



CENTER FOR
NEAR EASTERN
ARCHAEOLOGY
LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY

La Sierra Digs

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Preservation of Marginalized Archaeological Sites

By Dr. Ziad al-Saad. *Dr. Ziad Al-Saad is a Professor at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan who specializes in cultural-heritage preservation and conservation and, as a Fulbright Fellow who chose to locate at La Sierra for the 2021–2022 school year, taught a course last quarter on preserving archaeological sites. The editors asked him to write a piece related to his professional interests, something about how we should go about preserving the past at archaeological sites.*

This short article begins with the questions, “Of what value are ancient at-risk archaeological sites and how does one go about protecting them?” In response, the following comments

focus on devising policies and strategies for the long-term preservation of a category of archaeological sites that are classified as “marginalized.” This classification is based on different qualitative and quantitative parameters such as: value and significance of the site; dimensions; site location; degree of knowledge of the site on the local, regional, national and international levels; existence of proper conservation and management policies; existence of proper management policies and accessibility of the site.

No one of these parameters, alone, is enough to judge if an archaeological site can be classified as major or marginalized. However, this also means that a highly significant site can be classified as “marginalized” because of the lack of proper conservation and management policies. For instance, the famous and highly significant site of Ain Ghazal in Jordan, which is among the most important pre-pottery Neolithic sites in the whole of the ancient Near East that reveals important evidence about human rituals and technological innovation, can be classified as a marginalized site due to lack of proper conservation and management policies. Extraordinarily rare plaster statues about 9000 years old, probably the oldest large-sized statues ever discovered, were excavated from this site.

Large numbers of archaeological sites and historical places in the United States are experiencing an onslaught of looting, vandalism and the threat of urbanization and development projects. Over 90% of known American Indian archaeological sites have already been destroyed or negatively affected by the ongoing process of looting. A typical example is the Bears Ears region located in San Juan County in southeastern Utah. Bears Ears is home to more than 100,000 Native American archaeological and cultural sites. Most of these sites are facing an unprecedented threat of looting and vandalism. *(see article continued on page 3)*

THE CENTER FOR NEAR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY
- 02.15.2022 -
WWW.LASIERRA.EDU/CNEA

w/ Dr. Ziad Al-Saad
Fulbright Fellow

*“Jordan: A Key Player
in the History of Human
Innovation and Technology”*

**1st ANNUAL
WINTER ARCHAEOLOGY LECTURE**

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IS IT TIME TO CELEBRATE?! La Sierra University, Center for Near Eastern Archaeology, and 2022

By Larry Geraty

One doesn't need to be around La Sierra much these days to realize that a centennial celebration is in the air! After all, we're coming up to the institution's hundredth birthday—October 3, 2022! Archaeologically speaking, it is also the hundredth anniversary of Howard Carter's exciting discovery of King Tut's Tomb in the Egyptian Valley of the Kings. Coincidentally, it is also the tenth anniversary of the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology! So, of course, we have to bring together all these celebrations on November 12–13, 2022, with our annual Archaeology Discovery Weekend featuring the Pharaohs of Egypt (details elsewhere in this issue).

While the November 12–13 event is especially important to our archaeological community, the University has other important events on its centennial calendar. The first will be February 15, 2022, when a new sculpture ("The Lost Sheep", by Victor Issa) will be inaugurated to the right of the University's entrance road (opposite the Zapara School of Business) after you come through the front gate. It will be the third of a trilogy of University sculptures inspired by the three parables Jesus told as recorded in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 15. The others include "The Glory of God's Grace" sculpture, often called the Prodigal or Lost Son, and "The Lost Coin," both of which have been previously installed on campus.

The second large University centennial celebration will occur over Alumni Weekend, April 29 to May 1, 2022. Stay tuned for further information, but of particular interest that weekend will be CNEA's special centennial lecture featuring the history of archaeology at La Sierra University—"Preserving the Biblical Past: A History of Archaeology at La Sierra"! CNEA itself will be open for visits to its centennial exhibits.

The third and concluding celebratory event is scheduled for Monday, October 3, 2022—the actual one hundredth birthday of the University. Campus events that day (that could include a ground-breaking for the University's new Museum and Visitor Center, depending on adequate funding raised by that date) will culminate that evening with a grand gala at the Riverside Convention Center downtown.

So, how are we progressing on the long-anticipated University Museum & Visitor Center? In addition to the Museum Board, which is in charge of overall planning, a couple of subcommittees have been very active. One is the Business Operations Committee which is bringing together plans that will make the museum's operations financially sustainable. A consultant out of Chicago (HVS Convention, Sports, and Entertainment) is readying its report. A second subcommittee is the Architectural Design Committee which has reviewed many proposals from reputable architectural firms who are interested in designing our Museum. They have narrowed the choice down to three firms which will be making presentations to the campus on February 3, 2022. The chosen firm will be coming up with sketches for the proposed building which will considerably assist in our fundraising. As of now we have raised approximately half of the anticipated \$40M goal for construction

and endowed operation of this 40,000 square foot facility that will house archaeology, natural history, and the Stahl Center's anthropology collection. In the meantime, anyone who is interested in contributing to this goal is invited to contact Larry Geraty at lgeraty@lasierra.edu! Thank you for being a part of this once-in-a-lifetime endeavor to enhance the university's mission in the world!

Inaugural Winter Archaeology Lecture: Jordan: A Key Player in the History of Human Innovation and Technology.

Announcing CNEA's inaugural annual Winter Archaeology Lecture! While the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology sponsors its major yearly archaeological event during the autumn quarter (**Archaeology Discovery Weekend**) and a second event during Homecoming Weekend in the spring, we are initiating a winter lecture series in 2022, sponsoring one presentation each winter quarter. This will provide an archaeological fix for the three major academic terms of the university calendar and an additional opportunity to connect with the campus and community about the past and how that past might affect the present. The inaugural Winter Archaeology Lecture will be delivered by Dr. Ziad Al-Saad, Fulbright Fellow in residence at La Sierra University during the 2021–2022 academic year on a topic about which he is passionate and prepared to share: **Jordan: A Key Player in the History of Human Innovation and Technology**. The illustrated presentation will take place at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, the 15th of February, 2022 and will be held online and on campus (Zapara School of Business, Room 244). Watch the **CNEA website** for possible COVID updates and the Zoom invite.

Archaeology Discovery Weekend 2022

Archaeology Discovery Weekend (ADW) now boasts its 14th annual event which is scheduled for November 12–13, 2022. It will feature **The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt: Glory, Grit, and Grandeur**. Plans are to meet in person on campus and online via Zoom. This hybrid approach has made the program much more widely available and will provide the program's model long into the future. The 2022 edition of ADW comes at a propitious time: the 100th anniversary of La Sierra University, the 100th anniversary of the discovery of King Tut's tomb in the Valley of the Kings, and the 10th anniversary of CNEA. Watch the **Archaeology Discovery Weekend website** for details as they emerge over the next few months.



(article continued from page 1)

The state of conservation of most marginalized sites is rather poor, due mainly to natural weathering and deterioration in combination with human-induced effects such as neglect, urban expansion, outdated legislation, insufficient urban planning frameworks and pressures from tourism. Marginalized sites are the most vulnerable cultural assets that face irreversible damage and destruction.

To ensure long-term preservation and utilization of marginalized sites, a set of management and conservation policies are provided and briefly described below. These policies can be used for guidance in deriving strategies and actions to achieve the sustainable protection and utilization of these sites that they deserve.

Key Policies for Long Term Preservation

- **Development and Implementation of Holistic Conservation and Management Plans.** Preceding any conservation intervention and development of marginalized sites, comprehensive conservation and management plans should be developed. Conservation and Management plans represent a set of principles for proper conservation and management of heritage sites that outline the legal foundations, administrative procedures and structures including a detailed action plan. The efficiency of a management plan, however, is strongly linked with the action plan, which outlines the necessary steps for full implementation of the plan.
- **Thinking with All Stakeholders: A Community-based, Participatory Approach.** There is an almost universal consensus among scholars and organizations concerned with conservation and management of cultural heritage sites that long-term preservation of heritage sites, particularly marginalized sites, can only be achieved by adopting an inclusive approach to heritage management with active engagement of all stakeholders, particularly the local community. A community-based, participatory approach to conservation and management requires true participation of all stakeholders in decision-making, assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation processes, and contributions of experience, knowledge and skills.
- **Archaeological Excavations.** Although the archaeological

research at marginalized sites has resulted in major revelations, the negative impact of excavation processes on these sites' preservation is of great concern. Excavation at these sites should be kept to the minimum necessary to achieve research objectives in case of identified gaps in knowledge. Excavation projects should utilize the potential of non-destructive techniques as much as possible, and be accompanied with conservation, interpretation, and publication plans.

- **Capacity Building.** Most marginalized sites suffer from lack of trained and experienced conservation specialists and lack of availability of adequate materials for conservation. Effective implementation of conservation activities requires up-to-date knowledge and well-honed skills. This can only be provided through the implementation of serious capacity-building activities using national and international venues.
- **Interpretation and Presentation.** Most marginalized sites lack appropriate interpretation and presentation for visitors. Therefore, the values and meanings embodied in these sites are hidden and can't be easily identified and recognized by visitors. This can adversely impact the understanding and appreciation of the values and meanings of the sites and consequently negatively impact their utilization and protection. Effective interpretation and presentation of these sites is vital for their understanding, appreciation and protection.
- **Tourism Development.** Sustainable Tourism is an effective approach that can be utilized to increase the economic value of marginalized sites and offer sustainable opportunities for economic development to local people. While the rich heritage assets of the sites provide the foundation for tourism's growth, tourism has the power to generate funds that make conservation and development of these sites possible. However, finding the right balance between site protection, on the one hand, and the development of a competitive economic activity on the other may be a challenge.

All archaeological sites are irreplaceable and best practices demand that we do everything possible to protect them, especially those most at risk.



Archaeology Excavation Season Coming Soon!

With the hopefully subsiding impact of COVID, CNEA-connected archaeological excavations are scheduled to proceed this spring and summer in Jordan. There are three of them, each with a different set of objectives for the 2022 season, and each with varied opportunities for specialist, student, and volunteer participation. In chronological order, here is this year's menu:

The Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP)

May 15–27, 2022

Co-directors: Douglas Clark (La Sierra University), Suzanne Richard (Gannon University), Andrea Polcaro (Perugia University), Marta D'Andrea (Sapienza University of Rome), and Basem Mahamid (Department of Antiquities of Jordan)

Security Form Deadline – February 1, 2022

www.madabamuseum.org

madabaplains.org/umayri (for dig information and forms)

The site of Madaba, Jordan occupies a border region between ancient Ammonites and Moabites, but also provides excellent access to the architecture and artifacts from the early centuries of the common era and the late 19th century. Called the City of Mosaics as well as the **Arab Tourism Capital for 2022**, Madaba invites participants to explore its remains which, this spring, include strata from the Byzantine period (mosaics are king!) beneath a recent building which will have just been removed. Excavating this area will clear the way for the establishment of a proposed new regional archaeological museum in historic downtown Madaba. Visit the Madaba Museum website for everything there is to know about the museum project, along with 3D videos and virtual tours. Go to the madabaplains.org website for participation forms. Costs are still to be determined; however, participants typically cover airfare and accommodations at a small hotel in Madaba.



Ataruz

June 23-July 20, 2022

Co-directors: Chang Ho Ji (La Sierra University) and Aaron Schade (Brigham Young University)

Security Form Deadline – March 1, 2022

www.ataruz.org

Ataruz is an incredibly rich and primarily religious site in central Jordan. Located along a ridge between the central Jordanian plateau and the Dead Sea, it contains mostly cultic

architectural and artifactual remains from the Iron Age. Mentioned in the Bible (Numbers 32) and the Mesha Stele (9th century BC), the site also boasts its own incense altar stand inscriptions about offerings evidently made at the sacred site.



Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP)

June 23-August 4, 2022

Co-directors: Kent Bramlett (La Sierra University), Monique Roddy (Walla Walla University), and Friedbert Ninow (La Sierra University)

Security Form Deadline – March 1, 2022

www.BRAPJordan.org

The Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP) will be returning to Jordan for a 2022 season of excavation from 23 June to 4 August under the direction of Kent Bramlett, Monique Roddy, and Friedbert Ninow. Team members will continue excavations in the three Iron Age areas that have been our focus since 2017: the Qasr, a monumental public structure; the House, a well-preserved and extensive Iron II domestic building; and the Wall, a part of the Iron Age defense fortifications. We will also begin excavations of the medieval Islamic village that is an important part of understanding the site's long and prosperous history at the northern edge of the Karak Plateau. For more information on participation options, costs, accommodations, weekend tours, academic credit offered through La Sierra University, and to apply, visit our website.



The Significance of UCSD's Donation to CNEA

By Kent Bramlett

The transfer of the 35 tons of archaeological study samples and artifacts from the University of California, San Diego to La Sierra University is almost complete. This trove from the Edomite Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project of Jordan (ELRAP) constitutes a vast record of human activity from the Neolithic to the Islamic periods including the floruit of the independent Iron Age Edomite kingdom and the region known as Idumea under Roman hegemony.



The research materials include findings from the ancient copper mining district of Faynan, south of the Dead Sea. This area is the best-preserved ancient metallurgy landscape in the world. Dr. Thomas Levy's work revolutionized the dating of the mining activity there and revealed that the 11th – 9th centuries BC in the Iron Age marked the high point of copper production in the region and was not the result of Egyptian activity centuries earlier as had been postulated. Based on the amount of slag left in piles, estimates are that 6,500–13,000 tons of copper were extracted during this time. Moreover, 135 stratigraphically secure 14C samples were dated showing the 10th century BC was the peak of activity there which correlates biblically with the reign of Solomon in Jerusalem and the often-debated emergence of an Edomite kingdom in Jordan.

The donation includes an important study of Edomite pottery typology, all the 14C samples that produced the new historical understanding, and remains from an Iron Age cemetery of excavated human burials.

CNEA @ Homecoming Weekend

As in the past, CNEA will provide special programming during Homecoming Weekend, this year on April 29 through May 1. The Center is always a campus hospitality hotspot, making good use of its genuine Bedouin Tent for receptions and the display cases for exhibits. This annual event will take place at CNEA (and online) at 2:30–4:00 PM on April 30 and will feature an illustrated presentation on archaeology past and present at La Sierra: "Preserving the Biblical Past: A History of Archaeology at La Sierra," by several CNEA archaeologists. We will also present our annual CNEA Archaeology Awards (see below).



Back to School for Betty Adams

Betty Adams, an alum of the MA in Near Eastern Archaeology program at La Sierra, was just accepted into a PhD program in archaeological research at the University of Reading in the UK. This is a distance program which will allow Betty to continue her extensive research on artifacts from 'Umayri and Balu'a. She begins in March.



Donation of Middle Eastern Maps to CNEA

A long-time friend of several La Sierra archaeologists and participant in the early Hisban excavations, Dr. Robin Brown of Watertown, MA, recently donated a large map collection to CNEA. While downsizing her belongings, Robin began looking for a good home for her many maps and other documents: large sheets from the 1596 Ottoman Tax Registers for Jordan/Palestine and several folded maps referring to the tax registers, two mounted maps, and the entire set of 1:50,000 maps of Jordan. She also tossed in her Munsell Soil Color Chart, a resource most archaeologists use to identify colors of soils and artifacts. These will contribute significantly to research projects of CNEA students and faculty.

CNEA Archaeology Award Winners 2022

It is our pleasure to announce the recipients of the 2022 CNEA Archaeology Awards for their many and varied contributions to the Center, its programs, and its long-term success. While the CNEA orbit of friends, supporters, and volunteers is deep and wide, two individuals have been selected this year for their

Display Case

Dawn Acevedo

Tesserae (sing. tessera) are small tiles made of stone, glass, ceramic, or metal which were used to construct mosaics. Mosaics vary in their complexity from a simple, solid color to intricate, colorful works of art. Mosaics were used in floors primarily but began to be used in wall décor by the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. Madaba, Jordan, hailed as the "City of Mosaics," is best known for its well-preserved mosaic floors across numerous Byzantine and Islamic locations. Perhaps the best-known mosaic of the city is that of the 6th century A.D. Madaba Map now housed in St. George's Church. Other mosaics in the city can be found in the Church of the Virgin and Hippolytus Hall within Madaba's Archaeological Park, as well as other parts of the city. To see more of these mosaics, visit [CYARK](#).

outstanding leadership roles at La Sierra University and CNEA: Mr. Norman Yergen, Vice President for Advancement and Marketing and Ms. Darla Martin Tucker, Director of Public Relations. Their awards will be presented during the CNEA event at La Sierra's Homecoming Weekend, April 29-May 1, 2022.

CNEA Fundraising Report

Warm gratitude and sincere appreciation from CNEA staff for the generous outpouring of support for the Center via La Sierra's 2021 annual Giving Day, which occurred on Wednesday 8 December. Donations to CNEA recorded on the Giving Day website registered contributions in excess of the published goal of \$50,000, mostly arriving in November and December, and included a \$10,000 matching contribution and the matching funds; an additional \$10,000 matching pledge has been made and has already been matched. THANK YOU! to everyone for keeping CNEA and its financial needs in your giving plans later this year and into the future. Please visit [here](#) to make donations.

LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY
giving day

Archaeology Team

\$52,054.60 Total Raised

\$50,000 Goal

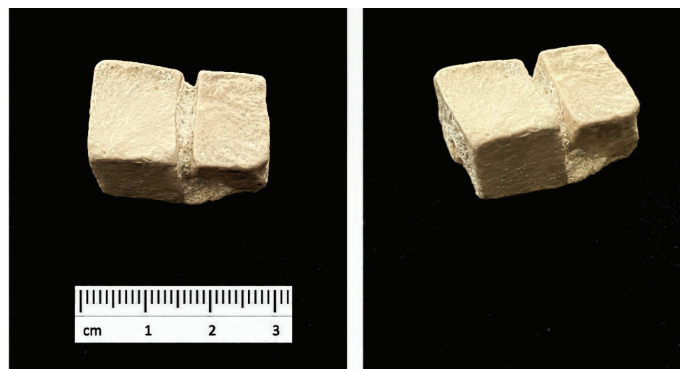
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Two Roman tesserae from Caesarea Maritima, still joined together with mortar. From an anonymous private collection.

La Sierra Digs

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2022 Calendar of Events

15 February, 7 PM (ZSB 244)
(COVID limitations permitting + online)
Winter Archaeology Lecture by Ziad Al-Saad
17 March – 10 April
Holy Land Centennial Tour
29 April – 1 May
La Sierra University Homecoming Weekend
Excavation deadlines for security forms
1 February (MRAMP)
1 March (Ataruz & Balu'a-BRAP)
Excavation dates
15–27 May – Madaba Regional Archaeological
Museum Project (MRAMP)
23 June – 20 July – Ataruz
23 June – 4 August 4 Balu'a (BRAP)
12–13 November
Archaeology Discovery Weekend:
The Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt: Glory, Grit,
and Grandeur

SUPPORT CNEA!

As this issue of *La Sierra Digs* makes clear, the Center for Near Eastern Archaeology at La Sierra University is on the move! And it needs your support for student travel scholarships, the new university museum, and ongoing operations. Please go online at <https://lasierra.edu/donate> and click on "Center for Near Eastern Archaeology" to make your contribution. Or contact the Office of University Advancement at (951) 785-2500. Thank you!

Recent Discoveries

Assembled by Dawn Acevedo

Repatriation of Smuggled Egyptian Artifacts

December 2021 saw the repatriation of smuggled Egyptian artifacts from both Israel and Spain. Israel returned 95 artifacts including figurines, ushabtis, inscriptions, and more, most of which were recovered from an antiquities dealer in Jerusalem. From Spain, 36 figurines, statues, and funerary jars which had been seized in 2014 were returned after years of investigation. [Israel \(BBC News\)](#) & [Spain \(Reuters\)](#)

Digital Investigation of Amenhotep I

Amenhotep I, who ruled during the 18th dynasty, has been digitally examined via CT scans by Cairo University. The scans provided otherwise unknown information regarding the pharaoh's height, age, physique, death, and burial. Moreover, evidence was found of repairs performed during the 21st dynasty. [BBC News](#)

13,000 Ostraca Found in Upper Egypt

As many as 13,000 ostraca have been excavated at the site of Al-Sheikh Hamad. The ostraca included inscriptions in Demotic, Hieratic, Hieroglyphic, Greek, Coptic, and Arabic. The multilingual ostraca reveal new information about trade activities, economy, and education in the region. The sherds date to the Ptolemaic, Roman, Coptic, and Islamic periods. [Egypt Today](#)