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Seascape corridors : modeling routes to connect communities across the Caribbean Sea

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Slayton Propositions:

- 1) The study of past sea-based mobility in the Caribbean region should follow a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates the archaeological record, ethnographic and/or ethno-historic research, and modern experimental voyages to evaluate how Amerindian islander technology may have influenced inter-island activity and relationships.
- 2) Computer-generated routes derived from modern environmental data can provide key information about possible early inter-island mobility routes to explore observations from the archaeological or ethnographic records.
- 3) Analysis of computer modeled routes indicates there may have been a link between the location of canoeing routes and the placement of pre-Columbian settlements and coastal landing point.
- 4) If routes are shown to align with the archaeological record, they can be used to suggest new areas for archaeological survey or excavation.
- 5) To better understand human movement in the past, archaeologists should incorporate sea-based mobility as well as land based travel. This is especially important for studying connections between peoples living on islands who relied heavily on sea travel.
- 6) Applying computer models to archaeological questions cannot prove what occurred in the past.
- 7) Applying the same computer modeling methodologies to different environments and geographic areas can show the effectiveness of the method to test micro and macro regional mobility patterns.
- 8) Traveling between two points on the same island by boat in calm water can be easier than traveling through the center of that island if it is mountainous.
- 9) Current interest in early seafaring and wayfinding traditions is increasing, as evidenced by the film Moana that referenced both phenomena.
- 10) Everyone who studies past seafaring practices should engage in experimental voyaging, as it opens the eyes to the true difficulties, possibilities, and beauty of traveling on water.