA. 623  
624  
625
- ApesteGUI, Cruz 2002 *Pirates of the Caribbean: Buccaneers, Privateers, Freebooters, and Filibusters*. Chartwell Books, Inc, Edison, NJ. 626  
627
- Ardren, Traci, T. Kam Manahan, Julie Kay Wesp, and Alejandra Alonso 2009 Cloth Production and Economic Intensification in the Area Surrounding Chichen Itza. *Latin American Antiquity* 21:274–289. 628  
629  
630
- Ashmore, Wendy 2002 “Decisions and Dispositions”: Socializing Spatial Archaeology. *American Anthropologist* 104:1172–1183. 631  
632
- Ashmore, Wendy, and A. Bernard Knapp (editors) 1999 *Archaeologies of Landscape*. Blackwell Publishers, Malden, MA. 633  
634
- Ball, Joseph W. 1978 Archaeological Pottery of the Yucatan–Campeche Coast. In *Studies in the Archaeology of Coastal Yucatan and Campeche, Mexico*, Joseph W. Ball, editor, pp. 75–146. Middle American Research Institute Publication 46, New Orleans, LA. 635  
636  
637
- Ball, Joseph W. and Jennifer T. Taschek 2003 Reconsidering the Belize Valley Preclassic: A case for multiethnic interactions in the development of a regional culture tradition. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 14(2):179–217. 638  
639  
640
- Blomster, Jeffrey P. 2009 Representational Juxtapositions in Early Formative Figurines, Oaxaca, Mexico. In *Mesoamerican Figurines: Small-Scale Indices of Large-Scale Social Phenomena*, Christina T. Halperin, Katherine Faust, A., Rhonda Taube and Aurore Giguët, editors, pp. 119–148. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL. 641  
642  
643  
644
- Brady, James E. 1997 Settlement Configuration and Cosmology: The Role of Caves at Dos Pilas. *American Anthropologist* 99:602–618. 645  
646
- Brady, James E. and Wendy Ashmore 1999 Mountains, Caves, Water: Ideational Landscapes of the Ancient Maya. In *Archaeologies of Landscape*, A Bernard Knapp and Wendy Ashmore, editors, pp. 124–148. Blackwell Publishers, Malden, MA. 647  
648  
649
- Careaga Viliesid, Lorena 1990 *Quintana Roo: Una historia compartida*. 1. ed. Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, Mexico, D.F. 650  
651
- Chamberlain, Robert Stoner 1948 *The conquest and colonization of Yucatan, 1517–1550*. Carnegie Institution, Washington, D.C. 652  
653
- Cheetham, David T. 2009 Early Olmec Figurines from Two Regions: Style as Cultural Imperative. In *Mesoamerican Figurines: Small-Scale Indices of Large-Scale Social Phenomena*, Christina T. Halperin, Katherine Faust, A., Rhonda Taube and Aurore Giguët, editors, pp. 149–179. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL. 654  
655  
656  
657
- Cobos, Rafael (editor) 2006 *Proyecto Arqueológico Isla Cerritos: Estudio de una Comunidad Maya Costera del Clásico Terminal*. Informe de la temporada de campo 2006 prepared for the Consejo de Arqueología del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City, MX. 658  
659  
660  
661
- Cobos, Rafael (editor) 2007 *Proyecto Arqueológico Isla Cerritos: Estudio de una Comunidad Maya Costera del Clásico Terminal*. Informe de la temporada de campo 2007 prepared for the Consejo de Arqueología del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City, MX. 662  
663  
664
- Cobos, Rafael Palma 2004 Chichén Itza: Settlement and Hegemony during the Terminal Classic Period. In *The Terminal Classic in the Maya Lowlands*, Arthur A. Demarest, Prudence M. Rice and Don S. Rice, editors, pp. 517–544. University Press of Colorado, Boulder, CO. 665  
666  
667
- Coggins, Clemency C. and Orrin C. Shane III 1984 *Cenote of Sacrifice: Maya Treasures from the Sacred Well at Chichén Itzá*. University of Texas Press, Austin, TX. 668  
669
- Con Uribe, María José, and Eric D. Jordán 1992 Polé: Notas Sobre un Puerto Maya. In *Memorias del Primer Congreso Internacional de Mayistas*, pp. 497–511. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, D.F. 670  
671  
672

- 673 Eaton, Jack D. 1978 *Archaeological Survey of the Yucatan-Campeche Coast, Middle American*  
674 *Research Institute, Pub. 46, part 1*. Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.
- 675 Edwards, Clinton R. 1957 Quintana Roo, Mexico's Empty Quarter. Master's thesis, Department  
676 of Geography, University of California, Berkeley, CA.
- 677 Edwards, Clinton R. 1973 Nautical technology and maritime routes in Mesoamerica. In *Atti del*  
678 *XL Congresso Internazionale degli Americanisti, vol. IV*, pp. 199–202. Tilgher-Genova, Rome,  
679 Italy.
- 680 Fedick, Scott L. 2003 Archaeological Evidence for Ancient and Historic Resource Use Associated  
681 with the El Edén Wetland, Northern Quintana Roo, Mexico. In *The Lowland Maya Area:*  
682 *Three Millennia at the Human-Wildland Interface*, Arturo Gómez-Pompa, Michael F. Allen,  
683 Scott L. Fedick and Juan J. Jiménez-Osornio, editors, pp. 339–360. Food Products Press,  
684 Binghamton, NY.
- 685 Finamore, Daniel, and Stephen D. Houston 2010 *Fiery Pool: The Maya and the Mythic Sea*.  
686 Peabody Essex Museum and Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.
- 687 Freidel, David A., and Jeremy A. Sabloff 1984 *Cozumel: Late Maya Settlement Patterns*.  
688 Academic Press, New York, NY.
- 689 Gallareta Negrón, Tomás, and Anthony P. Andrews 1988 El proyecto arqueológico Isla Cerritos,  
690 Yucatan, Mexico. *Boletín de la Escuela de Ciencias antropológicas de la Universidad de*  
691 *Yucatan* 89:3–16.
- 692 Gallareta Negrón, Tomás, Anthony P. Andrews, Rafael Cobos Palma, and Pura Cervera Rivero  
693 1989 Isla Cerritos: Un Puerto Maya Prehispánico de la Costa Norte de Yucatán, México.  
694 In *Memorias del Segundo Coloquio Internacional de Mayistas*, pp. 311–332. Universidad  
695 Nacional de Autónoma de México, Mexico, D.F.
- 696 Gallareta Negrón, Tomás and Karl A. Taube 2005 Late Postclassic Occupation in the Ruinas de  
697 San Angel Region. In *Quintana Roo Archaeology*, Justine M. Shaw and Jennifer P. Mathews,  
698 editors, pp. 87–111. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- 699 Garber, James F., M. Kathryn Brown, Jaime J. Awe, and Christopher J. Hartman 2004 Middle  
700 Formative Prehistory of the Central Belize Valley: An Examination of Architecture, Material  
701 Culture, and Sociopolitical Change at Blackman Eddy. In *The Ancient Maya of the Belize*  
702 *Valley: Half a Century of Archaeological Research*, James F. Garber, editor, pp. 25–47.  
703 University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- 704 Given, Michael, and A. Bernard Knapp (editors) 2003 *The Sydney Cyprus Survey Project: Social*  
705 *Approaches to Regional Archaeological Survey, Monumenta Archaeologica 21*. Cotsen  
706 Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, CA.
- 707 Glover, Jeffrey B. 2006 The Yalahau Regional Settlement Pattern Survey: A Study of Ancient  
708 Maya Social Organization in Northern Quintana Roo, Mexico. Doctoral dissertation,  
709 Department of Anthropology, University of California, Riverside, CA.
- 710 Glover, Jeffrey B. and Travis W. Stanton 2010 Assessing the Role of Preclassic Traditions in the  
711 Formation of Early Classic Yucatec Cultures. *Journal of Field Archaeology* v. 35:58–77.
- 712 Goñi, Guillermo 1998 *Xamanhá: Un Sitio Arqueológico de la Costa Central de Quintana Roo*.  
713 Colección Científica, INAH, Mexico City.
- 714 Hoover, Anna Marie 2003 The Ritual and the Domestic: The Late Postclassic Reoccupation of  
715 T'isil. Master's thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Riverside, CA.
- 716 Ingold, Tim 1993 The Temporality of the Landscape. *World Archaeology* 25:152–174.
- 717 Kepecs, Susan 1999 The Political Economy of Chikinchel, Yucatan, Mexico: A Diachronic  
718 Analysis from the Prehispanic Era through the age of Spanish Administrative. Doctoral  
719 dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.
- 720 Kepecs, Susan, Gary Feinman, and Sylviane Boucher 1994 Chichen Itza and Its Hinterland:  
721 A world-systems perspective. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 5:141–158.
- 722 Leshikar, Margaret E. 1996 The Earliest Watercraft: From Rafts to Viking Ships. In *Ships and*  
723 *Shipwrecks of the Americas: A History Based on Underwater Archaeology*, George F. Bass,  
724 editor, pp. 13–32. Thames and Hudson, New York, NY.
- 725 Lesure, Richard G. 1997 Figurines and Social Identities in Early Sedentary Societies of Coastal  
726 Chiapas, Mexico, 1550 – 800 B.C. In *Women in Prehistory: North America and Mesoamerica*,

- Cheryl Claassen and Rosemary A. Joyce, editors, pp. 227–248. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. 727
- Martos López, Luis Alberto 2002 *Por las Tierras Mayas de Oriente: Arqueología en el área de CALICA, Quintana Roo*. Compañía Editorial Impresora y Distribuidora, México, D.F. 729
- Mathews, Jennifer P. 2009 *Chicle: The Chewing Gum of the Americas, From the Ancient Maya to William Wrigley*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, AZ. 731
- Mathews, Jennifer P., and Lilia Lizama-Rogers 2005 All Aboard the Chiclet Express: The History of a Chewing Gum Railroad in Quintana Roo, Mexico. Paper presented at Society for American Archaeology, at Salt Lake City, UT. 732
- Miller, Arthur G. 1982 *On the edge of the sea: mural painting at Tancah-Tulum, Quintana Roo, Mexico*. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. 733
- Miller, Arthur G. 1977 The Maya and the Sea: Trade and Cult at Tancah and Tulum, Quintana Roo, Mexico. In *The Sea and the Pre-Columbian World*, Elizabeth P. Benson, editor, pp. 97–140. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. 734
- Le Plongeon, Alice D. 1889 *Here and there in Yucatan. Miscellanies*. J.W. Lovell, New York, NY. 735
- Pool, Christopher A. 2007 *Olmec Archaeology and Early Mesoamerica*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK. 736
- Prager, Christian 2001 The Spanish Conquest of Yucatan and Guatemala in the 16th and 17th Centuries. In *Maya: Divine Kings of the Rain Forest*, Nikolai Grube, editor, pp. 373–383. Könemann, Cologne, DE. 737
- Pred, Allan 1990 *Making Histories and Constructing Human Geographies: the local transformation of practice, power relations, and consciousness*. Westview Press, San Francisco, CA. 738
- Reed, Nelson 2001 *The Caste War of Yucatan*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA. 739
- Restall, Matthew 1998 *Maya Conquistador*. Beacon Press, Boston, MA. 740
- Rissolo, Dominique and Jeffrey B. Glover 2006 *La Costa Escondida: An Archaeological Investigation of the Ancient Maya Port of Vista Alegre, Quintana Roo, Mexico*. Grant #03043 Final Report Submitted to FAMSI. 741
- Rissolo, Dominique, José Manuel Ochoa Rodríguez, and Joseph W. Ball 2005 A Reassessment of the Middle Preclassic in Northern Quintana Roo. In *Quintana Roo Archaeology*, Justine M. Shaw and Jennifer P. Mathews, editors, pp. 66–76. University of Arizona Press, Tucson, AZ. 742
- Robles Castellanos, Fernando 1987 La Secuencia Cerámica Preliminar de Isla Cerritos, Costa Centro-Norte de Yucatán. In *Maya Ceramics: Papers from the 1985 Maya Ceramic Conference*, Prudence M. Rice and Robert J. Sharer, editors, pp. 99–109. British Archaeological Reports, Oxford, UK. 743
- Robles Castellanos, Fernando 1990 *La secuencia cerámica de la región de Cobá, Quintana Roo*. Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, México, D.F. 744
- Robles Castellanos, Fernando and Anthony P. Andrews 1986 A Review and Synthesis of Recent Postclassic Archaeology in Northern Yucatan. In *Late Lowland Maya Civilization: Classic to Postclassic*, Jeremy A. Sabloff and E. Wyllys Andrews V, editors, pp. 53–98. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque. 745
- Romero, Eugenia R. 1991 Aspectos la navegación Maya. La costa de Quintana Roo. *Arqueología* 5:93–106. 746
- Romero, Eugenia R. and Susana Gurrola Briones 1991 La navegación Maya en el caribe Mesoamericano. In *España y nuevo España : sus acciones transmarítimas. Memorias del I simposio internacional*, pp. 71–87. Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, Mexico, D.F. 747
- Romero, Eugenia R. and Susana Gurrola Briones 1995 Los sitios el las márgenes de la laguna Yalahau y Santa Rosa, desde el punto de vista del estudio de la navegación como sistema. In *Memorias del Segundo Congreso Internacional de Mayistas*, pp. 458–476. Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, Mexico, D.F. 748
- Roys, Ralph L. 1957 *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington Publication 613, Washington D.C. 749
- Sabloff, Jeremy A. and William L. Rathje 1975 *A study of changing pre-Columbian commercial systems; the 1972–1973 seasons at Cozumel, Mexico*. Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. 750

- 781 Sanders, William T. 1955 *An Archaeological Reconnaissance of Northern Quintana Roo,*  
 782 *Current Reports, No. 24.* Carnegie Institution of Washington, Department of Archaeology,  
 783 Cambridge, MA.
- 784 Sanders, William T. 1960 *Prehistoric Ceramics and Settlement Patterns in Quintana Roo, Mexico,*  
 785 *Contributions to American Anthropology and History, Vol. XII, No. 60, pp. 155–265.* Carnegie  
 786 Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.
- 787 Scholes, France V. and Ralph L. Roys 1948 *The Maya Chontal Indians of Acalan-Tixchel:*  
 788 *A Contribution to the History and Ethnography of the Yucatan Peninsula, pp. 585–620.*  
 789 Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.
- 790 Silva Rhoads, Carlos and Concepción María del Carmen Hernández 1991 *Estudios de patrón de*  
 791 *asentamiento en Playa del Carmen, Quintana Roo.* 1. ed. Instituto Nacional de Antropología e  
 792 Historia, México, D.F.
- 793 Smith, Adam T. 2003a *The Political Landscape: Constellations of Authority in Early Complex*  
 794 *Polities.* University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- 795 Smith, J. Gregory 2000 *The Chichen-Itza - Ek Balam Transect Project: An Intersite Perspective*  
 796 *on the Political Organization of the Ancient Maya.* Doctoral dissertation, Department of  
 797 Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh, PA.
- 798 Smith, J. Gregory 2003b *Kulubá Archaeological Project 2001 Field Season.* Final Report  
 799 Submitted to FAMSI.
- 800 Soja, Edward W. 1989 *Postmodern Geographies; The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social*  
 801 *Theory.* Verso, London, UK.
- 802 Stanton, Travis W. and Aline Magnoni 2009 *Proyecto de Interacción Política del Centro de*  
 803 *Yucatán: Segunda Temporada de Campo.* Informe Técnico al Consejo de Arqueología del  
 804 Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico, D.F.
- 805 Stanton, Travis W. and Traci Ardren 2005 *The Middle Formative of Yucatán in Context: The View*  
 806 *from Yaxuná.* *Ancient Mesoamerica* 16:213–228.
- 807 Stanton, Travis W. and Tomás Gallareta Negrón 2001 *Warfare, Ceramic Economy, and the Itza:*  
 808 *A reconsideration of the Itza polity in ancient Yucatan.* *Ancient Mesoamerica* 12:229–245.
- 809 Stephens, John Lloyd 1962[1843] *Incidents of Travel in Yucatán, vol. II.* University of Oklahoma  
 810 Press, Norman, OK.
- 811 Sullivan, Paul R. 2004 *Xuxub Must Die: The Lost Histories of a Murder on the Yucatan.* University  
 812 of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA.
- 813 Thompson, J. Eric S. 1949 *Canoes and navigation of the Maya and their neighbors.* *Journal of the*  
 814 *Royal Anthropological Institute* 79:69–78.
- 815 Tozzer, Alfred M. 1957 *Chichen Itza and Its Cenote of Sacrifice: A Comparative Study of*  
 816 *Contemporaneous Maya and Toltec, Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and*  
 817 *Ethnology, Vols. 11 and 12.* Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- 818 Westerdahl, Christer 1992 *The maritime cultural landscape.* *International Journal of Nautical*  
 819 *Archaeology* 21(1):5–14.
- 820 Westerdahl, Christer 2006 *The Relationship between Land Roads and Sea Routes in the Past -*  
 821 *Some Reflections.* *Deutsches Schifffahrtsarchiv* 29:59–114.
- 822 Xacur Maiza, Juan Ángel, María Cecilia Lavalle Torres, Eugenia Varela Carlos, Luz del Carmen  
 823 Vallarta Vélez, and Antonio Higuera Bonfil 1998 *Enciclopedia de Quintana Roo.* 10 vols. J.A.  
 824 Xacur Maiza, Mexico, D.F.