

## ANNUAL REPORT: Ciudad Perdida 2016 FIELD SCHOOL

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Students at Ciudad Perdida Field School learning how to operate a total station on the main terraces

During the field season we accomplished all of the objectives planned for 2016, which included mapping all structures at site B-202, and completing two small trenches within Ciudad Perdida's main terraces. As planned, survey work was completed during the first three weeks, with a brief interlude of 3-4 days dedicated to conservation work, during which we were able to map out the 17 structures that comprise B-202. This means that we are now in a better position to understand the layout and functions of outlying sites, as well as their temporal position with regards to much larger sites such as Ciudad Perdida, providing us with a much clearer picture as to their social and political relationships. Excavations in the central terraces were meant to ground truth GPR findings made during May of 2016 that indicated stable layers of rock fill up to 1.5 meters below the surface in certain sections. An additional objective centered on verifying the extent of the looting that took place during the early 70s. One of the major findings was that we were able to find an untouched floor layer containing artifacts dating to the years prior to abandonment of the town. This means that despite the heavy looting, there is still much information that can be recovered from these structures. We are still working on the maps and artifact cataloging and processing, but the preliminary conclusions from these findings are

already being presented in local and international conferences and will be of course presented in the final report to be filed before the Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia.

Given our small class size, students were able to actively participate in all phases of research, including survey and sampling, conservation, and excavation. One of the benefits of having small groups of students is that the amount of time actually spent by each one of them handling the total station and acquiring data, as well as excavating test pits and processing finds is very high. This also includes conservation work, which they were able to participate in by restoring a small section of a staircase (about 60 feet). Students were also able to interact with the archaeological park rangers, local archaeologists, our architectural mapping crew, and ICANH researchers who were there with us during the field season, something that gave them a good sense of the stakes involved in conducting research and conservation work at a place such as Ciudad Perdida Archaeological Park.