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These two works press beyond the boundaries of conventional scholarship to explore the alternative world view offered by Maya culture. Brennan, an artist and longtime student of prehistoric rock inspirations throughout North America and Mexico, examines the hand signs shown in Maya glyphs and art work in search of an interpretation of the Maya system of writing, which has long interested interested and puzzled scholars He contends that the Maya used a sophisticated gesture language similar to that of the Plains Indian groups of North America. Many useful illustrations and compelling examples support Brennan's theory. While the conclusions drawn are equal parts scholarship and hypothesis, this thorough and detailed study of the relationships among writing, art, symbolism, and meaning fascinates. The Maya Long Count calendar, a complex system for measuring time, was developed around 2000 years ago, possibly at the pre-Maya site of Izapa in southern Mexico. Jenkins, an independent researcher, presents a wealth of information about Maya astronomy, mythology, and caledrics in support of his analysis of the Long Count calendar end-date, scheduled to occur on December 21, 2012. Providing evidence that the end-date corresponds with a rare alignment of our solar system, Jenkins contends that the Maya were aware of this celestial event and believed that it portended a dramatic rebirth for humanity. Good illustrations, maps, and an extensive bibliography complement this detailed work. Ultimately, however, Jenkins' well-researched and interesting interpretation remains speculative.