

ANNUAL REPORT: Cochasquí-Mojanda 2019 FIELD SCHOOL

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Field school students and staff flying one of the project drones

Five areas were investigated at the site of Cochasquí in the summer of 2019. For the third year in a row, investigations continued at Operation 9 in the West Trench area of Pyramid G, where the profile extending down from the mound's upper surface reached more than five meters depth in total, under the direct of Will Pratt and Clementine Martal. The midden found last year grew in size and we found the base of the retaining wall also first seen in 2018. Several field school students cycled through this task, helping with screening and profiling as the team followed the complex stratigraphy of this unit.

The second area investigated in 2019 was one of the subsurface anomalies indicated by both gradiometer and georadar passes southeast of Pyramid K. Two operations, 12 and 13, both under the direction of Ryan Hechler, were begun here as the field school opened and students were trained to lay out and open units. The largest operation on the site for a while during the 2019 season, most of the students and student staff worked here at one point or another, excavating, screening, mapping, and doing general paperwork. While some cultural materials were recovered from these units, it was impossible to understand the nature of the proposed features and these units were closed by the next to last week of the field school.

As work at Operations 12 and 13 began to close, a new series of operations, 14 and 15, were begun in the area adjacent to the entry road where the German team had excavated what they believed was a village area in 1964. Despite challenges dealing with unit layout and working alongside badly eroded former units that had been left open over the last 50-odd years, we

were able to reestablish the German grid and find useful areas to sample. The recovery of cultural materials from these areas was dramatic and several features were recorded during the last week of excavations. On the last day, it became obvious that one of the units was sampling an apparent colonial midden in what might have been an abandoned prehistoric structure built from Cangahua blocks; if the latter is true it would be one of the first such dwellings excavated off the top of a mound in the northern highlands. This was a huge find, one of the most important of the projects four field seasons to date. During the short time this area was under investigations, it was a project priority and all of the students got a chance to work in this area, excavating, screening, mapping, profiling, and taking notes.

Finally, Operation 7, atop the east half of Pyramid G, was reopened by Dr. Steve Black while he was working at the site. First excavated in 2017, it was reopened to search for evidence of a wall around the temple floor and burned clay feature that we had documented in 2017. Charles Frederick, project geoarchaeologist, completed a profile of sediments overlying the structure that were clearly two layers of intentional fill; the two mid-15th century dates recovered in 2017 suggest that this building was constructed, abandoned and covered with a meter of fill before the arrival of the Inka. One of the most surprising finds was that unlike the floors of buildings excavated by the Germans on Pyramid E, the floor of the pre-Inka G-top structure was not burned. This supports the concept that the Pyramid E floors, which had Inka materials in the overlying excavated layers, may have been burned when the roof structure burned and collapsed. An apparent outer wall was discovered, as were apparent exterior compact ground surfaces. In fact, four former exterior ground surfaces were observed below the modern surface, the second of which could be connected to the partly excavated structure. Students helped in excavating, screening, mapping, and profiling this operation in 2019.

A session at next year's SAA meetings in Austin has been planned by the research team to discuss the 2019 findings at Cochasquí. The session will include individual papers by three co-directors, by four student staff members, and two of the IFR field school students. Project related presentations in this session are:

La arqueología política y el nuevo asedio de Cochasquí: ¿Quién es el dueño de arqueología?

– Byron Ortiz, Pedro Cazar, and David O. Brown

Cochasquí: celebrando el agua de los ancestros

– Estanislao Pazmiño

Live in the Layers: Complex earthen architecture at Cochasquí

– Clementine Martal and William S. Pratt

Not in the Litter: An Analysis of a Late Integration Midden Deposit at Cochasquí

– Fabiola Meyer Garza and William S. Pratt

A Shiny Clear Rock and a Hard Place: Obsidian Usage in Ritual Contexts at Cochasquí

– Maxwell Ward and Ryan Hechler

It Takes a Village?: Research developments in the "Pueblo" area of Cochasquí

– Andrea Chavez-Cuquimarca and Ryan Hechler

Where's the Lived Reality?: Investigating Non-Monumental Spaces at the Monumental Site of Cochasquí, Ecuador

– Ryan Hechler

Squaring the circle: Settlement planning in the late prehistoric northern Ecuadorian highlands

– David O. Brown

The Quilotoa Hypothesis: Post-disaster cultural change and resilience amongst the Cara

– William S. Pratt

