Arianne Boileau

Tedder Family Doctoral Fellowship in the Humanities
Rothman Doctoral Fellowship in the Humanities

NARRATIVE

Colonial Life in the Maya/Spanish Borderlands: A Zooarchaeological Perspective on Political Economy at Lamanai, Belize

I am a doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of Florida, under the supervision of Dr. Kitty Emery, curator of the Environmental Archaeology Program (EAP) at the Florida Museum of Natural History. I plan to defend my dissertation during the spring of 2020. For my dissertation, I analyze archaeological animal remains to investigate whether householder-level political economy was transformed by, or resilient to, Spanish colonial policies at the Maya archaeological site of Lamanai, Belize. To contextualize the Lamanai’s data within the broader sphere of Colonial Spanish/Maya interaction, I am requesting funds to travel to the Archivo General de Indias (Seville, Spain) to consult Spanish archival documents.

Summary of Dissertation Research

Spanish colonialism practices in the Yucatan Peninsula during the 16th and 17th centuries disrupted Maya socio-political and economic structures. Archaeologists and historians document a diversity of responses to this process in the Maya lowlands (Farriss 1984; Graham 2011; Jones 1989; Oland 2012; Restall 1997). However, they devote comparatively little attention to its effects on groups and individuals of different statuses and occupations, particularly in borderlands communities. The site of Lamanai, Belize, offers such an opportunity. Combining zooarchaeological and archival data, I examine socio-political and economic transformations and continuities in the contact-period use of and attitudes towards animals by Lamaneros. More broadly, I evaluate the impact of colonialism on individuals and households of different statuses and occupations that participated in Lamanai’s animal-related political economy. I examine animal remains from an elite residential complex, which includes a possible ruler’s residence (Graham 2011; Simmons 2005), and four domestic non-elite households (Wiewall 2009), both occupied during the Terminal Postclassic (AD 1450–1544) and Early Colonial (AD 1544–1650) periods.

My dissertation project addresses three main research problems. First, I ask whether Lamanai’s residents intensified the exploitation of local animal resources following Spanish contact. During the Colonial period, Lamaneros likely had to cope with heavy Spanish tribute demands as well as a population influx (Farriss 1984; Jones 1989). Did these stressors force them to modify existing animal exploitation strategies or adopt new ones, such as raising European domesticates? Second, I examine if Lamaneros continued to acquire non-local animal resources through exchange. Spanish colonialism practices disrupted indigenous trade networks (Farriss 1984; Stemp et al. 2011). Thus, did Lamaneros cease to acquire non-local animals or acquire them from new locales, which could suggest new trade partners or trading practices? Finally, I investigate whether Lamaneros continued to manipulate animal resources for political means. During the Colonial period, the power of Maya rulers was challenged by the new socio-political order imposed by the Spanish, a situation that may have enabled new individuals to occupy...
positions of power (Farriss 1984; Restall 1997). Did Lamanai’s ruler cement its authority by mobilizing the greatest amount of valued animal resources, by mediating other community members’ access to resources, or by restricting use of new ones?

My research is informed by a political economic approach (Roseberry 1988; Hirth 1996) to identify the practices that allowed certain individuals or groups to garner “control” over animal resources and the occupational specialists who acquired, modified, and exchanged those resources. These practices would not have occurred in a vacuum. Thus, I must contextualize the zooarchaeological data within the broader sphere of culture contact in Mesoamerica and consider how larger cultural processes may have shaped the actions of the Lamaneros and Spanish with whom they interacted. This aspect of my project relies on the study of 16th- and 17th-century Spanish records.

**Proposed Project**

I request funds to travel to the Archivo General de Indias (AGI), in Seville, Spain from May 13 to June 7, 2019. There, I will collect historical data to better understand Maya and Spanish decision-making with regards to animal use. My first goal is to gather historical data on the economic model that the Spanish tried implementing at Lamanai: the *encomienda*. Such details as the tribute items provided by Lamaneros will allow me to evaluate the potential impact of the *encomienda* on animal exploitation strategies. Second, I will acquire documents about the town of Salamanca de Bacalar, whose administrators oversaw Lamanai and neighboring villages, to paint a picture of the administration of Maya towns under Spanish control in the region.

The AGI has digitized and made available online many of its collections, but not those that I want to consult. I plan to review records from the *Papeles de las Cajas Reales de Nueva España* held in the *Contaduría* collection, which detail population censuses and *encomienda* payments for the Bacalar province. Non-digitized materials must be consulted on site and may not be photographed or photocopied by patrons. Consequently, I must read and transcribe all documents of interest directly at the AGI, which can be a lengthy process. In anticipation of this trip, I have participated in paleography workshops by Dr. Ida Altman, (professor emerita, Department of History, University of Florida) to learn how to read and transcribe 16th- and 17th-century Spanish documents. I am also semi-fluent in conversation, reading, and writing in Spanish.

The research trip to the AGI is an important component of my research, as it will provide valuable historical documents that are not otherwise available and have not priorly been researched to answer questions regarding contact-period Maya political economy. More broadly, my research will be one of the first zooarchaeological studies to examine the household- and individual-level details of retention and loss of Maya socio-political and economic systems during culture contact along Spanish colonial frontiers. Previous studies have used lithics, ceramics, and European objects to investigate disruption to Maya politics and economics (Oland 2012; Stemp et al. 2011); very few have focused on animal remains (for exceptions, see deFrance and Hanson 2008; Emery 1999; Freiwald and Pugh 2018). By considering how relations of exchange and production among Spanish and Maya shaped borderland indigenous communities, my research informs the history of colonialism in the Americas and the broader study of political economy.


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EDUCATION

2013–present Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology (concentration in Archaeology), University of Florida, expected graduation April 2020
2010–2013 Master of Arts in Anthropology (concentration in Archaeology), Trent University
2007–2010 Bachelor of Arts in Archaeology, Université Laval

ACADEMIC AWARDS AND HONORS

2018 Florida Museum of Natural History Bullen Award (for excellence in research of the archaeology of Florida and the Caribbean Basin)
2016 Dienje Kenyon Memorial Fellowship, Society for American Archaeology (for excellence in research of zooarchaeology by a female graduate student)
2016 Sigma Xi Grants-in-Aid of Research, Sigma Xi (for stable isotope analysis of archaeological animal remains)
2014–2018 SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

PUBLICATIONS

Morin, E., C. Beauval, A. Boileau, E. Ready, and V. Laroulandie (accepted) The Number of Distinct Elements: Extending a Landmark-based Counting Unit to Other Taxa. Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports.


**Research Experience**

2018–present **Research Assistant in Zooarchaeology.** Environmental Archaeology Program, Florida Museum of Natural History. Conducting zooarchaeological research under supervision of Dr. Kitty Emery. Projects include: FuTRES (2018–present), mobilizing zooarchaeological data for biological and anthropological research; Proyecto Guajalote Mesoamericano, Mexico (2018), inventorying turkey remains and collecting DNA samples from modern turkeys; Everglades Restoration Transition Project, Florida (2016), identifying zooarchaeological remains; La Joyanca, Guatemala, (2013–present), identifying zooarchaeological remains.


2013 **Research Assistant in Zooarchaeology.** Le Piage (France), assisting in the identification of fauna dating to the Middle to Upper Paleolithic transition in SW France. Supervisor: Eugène Morin, Trent University.

2011 **Lead Zooarchaeologist.** Pacbitun Regional Archaeological Project (Belize), conducting independent zooarchaeological and taphonomic identifications and analysis for master’s research. Supervisor: Eugène Morin, Trent University.

**Archaeological Fieldwork Experience**

2014 **Excavator and Lab Work.** Lamanai Archaeological Project, Belize. Directors: Elizabeth Graham, University College London

2013 **Excavator and Lab Work.** Roche à Pierrot, France. Project Directors: François Bachellerie, PACEA, and Eugène Morin, Trent University

2011 **Field and Lab Assistant.** Pacbitun Regional Archaeological Project, Belize. Project Director: Terry Powis, Kennesaw State University

2010–11 **Field and Lab Assistant.** Social Archaeological Research Program, Belize. Project Director: Gyles Iannone, Trent University

2010 **Excavator and Lab Work.** Le Piage, France. Project Directors: Jean-Guillaume Bordes, Université Bordeaux 1, and Foni Le Brun-Ricalens, CNRA Luxembourg

2009 **Excavator.** Mont-Louis, Québec, Canada. Project Directors: Réginald Auger and Tommy-Simon Pelletier, Université Laval

2009 **Beginner Field Student.** Ilot des Palais, Québec, Canada. Project Director: Réginald Auger, Université Laval
The funds requested will be used to travel to the Archivo General de Indias (AGI), in Seville, Spain from May 13 to June 7, 2019. The Tedder Family or Rothman Doctoral Fellowship will be used to pay for the airfare and lodging in Seville.

I have applied to the Florida Museum Travel Award ($1000) and will apply to the Graduate School Doctoral Research Travel Award (amount of award unspecified on Grad School website) to obtain additional funds to cover the expenses of this research trip.

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