



# In Situ

News and Events of the Harvard Standing Committee on Archeology

## San Diego de la Congregación Mission Excavation Project 2017

Wade Campbell, Harvard University,  
Department of Anthropology



Figure 1: Richard Kern's 1849 drawing of Jemez Pueblo. Note the square tower structure in middle of scene; relationship to plaza suggests it is in the same location as Old Jemez Church site

From June 16 to July 6, a small Harvard-Jemez team led by Professor Matt Liebmann and Jemez THPO Chris Toya carried out a series of exploratory excavations in Walatowa village (modern Jemez Pueblo). This work, which was carried out with the approval of the Jemez Tribal Council, focused on better understanding a cluster of

architectural features made visible on the surface by decades of building construction, utilities work, and road grading in the area. In particular, although this part of the village has long been identified in both Jemez oral tradition and various Euro-American accounts as the location of the "Old Church," the relationship between these features and the history of Spanish missionization in the Jemez region is unclear (Figure 1). With these questions in mind, we set about examining the Old Church area via architectural documentation and a series of 1x1 meter test pits (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Professor Matt Liebmann excavating

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The core of the Old Church site centers on an approximately 30 x 20 meter area to the west of the plaza that was once the site of one of the village's main ash dumps. Florence Hawley Ellis appears to have conducted a surface collection in this area during the 1950s (Liebmann personal communication 2017; cf. Hawley Ellis 1966:811); however, according to residents the mound was removed in the late 1970s or early 80s. Currently, the area is distinguished by several different sets of architectural features, including a short berm, stretches of cobble wall approximately 80 centimeters wide, and several cobbled floor sections. We brushed these features clear and photo-recorded the area with the intent of carrying out 3-D Photogrammetry to produce a site map and DEM for future work. Initial attempts to use a drone for this task were met with technical difficulties, so we switched to taking photos from elevated positions around the site.

Turning to the excavations, JMZ17-1 was located in a nondescript ashy area a short distance away from any visible surface features. This unit was excavated to a depth of 120 centimeters and contained abundant modern trash. Notable finds from these levels include: a number of shoe soles, a rusty pocket knife, several peach and cherry pits, a 1943 tombac-alloy Canadian "Victory" nickel, and a Catholic prayer medallion depicting the Virgin Mary and the date 1830. At a depth of 90 centimeters, however, we uncovered the remains of what appears to be a foundation wall constructed using pairs of large cobbles and adobe. Based on conversations with Jemez tribal members and local archaeologists this style is similar to that seen in both older buildings in the village as well as other 17th century sites like the Palace of the Governors and LA 20,000. Units JMZ17-2 and JMZ17-3 form a 2x1 meter unit that was placed with the goal of examining the extent of a distinctive surface feature at the site, a roughly 3x3 meter cobbled floor laid in adobe. A distinct burn layer (possibly A.D. 1680?) approximately 20 centimeters below the surface caps a well-defined stratigraphic layer that extends across both units. In Unit 2, this layer



Figure 3: Units JMZ17-2 and JMZ17-3 Figure 4 - Floor 1 and Units 2 & 3. showing wall-fall, cobble surface, and charcoal layer.

is underlain by what appears to be a builder's trench with adobe wall fall, while the same area in Unit 3 contains ~40 centimeters of sterile looking sand fill. In both units however, mold-made adobe brick wall-fall and melt can be found at a depth of ~70 centimeters (Figure 3).

Throughout the 2x1, we recovered a random assortment of 17th century pottery sherds (e.g., Jemez Black-on-white, Rio Grande glazeware, and undetermined greyware). Selenite fragments were recovered from the wall-fall in Unit 3 as well as on the surface approximately 2-3 meters to the south.

From these results, a couple of discussion points stand out. The cobbled floor that was



Figure 4: Floor 1 and Units 2 & 3.

examined in Units 2 and 3 is significant because – to the best of our knowledge – there have only been a few prepared floors found in Spanish colonial contexts in New Mexico.

At the Old Church site, 3 distinct cobbled areas are visible on the surface:

1. Floor 1: As mentioned, the Unit 2 floor is relatively large and distinguished by palm-sized river cobbles. Furthermore, the cobbles appear to be ground down and flattened to some degree (Figure 4).

2. Floor 2: ~4 x 2 meters. Small river stones measuring approx. 5-7 centimeters long, 1-3 centimeters wide. Divided into two halves – on one half the stones are oriented E-W; on the other half, the stones are oriented N-S (Figure 5).

3. Floor 3: Located ~20 meters from nearest cobbled surface near a modern house. Formed of small rivers stones. Total area is ~1.5 m long and 0.5 m wide, with two sections of white river stones flanking a patch of black stones (Figure 6).

Together, the details associated with these three floor surfaces suggest a carefully prepared and spatially extensive construction with a



Figure 5: Floor 2. Note the difference in orientation between halves.

a collection of features that suggest a certain level of artistry and design. This stands in contrast to the other known cobble floors from the early Spanish colonial period which – like the so-called “turkey pen” in the Pecos convento (Figure 8),

or the strange indented/channeled surface at LA 20,000 (Figure 7) – are architectural isolates that have mostly been interpreted as agricultural or livestock features. Although Joseph Toulouse noted flagstone floors in the convento at Abó (Toulouse 1949: 11, Plate 13), the presumably interior cobbled floors found at Jemez stand apart, and would be the first of their kind in a church complex.

The location and identity of the mission churches in the Jemez region have long been a topic of scholarly confusion. While the current state of affairs valley-wide has been well covered by Mike Elliott (2002), the number of churches built at Walatowa itself remains hazy. In fact, it is an open question as to which period the architectural features in the “Old Church Area” belong. Do they represent the original reduccion of San Diego de la Congregación built by Father Zárate Salmerón in 1622 and burned in the Uprising of 1623? Might these features instead mark the 1628 reoccupation of the reduccion or the post-Revolt mission of San Juan de los Jemez (Liebmann in press)? Finally, what connection – if any – do these features have to the later 18th century church(es) described by Father Dominguez in 1776 (1956:176-182) and the Navajo Expedition of 1849 (Simpson 1964:xlix, 18, n.12)? While these questions are impossible to answer as this point, the team collected a number of good charcoal samples from the burn layer and the underlying adobe rubble in Units 2 and 3 that should help start to answer this question.



Figure 6: Floor 3



Figure 7: Excavation trench with exposed cobbled surface at the site of LA 20,000.

“What comes next?” The simple answer is “more work” (Figure 9). A number of very interesting questions have been raised from only a few small test units and it is the goal of both Matt and Chris to expand the project and continue work at Walatowa. Importantly, this summer’s fieldwork represents one of the first academically-oriented excavations in a modern pueblo in decades, and active tribal involvement during the development and implementation of this project was key to achieving this. Moving forward, one of the team’s goals is to explore potential partnerships with local archaeological organizations that will help to increase tribal participation in the project.



Figure 8: Excavation trench with exposed cobbled surface at the site of LA 20,000.



Figure 9: The Harvard-Jemez team starting the day

### Acknowledgements:

The Tribal Council of Jemez Pueblo; Chris Toya, Paul Clarke (Jemez Natural Resources Department); Matt Barbour, Ethan Ortega (New Mexico Historic Sites [Jemez/Coronado]); and All the folks – both Jemez tribal members and archaeologists alike – who stopped by to see what we were doing and asked a lot of questions. We’re working on the answers!

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## A Message from the Chair

To those in the community of the Harvard University Standing Committee on Archaeology (SCA),

After a summer of new discoveries and a semester of stimulating classes, talks, discussion (and meetings!), I once again have the pleasure of writing a message as part of this next installment of In Situ. The fall of 2017 was a full semester. Enrollments in archaeology classes across the university we high, and attendance at the many events associated with faculty, staff and students affiliated with SCA was strong. In the spring issue we will endeavor to once again provide a comprehensive list of these events for 2017-2018. As the events come up, we distribute announcements through our website and a list of affiliates and interested members of the community. If you are not receiving these announcements and would like to, I urge you to write us at [sca@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:sca@fas.harvard.edu). We are not able to advertise everything, as some archaeological working groups on campus have a mix of public and more private events but even our abbreviated list shows a vigorous life of archaeological events at Harvard.

One aspect of our community that has been particularly active of late has been related to the employ of archaeological science in the attempt to better understand the Mediterranean world through an intuitive called the Max Planck-Harvard Research Center for Archaeoscience of the Ancient Mediterranean (MHAAM). This Center, associated with the Science of the Human Past at Harvard (SoHP) Initiative is the focus of one of the short essays in this issue.

Elsewhere in this issue we have a couple reports from the field. Wade Campbell, a PhD student in Anthropology reports on recent excavations in the Jemez Pueblo in New Mexico directed by Prof. Matthew Liebmann, who we are happy to note, has just been granted tenure in the Department of Anthropology. This report documents the initial season of a collaborative project with the people of the Jemez pueblo, marking the first time excavations with the support and participation of the Jemez have taken place.

Additionally, we have a report by an undergraduate concentrator in archaeology, Caroline Rakus –Wojciechowski, who describes for us the focus of the Harvard archaeological field school at San José de Moro in Peru that took place during the summer of 2017. Caroline was one of a number of concentrators and archaeology “secondary field” undergraduate students who participated in this field school.

Finally, the end of the fall term brought the sad news of the passing of Prof. Larry Stager, Professor Emeritus of the Archaeology of Israel. Recent Archaeology PhD from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Joshua Walton (now teaching at Capitol University), provides a memorial essay describing Prof. Stager’s singular contributions to the discipline.

In the Spring 2018 semester we look forward to many more archaeological events, talks, and courses at Harvard and look forward to generating more excitement about the past.

-Rowan Flad, John E. Hudson Chair of Archaeology

## SCA-Sponsored Events

On November 8th, 2017, the SCA sponsored a reception at the Harvard Semitic Museum's newly renovated third floor gallery during the annual meetings of the American Schools for Oriental Research (ASOR) in Boston. The reception was well-attended by Harvard archaeologists, scholars, students, and affiliates, as well as conference presenters and attendees from around the world.



Figure 10: Graduate students in Anthropology and NELC attending the ASOR reception



Figure 11: A view of the reception attendees in the newly renovated third floor gallery of the Semitic Museum



Figure 12: The third floor gallery boasts a new exhibit displaying fabricated casts of ancient Mesopotamian reliefs, created by Harvard curators and students

*The Standing Committee on Archaeology at Harvard University is a multidisciplinary group of scholars at Harvard who promote the teaching and research of archaeological work around the world. Visit our website at [archaeology.harvard.edu](http://archaeology.harvard.edu)*

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## Student News from the Field

### San José de Moro: the Fieldschool at a Glance

*Caroline Rakus-Wojciechowski, Harvard  
College Class of 2018*



*Figure 13: The SJDM 2017 Fieldschool pictured at the site with the ladder used for photography*

San José de Moro- what once was a place of gathering and ceremony for the Moche continued this role for the students of the Harvard Archaeological field school in the summer of 2017. Located in the Jequetepeque Valley of Peru, San José de Moro (SJDM) was first occupied by the Northern Moche, a culture with rich historical complexity. The Moche are associated with exquisite stirrup-spout vessels and fineline painting. In Larco Hoyle et al (1945) and Donnan (1978), scholars disputed whether they were a centralized, militaristic empire or used ritualized combat and complex irrigation to expand their territories. Luis Jaime Castillo Butters' work (1991) provides insight that Moche are actually many polities that acquired their own cultures over a period of different times and regions. His approach studies representation through combat and sacrifice iconography, settlement patterns, and comparing Moche-occupied sites. At the field school, students were presented with the opportunity to explore the application of this approach.

At the SJDM field school, staff stressed the importance of addressing who, in the plural, were at the site, in what phases they came and went, as well as when in absolute time. Students were able to gain a hands-on experience in understanding Moche culture at sites like Cerro Chepén, where evidence of alliances, rather than battles, with the Cajamarca and Wari cultures exists based on the architectural patterns. The sheer number of chicha paicas along with iconography at SJDM revealed that it was a place where negotiations and marriages took place to keep peace. At Cerro Chepén and San Ildefonso, students found sling stones and formed connections to the bioarchaeological blows to the skeletons at Huaca de la Luna. These evidence show that some form of violence existed there, but they also identified parry fractures that indicated the presence of ritualized combat. Students were consequently able to see SJDM was a ceremonial center that can be used to understand how ritual was used in order to organize society in the Jequetepeque Valley and see how a political goal could be fulfilled by ritual theatrics as a means to an end.

This past year, students finished the unit excavation, originally opened to study occupational sequences and its contents, and used bioarchaeological and paleoethnobotanical analyses to better understand the site's occupants' identities. At the base of Level 13, students found the occupational level of the Middle Moche. On the huaca, students found evidence of Late Moche. The team found a flat floor on top and ascending ramp, as well as burials in the reoccupation of site, which will be excavated in future seasons.



*Figure 14: Fieldschool student, Caroline Rakus-Wojciechowski, in the Lima lab working to process and catalogue finds from the excavations.*



Figure 15: Professor Gary Urton speaking to students about his research on khipus in Chachapoyas.



Figure 16: A Moche mural at SJDM, located on the on-site lab.

For students interested in doing their own research, SJDM offers incredible exposure to such opportunities. In addition to studying the Moche, students are able to visit an array of archaeological sites in different regions of Peru, such as Chachapoyas. The staff, led by Harvard faculty member Gary Urton, brings in several professors from major institutions to speak about the different fields they have worked in whilst in South America. This year, Professor Jason Ur from Harvard also visited to instruct students, together with Professor Castillo Butters, in the use of drones in archaeology. These included fields such as ceramics, lithic artifacts, bioarchaeology, GIS, burial patterns, and ethnographic studies.

This exemplary program not only allows students to gain the most complete archaeological experience through field and lab work, but it also pushes them to immerse themselves in culture, both past and present.

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Figure 17: Platform-base structures at Kuelap. One of the many field trips taken by students.



Figure 18: Chachapoyas cliff burials, also visited by the students

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 and affiliates work with and in a range of museums and  
 department on Harvard's campuses.*

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## In Memoriam: *Lawrence “Larry” Elwood Stager*

*Joshua Walton, Capitol University,  
Department of Religion and Philosophy, History*

Lawrence E. Stager, the Emeritus Dorot Professor of the Archaeology of Israel at Harvard University, passed away on December 29, 2017 at the age of 74 after a fall in his home in Concord, Massachusetts. Known to his friends and colleagues as “Larry,” Stager was a preeminent archaeologist of the southern Levant and its broader Mediterranean environment. He was renowned for his interdisciplinary approach to archaeology and his extensive command of vast assemblages of material culture, text, and theory, which he synthesized in his research in a concise, innovative, and accessible manner.

Born in Kenton Ohio, Larry was the first of his family to attend college. He received his Bachelors, Masters, and Doctorate from the Harvard Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations department under the tutelage of luminaries such as G. Ernest Wright and Frank Moore Cross. Hired by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in 1973, Larry returned to Harvard in 1986 as the Dorot Professor of the Archaeology of Israel and the Director of the Semitic Museum until his retirement in 2012. During this time, he supervised over 50 doctoral students.

Larry began his career as a field director at the site of Idalion, Cyprus, where he worked as the co-principal director (alongside Anita Walker) from 1974-1980. In 1975, he turned his attention to the Punic Project and began work in Carthage, Tunisia. There, he excavated the Tophet, a Phoenician burial precinct yielding important evidence for cultic practices including child sacrifice.

Larry was best known for his excavations at Ashkelon, which he directed



from 1985 to 2016. Upon arriving at Harvard in 1985, Larry joined forces with Leon Levy and Shelby White to initiate the Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, a partnership that spanned more than three decades that has greatly expanded our understanding of the Canaanites, Philistines, and Phoenicians. The site of Ashkelon, best known for its association with the biblical Philistines, yielded many notable finds—from a Middle Bronze Age Canaanite shrine housing a silver calf in 1990, to the first ever Philistine cemetery, which was excavated from 2013-2016. Under Larry’s leadership, Ashkelon also became one of the most

influential field schools in Israel, and a generation of prominent southern Levantine archaeologists spent time in the Ashkelon system.

Larry's compelling personality was evident in both his personal interactions and his scholarship. He had ability to connect with all genres of people and was equally comfortable delivering an academic lecture or regaling a dinner party with stories about cleaning up roadkill as a youth in Ohio. Larry's tandem intellectualism and social adroitness were clearly reflected in his scholarship, which was accessible to a broad audience in addition to being impeccably researched and brilliantly articulated. His seminal work *Life in Biblical Israel*, published with Professor Philip King, is a case in point --a comprehensive and practical treatment of daily life in ancient Israel that seamlessly weaves together the archaeological and textual records.

Larry was widely recognized by his domestic and international colleagues as a creative and innovative scholar, receiving recognitions such as an invitation to give the Schweich Lectures on Biblical Archaeology sponsored by the British Academy in London in 2004, an appointment as a Corresponding Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in 2008, and a festschrift, also in 2008, which featured 50 essays from colleagues and former students (*Exploring the Longue Durée*, ed. J.D. Schloen). Most recently, Larry had been chosen as the recipient of a volume of *Eretz-Israel* being prepared in his honor, becoming only the fifth American to be awarded this distinction. In recent years, Larry had dedicated himself to the publication of his excavations at Ashkelon, a task that he nearly completed and has left in good hands. While Larry's intellectual legacy will continue to grow through the work of his colleagues and students, his charm, wit, and creativity will be sorely missed.

## News from the Standing Committee

### MHAAM Inauguration

*Michael McCormick, Department of History*

Since its inception in 2011, the Initiative for the Science of the Human Past at Harvard (SoHP) has been a happy partner with the Standing Committee on Archaeology, not least through their considerable intellectual and membership overlaps. SoHP is a University-wide network dedicated to fostering the study of the material remains of our past collective experience by means of the most innovative



*Figure 19: HAAM Inaugural Public Workshop at the Barker Center*

transdisciplinary scientific methods and technologies. 2017 saw an important advance that has already begun to benefit Harvard archaeologists of all descriptions: the launching of the new Max Planck-Harvard Research Center for the Archaeoscience of the Ancient Mediterranean (MHAAM).

The new virtual research center combines the complementary strengths of Harvard with those of the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History (MPISSH, Jena, Germany) in order to address the problem of ancient mobility and migration, with two initial research themes: the peopling of the ancient Mediterranean, and the discovery and identification of ancient pathogens and the pandemics they caused. Co-directed by Johannes Krause (MPISSH) and Michael McCormick (Harvard History, SoHP, SCA), the new research venture offers an exciting platform for path-breaking collaborative ventures in scientific archaeology. The main research sites for MHAAM are the MPISSH Dept. of Archaeogenetics (directed by Prof. Krause), and SoHP-affiliated research groups including those of McCormick (History), David Reich (Genetics) and Noreen Tuross (Human Evolutionary Biology).

In February, SoHP organized a town-hall meeting of interested archaeologists and scientists from around the University and MHAAM, to present the nascent research center and to gather ideas about projects and collaborations (to see videos, [click here](#)). In October, Martin Stratmann, President of the Max Planck Society, and Mark C. Elliot, Vice Provost of International Affairs and Schwartz Professor of Chinese and Inner Asian History at Harvard, signed the agreement between the two collaborating institutions and spoke on this landmark new center – the first of its kind at Harvard. A public workshop presented early results of MHAAM research featuring talks by Susan Alcock, Krause, Iosif Lazaridis (on ancient Mycenaean and Minoan genomes), McCormick,

and Reich. A standing-room only crowd filled the Barker Center Thompson Room to mark this historic inauguration.

Further sessions included one on ancient pathogens involving numerous colleagues from across Harvard (including HMS, HSPH, FAS, Harvard Global Health Institute); a Young Investigator Symposium in which invited student archaeologists from across the globe presented research on the science of the human past; and a MHAAM planning workshop on migration which included a mix of ancient biomolecules scientists, biologists, archaeologists, philologists, historians and classicists, on promising research directions for the new center.

Thanks to the generous support of its friends and allies, MHAAM has already been able to create a small number of new graduate fellowships in archaeoscience. The first two graduate students in the new discipline at Harvard began their studies this academic year: Aurora Allshouse (Anthropology/Archaeology) will specialize in early Aegean archaeology; Megan Michel (Human Evolutionary Biology) will focus on the archaeogenetics of ancient pathogens and pandemics. A further MHAAM fellowship was awarded to Eadaoin Harney (Organismic and Evolutionary Biology) for her archaeogenetic dissertation research into migration and mobility in the Levant from the Chalcolithic to the Iron Age. The new research network anticipates international workshops, talks, and exchanges that will undoubtedly strengthen on both sides of the Atlantic the accelerating pace of discovery at the intersection of science and the humanities in the scientific archaeology of the ancient Mediterranean, and foster the flourishing archaeological scene at Harvard in coming years.

