



**Harvard
University**

Afro-Latin American Archaeology: Enhancing a Creative Community for Anthropological Inquiry

September 15-16, 2017

Hutchins Center

104 Mt. Auburn Street, 3R

The challenge of this workshop is to address a few seemingly simple questions:

- What are the particular challenges and opportunities of Afro-Latin American archaeology?
- What can individual researchers and institutions do to move this focus of inquiry (an academic enterprise) and heritage conservation (efforts of community justice) forward?
- How can archaeology contribute to Afro-Latin American Studies?
- How can Afro-Latin American archaeology contribute to archaeological method and practice?

We ask you to work with this group to compose ways at local, national, international, disciplinary, and interdisciplinary levels that will promote and improve practice and theoretical framing of Afro-Latin American archaeology.

Workshop Panels

Organization

The panels are organized geographically, with the expectation that major themes and ideas for initiatives will emerge from both the presentations themselves and the lively discussion afterwards. The end of the schedule includes a list of potential topics that you may wish to consult.

Intervention

Each participant will intervene for 20 minutes presenting their work on Afro-Latin American Archaeology. The presentations should be in the language of choice, and some panels and presentations will likely be in Spanish and/or Portuguese. A computer projector for audio/visual aids will be available. If you have any special needs for equipment, please let us know. In your intervention, you should address how the field looks from your perspective, professional and/or personal experience, and

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specialization. The key goal is to offer ideas and examples that you find especially important for addressing one or several of the four principle questions listed above. To that aim, you may prefer to share an evocative, detailed example or a more general synthesis of perspectives and trends. The choice of exactly what to present is your decision. Think of it as an opportunity to shape the field in a vitally important way through a crucial message.

Debate

After all of the presentations for each panel are complete, the floor will open for debate for the panel, moderated by workshop participants as listed. The moderators do not work in the region, and will thus give an alternative perspective on key themes that emerged during the interventions. In this case, we will *all* be giving initial (gut) reactions to the propositions of the panel presentations. Faculty from other disciplines have been invited to attend the workshop panels, as well, so you may receive comments from specialists in Art History, History, and other fields. This is a chance to see your own work with fresh eyes with the help of a supportive and engaged community, and to invite others to understand your particular perspectives and goals, particularly as an archaeologist studying a developing topic within the discipline.

Outcomes

The goal is that the suggestions that emerge from the debates will inform the development of the presentation into a contribution for the publication of the workshop proceedings. A dilemma with pre-circulated papers is that the work is fully formed and often researchers are reluctant to fundamentally rebuild what they have done. Here the goal is for the workshop experience to be formative for the published work. The resulting publication will also benefit from all of the authors being acquainted in detail with each other's contribution, as everyone will have helped each other out with their work.

List of Participants

Anthony Andrews
New College of Florida

Allison Bain
Université du Laval

Anna T. Browne Ribeiro
University of Louisville

José Heriberto Erquicia Cruz
*Director, Museo Nacional de Antropología Dr.
David J Guzmán, El Salvador
Universidad Tecnológica de El Salvador*

Felipe Gaitan-Amann
*University of Chicago/Archaeologist for the city
of Bogota*

Ross Jamieson
Simon Frasier University

Kenneth Kelly
University of South Carolina

Lúcio Menezes Ferreira
Instituto de Ciências Humanas, UFPel

Charles Orser, Jr.
Vanderbilt University

Guido Pezzarossi
Syracuse University

Daniel Schávelzon
*Founder and Director, Centro de Arqueología
Urbana (FADU, UBA), Buenos Aires*

Russell Sheptak
University of California, Berkeley

Frederick Smith
College of William & Mary

Julie Wesp
American University

Brendan J. M. Weaver
Berea College

Theresa Singleton
Syracuse University

Jeffrey Quilter
Harvard University

Friday, September 15

8:40am

Pick up at Double Tree Hotel Main Entrance

9:00-9:30am

**Welcome Remarks: Kathryn Sampeck and Alejandro de la Fuente
Breakfast**

9:30-11:00am

Panel 1 Nueva Granada, Southern Cone

Felipe Gaitan-Amann

Daniel Schávelzon

Moderators: José Heriberto Erquicia Cruz
Rus Sheptak
Theresa Singleton

11:00 - 12:00pm

Visit of the Hutchins Center & Cooper Gallery

12:00-1:00 pm

Lunch Break

1:00-3:00pm

Panel 2 Andean South America

Ross Jamieson

Jeffrey Quilter

Brendan Weaver

Moderators: Anthony Andrews
Kenneth Kelly
Julie Wesp

3:00-3:15pm

Coffee Break

3:15-5:00pm

Panel 3 Central America

José Heriberto Erquicia Cruz

Guido Pezzarossi

Rus Sheptak

Moderators: Brendan Weaver

Lúcio Menezes Ferreira
Daniel Schávelzon

5:00-6:45pm

Panel 4 Mexico

Anthony Andrews

Julie K. Wesp

Moderators: Frederick Smith
Anna T. Browne Ribeiro
Ross Jamieson

7:00pm

Dinner, Harvard Faculty Club

9:00pm

Pick up at Lamont Library to Double Tree Hotel

Saturday, September 16

8:40am

Pick up at Double Tree Hotel Main Entrance

9:00-9:30am

Breakfast

9:30-11:00 am

Panel 4 Brazil

Lucio Menezes Ferreira

Anna T. Browne Ribeiro

Moderators: Alison Bain
Charles Orser
Guido Pezzarossi

11:00-12:00pm

Tour of the Peabody Museum, guided by Jeffrey Quilter, Director.

12:30-1:30 pm

Lunch at the Hutchins Center

1:30-4:00pm

Panel 6

The Caribbean

Kenneth Kelly

Alison Bain

Charles Orser

Theresa Singleton

Frederick Smith

Moderators: Felipe Gaitan-Amann
Jeffrey Quilter

4:00-5:00 pm

Planning for the Future

A crucial point of discussion for this planning session will be the ways to promote, enhance, and further develop Afro-Latin American archaeological studies. What are ways to help the community not just sustain itself, but grow in fruitful ways? What are the most pressing agendas not only in scholarship, but the wider initiatives that help preserve Afro-Latin American heritage?

5:00-5:30 **Closing Remarks**

Possible Workshop Topics for Discussion

TOPIC 1: Colonialism--First Encounters, Last Resorts

The first voyage of Christopher Columbus and his crew in 1492 was the inception of dramatic changes whose legacies endure today. Scholars have typically emphasized the “Columbian Exchange” in terms of Native American-European dynamics, a binary equation that at best relegates to the sideline people indispensable to the formation of Latin America: people of African descent. Despite prominent roles and social status of Afrodescendants in the Columbus expeditions, the African presence in the Americas during the following five centuries grew at exponential rates, but largely in the form of coerced labor. This topic includes some of the earliest evidence of Africans in the Americas and varied roles Afro-Latin Americans, such as serving in militias, as skilled craftspeople, and defiant opportunists.

TOPIC 2: Slavery

It is Latin America’s dubious heritage to be first, most, and last (in a few places) in the African slave trade. Several workshop participants are assessing major nodes in slave trade networks, contemporary impacts on archaeological sites related to this heritage, and the formation of Maroon communities. Marronage tested boundaries—political, geographic, conceptual, and economic. By better understanding how these in-between places fit (or did not) within colonial regimes further elucidates relationships of power, social networks, and realms of freedom and servitude.

TOPIC 3: Configurations of Blackness

The colonial metamorphosis from social classification to racial thinking centered on defining places, social and geographic, for and by Afro-Latin Americans. The Spanish American social classification schemes of types of people, castizaje or the casta system and racial thinking had its foundation in 16th- and 17th-century moral concerns related to maintaining the purity of Christian blood (limpieza de sangre). Ambiguous early terminology was tied to an imagined body of difference often focused on skin color, or colorism. Intimate relationships of blood mixing made it also fluid and opportunistic; the concept of caste retracted, stretched, and grew according to circumstance, eventually merging with the concept of race as it developed in the 18th and early 19th century. This topic offers a chance to discuss the gritty reality of the construction of race in different regions as well as assess differences among colonial powers. Many of the workshop participants have done works that shows how difference was constructed through the built environment, especially regarding mobility and invisibility, kinds of ecologies (swamps, caves), urban space, and through bodies themselves.

TOPIC 4: Nationhood

The idea of “nation” in Latin America often invoked discussions of ideal citizens. Archaeology further reveals Afro-Latin American labor to defend the state, most notably in building forts. In cases such as Cuba, political efforts aimed to end racism and build “raceless” nations, while others, such as Mexico, enthusiastically embraced indigenous heritage but at the same time elided or even rejected African

descent, creating what Andrews has dubbed “pigmentocracies”. Eighteenth-century and later contexts pertain to both subtle and obvious forms of the persistence of racism, structural inequalities, and marginalization despite political revolutions claiming to eliminate discrimination.

TOPIC 5: Networks of Commerce, Communities of Practice

Afro-Latin Americans made deep and enduring contributions to many realms of Latin American life. Afro-Latin American forms—food, arts, architecture, religious practice—have done much to shape Latin America as we know it today. The material record shows undocumented economic connections and entrepreneurial activity as well as shared values in adornment, etiquette and sociability, and aesthetics.

This event is sponsored by Wenner-Gren Foundation, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and Afro-Latin American Research Institute.

