

Comparison:  
Steve's reference photo for creating  
this sketch of a Mask at Labna.

**Steve Radzi:  
Sketcher  
in the Wild!**

**See page 4**



# IMS EXPLORER

Institute of Maya Studies

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March 17, 2021 • Modern K'iche' Maya Long Count: 0.0.8.6.8 • 9 Lamat 11 Cumku • G2

## Figurines from the Western Campeche Coast

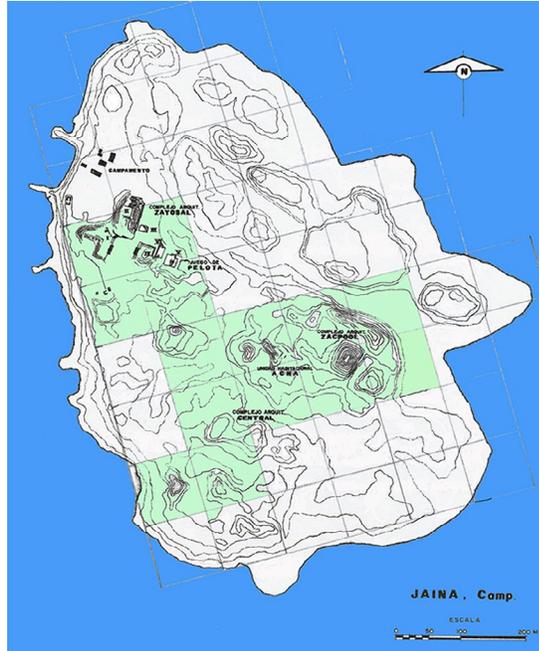
by **Antonio Benavides C.**  
INAH Campeche

In the archaeological literature, we commonly find prehispanic ceramic figurines ascribed to the island of Jaina. There is also the term “Jaina style” referring to them, without having a formal definition. According to some misinformed researchers the island was used as a necropolis.

However, systematic serious research practiced at Jaina and at other coastal and inland sites show there is not a “Jaina style”, but several figurine traditions that developed at regions like central and southern Veracruz, the Tabasco coast, the Palenque zone, and some points of the Campeche coast. In a similar way, we have to say that Jaina was not a regional cemetery, but a small settlement where looting and disinformation created erroneous ideas.

Jaina is located 42 km north from Campeche City, on the western limit of the Hecelchakán municipality and in Los Petenes Biosphere Reserve. Jaina is not a big settlement, it occupies less than 1 km<sup>2</sup> (a little more than 40 hectares), but the cultural heritage it contains tell us a lot about the Maya society that lived there (Piña 1968, 1996; Barba 2003; Benavides 2007, 2010, 2012a).

The western central part of the state of Campeche, the coast between Isla Aguada and San Francisco de Campeche is distinguished



**Fig 1:** Map of the Jaina island. (by Antonio Benavides C.)

**Fig 2:** Kaan/Chaan (Heaven), Jaina's emblem glyph.



by alternating rocky shores, sandy beaches, and sections covered by mangrove. In contrast, from Campeche City to Celestún we find a little more than 100 km coast covered by mangrove. Navigation through the southern Campeche shore was relatively easy thanks to the existence of several places where canoers could stop, rest, get fresh water and food, or repair boats. But, to continue traveling to the north once arriving to Campeche, the journeys required intermediary

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points to replace energy and to fix eventual damages.

To cross the mangrove forest, people would open a water trail several kilometers in length (an average of 12 km) to the east until arriving to firm limestone soil. The

*continued on page 3*



**Jim Reed,**  
Editor

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# The Colors of Corn: John White's Florida Watercolor Paintings

by **Norman Hammond, ScD, FSA, FBA**

Senior Fellow, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Cambridge University;  
Research Associate, Peabody Museum, Harvard University;  
Emeritus Professor of Archaeology, Boston University

John White, born in the 1540s and last heard of in 1593 in Ireland, is known for the five voyages to North America that he took part in between 1584 and 1590, mostly to Sir Walter Raleigh's Virginia Colony, and for the 75 watercolors that now survive in the British Museum (Hulton & Quinn 1964; Hulton 1985; Sloan 2007).

The most noted of these watercolors were made on the 1585 expedition and portray the Algonquin people of what is now coastal North Carolina; others include fanciful notions of ancient Picts, based to some extent on his Amerindian observations, and of Baffin Island Inuit (although White did not necessarily accompany Frobisher there in 1576).

Two of the watercolors depict a Timuacan man and woman, from the St. John's River region of central Atlantic-coastal Florida (BM accessions Prints and Drawings, 1906, 0509. 1.22–23). They are labelled only "Of Florida", without the detailed captions on his Virginia paintings, and are thought to be copies by White of now lost originals by the Huguenot Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues (1533–1588).

Le Moyne was in Florida in 1564–1565 and was then in London from 1581 until his death. What may be one of his original gouaches shows the commemorative pillar bearing the arms of Charles IX of France that Jean Ribault had raised in Florida in 1562, alongside the local chief's son, Athore, greeting Le Moyne's captain René Laudonnière on 27 June 1564, and with containers of local produce apparently as offerings in front of the pillar (**Fig. 1**).

The food offerings include gourds probably holding beverages, baskets of fruits and vegetables, and a tied bundle of maize cobs (Sloan 2007: fig. 77; engravings of Le Moyne's drawings, including this one, were published by Theodore de Bry in 1591 in Frankfurt; De Bry had already published engravings of White's drawings the previous year, (see Hulton 1977, 1985).

White's two putative copies from Le Moyne labelled "Of Florida" are in the same style as his Virginia watercolors; the man (**Fig. 2**) is heavily tattooed and wears a loincloth with many pendants, apparently of metal and possibly being brass aglets

●● used in European costume of the period



**Fig. 1:** Florida Native American Chief Athore showing Ren De Laudonniere the Marker Column erected by Jean Ribault in 1562. Watercolor by Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues, 1564–1565. Courtesy of: The New York Public Library Digital Collections.

to link doublet and breeches (Martinón-Torres et al. 2007 show the adoption of these as jewellery in sixteenth-century Cuba). He also has flat elliptical metal ornaments on his arms and knees, and as a pectoral. These may also be of European manufacture, or perhaps indigenous trade goods from Colombia via the Antilles. If European, they would probably have been of brass; if Colombian, of gold or a copper-gold alloy such as tumbaga. While he resembles, in his armament and adornment, figures from De Bry's engravings after Le Moyne's lost originals, he does not replicate any of them; Sloan (2007: 134) notes the resemblance of his tattoos to Elizabethan strapwork, and this may indicate an ex post facto adaptation by either Le Moyne or White.

The woman is also tattooed in similar fashion from forehead to wrists and ankles (**Fig. 3**, page 5), and wears two necklaces as well as fish bladders in her earlobes (Sloan 2007: 136 & plate 20); it is not clear whether she also has a labret through her lower lip. Her costume is striking, albeit impractical, in its brevity: long blue icicle-like points hang from a red-and-white band over one shoulder, beneath which she is naked. It implies ceremonial rather than everyday garb.

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**Fig. 2:** Timuacan man "Of Florida", by John White c. 1585, probably after Jacques Le Moyne 1564–1565. Watercolor. British Museum, Department of Prints & Drawings 1906, 0509. 1.22.

# Figurines from the Western Campeche Coast

by Antonio Benavides C.

INAH Campeche *continued from page 1*

pre-Columbian solution was to build islands. In an environment of thick mangrove forests, the ingenious Maya learned how to take advantage of the narrow passages formed by the Petenes' sweet water flowing to the sea. Farther on, they arrived at somewhat higher sectors where they could quarry a more solid material called *sascab*. It was hauled on thousands of canoe trips and used to shape accessible and livable areas along the shoreline (Benavides 2012a).

In such a way, during the first centuries of our era, the Maya created several artificial platforms where they could stand and perform quotidian activities. Those places today are known as El Cuyo, Yukumbalan, Jaina, Nisyuc, Isla Piedras, Chisahscab, Yalton, Nunchukum, and Isla Uaymil (Andrews 1977, 1978a, 1978b). Jaina is the biggest island to ever be built by the Maya (Benavides 2012a: 125) (Fig. 1, page 1).

But, colonial times erased the memory of those efforts. That's the reason why most of the actual northern Campeche communities located relatively close to the sea are located on limestone lands; Koben, Hampolol, Tenabo, Sodzil, Chunkanan, Tankuche, Pomuch, and Hecelchakan, among others (CONANP 2006).

A relevant role resulting from the arduous task of creating shoreland settlements must have been commerce, forming useful and necessary spaces to stop after several hours of canoeing. Those northern Campeche coastal points were like bridges helping to bond northern and southern regions.

The earliest human evidences firmly registered at Jaina are from the Early Classic, but the apogee occurred during the Late Classic (600-900 AD), when the island became one of the most relevant sites of the western coast of the peninsula, parallel to the climax of the Puuc cities. As a matter of fact,

the island had a ruling family and its own emblem glyph (Fig. 2, page 1). It was abandoned by the end of the Postclassic period, so when the Europeans arrived, it only functioned as a coastal reference point because of its large jungle-covered mounds.

Román Piña Chán (2003; 180-225) established that Jaina was a religious, administrative, and habitation center, correcting previous interpretations as a necropolis. William Folan and Luis Alvarez (1986) emphasized its role as a port where exchange was important. The author (Benavides 2007, 2012a) argued the idea of a complete settlement, with domestic units, a civil-religious core, and a strategic commercial location. We understand Jaina as a small, but powerful political entity, not only for having its own emblem glyph, but also because of the exchange links it shared with several Mesoamerican regions.

Jaina's political-administrative facilities included public buildings concentrated in what today we call the Zacpool and Zayosal architectonic groups. They also built a 400-meter-long docking area. The high rank officials lived in the masonry domestic units placed around those monumental buildings, while the other social groups occupied perishable or semi-perishable material units in the periphery.

Jaina concentrated and distributed the ceramic production coming from different regions, some as far as central and southern Veracruz, also acquiring many objects from Palenque's periphery, and also materials manufactured at Comalcalco and Jonuta (Berlin 1956; Gallegos and Armijo 2004; Benavides Op. cit.). There was also a ceramic tradition of western Campeche, but its precise location has not been defined.

**Fig 3:** Some examples of Comalcalco figurines. (Courtesy of R. Armijo and M. Gallegos.)



## Techniques and variety

The manufacturing techniques of the figurines can be summarized in three groups; 1) modeled or handmade; 2) molded or using ceramic molds; and 3) mixed, by the combination of the previous techniques. An interesting variant of the molded pieces is that of figurines with articulated legs and arms. Generally, for most of the terracotta artifacts, the Maya incorporated a post-cooking style of painting, especially using white, blue, red, and yellow colors (in that order of frequency).

Paste analysis of more than 30 Jaina figurine samples prepared at the Smithsonian Institute helped to identify the provenance of objects manufactured at Jonuta and carried to Jaina, where they were found in archaeological excavations (Bishop et al 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2008, 2012). Among other forms, Jonuta's inventory of figurines include molded women with their hands upturned; other ladies also up-handed, but with big headdresses; women of rectangular shape; and funerary bundles placed on thrones (Gallegos 2010).

Comalcalco was also an important figurine producer and some examples of their repertory include musicians, dwarfs, standing or seated women (Fig. 3), and ladies called "petitioners" or portrayed with their hands up, as if in the act of prayer. Gallegos (2011) distinguishes five groups of this last character, identifying it with the young fertility deity and indicating that some figurines were integrated as part of a funerary offering while others were discarded after being used in religious activities.

– To be continued in the April IMS Explorer –  
References cited appear in a Word doc attached to the email letter that includes the March PDF version of the IMS Explorer.



# Steve Radzi: Sketcher in the Wild!

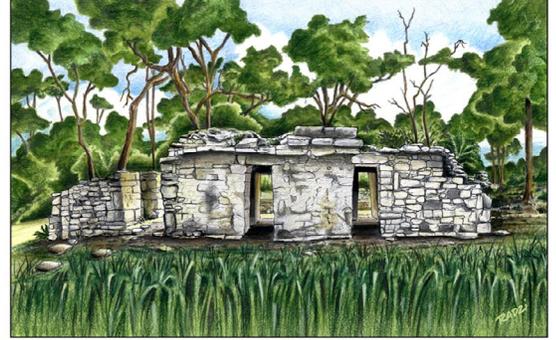
As a member of the Institute of Maya Studies for some years, Steve Radzi has produced, exhibited, and published a voluminous collection of Maya architectural illustrations. He has used a variety of mediums from sketching with pencils to finished works in watercolors, inks, and colored pencils.

Each of his illustrations has been sketched in person on site. The use of photography in his work has been primarily for later use in the accurate positioning of details.

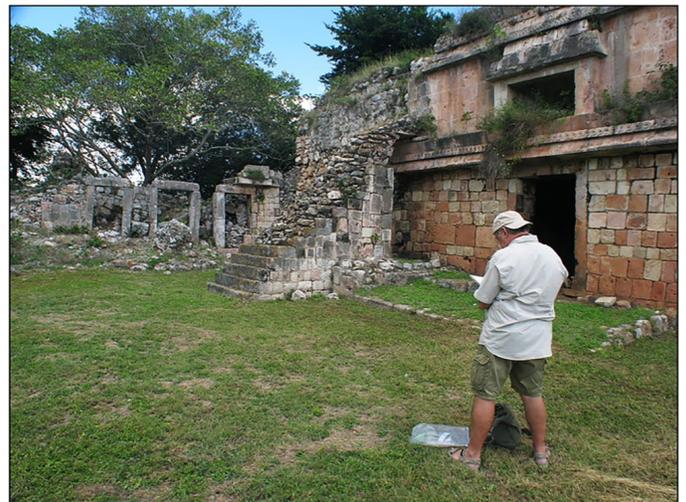
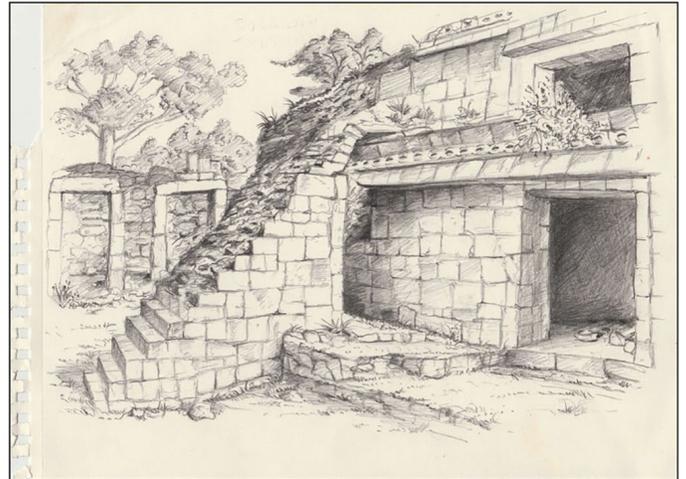
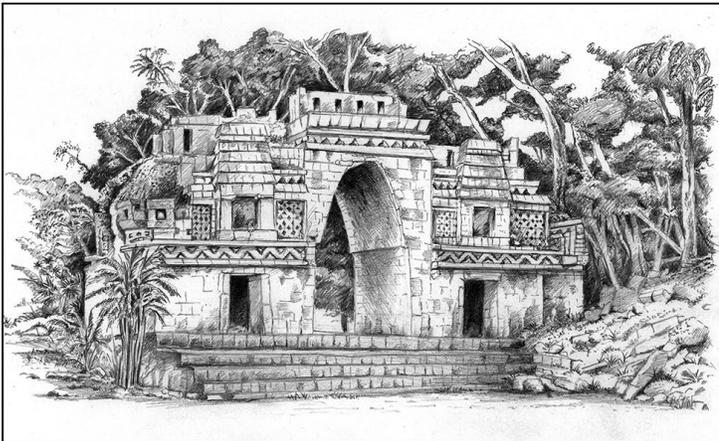
We asked Steve to share a few of his illustrations, comparing and contrasting them with the photographs taken at those locations. Enjoy!

*Thank you, Steve!*

Check out Steve's archive of original artwork at: [www.mayavision.com](http://www.mayavision.com) !



L) Steve's final sketch and reference photo of Dzib Mul, Quintana Roo, Mexico. R) Beautiful watercolor rendering and reference photo of a structure at Tancah, Quintana Roo, Mexico.



L) Steve's final sketch and reference photo of the beautiful archway at Labna, Yucatan, Mexico. R) Straight from his sketchbook, Steve's rendering and his reference photo of a structure at Chacmultun, Yucatan, Mexico. Continued on page 6.



# The Colors of Corn: John White's Florida Watercolor Paintings

by Norman Hammond, ScD, FSA, FBA *continued from page 2*

Sloan (2007: 136) suggests it is made from Spanish moss, which grows commonly on trees in the Southeastern U.S., although the red-and-white border would seem to be fabric. She again resembles, but does not duplicate, the figure of a chief's wife in De Bry's engravings: the most economical explanation might be that both the male and female figures were drawn from life by Le Moyne, and formed part of a scene not used by, or not in the hands of, De Bry. This matter, however, is tangential to my main point – the identification of objects held in the woman's hands.

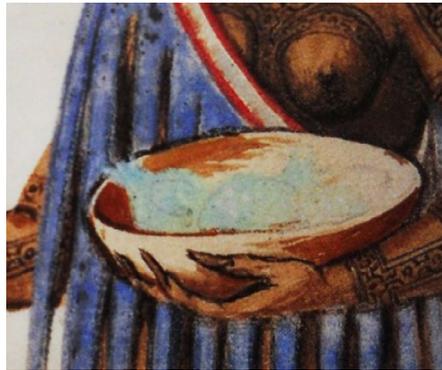
In her left hand (**Fig. 4**) she holds a pottery bowl containing three fruit-like objects, now in a pale blue so faded that their identity is uncertain, although they are possibly pineapples. Her right hand holds out five cobs of maize, which are explicitly, although sketchily, shown as being red, black, white and (two) yellow in color (**Fig. 5**).

This is of considerable interest, as these are the four colors of the world directions in the cosmology of parts of Mesoamerica (southern Mexico and western Central America), notably the Maya civilization. There, red (*chak*) signified the east and sunrise, black (*ek*) the west and sunset into night; white (*sak*) was the north and also upwards into the blinding light of the heavens, while yellow (*k'an*) was the south and the underworld. The path of the sun cycled through all four on its diurnal round. The cosmic centre and axis mundi were blue-green (*yax*).

The use of four-colored maize in what may be a ceremonial action could hint at ideas transferred from Mesoamerica to Florida. Given the man's elaborate metal ornaments, he may also be in ceremonial garb, and it is possible that we should associate the two copies of Le Moyne by John White with the ritual depicted on the putative Le Moyne original in New York or one much like it.

The bundle of maize shown by Le Moyne contains 10 white and 10

**Fig. 3:** Timuacan woman "Of Florida"; by John White c. 1585, probably after Jacques Le Moyne 1564–1565. Watercolor. British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings 1906, 0509.1.23.



**Fig. 4:** Detailed view of figure 3, showing bowl with what could be pineapples in the woman's left hand.

red cobs: the number 20 was of considerable significance in Mesoamerica, being the base for the vigesimal calendar and numeration system: the 260-day Aztec *tonalpohualli* cycle and Maya *tzolkin* (Sacred Round) were multiples of 20 named days with the numbers 1–13. The use of just red and white may matter: among a number of contemporary Maya cultures, east (red) and north (white) define the sunrise to sunset positions, thereby corresponding to the daytime and to the solar (male) realm, as opposed to the lunar (female) realm. Red and white are significant in several contact-period Southeastern United States cultures in terms of being linked to the dual system of peacetime chiefs (associated with white) and war chiefs (red) (Gabrielle Vail, pers. comm. 2015). The male cast of the ceremony depicted by Le Moyne in **Fig. 1**, albeit with a background chorus of semi-naked women, may be relevant to the bi-colored maize bundle.

For the late pre-Hispanic Maya, however, the combination of sunrise (red) and zenith (white) colors is not important: in the Dresden Codex, north and south (white and yellow) have positive associations, while east and west (red and black) have



**Fig. 5:** Detailed view of figure 3, showing maize cobs in the woman's right hand.

negative associations. In the Madrid Codex (and in Landa), north (white) and west (black) years have the most negative prognostications. Generally, the south has extremely positive associations in both codices, as it is linked with the deity K'awil and sustenance. The two yellow cobs seem to suggest that the southern direction, perhaps because of its association with abundance, is being emphasized (Gabrielle Vail, pers. comm. 2015). Whether the use of precisely 20 bundled cobs in Le Moyne's depiction is the result

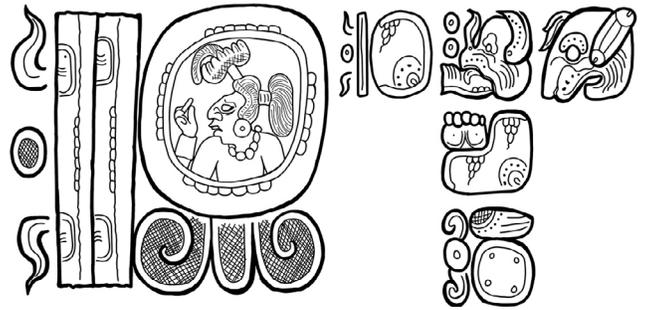
*continued on page 8*

## Unbundling the Past: Events in Ancient and Contemporary Maya History for March by Zach Lindsey

**24 March 603 CE:** On 9.8.9.13.0 8 Ajaw 13 Pop G8, K'inich Janaab' Pakal was born. I use this date every year, but that's because it's one of the most important. Even in contemporary times, archaeologist Alberto Ruz Lhuillier confused the birthday of Pakal the Great with his name. While all kings certainly do bad things, Pakal's legacy in retrospect seems like one of the greatest in world history: His reign was long and stable, and he oversaw a renaissance of architectural, artistic, and religious accomplishments which wow tourists even today. He was apparently not the best warrior, losing territory

toward the end of his reign, but that just makes me like him even more.

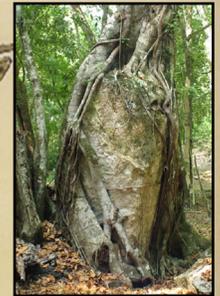
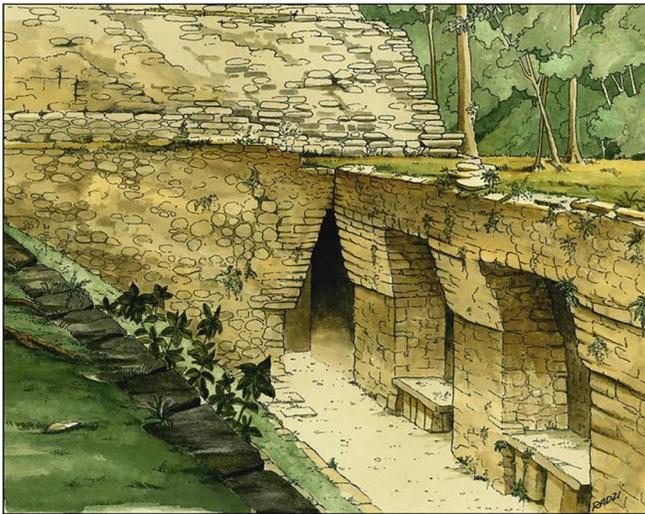
**31 March 773 CE:** On 9.17.2.3.19 6 Kawak 2 Sots' G7, a young man received a cup as a gift. The cup is today archived in the Kerr Gallery as K508. It's a beautiful piece, with one of my favorite Ajaw signs, and I hope its owner was proud, even if the fellow in the portrait does look a bit goofy. It's nicknamed "the cup of the youth," (above) and it does, in fact, talk about a ch'ok – literally "sprout," but used metaphorically as "young person." That he chose to identify



Glyphs on "the cup of the youth". Artwork by Zach Lindsey.

not by his name, not by any titles of nobility, but simply as "the youth" may reflect broader cultural changes going on during the passage from the Early to the Late Classic periods. According to Steven Houston, early Classic literature and iconography focused on ancestors and the elderly, but by the Late Classic, it was all ch'ok culture – young people and heirs were the focus of texts and art. 🏛️

## Steve Radzi: Sketcher in the Wild! continued from page 4



Reference photo.

©STEVE RADZI

L) Steve's final sketch and reference photo of Yaxchilan, Chiapas, Mexico. R) Steve's final illustration and reference photo (inset) of a tree devouring a stela at Holmul, Peten, Guatemala. ▶ Get your own! Steve does drawings by commission, contact him at: [info@mayavision.com](mailto:info@mayavision.com) 🏛️

Wednesday  
March 17  
at 8 pm

3.17.2021 **IMS Streaming**

Join in the Exploration!

## The sea-floor survey of Ek Way Nal, Belize (before our ~~2020~~ 2021? excavations)

with **Heather McKillop**  
Louisiana State University

Ek Way Nal is a large underwater site, the remains of a former salt-making site, located in the marsh groves along the Caribbean coast of Belize. Over the years, she and her team have excavated a lot of ocarinas, Belize Red serving bowls, stone tools, a jadeite gouge with the rosewood handle, as well as over 300 wooden posts marking the walls of at least 10 buildings. At the nearby K'ak' Naab' site, they discovered the only known surviving Classic Maya wooden canoe paddle! In this presentation, Heather will discuss the survey, mapping, and artifact analyses at Ek Way Nal from 2003 to 2016.

The fieldwork was funded by the National Science Foundation.

Above: Archaeologists on Research Flotation Devices finding and flagging wooden posts below the sea floor at Ek Way Nal. Photo by H. McKillop.

Will Heather and her team have a 2021 underwater field season? Tune in to find out!

**Wednesday, March 17, 2021 • 8 pm Eastern Time • Be there with us!**

Access and save this live streaming hyperlink to join the event:

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# The Colors of Corn: John White's Florida Watercolor Paintings

by Norman Hammond, ScD, FSA, FBA *continued from page 5*

of Mesoamerican contact or just coincidence remains moot.

Maize is rare as a crop in Florida until after 1200 CE, when it is found at the Browne Mound and Holy Spirit sites on the lower St. John's River (Hutchinson et al. 1998). These are mortuary sites, and the populations had a marine-oriented diet with little maize. Hutchinson et al. (1998) notes increased maize usage after Spanish contact, suggesting that new routes of communication, perhaps including greater distance maritime ones, could have been a factor.

Although maize was in use in upstate New York from the late first millennium BCE onwards, having apparently spread north and east from the U.S. Southwest, it seems to have trickled southwards through Georgia into Florida much later on. It is possible, given the post-Contact date for expansion of maize use there, that this resulted from maritime rather than terrestrial exchanges, and that these ultimately may have been with Mexico. If so, why and how maize color-symbolism came along with the comestible is intriguing, but perhaps unascertainable.

No proven links between the Maya area and Florida have yet been found (and most Florida archaeologists remain sceptical), although Bullen (1966) suggested that the standing stelae with associated offerings of the mid-first millennium CE at the Crystal River Archaeological site on the Gulf Coast north of Tampa, resulted from such contact, either direct or mediated through the Antilles.

The apparent ritual use of maize on the St. John's River in the 1560s as recorded by Le Moyne may have been a response to the novelty of this crop as much as to its utility, and the striking parallels with

four-color symbolism are worthy of further study.

## Acknowledgements

Figure 1 is used by courtesy of The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library; and Figures 2–5 are courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. For detailed advice on the *Madrid Codex* and ethnohistoric data, I am grateful to Gabrielle Vail.

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