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FACING THE PAST: LUCAYAN ART, ZEMIS, AND THEIR PLACE IN THE WORLD

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ABSTRACT

The Taíno of the Greater Antilles used anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations in ceramic adornos, ritual statuary, personal adornment, and cave art. The Lucayans also put anthropomorphic faces on their cave walls. It is heretofore unreported that some Lucayans made similar faces on their ceramics. While Taíno art is very public, the Lucayans seem to be more private. The faces on their pottery vessels are often diminutive, and thus far their known rock art is in caves. This paper will compare Lucayan “face art” between the ceramics and cave petroglyphs, and will then make an attempt to show similarities, but also differences, between those of the Bahamas and the Greater Antilles. This is a preliminary study.

INTRODUCTION

E. H. Gombrich states in his book, *Art and Illustration*, that the “overarching styles of art within a group represents a unity of thoughts and beliefs conveyed in such a way that group members comprehend what is ‘being said’. Such unity must be due to some supra-individual spirit, the spirit of the age or the spirit of the race” (Gombrich 1972:21).

The Taíno peoples of the Greater Antilles, (Figure 1) used anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and anthropozoomorphic representations in ceramic adornos, ritual statuary, personal adornment, and rock art throughout the region (Arrom 1989; Decal and Rivero 1996; Fewkes 1907; Hayward et al. 2009:3, Keegan 2013; Oliver 2009). The Lucayans also used anthropomorphic images. Many are full or partial faces on cave walls (Win-

ter 2009). They created anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and anthropozoomorphic iconography on high status items such as *duhos* (Berman et al. 2013). It has been previously unreported that some Lucayans also made faces, some quite diminutive, on selected ceramic items which are similar to their rock art.



Figure 1. Map of the Caribbean.
(http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caribbean_general_map.png)

Taíno art in the Greater and Lesser Antilles is often very public. Much, albeit certainly not all, of the rock art in these regions are in open air sacred and ceremonial sites (Figure 2), but some are also in caves (Arrom 1989; Hayward et al. 2009, 2013; Oliver 2009). Thus far, the Lucayans seem to be more private in the placement of such art. Their rock art is in enclosed spaces – caves or sink holes (Nunez Jimenez 1997; Winter 2009). In all areas of the Caribbean, water seems to play a major role in location selection for rock art sites (Atkinson 2009; Fernández and Gonzáles 2001; Hayward et al 2009, 2013; Oliver 2009; Wild 2004) and the Bahamas seem to follow this tendency (Winters 2009).



Figure 2. Petroglyphs on standing stones that line the Tibes Ceremonial Plaza, Ponce, Puerto Rico. (Nathan Mountjoy, 2007 www.latinamericanstudies.org/taino-ponce.htm)

The adornos (Figure 3) on the ceramics of the Antilleans are often very elaborate and prominently displayed on their ceramic vessels (Harris 2000; Fewkes 1907). There are some adornos found on trade ware and early Lucayan ceramics (ca. AD 700-1100 [Berman 2011]), but occasionally some do still appear on Late Lucayan pottery (ca. AD 1100-1500 [Berman 2011]) in the form of elaborate rim peaks, as seen in Figure 4 (Bate 2011; Berman et al. 2013; Granberry and Winter 1995; Hoffman 1967, 1970; Rose 1982, 1987; Sears and Sullivan 1987). The “manatee” rim peak, Figure 4a, when rotated and viewed from the top takes on the appearance of a sea turtle or possibly a bird in flight. It could actually represent all three to the Lucayans.

The faces I have found on the Lucayan ceramic vessels from San Salvador are often quite small, and are usually located on the exterior near the rim. However, some are found on the interior near the rim surfaces, and others are worked into the basketry impressions. Placement of the images near the rim is consistent with adorno placement throughout the Caribbean. The difference seems to be largely one of scale and style, which may imply a different sphere of influence, perspective of the spirit realms, or usage. This paper will present and discuss the stylistic similarities

and differences between Lucayan ceramics and rock art, and will also make comparisons to the art of the Taíno in the Greater Antilles. Please note, this is a preliminary study.



Figure 3. Ceramic adorno from the Dominican Republic (Private collection. Photo by Anne Sampson, 2013)

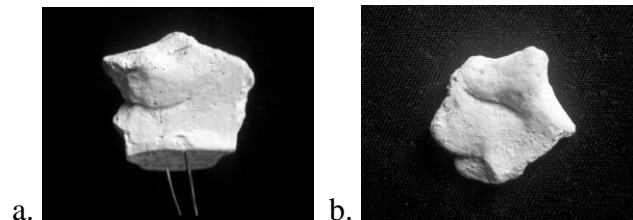


Figure 4. a. Multi-dimensional rim peak that possibly resembles a manatee, sea turtle, and/or bird in flight. b. Plain rim peak that resembles Taíno “three-pointer” zemis. Both are from the Palmetto Grove site, San Salvador. (Casts and photos by C. D. Hutcheson)

THE SACRED AND THE MUNDANE

Generally speaking, for Pre-Columbian Amerindians, as well as for prehistoric peoples at large (Campbell 1969), art was never far removed from their religions and world view (Anderson 2005; Campbell 1969; Keegan 2007, 2013; Keegan and Carlson 2007; Oliver 2009; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1985; Roth 1929). When addressing early ceramic production, Otis Mason states: “The mythical and religious motive is also ever present with early potters” (Mason 1900:172). This ex-

tends to all craft producers according to Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff (1975) and David Guss (1989). Among the Warao, craftsmen, along with “professionals” like the shaman, are all considered religious practitioners who mediate the powers of the natural and supernatural environments (Wilbert 1993:20). Since we see many similarities in the Lucayan art and artifacts to that of the Taíno, it seems reasonable to assume the Lucayans also held no distinction between the sacred and mundane in their worldview.

Cemí, Çemí, and Zemi

Cemí, çemí, and *zemi* are all the same entity. *Zemi* is the English usage, while the other spellings are Spanish versions.

Definitions. José Oliver (2009:59) states that by definition in the Taíno language, “*cemí* refers not to an artifact or object but to an immaterial, numinous, and vital force. Under particular conditions, beings, things, and other phenomena in nature can be imbued with *cemí*. *Cemí* is, therefore, a condition of being, not a thing.” This numinous power is a vital force and compels action. *Cemí* has the “power to cause, to effect, and also denotes a condition or state of being” (Oliver 2009:59). Oliver also says “*cemí*” means “sweetness” (Oliver 2009). Oliver believes all rock art is permeated with the spiritual energy or potency of *cemí*. These spirits make themselves known to humans in various ways and could manifest themselves in a variety forms or objects such as smells, rocks, plants, and animals. If they desired a physical form, instructions would be conveyed, usually through hallucinogenic rituals, as to what form they required for their idol, which would become “*çemí*” (Alegria 1997:23 in Hayward et al. 2009:11; Oliver 2005:246-248; Stevens-Arroyo 1988). These spirits may be those of ancestors or other nature deities. The materials requisite may be ceramic, stone, shell, bone, cotton, or wood (Oliver 2009:62). Thus, by this definition the rock art (both within and without caves), Taíno “three-pointer” stones, stone collars, stone elbows, *duhos*, idols, amulets, and so forth that are commonly referred to as *zemis* are actually the

physical embodiment of this numinous force that has being and causes action for good or ill. *Zemis* must be respected, venerated, given gifts, fed, obeyed; but also controlled, or there would be chaos and danger (Oliver 2009:74).

Adornos are decorative embellishments on Taíno, Carib, and Lucayan ceramic vessels. They are usually at or near the rim, although they may be worked into the structural sidewalls of the pot. Sometimes they act as decorative handles. Frequently zoomorphic or anthropomorphic in design, they may be considered *zemis*.

A *duho* is a special high status seat or stool reserved for the elite members of the Taíno and Lucayan cultures, such as *behiques* (shamans) and *caciques* (headmen, big men, or chiefs). They were also reportedly offered to honored guests, as well (Ostapkowicz 1997). *Duhos* were often made of wood, elaborately carved with stylistic designs or faces; in a few instances in Hispaniola they were stone (Ostapkowicz 1997). The wooden *duhos*, as well as wooden statuary, frequently had carved shell teeth insets, referred to as “*zemi* mouths”. *Duhos* and these statues/idols were imbued with *zemi* power.

Making the Image of a Zemi. Fray Ramón Pané, in 1498, relates a story he was told by a native of Hispaniola on how a *zemi* was made manifest: In this case, a tree directed a man to get a shaman so he [the tree] could impart how he wished to be fashioned. The shaman would carry out the appropriate ritual with hallucinogens and then pass on the tree spirit’s desired shape to a craftsman. This tree is imbued with *zemi* and so is the artifact made from it (Pané 1999:25-26 in Oliver 2009:60-61). The *zemi*’s form is created, but it is already invested with personhood; the idol will be in the care of someone, usually a shaman, *cacique*, or head of a household for a family *zemi*, who will build a house for it, revere it with “*cohoba* ceremonies” and the *zemi* will be given food offerings “from the first harvests” (Oliver 2009:61). Oliver (2009:62) believes all *zemis* are probably created in a similar fashion.

Mary Jane Berman et al. (1999) reported 11 wooden artifacts from Deadman’s Reef site on Grand Bahama exhibiting human modification

displaying multiple instances per item of anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, and human forms and faces. They believe these artifacts to be zemis (Berman et al. 2000). These images are very similar to the faces I have found on the ceramics on San Salvador.

Caves and Cosmology

Pre-Columbian Natives of the Caribbean used caves as sanctuaries for ritual purposes (Hayward et al. 2009; Keegan and Carlson 2007; Morales and Quesenberry 2005; Siegel 1996:108) these are liminal spaces, places between the worlds. The Taíno world view is centered on the axis mundi which “is surrounded by vertical layers and concentric regions of sacred and profane, public and private, and worldly and other-worldly space” according to Reinaldo Morales and Melisa Quesenberry (2005:37). Morales and Quesenberry (2005:37) also believe the structural basis for Taíno cosmology is a variant of an Amazonian and Orinocoan model (also see Siegel 1996:108). It is believed the Taíno recognized three primary divisions of the cosmos: a sky world, the land world (our temporal plane), and the world of subterranean waters (Keegan and Carlson 2007; Morales and Quesenberry 2005; Siegel 1996:108).

Caves were the portals to this subterranean world (Keegan and Carlson 2007). Morales and Quesenberry (2005) believe a key factor in the alterations of the cultural and cosmological heritage the settlers initially brought with them into the Greater Antilles was the karst landscape (for a definition of karst, see Sealey 1994:60-62) of the region itself. The entire region has abundant cave art, an obvious divergence from mainland South and Lower Central America which has very little such art or karst landscape (Morales and Quesenberry 2005:37).

I propose that ceramic bowls could symbolically represent caves to the Lucayans. A symbolic womb, as it were. Thus, markings that hint at associations to the mythological stories, beings, and/or ritual could be imbued with the force of zemi, as caves seem to have been.

METHODOLOGY

While examining Pigeon Creek ceramics for basketry impressions the faces became apparent. Many of them were small and/or faint enough that they needed to be examined under 5-10x magnification to determine the shape of the implement utilized, or sometimes just to be sure the markings were not post depositional bioturbation. A binocular dissecting microscope was employed, but I did not have the capability of capturing images. Numerous examples were drawn in my lab notes (Figure 5).

LUCAYAN ECOLOGICAL ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT: PIGEON CREEK SITE (881) FRATT AND ROSE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS CERAMIC INVENTORY COMMENTS		
ITEM NUMBER	BAG NUMBER	COMMENTS
2077	212	00-9-68 rim is incised a pentagonal (?) notch face
2078	212	01-9-98 incised rim
2089	214	02-10-96 These are definite punctated (very small) markings. (orbits?) This seems to be a faint impression of a slange edge.
2093	215	03-11-96 1472 low incised rim which seems to have face but also one other... the 1st small one may have a body (one also; has a third 'individual'; possible coming out of top of center figure's head...
2104	216	01-08-15 incised rim - seems to have "eyes" one open, one shut
2109	217	01-05-97 ? multiple faces
2108	217	01-05-15 Impressed + incised/punctated this seems to be several faces" worked into the wear pattern. The actual impression of the wear pattern seems to center on a

NAME (Charlotte Elgin Hutchison) DATE 29 June 1996

Figure 5. Pigeon Creek Ceramics Study Lab Worksheet indicating facial and partial facial features noted on some of the sherds, 8 June 1996.

A determination had to be made as to whether or not weave elements had actually been manipulated to create faces or if it was simply the way elements had been twisted or turned during weaving, making facial attributes appear to be present in the impressions. There were instances where this latter was the case, as well as the fact that some were root markings. Molds and casts (see Hutcheson 2001, 2008, 2013) of the sherds with markings were made. The weave impressions, in some of the sherds, had incised lines or thumbnail marks in such a way that it appeared the weave had been manipulated to create a face-like image after the basketry had been impressed into the pottery (Figure 6). Creating a mold of the sherd and examination under magnification usually clarified purposeful marks versus bioturbation.

In the past year, a number of the casts bearing suspected facial images from the study sites have been photographed and reexamined with a digital imaging microscope. This re-examination elucidated the status of some of the more questionable markings, with some confirmed and others rejected. This process also brought to light fainter markings, much smaller than any previously seen, indicating that most of the sherds had multiple images oriented in numerous directions.



Figure 6. Basketry Impressed sherd from Pigeon Creek with small incised lines in the weave depicting a face. Note there is a second face made with punctation, upside-down, to the left of the “eye”. (Photo by C. D. Hutcheson)

FACES ON THE CERAMICS

The initial faces were seen on ceramics from the Pigeon Creek site, as noted above, some were easily visible with the naked eye, while others were faint or small enough that magnification was necessary. I divided the markings by whether or not they made a complete face (encircled or not); those that did not make a complete face were divided by the type of mark – incised line, punctation, or a combination. An additional note was

made as to their location on the exterior or interior of the rim or worked into basketry impressions.

Table 1 shows the breakdown for the ceramics I studied for each of these sites: Pigeon Creek, Palmetto Grove, The New World Museum, and Jeffrey P. Blick’s excavation at North Storr’s Lake. I have not examined any of the ceramics from other excavators at North Storr’s Lake, thus the findings for that site are extremely low. The New World Museum collection was not completely studied; rather a random sample was assessed.

Pigeon Creek has the highest incidence of faces, as well as the most worked into the basketry impressions. This is true even if the other markings are eliminated, with Pigeon Creek having 39 sherds with complete faces, while Palmetto Grove has 29 examples, the New World Museum has 14, and North Storr’s Lake produced five. When exclusively looking at complete faces, the only exception to this distribution is the category of faces on the interior of the rim. Palmetto Grove has 12 in comparison to Pigeon Creek’s single example, and two at North Storr’s Lake.

Pigeon Creek had a rough parity between the numbers of complete faces, (no. 39), incised lines / partial faces (no. 36), and punctate markings / partial faces (no. 29). Palmetto Grove has a similar amount of complete faces, but lags considerably with incised lines / partial face (no. 15), and only has two in the punctate markings / partial faces category. There were only a few of each of the partial face categories at both the New World Museum and North Storr’s Lake.

North Storr’s Lake produced two pieces of turtle bone that appear to be worked into faces. One resembles a mask and the other is animal-like, cat-like, with small pointed ears and whiskers, possibly representing a Hutia. There was a small ceramic piece that also had pointed ears and possibly whiskers. These are very enigmatic pieces. The turtle was an important animal for the Lucayans, both as food and as mythological beings; turtles were liminal creatures as they traversed worlds – sea and land (Blick et al. 2011; Keegan and Carlson 2008). It is quite possible that given the nature of the turtle to the Lucayans, they specifically choose to shape and/or slightly modify these bones for personal amulets. Pané

indicates that all individuals can have personal zemis (in Oliver 2009). It is interesting to note that the Taíno at Caguana Ceremonial site, Utuado, Puerto Rico, created a petroglyph depicting a cat-like head similar to these artifacts.

DISCUSSION

If rock art conveys meaning to the group that created it, it acts as communication, a type of language, for disseminating cultural laws, mores,

and information. The elements of the art act as a crossroads; regularities in the elements can show structure and thus can be viewed as a “system of cognitive rules” (Llamazares 2004:245). When an element is seen in many different settings, it probably has meaning in its own right, if it is always seen with other symbols it likely that it does not stand alone (Llamazares 2004:246).

Most of the Antillean and Lucayan rock art constitutes images of faces, which are often disembodied and the facial features may or may

Table 1. Incised and Punctate Marked Sherds with Facial Features

	Pigeon Creek	Palmetto Grove	New World Museum	North Storr's Lake
Complete Faces Totals	39	29	14	9
Punctuation only	9	2	1	3
Incised only	10	6	3	-
Combination	13	5	5	3
(1ea. PC & PG fingernail marks)				
Worked into BI	6	4	4	1
Interior of BI sherd Combination	1	12	-	2
Incised Lines (Incomplete) Total	36	15	5	3
Incised Lines wo absolute designs	19	13	3	2
Worked into BI	6	2	2	1
Interior of BI sherd Combination	11	-	-	-
Punctate (Incomplete) Total	29	2	2	1
Punctuation wo absolute designs	18	2	1	1
Worked into BI	7	-	1	-
Interior of BI sherd Combination	4	-	-	-
Punctuation & Incised wo clear designs (mostly due to breakage)	5	-	1	1
Turtle Bone				2
Total Marked Sherds ^a	109 (3.2%)	46 (1.5%)	21	14 + 2
Sherd Count for each site	3,396	3,027	Unknown	Unknown JPB

^aTotal number of marked sherds is just that, sherds with markings; some have multiple images or marks. Overall total sherds with face or partial face markings is 191. There was 1 sherd with facial markings (incised lines and punctations) from J. P. Blick's Minnis Ward site excavation.

not be encircled (Hayward et al. 2009, 2013; Roe 2009; Winter 2009). José Oliver (2009:149) tells us that the Taíno believed the soul was located in the face. Neuroscientific studies have shown that humans are hardwired to see faces even when there is only a hint of face-like stimuli (Winrich et al. 2009). Perhaps this is part of the reason the petroglyphs are primarily faces.

Rock Art in the Bahamas and Faces on Ceramics

Figure 7 shows John Winter's (2009:17) renderings of an overview of the basic types of rock art styles in the Bahamas. Winter (2009:14) indicates that Bahamian rock art thus far has been found in caves and not open air sites. The vast majority are petroglyphs, not pictographs, and there is also a low frequency of geometric designs (7b). Some have wrapped bodies (7c), some are masked (7a), there are a variety of head shapes (mostly round and oval), and some have what Winter calls "rayed lunate crests" (7f) (Winter 2009:14).

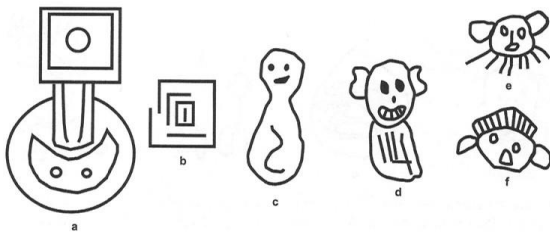


Figure 7. John Winter's rendering of the typical types of petroglyphs found in the Bahama Archipelago (Winter 2009:17).

Winter (2009:16) notes that throughout the archipelago, most petroglyphs are "simple circular or oval humanlike faces with two eyes and a mouth" appearing in groups or singly (Figure 8). This holds true for the entire region as well. Hartford Cave, Rum Cay, has several clusters of images, one such group of disembodied faces is near a "masked figure" (Winter 2009:16). There are many examples in the ceramics of clustered facial images, and whether singly or grouped, like most of the petroglyphs, they are disembodied. Unless some of the more grotesque faces are representa-

tive of masks, there are no masks clearly seen in the ceramics. There may be such an image in the turtle bone, but it is not possible to be certain.

Visibility

Not all of the rock art images are apparent at a glance (Winter 2009). This is true of the wooden artifacts found on Deadman's Reef, Grand Bahama, as well (Berman et al. 1999). It is also true of the ceramics. Many of the ceramics, wooden artifacts, and the petroglyphs have multiple images that reveal themselves as the piece is seen from different angles and in altered lighting, and quite possibly altered states of being.

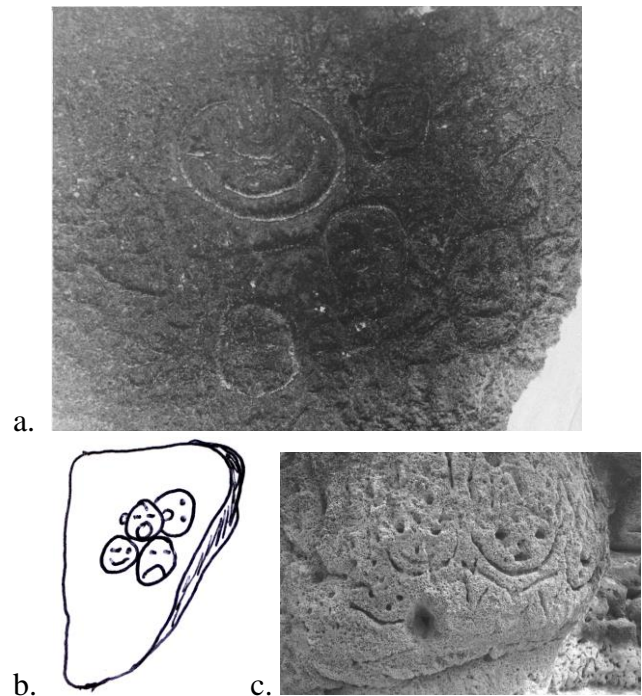


Figure 8. a. Petroglyph cluster in Hartford Cave with "mask" in center (Photo Department of Archives, Nassau), b. example of clustered faces on a sherd from Pigeon Creek (ill. C. D. Hutcheson), c. cluster of disembodied face petroglyphs, Las Caritas, Lake Enriquillo, Dominican Republic (Photo by Allen Curran, Smith College).

Winter (2009) indicates that a cave needs to be visited several times, or at least at different times of the day or year in order to see all of the

petroglyphs. They disappear and reappear as the lighting changes. The ceramic sherds, and wooden artifacts (Berman et al. 1999), need to be rotated as well as viewed in different lighting for all of the images to reveal themselves. As the piece turns one visage alters, blends, or disappears as another comes to light. Some of the rim peaks morph into other creatures as the vessel is viewed from another angle. What we think of as visible may be very different from the Lucayan's perspective. This requires us, as researchers, to be hyper-vigilant when examining artifacts that seem straight forward and mundane.

Wrapped Figures

Throughout the Antilles, petroglyphs and pictographs frequently depict what are called wrapped or bundled figures (Hayward et al. 2009:119; Roe 2009) (Figure 9). It has been suggested that the images represent bodies wrapped in a burial shroud or hammock (Winter 2009:17), as they rarely show appendages. There is evidence to support this from an excavation of Preacher's Cave, Eleuthera, with Lucayan burials wrapped in basketry mats (Schaffer et al. 2012).



Figure 9. *Wrapped Figure, El Yunque National Forest, Puerto Rico (Photo by Rex Cauldwell)*

The Pigeon Creek and Palmetto Grove sites have several sherds with discernable body elements without appendages. Therefore, I would tentatively class them as wrapped or enclosed figures even though there are differences between them and the rock art. They are always straight lines, usually rectangular, not ovoid, and thus far,

they are not closed at the bottom. In the most dramatic of these images (Figure 10), there are three figures: the central one is the most visible with rays extending out of the top of the head; the other two flank the larger figure, are much smaller, and until examination under 5x magnification, outer body lines were too faint to see. The heavily incised lines running directly under the rim and diagonally across the bodies, essentially decapitating the figures, are totally enigmatic.



Figure 10. *This Pigeon Creek rim sherd displays the typical shape of the only style of body seen thus far in the ceramics. It differs from the rock art wrapped figures in that the bottom is open and all of the figures are rectangular, not rounded. (Photo by Anne Sampson, 2013)*

Additionally, some of the wooden objects described by Berman et al. (1999) depict human-like figures with bodies, and possibly even clothing in one. The wrapped figure motif is ubiquitous in the region and almost certainly stood on its own as a symbol conveying a specific message for the Amerindians in the Caribbean.

What's in a Facial Expression?

Early Spanish accounts reported zemi statuary and duho features as death masks, diabolical, idols representing the Devil, thus menacing or frightening (Oliver 2009:64). Western thought has followed this lead ever since. Another frequently held idea concerning the meaning of the “bared teeth” faces has been that they represent the transformative nature of a shaman’s journey with teeth clenched in a drug induced concentration or spasm (Mol 2007:133 in Samson and Waller 2010:428). In general, the petroglyphs have a smiley-face like mouth. When they actually do have visible teeth they are like the prototypical “zemi mouth” with wide open lips and closed teeth which, according to Alice Samson and Bridget Waller (2010:428), resemble a wide grin or smile rather than an angry or threatening grimace. Bahamian rock art has several images exhibiting noticeable teeth (Winter 2009:17).

Most of the ceramic faces have a single line for a mouth. It may be straight across, curving up in a smile, frowning, or even wide open as if screaming or yawning. A few of these faces do have teeth: gnashing scary teeth and appear to be angry or menacing (Figure 11). One explanation is that these distorted faces represent a shaman in ceremonial intoxication, or possibly what the shaman might see during rituals. Alternatively, since they are on ceramic vessels, they may act as a guard or guide to make the shaman’s travel less dangerous. That is, assuming these vessels were utilized in the cohoba ritual or in the preparation of food to placate the zemis. A number of the wooden artifacts from Deadman’s Reef site, according to Berman et al. (1999), have “grimacing human faces”, and they suggest these depict the shaman in a trance.

Dressed for Power

A number of the petroglyphs throughout the Antilles depict faces described as having “rays” extending out of the top of the head or as wearing a headdress and some are encompassed by these rays (Hayward et al. 2013:488), while others have rays coming from the bottom of the

face in the neck area. These images depicting rays or headdresses may represent elite personages in the local community, specific deities, zemis, or ancestors. Or, do the symbols express a

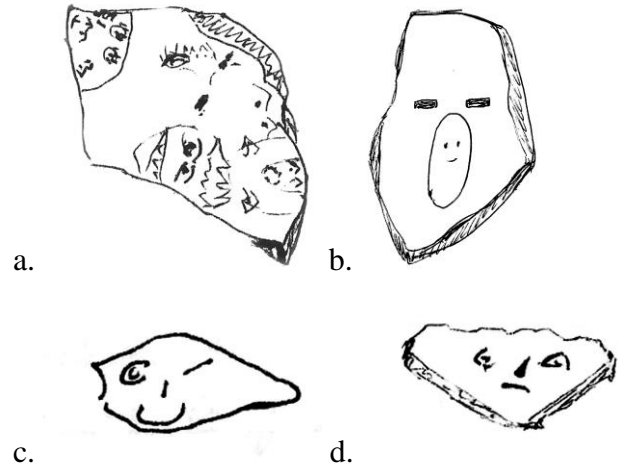


Figure 11. Drawings of Pigeon Creek sherds: a. “menacing” faces; b. face in face, c. smiling face, unencircled; d. neutral or frowning face, unencircled. (Ill. C. D. Hutcheson)

shorthand telling the community how to act, with whom to interact, or not? While their meaning is unknown, they are found in a widespread area. Crooked Island, Bahamas, has this motif which is described by Winter (2009:19) as “headdresses or feathers” on the tops of images in MacKay and Kelly Caves, the latter also having Lucayan burials. The ray motif is seen in the ceramics on San Salvador. One is the central image with the bodies from Pigeon Creek. Another example is a tiny sherd (1.5 cm²) from North Storr’s Lake (Figure 12). The North Storr’s Lake example has rays extending out of at least half the circular face. It is not possible to determine if they go all the way around due to breakage. Figure 12 also shows an example of a similar petroglyph from Puerto Rico.

CONCLUSIONS

Is the rendering of facial features on the Lucayan ceramics of San Salvador any more significant than personal communing and/or propitiation of household deities and ancestors (zemis)?

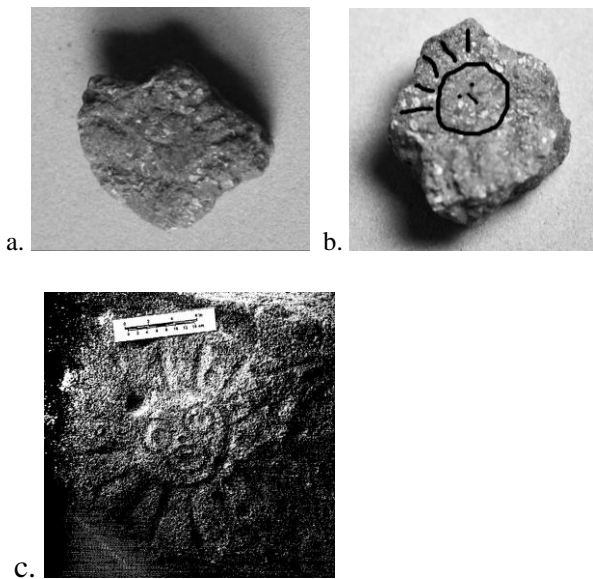


Figure 12. North Storr's Lake sherd (a. natural sherd, b. enhanced details) with circumscribed face, punctate eyes, incised nose, and rays from the top and sides of the head, possibly encircling the face (Photos Anne Sampson); c. enclosed face with continuous facial rays (Hayward et al. 1992 in Hayward et al. 2013:491).

Are such markings found on other pottery collections within or without the archipelago? Did the very similar images on the Deadman's Reef wooden artifacts convey the same information to the Lucayans as the faces on the ceramics and faces in the rock art? It is hard to interpret these images until they have been found to be present, or absent, on the ceramics of other islands in the Bahamas.

The rock art may act as a system of symbols conveying cultural laws (Hayward et al. 2013). The Lucayans of San Salvador do seem to be integrated into the shared magico-religious system of the region, as expressed through the mediums of zemis, rock art, and ritual based on the overarching similarities of a number of the motifs. Even so, the Lucayans seem to have taken what are largely public art motifs in the Greater Antilles and made them more personal on their ceramics. That is, unless the marked vessels were indeed used for making the food for the deities or for preparing and mixing hallucinogenic powers

for shamanic rituals. Under these circumstances, the markings may be considered within the public domain even if the rituals were conducted privately. We must remember that all of these entities were integral aspects of this society, they all acted as social agents with mutual respect: people, spirits, plants, animals, and objects.

When I first showed the sherds with faces to my professor, she asked why they would be so tiny. My first thought was: Perhaps they are like Gotham's "Bat Signal" (tiny on our side but large on the other side) letting the zemis know their help was needed, and in exchange food and cohoba rituals would be offered. I explained that they were not so tiny when first created, as they were made on wet plastic clay which shrinks as it dries and during firing. Yet, tiny they are in many instances. Perhaps this is another occasion where we must abandon our Western industrial worldview and see the world with sweet zemi potency animating everything around us, seen and unseen.

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