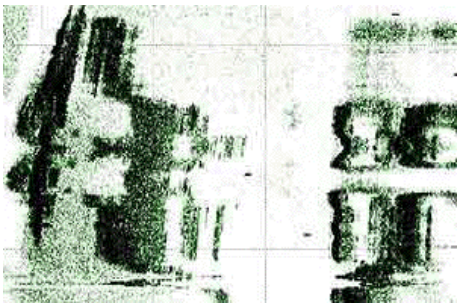
Update About Cuba Underwater Megalithic Research

A half mile down in the waters of Cabo de San Antonio off the western tip of Cuba's Guanahacabibes marked by red X is a 20-kilometer square area of clean, white sand punctuated by tall, megalithic stones or structures first reported in May 2001 by Paulina Zelitsky, Ocean Engineer, Havana, Cuba.

"They (megalithic stones) are very unique structures. They really are not easy to understand and I do not have any easy explanation for them in a natural geological process."
Manuel Iturralde-Vinent, Ph.D., Geologist,
National Museum of Natural History, Havana, Cuba

July 10, 2002 Havana, Cuba A year ago in May 2001, I first reported at Earthfiles.com the startling comments made by ocean engineer, Paulina Zelitsky in Havana, Cuba about her finding earlier in 2000 "possibly a sunken city built in the pre-classic period and populated by an advanced civilization similar to the early Teotihuacan culture of Yucatan. ...Researchers using sonar equipment have discovered at a depth of about 2,200 feet (700-800 meters) a huge land plateau with clear images of what appears to be urban development partly covered by sand. From above, the shapes resemble pyramids, roads and buildings." (See **Earthfiles May 18, 2001**.)



Original high resolution sidescan sonar received by the EXPLORAMAR expedition in 2000 directed by Paulina Zelitsky and Paul Weinzweig, Owners, Advanced Digital Communications (ADC) of Victoria, British Columbia and Havana, Cuba. Image © 2000 by ADC and used with permission.

Since then, I have interviewed Paulina and her husband, Paul Weinzweig, several times about the evolution of their research and goal to get a specially built robot down to the megalithic site which could have lights for videotaping and drilling equipment to sample from the megalithic stone structures. (See Earthfiles **June 13, 2001**, **November 19, 2001**, **December 1, 2001**, **December 15, 2001** and **December 28, 2001**.) The couple operates the Advanced Digital Communications known as ADC in Canada and Havana which contracts to perform deep ocean research.

Originally, ADC had hoped to have a robot on the ocean floor by the summer of 2002, but its cost of $2 million has been an obstacle. So far, the National Geographic Society continues to express interest in adding its resources and media production efforts to the exploration, but to date no official contract has been signed. So, Paulina and Paul have taken on other assignments to pay bills while periodically sending remote operated vehicles known as ROVs down to pick up small rocks that lay on thick sand around the large megalithic stone "structures."

Some of those samples have gone to geologist Manuel Iturralde-Vinent, Ph.D., who works for Cuba's National Museum of Natural History in Havana. Since early spring 2002, Dr. Iturralde-Vinent has studied side-scan sonar images and videotape from the half-mile-deep site and has concluded that he cannot assign a completely natural geological explanation for the large, rectangular-shaped rocks that stand up on a vast, white field of deep sand spread over 20 square kilometers. However, he is waiting for the first analyses of rock samples expected around July 19th. Until then, he is reserving opinion about the composition of the megalithic structures. However, Paulina Zelitsky describes the structures are polished granite not indigenous to either Cuba or the Yucatan.

This week I talked with both Paulina Zelitsky and Dr. Iturralde-Vinent about their current research and theories about what might have happened off the extreme northwestern Cuba peninsula known as Guanahacabibes.

Interviews:

Paulina Zelitsky at her computer in Havana studying a pyramidal-shaped stone videotaped at the half mile deep site in July 2001 by her ADC remote operated vehicle (ROV). Photograph © 2001 by ADC with permission.

Paulina Zelitsky, Ocean Engineer, Advanced Digital Communications, Havana, Cuba: "Samples that we recovered from the ocean bottom have justified our structures that we call megalithic structures. The samples are granite stone, completely polished, with some incrustations of fossils. Fossils of organic creatures that normally live on the surface, not on the ocean bottom. This is very interesting because this is evidence that the whole surface sank to the depth of 700 meters (2,297 feet, or about a half mile down).

The area has been seismically active for thousands of years. And what we find on the ocean bottom are fractures from which the magma and volcanic ash came out. From these structures we were able to delineate a configuration of the land

that sank because you can see them clearly. The land that sank is very obvious from our image of the ocean bottom. And you can see bays, like harbors, and it's all at the depths of 900 and 700 meters.

Geologically, does Dr. Iturralde-Vinent and others have any idea what happened volcanically? Was it one large eruption or series of eruptions?

Series of eruptions and as he is saying, it is still active. A series of eruptions that created major tectonic movement to such a degree that land is sinking. For example, Cuba has sank and re-emerged a couple of times! But that was long ago, geologically. Now, what happened more recently geologically is that land sank that joined to Yucatan islands between Yucatan and Cuba, they sank.

Also, geologically and botanically in terms of organic life, Yucatan and Cuba the extreme northwestern part of Cuba which is Peninsula Guanahacabibes (Gwan-uh-cah-BEE-buh) are completely identical. Completely identical. It's the same limestone and the same organic life and the same botanic and animal represented. It's very obvious that land that was joining that is now on ocean bottom is land that was joining Yucatan and Cuba. But this land was sinking because of tectonic movement which were occurring. Of course, earthquakes and volcanoes were accompanying the tectonic movements. Tectonic movement is not something that moves softly. It is always accompanied by dramatic volcano and earthquake activity.

But we saw on ocean bottom where the bays and coastal lines of the island that sank. We think there was a series of islands between Cuba and the Yucatan. There could have been sinking 15,000 years ago.

One area between the fractures. Not on the fractures. It is between the fractures was left undisturbed and just sank flat without fractures. On this area, we can observe those megalithic structures, or constructions. And they have completely different and independent delineation from geological faults, from our geology of the sunken land, or the geology of island Cuba. Completely independent delineation of their own.

As if they came from some place else?

We don't know yet. But it obviously didn't come from Cuba. That's one thing. The stone we recovered from ocean bottom is very polished granite. All of the peninsula of northwest part of Cuba, all of this peninsula is limestone, very fractured limestone. So, geologically, it (megalithic granite structures) is totally foreign to Cuba. But it's also not known in Yucatan because Yucatan is also limestone, not granite. Granite is found only in the center of Mexico.

It covers approximately a beautiful, beautiful, flat, clean area. Nothing else in this area. And it covers approximately 20 square kilometers of this area. It's flat, completely flat. Huge white silicon field. In the middle of all of that are these megalithic structures surfacing out of it.

What is the scientific consensus so far about how 20 square kilometers could get down a half mile?

The whole island sank. Probably what we think happened is that Cuba and Yucatan at one historical time were both joined. But little by little, this land was fractured into islands and sank to the ocean bottom. So, the land on which we discovered megalithic structures sank somewhere between 15,000 and maybe 50,000 years ago, which is quite recent geologically.

What for you is the next most important step you can take to collect one or more samples directly from the megalithic structures?

I wouldn't be able to do any serious work without a robot to that is working on ocean floor because I need stability in order to be able to make an opening in the megalithic structures. We need to make an opening to enter. National Geographic is interested in investigating the site with submersibles. So that might be another opportunity.

Do the submersibles have the ability to drill into stone?

No. Submersibles don't. They just have the ability to observe with human eyes.

Or videotape.

Or video camera, yeah. But it must be operated by humans.

If you can get the special robot constructed and down there that costs $2 million, you would be able to photograph with good light and be able to drill into a megalithic structure?

Oh, yes. I would be able to make opening and enter inside the structures. What I am the most interested in doing is to enter inside because if there are some artifacts, they should be inside the structures and not outside.

Then if National Geographic, or other interested organization, can get funding together, you might be able to go forward full time on research and get the robot down to both photograph and drill into the structures?

Yes, that's right. And discover a completely new page in our history."

Manuel Iturralde-Vinent, Ph.D., Geologist, National Museum of Natural History, Havana, Cuba, who presented a scientific paper about the deep water megalithic structures in March 2002 at an International Geophysical meeting in Havana: "I do not yet know if the megalithic structures are granite. I have been working with the data provided by Paulina for three months and I have been observing the side-scan sonar images, the video images with some samples recovered from different places within the area with the megalithic stones are and also from an area located to the south of this region.

My impression is first that the structures that are in the megalithic area at the 600 to 700 meter depths, I cannot explain these structures by any geological means right now. So, I am not sure that I can find a geological explanation for the origin of these structures.

So I'm clear the structures don't fit into any natural explanation currently?

Yeah, we think that in natural geological terms, I cannot give a logical explanation now. So, I am not telling that they are artificial, but what I say is right now I don't have a good explanation as to the origin by natural cause of these structures. They might have an artificial origin. But in this case, we are opening into a very interesting situation because given the depth of this structures and if we calculate the timing when these might have been uplifted, it will take us up to 50,000 years ago. (Meaning, when the land mass now down a half mile might have been above sea level.)

This is if we follow the rules of the normal tectonic movement as we have been recording them in the past 100 years in Cuba. But these figures are well known in the world. More or less, the sea floor can move down as quickly as 16 millimeters a year. That's one of the very interesting issues that are related to this discovery.

Meaning that the area is still active seismically and you are seeing that parts of Cuba are still sinking.

Current geological knowledge and data indicates that the area is still very active and sinking even now. We are not done with this research. We need to still do more research, collect more samples, provide more observation to be sure about what we are talking about. But something is very safe to say now is that we are not dealing with blocks that have been falling down from the slope. They (megalithic stones) are very unique structures. They really are not easy to understand and I do not have any easy explanation for them in a natural geological process. That's my conclusion now. I need more time and more data

before going forward."

More Information:

If any organizations or individuals are interested in helping fund the several million dollars needed to accomplish the deep underwater research of the Cuban megalithic site, Paulina Zelitsky and Paul Weinzweig suggest writing to:

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