



In Search of Lost Future: Documentary Film and Panel Discussion



The screening of “In Search of Lost Future,” a documentary directed and written by Luis Quevedo and Alfonso Par, will be followed by a panel discussion on recent findings in anthropology, archaeology, and paleo-climatology.

IN SEARCH OF LOST FUTURE

- Directed and written by Luis Quevedo and Alfonso Par, documentary, 56 minutes.
- In Spanish with English subtitles.
- [View trailer.](#)

In a road trip that spans the African heat and the polar chill, the lush fertile crescent in Turkey, and the impossible tangle of the Mayan jungle, a makeshift group of explorers searches for clues left by ancient societies. Might these clues help us understand the essential mechanisms that underpin all civilizations? What enabled the blossoming of culture and trade, and what precipitated the collapse of those who came before us?

This journey, led by renowned Spanish archaeologist Eudald Carbonell —Director of the Atapuerca site and a discoverer of Homo antecessor— and science journalist Luis Quevedo, explores the concept of “cultural evolution” as the engine of humanity’s singular progress, which has enabled us, from a situation from near extinction in Africa 150,000 years ago, to inhabit the planet in its entirety.

The secret? We human beings are doomed to think in much the same way giraffes are condemned to nibble at the tops of the acacia tree. To know, to think, underlies

FILM
NEW YORK

Thu, October 27, 2016

Venue

Americas Society, 680 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065

[View map](#)

Admission

Free. [Pre-registration required.](#)

More information

[Americas Society](#)

Credits

Presented by The Americas Society in collaboration with the Consulate General of Spain in New York.



the behavior of our species: a singular behavior among living things that has led us to modify our environment rather than adapt to it.

PANEL DISCUSSION

The screening will be followed by a panel discussion centered on recent findings in anthropology, archaeology, and paleo-climatology that shed light on recurring themes underlying the demise of past civilizations.

Expert scientists will discuss a quintessential episode from the Americas: the pre-Columbian Maya collapse. Science is helping us understand how and why the ancient Maya went from a flourishing and rapidly expanding culture to ashes. The interplay between ecology, climate, and the human sphere played a much more nuanced role than previously thought. Mayans had to endure climate fluctuations for which their society was not culturally ready. A similar scenario now encompasses not only the Yucatan peninsula but, arguably, the whole planet. What lessons can we extract from their misfortunes that might better the odds of our culture?

- Luis Quevedo, journalist.
- Martín Medina Elizalde, Associate Professor, Department of Geosciences, Auburn University.
- Richard Seager, Palisades Geophysical Institute / Lamont Research Professor.
- Radu Iovita, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, New York University.