The Thesis Committee for Lorena Paiz Aragon
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

Rescuing our cultural past. Santa Isabel and the archaeological rescue projects in Guatemala City

APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:

Julia Guernsey

Karl Butzer

Rescuing our cultural past. Santa Isabel and the archaeological rescue projects in Guatemala City

by

Lorena Paiz Aragon, B.A.

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Dedication

To my family and friends with great love

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Abstract

Rescuing our cultural past. Santa Isabel and the archaeological rescue projects in Guatemala City

Lorena Paiz Aragon, MA

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Supervisor: Julia Guernsey

Since the move of Guatemala´s capital from the Panchoy Valley to the Ermita Valley, the archaeological remains were doomed to be destroyed and 200 years later this could not be more true. Urban development is erasing the traces of a rich cultural past now hidden under modern houses, malls and football fields. Although the Cultural Heritage Law establishes that archaeological remains must be protected, the same law allows sites to be destroyed if they are excavated first. This has lead to an increase of the "Archaeological Rescue Projects", where time and pressure restrict the scientific nature of the excavation.

In this work I explore the theory behind rescue projects and how ethical issues can play a big role in th way rescue archaeology is been done in Guatemala. Also, i explore the history of the rescue projects in Guatemala to demonstrate how important is to have a strong cultural law but also a strong sense of responsibility towards our profession. I use the example of rescue projects, Santa Isabel, to highlight the importance of scientific oriented investigations but also the common mistakes that can be done in these projects. Finally, a proposed a series of steps that can improve the quality of the rescue projects with hopes that they can be implemented in other parts of Guatemala.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

I was playing with my four year old nephew when he suddenly asked me, Why do you dig rocks? He doesn't quite understand what I do, in fact, few people do. Archaeology is still an inconspicuous profession in Guatemala, one shadowed by the misconceptions of what an archaeologist does. Every time someone asks me about my profession I get looks of astonishment that can easily be of bewilderment, a feeling that increases when I told tell them that most of my work is done in Guatemala City. A lot of people can´t associate our work with an urban city and, sadly, a lot of people aren't aware of the existence of the Kaminaljuyu Archeological Park, an archaeological park that preserves the remains of the ancient site of Kaminaljuyu at the very center of Guatemala City.

Part of the national heritage upon which Guatemalans, or at least a certain part of them, have built their identity is the Maya Civilization, which most people are able to identify with those archaeological remains located in Peten, the Guatemalan lowlands located some 400 kilometers from Guatemala City. But, in reality, the prehispanic history of the country is made up by various ethnic groups whose remains are spread all over the country. The lack of awareness about the diversity of our cultural past is caused by a lot of factors that include a weak educational curriculum that mostly emphasizes the Maya of Peten, weak outreach mechanisms to publicize the results of the archaeological projects, a low budget to support national archaeological projects, a tourism agenda directed towards Peten, a failure to involve the local inhabitants with archaeological projects, and a weak set of cultural regulations.

Guatemala City, which is the capital of Guatemala, is strategically located between the lowlands of Peten and the South Coast, in a valley surrounded by volcanoes and mountains. This geographic setting is almost perfect and has two of the most important cities throughout the history of the country, Kaminaljuyu and Guatemala City, with 2000 years separating them. The remains of the important prehispanic city of Kaminaljuyu are scattered or buried beneath zones 7 and 11 of Guatemala City, and the mounds that still exist are located in both public or private areas. It is hard for most Guatemalans to associate the scattered mounds with only one site, they have no idea that mounds that are separated by ten blocks can belong to the same site.

This area has been experiencing a urban growth since the mid 1950´s. At that time, the most important roads were those leading to Mixco and San Juan and both crossed through the remains of various archaeological sites. However, the state infrastructural works of that period focused on the improvement of roads connecting various towns outside Guatemala city with it, rather than the preservation of archaeological sites. These roads and urban growth opened the door to the migration of people to the city, therefore creating an increase in housing needs. The city started growing to the north and west (Valladares and Morán 2006), in areas that were occupied by large farms that had a lot of archaeological mounds. It was thus due to the expansion in the boundaries of Guatemala City that archaeological remains became endangered.

Even though now it's hard to picture it, the city and its placement within the Valley of Guatemala was also important in the past, and the region had an incredible number of prehispanic settlements that have been destroyed by urbanization. When Edwin Shook (Shook 1952) published his work entitled *Lugares Meridionales del Altiplano Central de Guatemala*, he reported 35 archaeological sites within Guatemala city and its environs; of those, only three still exist. The fact that, unlike in the Maya lowlands, stone was rarely used as a construction material led to a misunderstanding of the earthen mounds, that were easily mistaken for natural hills and destroyed in order to get adobe to build houses (Kidder *et al.* 1946; Schavelzon and Rivera 1987; Crasborn 2009).

After the 1960's, colonies and residential complexes in Guatemala City such as Tikal, Kaminaljuyu I, Kaminaljuyu II and then Mirador, Miraflores and Jardines de Utatlan I and II were constructed. By 1962, the area was damaged, although a large number of mounds were still standing. Ironically, the lack of infrastructure for water and sewage contributed to their conservation (Schavelzon and Rivera 1987). The rapid destruction of Kaminaljuyu led to an accord to protect the site´s remaining mounds. That accord, with the governmental support of the Ministry of Education, was issued in 1964 and cataloged the mounds as "untouchable". (http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/es/gt/gt036es.pdf). Kaminaljuyu was one of the first sites to have its own cultural protection accord, even before a national law was established, but this didn't prevent the remaining mounds from being destroyed.

It was not until 1970 that the first law for the protection of the cultural heritage was issued. Known as the, Ley para la Protección del Patromino Cultural de la Nación , it stated that archaeological sites known at that time were declared historical monuments. Under Artclie 1 of the Acuerdo de Creación de Zonas ó Monumentos Arqueológicos Históricos y Artísticos de los Periodos Prehispánico e Hispánico: "*Se declaran zonas y monumentos arqueológicos, históricos y artísticos del Período Prehispánico los siguientes*:….", which was followed by the list of all the known archaeological sites by state (http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/es/gt/gt036es.pdf). The Instituto de Antropología e Historia (IDAEH) was the state's institution in charge of the cultural aspects of the country and was a dependence of the Ministry of Education. Nowadays, the Dirección General de Patrimonio Natural and Cultural is the one with that function.

In Guatemala City the preservation of mounds has always been problematic since they interfered with the layout of residential complexes. By 1975 the situation worsened and the land that was still vacant was divided into a series of lots. However the authorities did nothing about it, and the IDAEH was both financially and politically incapacitated to do so (Schavelzon and Rivera 1987). Despite the efforts of the Pennsylvania State University project in Kaminaljuyu, neither this project nor the ones made by Guatemalan archaeologists produced the necessary impact upon the national authorities and the general public that would have been necessary to further protect the site.

In the last 50 years and with the rapid urban development, archaeological sites have been swept away without any kind of archaeological research. This has severely limited the interpretation of the prehispanic history of the Central Valley of Guatemala. The incomplete history that we have is based, basically, in the outcomes of the investigations at Kaminaljuyu. Despite this dire situation, the rapid expansion of the city gave way to so called Rescue Archaeological Project, a practice that is becoming more and more popular not only in Guatemala City, in other areas of the country as well.

Rescue archaeology can be defined as archaeological survey and excavation carried out in areas threatened by, or revealed by, construction or other land development (Hester 1963:393) It is also known as preventive archaeology, salvage archaeology, commercial archaeology and even contract archaeology. No matter what name it receives, it has the same goal, to save as much information as possible of a site before it is destroyed.

For the Guatemalan archaeologist Erick Ponciano (Ponciano and Foncea 2009:46), rescue archaeology has four main objectives: 1. The rescue of portable objects such as stelae, ceramics and jade, 2. The rescue of looted sites, 3. The repatriation of cultural objects that left the country illegally and 4. The rescue of archaeological areas endangered by urban development in urban or rural areas. The last definition is the one that interests me in this thesis, since it is what characterizes what rescue projects do in Guatemala City.

Archaeological rescue projects have a long history in Guatemala, dating back to the time of the excavations of Shook, Kidder and Jennings in Mounds A and B of Kaminaljuyu (Kidder *et al.* 1946), but became more popular in other parts of the country due to major infrastructural work. The best example is, of course, the work of the French Mission in the Chixoy River Valley (Ichon 1979). This was a multiyear and multidisciplinary project carried out to rescue all the information possible of the sites that would be flooded by the construction of the Chixoy Dam. This work by the French Mission is a great example of a rescue project that had a lot of components with scientific research questions. The fact that they were able to study a huge area makes the history of the Chixoy Valley a little more complete than the one of Guatemala City. What's interesting to note here is that few sites were really destroyed, they were just flooded and when the river flow is low, the tallest structures can be seen.

The French Mission project was the last rescue project done by non-Guatemalans. The research area of the project was limited to areas susceptible to flooding by the waters of the dam, but they did document other sites on higher ground, and the project covered an area of around 40 km (Ichon 1996). The project was financed by a number of international organizations that included BID (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo) and the World Bank among others (http://www.internationalrivers.org/files/attached-files/vol2.pdf). According to Ichon the three main goals of the projects were: 1. A complete survey of the Chixoy River Basin, 2. In minor and medium sites the topographic drawing of each, with excavations only on the most important structures of every site and the dating of the site through the analysis of cultural material and finally 3.

The whole excavation of larger sites (Ichon 1979).

Like the Carnegie Institution and Pennsylvania State projects in Kaminaljuyu, the French mission was able to publish a series of books about it's findings (Ichon 1979; 1981; Arnauld 1986; Ichon *et al.* 1996) both in Spanish and French. Besides the results of the excavations, the French Mission was very interested on the impact that the construction of the Dam would have on the inhabitants of the region and they did anthropological work with the communities (Ichon 1992). The impact that development projects have in surrounding communities is something that is barely discussed among archaeologists and the results of the excavations in these areas are not sensitized enough.

As an archaeologist in Guatemala, your main role is to direct archeological projects and to submit a report with your findings to the cultural authorities; anything beyond that, including community engagement or educational outreach, is your own decision.

To carry out any archaeological project in Guatemala you have to have a professional degree preferably in archaeology and in the case of Guatemalans, you need to be a member of the Colegio de Humanidades, the only institution that hosts and gather professionals of the social sciences. There used to be an archaeological society in the 1990's (Lilian Corzo, personal communication), but that vanished. Now efforts are beginning to try to bring the society back with the main purpose of watching out after the archaeologist. The idea is to have a society under which archaeologists can share their collective concerns about any archaeological issue, one that clearly determines the roles of the archaeologists, one that establishes the ethical parameters under which

archaeologists should work and that can even impose legal sanctions to archaeologists who break any cultural rule. This topic has been discussed informally by some archaeologists and there's an interest among Guatemalan archaeologists on having the society back.

Archaeology began in Guatemala a long time ago, but as a professional career for Guatemalans it did so only in 1978 in the Universidad de San Carlos and in 1982 in the Universidad del Valle. Both universities have programs that teach you theory and practice, and it is under the second aspect where you learn how to do archaeology, and in the field where you are taught how to excavate, how to survey areas, etc. The practical part is complemented with theoretical courses about world history, the history of anthropological thought, general courses about archaeology and seminars about different topics in Mesoamerican archaeology. Despite the heavy burden of theory, something that is missing in both colleges is any course directed towards the learning of ethical definitions and procedures and one about cultural regulations.

Throughout this career path, students learn that archaeologists study the past to learn about ancient cultures. In my opinion, the fact that a student gets a degree in archaeology sort of gives that student the right and responsibility to protect the cultural past. As McGuire (2003:VII) points out: archaeologists are the stewardship of something that is priceless, irreplaceable and threatened. This definition is somehow true, but it is also true that some of the things we study have economic value and sites are constantly looted for this purpose and when not looted, they are destroyed. In my experience,

archaeologists who do rescue archaeology face ethical dilemmas for which college courses didn't prepare them.

The main problem that arises in rescue projects is for whom the archaeologist will work, for the person or company that hires him, and whose goal is to do minimal archaeology in order to develop the land for financial gain, or for the Ministerio de Cultura, which is tasked with preserving cultural heritage. Will her or his ethical values be stronger than the pressure of his/her contractor? What should be the archaeologist's position when facing different ethical issues? I think I learned a lot from my college years: I can do a map, a survey, I can do or supervise excavations, I know how to write a report, and I know the steps to carry out archaeological projects. But what my courses didn't teach me was to analyze the ethics behind what I do and to question if I'm doing ethical work or not.

Most archaeological research projects are filled with questions regarding ethical issues, questions of why we excavate thus, who has the power to approve what to excavate, and so on. But archaeologists that work in rescue projects face even larger challenges when faced with the decision of balancing the needs and ethics of the profession with the necessities of the client. All professions should have their own ethical codes, and professionals are supposed to follow that code, but can we archaeologists follow it in every situation, and especially with regards to rescue projects?

The only way to do ethical work, in Guatemala, is to follow the steps that the Reglamento de Investigacion Arqueologica y Disciplinas Afines del Ministerio de Cultura y Deportes gives you. As long as you comply with what's in there, Guatemalans

feel that we did the right thing. But there's no mention of any ethical problem that can arise from rescue projects; in reality, there is no elaborate or clearly thought out ethical code for rescue archaeology in Guatemala that also addresses different scenarios. This legislation was done mostly for research oriented projects and not for rescue projects, which due to their unique nature will have a lot of components that the current legislation doesn't mention. This is why the necessity of having a specific set of regulations to do rescue projects nowadays is important. In my opinion, strict and clear rules will lead to a better practice of archaeology and to better rescue projects.

This research is divided into two parts, one with the theory behind ethics and a brief history of Guatemala City rescue projects and the other with a focus on my field work carried out at Santa Isabel, as part of a rescue project. Santa Isabel is an archaeological site located in Fraijanes, southeast of Guatemala City and in its present condition it's probably the only archaeological site that hasn't been the object of destruction due to urbanism. Part of the reason for this is that the area has not experienced a lot of urban growth. But this is about to change. In 2011 a rescue project was carried out under my direction and the results are presented here, as well as some personal comments about my experience in the field of Guatemalan rescue archaeology. I do not consider myself an expert on this, but this experience has taught some valuable lessons that I would like to share and that I consider important because some of them are common problems that archaeologists could face and can be frustrating.

The first chapter of this thesis is the introduction to the research and some general definitions of the major topics discussed here. The second chapter has the theoretical background behind the meaning of both ethics in archaeology and rescue projects and the role of the archaeologist in the field in Guatemala The third chapter is an overview of the history of rescue projects in Guatemala and a brief discussion of the cultural legislation that guides it. These first three chapters are mainly a literature review on publications about ethics in archaeology. Since this topic hasn't been discussed in Guatemala, most of my sources are external, mostly by US scholars, but I use them to provide a closer examination of rescue projects in Guatemala City. For this last task I reviewed the reports of these projects that are stored in the library of the Dirección General del Patrimonio Natural y Cultural in Guatemala City and electronics reports as well.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to the results of the fieldwork in Santa Isabel, the lessons that I learned from working there, and the role that archaeological parks or areas can have in an urban context. Excavations in Santa Isabel consisted of 66 test pits located in different areas of the site. On the biggest mounds the excavations were located either on the supposed corners of the structure or in the center of them. Both locations were chosen with the intent to identify the shape of the structure and the cultural materials used to construct them. In areas where no visible architecture was seen, a manual drill was used to test for occupational traces, however none of the cores yielded cultural material and sterile soils were found less then a meter deep. As I will detail in Chapter Four, the excavations in the residential zone followed a different methodology due to the findings. What began as random test pits turned into one extensive

excavation that uncovered the remains of a residential unit, traces of floors and walls, ceramics and lithic dumps and a high concentration of lithic assemblages. All the material was later analyzed and turned over to the Dirección General del Patrimonio.

In the fifth, and final chapter, I propose a new methodology to do rescue projects and summarize the principal ideas of this work. The idea behind this chapter is influenced by my work on four different rescue projects (La Falda, Naranjo, Kaminaljuyu and Santa Isabel) but mostly by the engaging conversation with Dra. Barbara Arroyo, who has been actively promoting urban archaeology in Guatemala City.

The research in Santa Isabel was done under the category of a rescue project and even though the first season yielded some valuable information about the Middle and Late Preclassic periods, a lot of more work needs to be done in order to comprehend the role of the site. And, as I will discuss in Chapter Five, a lot of thinking has to go on about what role the site should play nowadays. I believe that sites like this need to be protected, not only for their historical value, but also because this area can become an important cultural and educational component for urban areas like Guatemala City.

Maybe it's too late for the prehispanic settlements in Guatemala City and its immediate surroundings to be rescued. But it is my belief that the history of how archaeological research has been done in Guatemala City can help to improve cultural regulations in other areas of the country and, I hope, prevent the same mistakes. In my opinion, the case of Santa Isabel is an excellent one for beginning to frame and evaluate the problems, and potential , of rescue projects in Guatemala and the role that these ancient settlements can have within Guatemalans.

NOTE to the reader: To avoid mistakes in the translation of the name of the cultural laws or of the Guatemalan institutions, throughout this work I will use the names they have in Spanish.

Chapter 2: A Theorethical approach to rescue archaeology

Archaeological salvage, carefully planned and executed, neither denies nor impedes progress
(Brew 1961:1).

"Esto es para usted" (this is for you), this is what Chente Patzan, one of my workers, told me the first day of fieldwork in 2006 and he handed me a little plastic bag. Inside, and wrapped in newspaper sheets, were three prehispanic artifacts that he had collected working in a construction site nearby. I ask him why he was giving that to me and he said that the people over there were just throwing everything out but he managed to recover those and thought that I was the ideal person to have them. Our conversation didn't go any further and I never asked him why he thought that about me, my only guess would be that he thought that since I'm an archaeologist, who better than me to have those. Now that I think about it, accepting those artifacts was an unethical thing to do**.**

Modern Guatemala City lies above the remains of various archaeological sites, most of them unknown to a majority of the population. When speaking of the prehispanic history of Guatemala, most of the people associate it with the archaeological sites of Peten and hardily recognize that within the city there are archaeological sites as well. This lack of awareness has led to the destruction of most of the archaeological remains.

Thousands of people walk everyday in the surroundings of a major and important archaeological site, Kaminaljuyu, but less than 50% of them know what Kaminaljuyu is and the role it played thousands of years ago. The remains of this ancient city, which make up the only official archaeological park in Guatemala City, are located in a densely

populated area. Scattered mounds of the same site are inside schools or private plots and it represents the best example of the kind of archaeology that has been practiced here in the last 50 years: a rescue archaeology. This kind of archaeology has received several names throughout the years, salvage, rescue, contract, client-oriented, emergency and even cultural resource management; no matter what it is called, it has the same purpose: to collect information about a site before it´s partially or fully destroyed.

A rescue research pretends to obtain the largest amount of information before it will be lost due to the building or modern activity at a site. The main objective of these projects is to handle the archaeological record adequately to obtain cultural information that could be relevant in determining the cultural value of the site and identify which sites or parts of the site should be protected or excavated through salvage operations (Arroyo 2007).

Archaeology has been through a series of changes, both methodologically and theoretically in the last 30 years, and as McGuire (McGuire 2003:viii) clearly points out "*perhaps, the most profound change…. has been the development of contract archaeology"* and since then, archaeology became a business. Contract archaeology is a useful and accurate definition, since this work is a contract between the archaeologist and a client (usually developers). The clients are most interested in how the presence of a particular cultural resource affects their projects and want to know in very basic terms the importance of these remains (Mayer-Oakes and Portnoy 1980:4). In Guatemala, only rescue or salvage archaeology are terms that are officially recognized, but throughout this work I will use both terms interchangeably. Also, I will sometimes use the word clients to

refer to the people who establish contracts with the archaeologist to do the rescue projects.

At first, archaeology was an antiquarians' endeavour, then the field turned to scientific research, and with the development of urban and rural areas, it has turned into a business. Governments, in response to the increasing number of archaeological sites that are in danger due to development projects, have created laws to protect these sites (Ley para la Protección del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nación, Acuerdo Ministerial sobre Protección de KaminalJuyú, Acuerdo Ministerial sobre las Normas para la Protección y uso de las Áreas Adyacentes afectas al Montículo de la Culebra y Acueducto de Pinula, Acuerdo de Creación de Zonas y Monumentos Arqueológicos Históricos y Artísticos de los Periodos Prehispánico e Hispánico, among others) and as part of requirements of these laws, a rescue project is mandatory before any kind of development work. Neverless this is seen as a mandatory exercise that sometimes lacks a scientific objectivity. In other words, this kind of archaeology is a technical service rather than genuine scientific research. Such an approach fails to meet the requirements of the law, fails to satisfy the needs of archaeological science, and frequently fails to protect the clients' interests (Raab *et al.* 1980).

The expansion of the Aswan dam in Egypt in 1907 began the trend of rescue archaeology. Several archaeological sites were in the area to be submerged and archaeological research was necessary. Since then, as cities expanded, the need to rescue the ancient settlements has become a necessity or an obligation (Brew 1961:45); and because it´s more an obligation than anything else, the quality of the work is sometimes

not the best. This is probably the most frequent critique of a rescue project: the incapacity to produce a good and comprehensive report that shows the true cultural value of a place and sometimes even, the incapability of writing a report for wider audiences.

Rescue archaeology experienced a boom in the mid 1950´s, and in 1962 Hester (Hester 1962:393) emphasized the importance of this work saying "*The need for salvage is imperative. We must either salvage the sites now or see them forever destroyed. In this situation we are faced with the choice of securing inadequate data or no data at all*". Obviously not everything can be saved, but it can be surveyed and recorded. Outstanding sites can be excavated and important buildings can sometimes be moved. Probably the best example of this would be the Abu Simbel Complex in Egypt, which was moved from its original location to prevent being flooded (Kadry 1983:207). When the construction of the Chixoy Dam began in the highlands of Guatemala the idea of moving some prehispanic temples was considered by the French Mission as an option for their protection, however, this was an expensive effort and according to Ichon (1979:5), the only site worth protecting from flooding was Cauinal. In fact, this is the same site whose tallest temples are seen when the river flow is low.

Despite not being able to move any temple, the French Mission gave to the country something that previous rescue projects couldn't: Spanish language written reports. From a technical perspective, it is not essential that results from rescue projects be published, especially because private firms regard those reports as proprietary information (Raab *et al.* 1980:543). The Guatemalan law requires a written report, but does not contemplate the idea of having these results socialized with the public or even

with fellow archaeologists; the commitment to have data presented in any congress or symposium comes from the archaeologist. The lack of awareness about the cultural past is to some extent a result of this; there are no formal publications of these projects and the most basic and complete rescue reports of Guatemala City pertain to the site of Kaminaljuyu and were done by the Carnegie Institution and The Pennsylvania State University Project (Kidder *et al.* 1946; Michels 1979a, 1979b). However they are written in English, which is spoken by a minority and have never been translated. After those two project most of the rescue archaeology has been done by Guatemala archaeologists, at first working for the Ministerio de Cultura and then as independent archaeologists. According to Miguel Orrego, some of the archaeologists who worked for the Ministerio de Cultura didn't make any report at all of the excavations and if they did, those are nowhere to be found (Miguel Orrego personal communication). With the exception of the Miraflores and San Jorge projects, the other rescue projects on Kaminaljuyu have only yielded very technical reports that failed to contextualized the excavated area with the whole site, like the report of the excavations of the Proyecto de Rescate Jordan (Padilla 2011).

The failure to publish reports contributes to the problem of cultural awareness, and a lack of commitment to research values condones the absence of objective professional oversight. This practice contributes to the development of what Schindler aptly calls the "*gray literature*" of environmental-impact studies, the accumulation of documents and reports that never come under the scrutiny of the scientific community (Raab *et al.* 1980:543).

A brief review of some old rescue project reports evidence this point. They resemble more a geological report, and just a mere description of the stratigraphic layers and some statistics concerning the cultural material. They lack basic comparison with other projects and cannot situate the importance of the work within the archaeology of the area. Both the reports of Padilla (2011) and Rubio (2008) on different areas of Kaminaljuyu only describe the different stratigraphic cultural layers but don't mention how those relate to other findings in Kaminaljuyu and none of those mention the relationship of these cultural layers with the nearby test trenches that were excavated by the Pennsylvania State University Project. I had the chance to visit Padilla's project and the impression that I got from it was that she didn't knew the basic literature about Kaminaljuyu. She seemed surprised when I mentioned the book about the test trenches or the digital photo archive of Kaminaljuyu that is online. Since the Proyecto Parque Kaminaljuyu started to gather and disperse information about Kaminaljuyu, the *Direccion General del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural* has a copy of all the files that year by year the project collects, but few people actually go and check that information and this contributes to poor written rescue project reports that don't satisfy the archaeological standard but are enough for the clients who pay for the work.

Profit motives exert a powerful influence on the character of rescue investigations of all kinds. Sometimes there´s an excessive emphasis on the profit making regardless of the scientific adequacy of the work as it to be performed. An ethical question could be raised about the profit from these projects, but regardless of the answer, many institutions and individuals benefit from it. For archaeologists, every project represents another point

in their curriculum, and there´s nothing wrong about it as long as the work has good quality, but that´s not always the case.

Archaeologists are trained to do scientific research but need to recognize that there are several types of work to be done in archaeology and these require different levels of competence and types of training. A basic knowledge and training in archaeological field techniques is also required, no matter what the project. But most importantly, some courses of an archaeological curriculum should be dedicated to this topic in the undergraduate level. In accordance with Hester (1963:393), I agree that courses in an archaeological curriculum should include the history of rescue archaeology, the legal background behind rescue projects, the Guatemalan cultural heritage law, and the nature of the specific survey and excavation techniques pertinent to rescue archaeology and, if possible, a course on techniques of publication. Hester was correct when pointing out the basic knowledge that one should have and of all of these I will emphasize the role of knowing the law. In the next chapter, the strengths and flaws of the Cultural Law will be analyzed, but it´s important to understand and know it before going to the field. But it is not only the archaeologist who should be knowledgeable about the law, though, but also the clients and people who need this feedback (Bergman and Doershuk 2003:86). The clients should be aware of what the law requires, and what to do in order to fulfill those needs. They should also able to understand that some archaeological findings will require more extensive and careful excavations, and they should be conscious of the possibility that the project will need to extend its original schedule.

In the specific case of Guatemala, most development projects are being carried out in either on the Highlands or in the South Coast, and these are the areas that have rescue projects done more often. I would suggest a stronger emphasis in the undergraduate level on course about the archaeology on these regions. Also, a course on ethics is more than necessary. Neither of the universities with archaeology programs devotes a single course or seminar on archaeological ethics issues and students should be challenged to think about ethical issues before they have to face the reality, a real problem in field. Every year the Society for American Archaeology holds an Ethics Bowl, a contest where students face ethical issues and each provides the best answer according to their ethical values. I think that this could a be an activity that should encourage the students to think about these issues and develop critical skills.

Despite the negativity behind rescue archaeology, this could actually bring unexpected outcomes. Brew (1961) gave some examples of how rescue archaeology contributed to the creation of a museum in Zuider Zee in the Netherlands, delayed the construction of new buildings in some European cities, and joined together a diverse group of governmental agencies in the same research program. In the case of Guatemala City it has created an archaeological park, Kaminaljuyu, an archaeologically-protected area at the site of Naranjo that has yet to be declared a park, and a private museum, Museo Miraflores, whose main goal is to exhibit the richness of Kaminaljuyu and the Maya Culture. This museum is located next to a shopping mall and people visiting the mall can take a little detour and go into the museum.

But rescue projects can also have negative results. The best example in Guatemala is Rosario-Naranjo, an archaeological site now formed by three mounds and totally surrounded by an urban development. The first rescue project was done in 1991 and the main area around the mounds was preserved. However, the owners of the place solicited another project to be able to free more land for development that also contained archaeological remains. But, before the Ministry of Culture issued its resolution to carry forth the project, an indigenous religious group filed a complaint to the Public Ministry because the site was being destroyed. The indigenous organization *Oklajuj Ajpop* was the one who made the complaint and the news was covered by local and international newspapers (http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/Breves_0_126588562.html, https://cejil.org/casos/sitio-el-rosario, http://www.albedrio.org/htm/otrosdocs/comunicados/diversasorganizaciones-013.htm, http://www.treatycouncil.org/PDF/COMUNICADO_URGENTE_I.pdf, https://www.facebook.com/EspiritualidadMaya/posts/630323440316341 http://argentina.indymedia.org/news/2006/01/365030.php, http://www.igfm.de/fileadmin/igfm.de/pdf/UNO/UN-SBE-Religionsfreiheit-2008-1.pdf)

Since that problem, Rosario-Naranjo became an example of how the different groups associated with a rescue project interact, or better said, don't. The organization's complaint said:

> On Tuesday, December 27 of 2005, CONSTRUTIERRA LEXUS Y SOCIEDAD ANONIMA, initiated the desecration and destruction of the ancient remains of the sacred place and archaeological site Tulam Tzj, located on the 40th avenue, zone 4 of Mixco to develop de residential project Cañadas de Naranjo (http://www.treatycouncil.org/PDF/COMUNICADO_URGENTE_I.pdf).

The then Minisetr of Culture , Licenciado Manuel Salazar, denied the existence of that damage (http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/Breves_0_126588562.html). The real claim was not really the destruction of the mounds, because the mounds were protected by the law, but the fact that with this new residential complex, the entry of the indigenous groups to the area would be denied.

The easiest solution for the owners was to stop developing the area, but also close it to any further archaeological project. The mounds now stand there enclosed by concrete walls and a perimeter fence, and the Ministry of Culture lacks the economic resources to follow the case in a court and conversations between them and the owners are nonexistent. The indigenous groups also stopped fighting the case. I couldn't find any reference to why this happened, but once the media stopped the coverage of this issue, so the claims of the indigenous groups ceased as well.

The hardest issue behind rescue archaeology is to find a balance of interests, the point where clients, the archaeologist, cultural authorities, and indigenous groups are in accordance. At the end, the archaeologist's work is to satisfy the client's wishes so they can get paid. Patterson expresses this point:

> Any increase in archaeological knowledge and satisfaction of individual research goals are simply secondary effects, no matter how important….. Rescue archaeology is really no different than professional consulting in other fields. Consultants are engaged to solve client problem, not research goals.

There is no inherent opposition between archaeological and client needs in problem-oriented research, quite the contrary. Environmental-protection laws clearly intend that archeological resources be conserved for their scientific and cultural values

and given the current stage of archaeology, the only way in which these values can be identified and protected is through genuine research, which serves archaeological science and, at the same time, brings the clients into compliance with the cultural law. The problem arises with the selection of research problems that are inappropriate to the needs and circumstances of specific projects. When creative research is worked skillfully into contract projects, maximum benefits accrue to all interests.

The growth in contract archaeology has raised or accentuated ethical issues pertaining to the relationship of research to legal compliance, the relationship of academic archaeology to business, the training of students, publication and public outreach. In terms in rescue archaeology, public education means that all mitigation projects should incorporate serious and effective outreach programs to be presented in popular articles, videos, poster, open-site visitation day and so on (Bergman and Doershuk:95).

Ethical issues are in fact one of the biggest problems in rescue archaeology. An ethic is a set of standards that guides actions, social norms that prescribe or prohibit certain kinds of behavior, or a code of conduct (Wildersen 1984:4). In day-to-day terms, an ethic consists of recommendations about what you should do. Archaeological ethics have not been part of formal archaeological training until recent years. Universities are starting to incorporate ethics into archaeology curricula and books (Lynnot 2003:5). But in Guatemala this is not the case, there´s still no course training the archaeologists about ethical issues like the privatization of the Museo Nacional, the private collections. And,

in rescue archaeology, most of the problems arise when the archeologist has to compromise her/his values to fulfill the client's desires.

The ethical dilemmas that archaeologists face in rescue projects are related to how to balance values that are often at odds with one another such as development and preservation. The practitioners of rescue archaeology should: understand federal, state and local cultural resource regulations, identify any specific permit requirement, understand the nature of the client´s industry, financing and scheduling (but clients should be aware that if the project demands it, the time can be extended), ensure the proper identification and treatment of the cultural material and to be able to negotiate the resolution of conflicts (Bergman and Doershuk:96).

Archaeologists have responsibilities towards the archeological record, colleagues, employees, students and to society. They are the ones in charge of evaluating the significance of the archaeological sites and raising awareness of the cultural past. They have to be the intermediaries between the client and the cultural authorities and have in their hands the immense power to preserve or destroy the archaeological record. Their field work and written report could be the last scientific research ever done in that site, and because of this their work has to be filled with good scientific questions and ethical values, and they have to see it as a research project and not merely as a rescue one. In my opinion, there has to be more commitment to their profession; they should not take this work for granted just because it's necessary.

Chapter 3 :La Ley para la Proteccion del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion and a brief history of archaeological rescue proyects in Guatemala City

LA LEY PARA LA PROTECCION DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURAL DE LA NACION

"*Yo no puedo decir que encontré esto (una vasija) en mi terreno porque viene el gobierno y nos lo quita*". This is what my grandmother told me when I asked her why she never said anything about some prehispanic objects she found in her property. This is probably one of the most common thoughts, a wrong one, about archaeological remains and has been a sort of collective thinking among Guatemalans. Most people believe that if you declare to have archaeological remains in your land, the state will come and appropriate the land because it's considered to be part of the nation's heritage.

There are a lot of misunderstandings about the cultural legislation than even I cannot understand and this is why I became interested in this topic. Is the Ley para Protección del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion really protecting the cultural heritage of Guatemala? In theory it is, and some of the articles deal exclusively with the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage, but there's no reference at all on how this will be reached and the means for doing so. This law should be more explicit in order to avoid misinterpretations.

Any discussion of cultural heritage has political, academic and social aspects and is a very complex topic. The legal framework governing the protection, promotion and

management of archaeological heritage includes a broad range of legal provisions found in national laws and international conventions as well.

Cultural heritage refers to a collective and public notion, belonging to the realm of public interest and held for the public good. On the other hand, cultural property is that specific form of property that enhances identity, understanding, and appreciation for the culture that produced the particular property.

The Ley para la Protección del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion was created on June 12 of 1970, some six years after a series of accords were created to specifically protect Kaminaljuyu. This law has seen some minor modifications through time but the main objectives are the ones described in 1970. In the same year, the Acuerdo de creación de Zonas y Monumentos arqueológicos, históricos y artísticos de los periodos prehispanico e Hispanico was issued, and here, all the known prehispanic sites were listed and declared historical monuments.

The law opens with the definition of cultural heritage as:

> Forman el patrimonio cultural de la nación los bienes e instituciones que por ministerio de ley o por declaratoria de autoridad lo integren y constituyan bienes muebles o inmuebles, públicos y privados, relativos a la paleontología, arqueología, historia, antropología, arte, ciencia y tecnología, y la cultura en general, incluido el patrimonio intangible, que coadyuven al fortalecimiento de la identidad nacional (Ley para la Protección de Patrimonio Cultural de la Nación 1970)

Further, Article III subdivides tangible property into movable and immovable categories. Among the immovable tangible property protected by the law are 1) architecture and its elements, including the applied ornamentation; 2) groups of architectonical elements and complexes, and complexes of vernacular architecture; 3)

historical centers and complexes, including the surrounding areas and landscapes; 4) the urban design of cities and towns, 5) paleontological and archaeological sites; 6) historical sites; 7) areas or singular places created by humans, or a combination of these with the surrounding landscape, recognized by its character or sight as a place of exceptional value; and 8) prehistoric and pre-Hispanic inscriptions and representations.

Among the movable tangible property are 1) collections and objects of scientific importance to the country, be it of value for zoology, botany, mineralogy, anatomy or paleontology; 2) the product of excavations and explorations whether authorized or not, or any paleontological or archaeological discoveries; 3) elements coming from the dismemberment of artistic and historic monuments, or archaeological sites; and 4) artistic and cultural goods related to the history of the country including: paintings, drawings and sculptures; photographs, engravings, sacred art, manuscripts and antique books; historical newspapers and magazines; archives, musical instruments and antique furniture.

The archaeological remains are defined under Article III of the Decree 81-98 of the Heritage Law; its protection and research constitute articles IV to XVII. Of these articles, IX and XII are confusing. For example it is stated in Article IX that "los bienes culturales protegidos por esta ley no podrán ser objeto de alteración alguna salvo en el caso de intervención debidamente autorizada por la Dirección General del Patrimonio Cultural y Natural". However, this is different from what is articulated in Article XII: "Los bienes que forman el Patrimonio Cultural de la Nación no podrán destruirse o alterarse total o parcialmente, por acción u omisión de personas naturales o jurídicas, nacionales o extranjeras". As with the accords of Kaminaljuyu, one article states that the

cultural assets cannot be destroyed but the other denies the previous article stating that they can be destroyed only with the authorization of the Direccion General del Patrimonio. The choice of words in the law is quite complicated and what can be understood is that as long as you have a rescue project, or any kind of archaeological project that is authorized by the cultural authorities, you have the legal power to tear down the mound, a fact that is not clearly written down.

Another problem here is that the archaeological sites declared as part of the Cultural Heritage are those reported a long time ago and there's no an updated version of these assets. For example, various surveys have documented new archaeological sites, and even though these are registered in the Dirección General del Patriminio, they are not legally recognized as historical monuments.

According to the Cultural Heritage Law, 108 archaeological sites located in the State of Guatemala (Figure 3.1), 52 of those in Guatemala City, were protected in the 1970 law, but of these, only 8 have some mounds left until this day (Figure 3.2). Guatemala City has, by far, the greatest amount of rescue projects done; and unfortunately, most of these projects are associated with the destruction of archaeological mounds. Since the cultural law was established, at least 40 mounds have been destroyed and there has been no judicial process against the landowners. In other words, the weight of the law hasn't had any effect.

The Instituto de Antropología e Historia was created in 1978 and entrusted with overseeing archaeological excavation and safeguarding the archaeological heritage. Now this institution is known as the Dirección General del Patrimonio Natural y Cultural and

they are in charge of everything related to cultural patrimony and are the only ones with the power to inspect the law and to make changes to it.

As one of the first steps to make the cultural law stronger and even more reliable, in my opinion, the Direccion General del Patrimonio Natural and Cultural should do an extensive survey to document the archaeological sites, or at least, visit the ones listed on the 1970 law (accord 1210), to record if they still exist or not, as an example, the table in appendix A names all the archaeological sites in Guatemala City that were protected in 1970, the last column describes the state of preservation nowadays; most of these sites don't even exist anymore but they still appear in the literature as protected sites (See Appendix A). This updated list would be helpful for the cultural authorities because it could demonstrate the rate of disappearance of archaeological sites and even create a set of emergency measures, like more periodic visits to some areas.

The way the measures of protection and conservation seem to work is that in every archaeological site a *poligono de proteccion* ("protection polygon") is mapped out according to internal manuals of the DIreccion General del Patrimonio. This poligono has the function of establishing an area that is going to be protected by the law, a sort of buffer zone. But the problem is that the areas outside that buffer zone don't have, up to this day, a legal term that describes them and the easiest solution is to name them as "*las areas que quedan fuera del poligono de proteccion*", but it is not clear whether this area is protected by the law or not. But the truth is that, in most cases, they aren't. Most archaeologists working in rescue projects, including myself, consider the "*poligono de proteccion"* the only protected area.

The area that does not fall in the buffer zone is not protected but it doesn't mean that it does not have archaeological value. I will use the term "*area liberada*" when referring to this area. Although it is not a term that's officially used , this is the colloquial term that we, the archaeologists, use in Guatemala. The problem about using this word is that it literally means "free area", suggesting that it is "free" or archaeologically valuable data, and can therefore be used for developing purposes. Also, this term also implies that the cultural authorities are giving permission to the developers to use the land and disassociating themselves from any responsibility.

The root of this problem is that this is an issue that is not discussed in the Ley Para la Proteccion del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion, and most of the terminology is not even in the law. According to Ana Lucia Arroyave (personal communication 2014), the director of the Departamento de Monumentos Prehispanicos, the current cultural authorities are working on incorporating these terms into the law, which was not created by archaeology technicians but by lawyers, who know little about the practical work done in the archaeological projects. She also told me that there are some internal manuals that are used by the lawyers to determine the dimensions of the "*poligono de proteccion"* and the standards to follow. Inside the general law there's no mention of these manuals, and I think there must be a section indicating the existence of these.

If you, as a developer, know from the beginning of the process that there's a manual that specifies that certain areas are going to be protected, then developers should not be able to argue in opposition to having these areas protected. I also consider it of

primary importance to establish a set of basic parameters about what the "*poligono de proteccion"* will protect from the very beginning of negotiations. For example, what mounds will be protected? All of the mounds or only those with certain dimensions? What about the stone monuments that are in flat areas with no visible architecture? What about flat areas with no mounds?

Every archaeological project will have its own parameters of protection, but it's important to establish some basic rules in order protect the actions of both the archaeologist and the cultural authorities. At the end, rescue projects are the tool for protecting the archaeological sites.

Another obstacle of the law, as with other laws, is its public outreach. Usually, in Guatemala, the laws are only printed in the official newspaper, which has a very limited audience and the law is published without any explanations in plain language. As a result, most people do not understand the law clearly. For years the biggest misunderstanding about this law is that most people think that if you have cultural remains on your property that the state can take them away from you. It's necessary to have an information campaign that explains this issue and that engages people with the goal of protecting the cultural assets that they find on their properties.

Likewise, in my opinion, the law needs stronger punishments, and if not stronger, at least the power to make those punishments a reality. For example, the law stipulates a certain amount of years in prison or a specific amount of money to be paid for violations, but most times, an agreement between the client and the Dirección general del Patrimonio is reached and instead of money, the developers end up doing something else, like

infrastructural work. A good example of this can be found inside Kaminaljuyu Archaeological Park where both the entrance cabin and restrooms were done by a development company who destroyed a mound and instead of jail time or monetary payback, they built those two buildings (Irene Palma personal communication). The irony in this is that potential governmental revenue, from fines for violations, is lost.

The law doesn´t contemplate any kind of punishment to archaeologists under whose direction mounds are destroyed. There have been some examples where archaeologist themselves were aware of the destruction of mounds and never said anything. Ethical issues are involved here and the Direccion General del Patriminio Natural and Cultural should be able to penalize these actions.

The general law is supported by national and international laws like the Convención de 1972 sobre la Protección del Patrimonio Mundial Cultural y Natural, but the government hasn't been able to apply the law even in the lower levels of local government, so national and international backing has not been particularly useful. Two ministerial agreements complement the Law for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage in Guatemala City, one regarding the Monticulo de la Culebra and its surroundings and the other belonging to Kaminaljuyu. None of these has been effective and both places continue to experience a slow destruction.

The Ley para la Protección del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion is somehow aided in its institutional implementation by the Reglamento de Investigacion Arqueologica y Disciplinas Afines del Ministerio de Cultura y Deportes, a set of rules that archaeologists must follow in order to carry out scientific research. This is an internal

manual that you can get in the Dirección General de Patriminio and has yet to be uploaded onto the webpage of the institution. Looking at this, you can see that some modifications can be done in order to improve the quality of the work, and in the case of rescue projects, it can provide a method to do scientific work that can yield better results than those associated with most extant rescue projects. In the last chapter I will be proposing some changes to those guidelines, ideas that are not only mine, but came as a result of conversations with various colleagues who are aware of the lack of scientific strictures that characterizes most rescue projects.

Under the Reglamento de Investigación Arqueologica y Disciplinas Afines del Ministerio de Cultura y Deportes, archaeological research projects can fall under eight different modalities. Of these, modalities B and C are the ones most pertinent for this work. Modality B is described as:

> Salvamento arqueológico de bienes muebles e inmuebles previo a cualquier intervención, como necesidad inevitable ante obras públicas y privadas. Para este tipo de proyectos deben realizarse investigaciones exhaustivas e integrales, de preferencia multidisciplinarias, en los sitios o áreas amenazadas.

Modality C states: "*Rescate y/o intervención imprevista de emergencia ante obras de infraestructura*". The main difference, in definition at least, is that "salvage" projects, according to Modality B, are done in sites that are not in danger of being destroyed immediately and usually are planned projects. By contrast, according to Modality C, rescue projects are done at the last minute and excavations undertaken in sites that are being destroyed. Although there´s a difference in the definitions, most archaeologist, including myself, use the term rescue instead of salvage and most

projects are labeled as rescue projects, even though some might have a more salvage component.

It was under the modality of archeological salvage project that the Santa Isabel Rescue Project saw light in 2011; the results of this project will be presented in the next chapter. The area around the site is planned to have the headquarters of a private university and some residential complexes. Only one season of excavations were done and further research in necessary, but the owners of the land are willing to protect all the mounds, which is a special case, since most urban developers are not interested in preserving the mounds.

The protection and conservation of archaeological sites involves an on-going dispute between archaeologists, urban planners, lawyers and cultural authorities all of whom have different agendas. But in order to make more informed decisions about the fate of archaeological sites, it is important for archaeologists to undertake careful, scientific excavation of sites, since it is only with tuch concrete data that they can hope to justify their suggestions as to what to protect and why. This information should also be used to rethink the role that these archeological sites can have for modern audiences.

The guidelines are a way for involving archaeologists in the research and preservation of the cultural heritage in a respectful, scientific, ethical and committed manner. In my opinion, it is not only the scientific aspects that are important. There is also a need to create a sense of belonging and pride in cultural heritage for the broader population of Guatemalan citizens so that they can understand and feel proud of their past.

OLD CITY, NEW CITY

Imagine a block of houses, traffic congestion and pedestrians everywhere. Now picture an archaeologist with his/her shovel trying to carry out an archaeological dig. Well, that´s the kind of archaeology that is nowadays carried in Guatemala City, an urban archaeology, one far away from the picture given by the Indiana Jones' movies or TV documentaries. This is the XXIst century archaeology in an urban context, and I remember my first encounter with it. It was 2004 and as part of my undergraduate archaeology degree requirement I had to work in an archaeological project just outside Guatemala City, in a site known as La Falda. It was my first experience on a rescue project and I had great expectations. The first day we got there I remember my sense of disappointment when I saw the area that we would be excavating, a flat plot of about 200 m x 200 m and I remember thinking to myself, *where are the mounds?"*.

There were no mounds, no visible prehispanic architecture, and later that day I learned how the three mounds had been destroyed some years ago but that the area was still considered of archaeological value and that was why we were there, to do a rescue project. Although there were no mounds to "*rescue*" , our goal was to collect as much information as we could because that plot of land was going to be "*liberada*" and that was the last chance, and the first one, of doing archaeological research.

Currently, and according to the country's cultural law (Ley para la Protección del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion), before any previous public work around or in areas with archaeological remains a rescue project must be carried out, this type of study is also

a component of the Environmental Impact Study (Ponciano and Foncea 2009). Many projects have been done in various places in the Valley of Guatemala. Unfortunately, there is no legislation that is specific for rescue archaeology. Because of this, a diverse amount of information is processed by different archaeologists in many ways. Some rescue projects have contributed important information, however, most have produced only scant reports that are hard to find and contain little information. This is a tragedy as whatever a rescue project does, it is the last information (and sometimes the only one) available on a specific site (Arroyo 2007). Since one of the most important prehispanic cities was located in what is now Guatemala City, archaeology and rescue projects have a long history here.

Even though it's now hard to imagine how Guatemala City might have looked during prehispanic times, the first European settlers were, for sure, aware of the ancient remains that surrounded them. The first report to be known regarding archaeology in the Guatemalan Highlands is the description given by Fuentes y Guzman of the Montículo de la Culebra and how he thought that it was a prehispanic work. His description came some years later after Guatemala City was moved from the Panchoy Valley to its current location (Fuentes y Guzman 1932). This valley was chosen because it had the right size, fertile soils and good irrigation capacity (Chacon 2006:15). The distribution of the archaeological remains in the Valley floor was, in my point of view, a decisive factor for the settlement of Guatemala City in 1777 and the center of the city was established far away from the mounds, leaving these places as fields for agriculture.

The city was situated to the east of where most of the mounds were located. For the city planner, Marcos Ibañez (Chacon 2006), it was easier, I think, to trace the city in a relatively huge area of flat land, something that was impossible, due the dense distribution of mounds, in the west. This deliberate decision was helpful for the protection of the mounds, but I do not think that Ibañez had this in mind. My guess is that his decision was driven more by the fact that working on flat land was way more advantageous because it required less labor.

So the outskirts of the new Guatemala City were mainly lands intended for agriculture and pastoral activities. The richest families by that time acquired huge plots of land and the land distribution was concentrated in the hands of only a few (Brown 1997). These lands had a high concentration of cattle and a series of small lagoons or *charcas* (Castañeda 1995), some of those were still common in the 1940's as seen in the Carnegie Institution Photograph Collection (https://www.peabody.harvard.edu/node/27). How easy it was to access to these farms I don't really know, but the first descriptions of the archaeological remains of the area all came people who had access to them.

"*At eight we drove to Naranjo, to see the mounds with Mr. Corbett, the Duke, don Chico, myself, the Duchess and Misses Everral"* (Salvin 2000:138). These are the words of Caroline Salvin, who in 1873 visited the Naranjo Farm in the company of the Duke, Don Pedro de Aycinena, the richest man in Guatemala by that time (Brown 1997). She was able to see some mounds, and even did a little excavation, as she describes: "*We went to open a mound in El Naranjo. We found a black pot and bowl with a colored drawing, we also found a skeleton……. I made a drawing"* (Salvin 2000:186).

This seems to have been a time of much curiosity about Naranjo Farm by explorers and travelers (Arroyo 2007). In 1975, the photographer Edward Muybridge visited the site and took two photographs in the main plaza of Naranjo showing the plain monuments at the site (Burns 1986) and one year later, George Williamson also visited Naranjo. At that time, the farm was a coffee plantation, and between the coffee plants and shade trees Williamson was able to see the archaeological remains and drew the first sketch of the site and gave an accurate description of the mounds and monuments (Williamson 1877).

Some time later Alfred Maudslay (1899-1902) arrived, and he was the one who turned his attention to the mounds. He focused his attention on an area around Finca Arevalo and drew the first map of what would become Kaminaljuyu, with lines indicating the distribution of the mounds in various farms. He also described how some of the mounds were used as platforms for houses and how some stelae were re-utilized as facade ornaments (Maudslay 1899, Henderson 2013). His map, like Williamson's sketch of Naranjo, is pretty accurate and even includes some mounds that the Pennsylvania State University couldn't find during its mapping of the site (Crasborn 2009).

Despite the impressive array of mounds of what would become Kaminaljuyu, Salvin, Muybridge, and Williamson, decided to describe a smaller archaeological site, Naranjo, and only Maudslay focused on Kaminaljuyu. What´s interesting about the first three works is that the authors used different documentation techniques, showing their diverse personal backgrounds: Carolina Salvin did a painting, a watercolor, Muybridge took a couple of photographs, and Williamson wrote a technical and sort of an

archaeological report. Sadly, none of these works have been published in Spanish and in fact, most are unknown for Guatemalans (Williamson 1977; Burns 1986; Salvin 2000).

For example, on March 3, 2014 one headline in a Guatemalan newspaper was that the Boston Athenaeum had recently bound a series of photographs that Edward Muybridge took in Guatemala at the end of the 19th century. By the way that the article is written, one would think that these photographs were unpublished before this effort (http://elperiodico.com.gt/es/20140303/pais/243565/). But, in fact, Burns (1986) published a book about it and both of the photographs of Naranjo were published in the book about the rescue project done there (Arroyo 2007).

The period of the travelers was followed by a period of silence where no mention of the mounds can be found. It took over 20 years before this area became the focus of archaeological research by Manuel Gamio who, in 1925, was the first to conduct stratigraphic excavations. His excavation was the first to define what is now known as the Las Charcas phase, the earliest cultural stage to be detected for the Central Highlands (Gamio 1926). Following the work of Gamio, Samuel Lothrop studied Stela A and other monuments of the site (Lothrop 1926). One year later, in 1927, Antonio Villacorta, who gave the name Kaminaljuyu to the scattered mounds, excavated, along with his son, a mound in the Finca Esperanza, now known as "*Quitasombrero*" (Grajeda 1964:53).

In 1935, the same year of excavations by Wauchope in Zacualpa (Kidder *et al*. 1946), Alfred Kidder started the first major institutional project within the site. With the assistance of Edwin Shook, he conducted excavations at two of the most famous mounds of Kaminaljuyu, Mounds A and B near Roosevelt Hospital (Ibid). The Carnegie

Institution research in Kaminaljuyu lasted 17 years and resulted in the publication of three reports, the first, the superb *Excavations at Kaminaljuyu* (Kidder *et al*. 1946) which is a landmark in Guatemalan archeology, followed by *Mound E-III-3 Kaminaljuyu* (Shook and Kidder 1952) and *Excavations in Mound D-III-13 Kaminaljuyu* (Berlin 1952). Between 1956 and 1961, Gustavo Espinoza conducted research on the mound D-III-3, and results were published in 1967 (Evans 1967).

While excavations were done there, another, and maybe more important, task was carried out. Edwin Shook was surveying the country and recording all the archaeological sites. His reconnaissance included, of course, Guatemala City and he spent almost 10 years mapping, sketching sites, and gathering ceramics and lithics as well. Shook´s illuminative article "*Lugares Meridionales del Altiplano Central*", which dates to 1952, is the most complete work related to the settlement of the central Valley and, in some cases, is the only reference to archaeological sites now destroyed. Shook identified at least 35 settlements inside Guatemala City. Interesting or not, in my experience, this article is unknown to most of the archaeologists of Guatemala and the only ones that truly read it are the ones working in the central highlands.

In the 1950´s the expansion of the city began and, therefore, the destruction of the archaeological remains was inevitable (Arroyo 2007). The lack of an urban development program that contemplated the preservation of archaeological heritage, coupled with the negligence of the authorities and the interests of construction companies, caused many new neighborhoods to be built on land that was part of the ancient prehispanic city of Kaminaljuyu (Gonzales Ponciano nd). Between 1944-1954 new residential areas where

incorporated to the urban core of Guatemala and it was zone 7, where Kaminaljuyu is located, that had the highest rate of use of residential soil , and 52% of the urban developments of that period where done here (Mora 1998:28).

The destruction of Kaminaljuyu was growing parallel to the growth of the city. By this time, around the mid 1950´s, the mounds of Kaminaljuyu were distributed in various private lots, whose fate was in the hands of the urban developers. Knowing the importance of the cultural heritage, part of the Finca Arevalo was appropriated to create the Kaminaljuyu Archaeological park in the late 1950's, protecting less than 10% of the original size of this important prehispanic city. Under the control of the state, Kaminaljuyu was subject to research by Gustavo Espinosa, who excavated the main part of the *Acropolis*, whose buildings are exposed nowadays to the public. Espinosa's notes of this work have been never found, but a series of photographs published in the local newspaper *El Imparcial* shed light on the great amount of work done there (El Impacial, January 17 1957 and December 28 1960).

While mounds inside the park were protected, the ones outside were not protected and located inside private plots. Again, local newspapers were publishing random findings (El Imparcial, February 7 1964), but not even this prevented the expansion of the city and the destruction of the site, a fact that was also reported in the newspaper (Figure 3.3), and sadly, the cultural authorities of that time weren't doing enough to protect it. By contrast, Mexico City has quite a different story. When the sculpture of the Aztec goddess Coyolxauhqui was found, the Mexican president Jose Lopez Portillo purchased the two blocks around the area of the discovery for archaeological purposes and the

Templo Mayor Archaeological project began (Navarrete 2011:39), a great example of urban archaeology and an example of how culture and state can interact positively.

Noticing the high rate of destruction that Kaminaljuyu was experiencing, the state´s solution was to create an accord to protect the mounds and in 1964 The Acuerdo Ministerial sobre la Proteccion de Kaminaljuyu was issued stating "*The site of Kaminaljuyu is being destroyed by the natural growth of Guatemala city capital and therefore measures are needed to be taken in order to preserve the areas that haven´t been destroyed*". In regards to this matter Gustavo Espinosa made a map indicating which mounds were still present and their state of conservation. This map shows how the city was taking over the archaeological remains. The original map and a digital version can be seen in the offices of the Departamento de Monumentos, also, the current ongoing project Parque Kaminaljuyu has a copy all of this material plus a series of photographs and monographs on Kaminaljuyu that are accessible for anyone. In fact, one of the goals of this project has been the recompilation of material pertaining to Kaminaljuyu from different sources and archive them together.

The problem with this accord is that it contradicts itself. Article 1 states:

> *Queda prohibido a toda persona natural o jurídica, nacional o extranjera, efectuar trabajos que deterioren o destruyan los montículo de Kaminlajuyú sin autorización del Ministerio de Educación Pública y previo dictamen del Instituto de Antropología e Historia. No podrán autorizarse la destrucción de un montículo clasificado como intocable por el presente acuerdo, salvo en los casos a que se refiere el artículo 5o. De este acuerdo.*

What this means is that, basically, you cannot do any kind of work that destroys or deteriorates the mounds without permission of the Instituto de Antropología e Historia

and the mounds that are classified as untouchable cannot be destroyed, unless in the cases stated in article 5. Let's jump ahead and see article 5, which states:

> *Los montículos y áreas intocables serán destinadas exclusivamente a conservación y estudio científico cuidadoso. Queda prohibido hacer exploraciones en ellas, salvo en el caso de que se trato de instituciones debidamente calificadas y autorizadas por el Ministerio de Educación Pública, previo el dictamen del Instituto de Antropológica e Historia*.

Article 5 says that the mounds will be exclusively protected for research and conservation, which is a measure that actually protects the mounds. But, going back to article 2, it states:

> *Cuando se conceda autorización para realizar trabajos que puedan deteriorar o destruir algún montículo de Kaminaljuyú los inspectores del Instituto de Antropología e Historia vigilarán estos trabajos y podrán ordenar que se detengan los mismos cuando se descubran estructuras, tumbas u objetos escultóricos que ameriten ser estudiados debidamente o preservados de toda destrucción.*"

In other words, there's a contradiction. So, are the mounds untouchable or not? Apparently not, and it is worth noticing in the accord that there's no punishment or legal action taken against those who break this accord.

Besides that accord, there was no other plan on behalf of the state to preserve the mounds, and meanwhile residential complexes in the area were increasing in number. The Pennsylvania State University conducted a major research project in Kaminaljuyu and its surroundings in the late 1960s. The effort of many years of work was reflected in four publications: *The Ceramics of Kaminaljuyu* (Wetherington 1978), *Settlement Pattern Excavations at Kaminaljuyu* (Michels 1979a), *The Kaminaljuyu Chiefdom* (Michels 1979b) and *Kaminaljuyu and Teotihuacan* (Sanders and Michels 1977), whose

contributions to the understanding of the site have been invaluable.

The importance of the work of both the Carnegie Institution and Pennsylvania State University lies in that fact that despite the rescue nature of both projects, they nevertheless had scientific questions to answer; besides that, at least seven books came out of that work. In the technical aspect, the hard work in mounds A, B and D-III-3 shows that meticulous excavations can be done in mounds doomed to be torn down. The Pennsylvania State project was done at the same time as when the first cultural laws were established (in 1970) but these were not implemented.

In the 1980's, Kaminaljuyu was well known in the archaeological field and despite the fact that the research demonstrates the cultural significance of the place, it went unnoticed by most of the population, a situation that 30 years later does not seem to have changed much. The construction of roads, shopping centers and residential complexes began to reduce the number of visible mounds. The rapid development of the city as well as the existence of the Ley para la Proteccion del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion (http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/es/gt/gt036es.pdf) forced landowners to conduct research in places with visible archaeological remains.

The Pennsylvania State University Project was the last foreign project in Guatemala City, and from that time until today, most of the projects have been conducted by Guatemalan archaeologists. The first rescue projects after the 1980's were usually done by personnel of the Instituto de Antropologia and Historia and reports, if ever made, are missing for some period of time, like the work on the mounds of Villas de San Juan

(Miguel Orrego, personal communication). Some of the rescue projects of this time were done in order to "liberar" some land for commercial development.

Since 1980 the number of rescue projects has been increasing, a fact linked to the increasing number of housing and commercial developments. Just to cite some examples, rescue projects have been conducted in El Montículo de la Culebra (Navarrete and Luján 1986; Ericastilla and Shibata 1991; Ortega 2001), Las Majadas I (Velásquez 1993), Majadas III (Román 1996), Proyecto La Trinidad (Rivera 1992; Velasquez 2005), Rosario Naranjo (Foncea 1989; Grignon and Jacobo 1991; Jacobo 1992; Escobar and Alvarado 2004), Kaminaljuyu Miraflores II (De Leon 1995; Valdés y Popenoe de Hatch 1996), Gran Vía (De León 1996) , Kaminaljuyu/San Jorge (Popenoe de Hatch 1997), Las Conchas (Valle 2006), Naranjo 2006, 2007 and 2010). Urban development has also reached the outskirts of Guatemala City with projects in Piedra Parada (De León y Valdés 2002), La Falda (2004), Taltic (Alvarado y Seijas 2006), Canchon (Carpio 2007) and Santa Isabel (Paiz 2012). Others projects have been done but have failed to produce a written report. One of the best examples is that work carried on the Monticulo de la Culebra, where various projects have been done but lack any publication; other projects that haven't been published include Villas de San Juan, Villas de Miraflores I, Las Majadas 1, II y III, Monticulo B-IV-5 y La Democracia (Ponciano 2009).

Despite the accord for the protection of Kaminaljuyu and the national cultural law, mounds were constantly destroyed, and of the 200 mounds that once made up the site, only 35 are remaining and distributed in private and public lands (Crasborn 2009), and some, like the mounds in the Giordani property, are inaccessible to archaeologists.

The law, or better said the cultural authorities, have failed to protect what's left of the site, erasing part of our cultural history.

This review of the archaeological rescue projects in Kaminaljuyu sheds light on the importance of having a strong and clear Cultural Heritage Law that not only promotes the conservation and protection of the archaeological sites, but that also creates mechanisms for the punishment of people who break it and one that can create a public outreach program. I also believe that this program should also have as a main purpose the goal of educating the public about prehispanic history and helping them to understand that under Guatemala City lies the remains of various archaeological sites and that hundreds of years ago there was an old city there, Kaminaljuyu, that had commercial, residential and religious roles, just like Guatemala City today.

CHAPTER 4: ARCHAEOLOGY IN SANTA ISABEL

SANTA ISABEL IN THE MIDDLE PRECLASSIC

The expansion of Guatemala City began around the 1950´s, as well as the obliteration of the archaeological sites within it. If it wasn´t for Edwin Shook´s (1952) reconnaissance, there would be no record of the archeological settlements that once stood in the valley floor. A combination of ignorance about mud structures, little surveillance by the cultural authorities and a weak and confusing cultural law, has promoted the destruction of archaeological remains.

Shook's reconnaissance reported 52 sites in and around Guatemala City, the biggest and largest by far was Kaminaljuyu, but there was also a cluster of relatively large Middle Preclassic sites, for highlands standards, which was located to the south and southeast of Guatemala City. To the north the sites were more abundant but smaller in size and since little work has been done since Shook´s times, there´s not much information about them (Corado 2008).

One of the interesting traits that Shook was able to notice is that for the Late Preclassic period, earlier sites were abandoned and the primary locus of activity was Kaminaljuyu. According to Sanders and Murdy (1982) most of the population of the valley moved to Kaminaljuyu and the site experienced a population growth of almost 100%. Shook also noticed that sites dating to the Middle Preclassic followed certain characteristics: the structures were oriented 21 degress to the east and had at least one plain monument (Shook 1952, Arroyo 2009). This pattern was not only seen in the

valley, but was a characteristic that was visible in the South Coast as documented by Bove and Estrada-Belli (Bove 1989; Estrada Belli 1999)

Santa Isabel is located in Fraijanes, just southeast of Guatemala City. The settlement got its name from the farm where it's situated (Figure 4.1). The first person to document Santa Isabel was Edwin Shook, who in 1942 visited the farm, saw the mounds (Shook 1952) and made the first sketch of the site (Figure 4.2). After Shook´s visit, the site was visited on three occasions, the first by Maria de los Angeles Corado in 2007 (Corado 2008), the second by Arroyo, Pereira and Paiz in 2008 (Arroyo personal communication) and another by Karen Pereira in 2009. Since Shook's first report, it seems that the site has been frozen in time, it looks exactly as Shook saw it, a unique example of an archaeological site that hasn't been reached by urbanization, until now.

Fraijanes and its surroundings have experienced an urban growth in the last five years and the area around Santa Isabel is planned to have the facilities of a private college and some residential complexes. According to the country's Cultural Heritage Law, archaeological research has to be done in areas that have archaeological remains in order to get the construction licence. When this is the case, the project falls under the category of a Rescue Project.

The Santa Isabel Rescue Project was done under Article 6, paragraph b of the law to do archaeological fieldwork in Guatemala. The project was directed by myself with the advice of Dr. Barbara Arroyo and the help of three students Andrea Rojas, Javier Estrada and Emanuel Serech from Universidad del Valle de Guatemala and Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala

Field work was done between September and November 2011 and laboratory work between December 2011 and April 2012. The main goals of the project were: 1. Recognition of the area to determine the presence of unreported structures and collection of cultural material, 2. Excavations in the corners of the structures (where possible) to determine the size of each one, 3. Excavations in specific areas that could yield information about the constructional sequence, 4. Excavations in residential areas and, 5. Comparison of the findings to other sites in the region. Although it was not a goal, some recommendations were made in order to protect the site from being destroyed and as a reference for future archaeological work.

Currently the site is divided into several paddocks bound by electrified wire. Almost all the mounds are in a good state of preservation and their only modern use is for some to graze (Figure 4.3). An old path for finca workers divided the site in two halfs and, curiosly each half represents a different chronological period of occupation. As privately owned land, few people have access to the mounds, which has helped with its preservation.

The setting of the site is just beautiful. To the north of the site runs the Santa Isabel River; on the ravine two water springs were located and one of them has modern use. Also to the north, a couple of hills are located. On a clear day, the volcanoes located to the south of Guatemala City are clearly visible. About 2 km south of the main area is a modern stone quarry. As documented by various authors, natural features such as mountains and volcanoes were important for the settlement of ancient sites, insomuch as

they configure the sacred landscape, the sacred geography of the place. Other examples in the Valley of Guatemala that integrate the natural landscape include Rosario Naranjo (Jacobo 1992) and Naranjo (Arroyo 2010). For these, the volcanoes surrounding the valley as well as the Cerro Naranjo, were sacred topographical markers integrated into the space occupied by the sites .

The site consists of 13 mounds arranged in three rows with a pattern that runs north to south; two of these are located to the along an old path (Figure 4.4). The 11 mounds that are located in the central area are oriented 21 ˚ to the east, which is a common orientation for other contemporary settlements on the valley (Shook 1952, Arroyo 2010) and date to the Middle Preclassic (800-400 BC). A plain monument sits on the west side of one the mounds. To the south of the path are two mounds of almost identical size. A natural elevation in the east can be confused as a mound; this part of the site is a cornfield and according to the workers, cultural material is easily seen in the ground when plowing the land. The terrain is relatively flat, but natural elevations ocurr, especially towards the west. Some of the mounds were built upon these natural elevations.

The geology of the Valley of Guatemala is composed of four layers of volcanic ash deposits, the lowest of these, called talpetate, was used as the base of some of the earliest structures. Fraijanes is characterized by shallow soils over weakly cemented volcanic deposits and the land can erode easily (Simmons *et al*. 1958). For the Middle Preclassic there were three basic construction materials: 1) sand, 2) mud and 3) clay. All these material were easily obtained from the valley floor and in lacustrine deposits. As

an interesting characteristic, stone was rarely used, and it can be said that it's absent as contructional material for the Preclassic Period and was only used for the monuments.

The first row of mounds is composed by Mounds 1,2 and 3 and closes the arrangement in the west side. As mentioned earlier, all these mounds were constructed taking advantage of the natural topography. Mound 1, the one in the north, has dimensions of 10 x 5 m with a height of 2.5 m. Excavations showed that most of the mound was part of a natural elevation and over 50 cm of sand layers were use to level the terrain. There was no evidence of floors or any other architectural feature.

Mound 2 lies exactly south of Mound 1 and it´s the highest of the site at 6.5 m. The first structure that was built here was a small talpetate platform, and signs of a posible posthole are visible in one of the profiles and some clay daub fragments were recovered. After this first constructional phase, 5 m of fill were used to raise to height. The lack of clay daub fragments in the upper levels suggests the absence of a wattle and daub structure in top. Since this mound is the biggest one of the site and faces an open plaza, its function could have been ceremonial.

Both Mounds 1 and 2 present modern disturbance, Mound 1 with two big trees in its summit and Mound 2, a series of terraces that were made so the cows can climb the mound. Between these mounds a test pit discovered a cache of stones at 1.30 m in depth that could not be accurately dated because of the lack of cultural material. The only remarkable artifact uncovered by the excavations was a shaped stone, but no date could be asigned to it. The cache had both natural stone and grinding stones as well. A layer of burnt sandy clay covered part of the cache.

The last mound in Row 1 is Mound 3, and it´s the hardest to recognize since it rest upon a wide natural elevation, but excavations showed that it had at least 2 m of cultural deposits. Once again, the first structure was a small platform that was covered up by layers of sand and clay. In the summit a recent hearth was discovered made up of stones of 5-10 cm in diameter and shaped in a circular pattern. Most of the stones had black spots as the result of being exposed to fire. This mound yielded little cultural material and part of it was razed by a recent path.

The second row of mounds is composed of Mounds 4,5,6,7 and 8. The first mound to the north, Mound 4, is not aligned with the other mounds in the row, in fact it doesn´t align with any row at all, but it was one of the most interesting structures of the site. The first and only constructional phase was an 8 m long talpetate platform, and the southeast corner was easily detected, and had a ceramic offering associated with it (Figure 4.5). In the south side of the platform a deposit of obsidian was also discovered; it had a round shape with prismatic blades on top. What´s noteworthy of this deposit is that it is composed of obsidian flake tools that are part of the process of blade making.

Between Mounds 1 and 4 was found, at a depth of 1.20 m, what appears to be a water drainage channel carved on talpetate . It´s a long and narrow drainage of almost 3 m with 5 cm in depth, and the slope goes from west to east, following the natural elevation of the land. Although both the beginning and end of the drainage were discovered, it´s hard to establish its real function. A similar drain was found in Mound A-IV-2 at Kaminaljuyu (Lopez and Martinez 1992).

Mounds 5 and 6 are almost identical in dimensions and both were last modified at the end of the Middle Preclassic or beginning of the Late Preclassic. Prior to the construction of Mound 5 a ceremonial activity was carried out and consisted in he placement of a ceremonial offering of two cereamic vessels and two jade beads over the sterile soil. Charcoal associated with this event dates to 670-410 BC. Later on, 3 m of fill were used to raise the height of the structure. Another ceramic deposit was discovered close to the summit that consisted of seven ceramic bowls (Figure 4.6). Due to the nature of the soil, the slip in the bowls was gone. One of the vessels had traces of what appeared to be negative painting, suggesting that the bowl, and therefore the offering, could date to the Late Preclassic.

Mound 6 is very similar in shape to Mound 5 and was constructed the same way, but unlike other mounds of the site, this had a very defined floor surface. About 1 m over ground, a 3 cm width floor was discovered made of sandy clay and earth with a burnt surface. The floor was uneven in height from east to west, with the lowest part in the latter. The excavation was placed in the center of the mound and due to time restraints, no extensive work could be done in the area. The function of this floor is unknown.

Mound 7 is a long platform mound that has a plain stela in its western base that is facing both the plaza and Mound 2 (Figure 4.7). The plain stela was lying down, but it probably was in a standing position originally. Excavations around this monument yielded all kinds of archaeological material (Figure 4.8), including modern trash. This showed that it has been moved in years before, a fact that was later confirmed by one of

the finca workers who mentioned that years back, although he wasn't able to recall the year, some people tried to move the monument without success.

To the south of Mound 7 was Mound 8, another long platform constructed on a natural elevation. At the botton of this mound, excavations discovered a circular hearth that can be associated with the initial ceremony prior to the construction of the first phase of the structure. The tradition of making offerings before the start of the construction of a structure is a characteristic that was very common in the Middle Preclassic and several sites like Kaminaljuyu (Popenoe de Hatch 1997) , Naranjo (Arroyo 2006), La Blanca (Love 2011), El Rosario Naranjo (Jacobo 1992) and Piedra Parada (De Leon and Valdes 2002) had similar ritual practices.

Three low platforms constitute row 3 and they close the arragement to the east. Due to its shape, they all seem to have had a residential function, in fact, Mound 11 had a extensive ceramic deposit in its base, mostly with utilitarian ceramic wares. To the east of these mounds the terrain is flat for almost 400 m and it's disturbed only by a modern soccer field. This characteristic is ideal for perishable residential structures and for agriculture. Traces of houses are not easily detectable for the Middle Preclassic, since most buildings were simple low platforms with a wattle and daub structure on top and these are hard to detect in the archaeological record. Examples of residential areas with these characteristics were encountered in Naranjo (Arroyo 2010), one of the few projects where residential areas have been excavated in the central valley of Guatemala. The lack of excavations in residential areas is one common trait of archaeological rescue projects

mainly because these projects have limited time to excavate and most of the research is done in areas with visible architecture.

These three mounds have less than 1 m in height and as in other parts of the site, natural elevations were utilized to accommodate the structures. These mounds are so low that they can be easily mistaken as natural elevations, that is why it's important to place excavations in areas of doubtful nature. Probably these were the houses of the ruling class of the site for the Middle Preclassic.

Excavations done in the main plaza showed only three construction levels covering 1 m in depth. The plaza was raised to its level by three layers of fill. One interesting thing is that no floors were recorded in this area, showing that the fill was just tamped down and no formal constructions were ever made. Since plazas were open and public spaces, but with a restricted access,, they have little material associated with them. Excavations here produced a fewer number of artifacts. Since excavations were done during the rainy season, the plaza was usually full of water after heavy rains, a characteristic that can even date to prehispanic times.

Due to the agricultural nature of the land, the soil is too acid and most of the ceramic recovered has lost its slip; the identification of the ceramic types was based on shapes and not decoration. Most of the obsidian recovered were flakes, the most common obsidian industry of the Middle Preclassic in the highlands, and as expected, El Chayal was the principal source with 98.37%. A total of 1741 artifacts were recovered, flakes compromising the 64.33% of the sample (1120 flakes) and a equal number of prismatic and irregular blades (100 each). According to Clark (1989), during the Middle Preclassic

the most predominat source for obsidian was San Martin Jilitepeque source for the area around Soconusco and even in La Venta (Brown 1984:231) and that was until the end of the Late Preclassic that El Chayal became the principal source in that area. Nonetheless, the data from different projects in Kaminaljuyu (Amador and Braswell 1999), Naranjo (Arroyo 2010) and Canchon (2007) shows that in the central highlands, El Chayal was the principal source during both the Middle Preclassic and the Late Preclassic.

Both Mounds 12 and 13 are somehow different from the others on the site. Both date to the Late Preclassic and have a different orientation, almost directly to the north. The construction techinique is the same as one of the other mounds, with fills and layers of sand and clay of different colors. The use of fills of different color was a widespread technique for the Preclassic period. Several sites in the South Coast such as La Victoria (Coe 1961), Takalik Abaj (Schieber and Orrego 2001) and La Blanca (Love 2006) have this pattern, which did not require much specialization but a large workforce. Also La Venta, which is most famous for this (Gonzales Lauck.2010).

Excavations in this part of the site discovered a large residential area, with remains of at least one house whose walls collapsed. Abundant ceramic deposits were found throughout the area and all of them were placed over sterile soil. To the north of the house, a large bottle-shaped pit was discovered with a lot of broken ceramic, obsidian and stone tools inside. Excavations in this area were extensive, almost all the original pits were extended to discover the ceramic deposits and features associated with them 4.8). Most of the cultural material recovered has domestic functions.

Bottle-shaped pits are a very common trait for the Preclassic throughout Mesoamerica and are related to the residential areas (Borhegyi 1965, Winter 1976, Demarest 1986). Experiments by Hall, Haswell and Oxley (1956) have tested if whether such pits sealed with clay could preserve corn for years, but no clear evidence was found. These pits were use to store pots, stones and other tools. In the case of Santa Isabel, this pit was used as a dump. The ceramics recovered here are mosty utilitarian wares such as Sumpango and Sumpanguito (Figure 4.9), the most common shape being big jars for storing both water and grains (Popenoe de Hatch 1997); there were also Usulutan and Providencia Rojo Sobre Blanco wares, and in a few number some sherds of the ceremonial ware Kaminaljuyu black-brown. More studies about paste composition are needed to determine the area of provinence of the clay used for the ceramics or to establish if all the ceramic was done in a certain area and then distributed within the central valley. But what it undeniable is that the ceramic inventory shows an uniformity in styles, manufacture and decoration.

In the residential area of the site, which dates mostly to the Late Preclassic Period (400BC-200AC), a total of 465 obsidian artifacts were recollected; of those, 257 were prismatic blades (55% of the sample), followed by flakes (116). Something remarkable about the obsidian sample is the high frequency of artifacts with cortex, almost 20%, indicating a possible direct access to the source. In the Late Preclassic obsidian blades were abundant and a close examination shows that most of them have little or no wear at all. This indicated to us that the population of Santa Isabel was either making their own instruments or had continious access to the trade system where the blades were

exchanged. For them getting these blades was easy so they could use the instruments for a little and throw them to the trash. Conran Hay proposed that during the Late Preclassic the blade specialists from Kaminaljuyu were exporting blades to other sites within the valley (Clark 1989:276) and Santa Isabel could have been one of those recipients.

Given the distribution of basic resources (agricultural land, water, obsidian, clay and basalt) and population, the clustering of political units may have facilitated the exchange of basic resources between groups that did not have inmediate access to the source. Populations on the valley floor and on the Canchon Plateau would have had access to the same basic goods, but the timing of agricultural activities would have been slightly different. Efficient utilization of resources might favor the location of these sites and also creating opportunities for exchange of goods, particularly pottery or pottery clay from the valley and agricultural goods from the Canchon Plateau (Brown 1984:220-221).

Obsidian is the main good used to explain the trade system in the Highlands of Guatemala since it's a material that can only be found there, this characteristic might have stimulated exchange relatiosnhips with different regions. For example, the piedmont and the coast area lacks deposits of obsidian or any raw materials suitable for the production of cutting tools, the only way of getting this material was either direct procurement or exchange (Ibid). Evidence in Santa Isabel shows that the settlement was part of that exchange system, but other role did it play during the Preclassic Period?

THE MIDDLE PRECLASSIC IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY

It was during the Middle Preclassic (800-400 BC) that the construction of ceremonial centers began in the Valley of Guatemala. As Borhegyi (1965) stated , it is likely that the location of the settlements of this period is linked to agriculture . The sites are located on flat, open spaces without any kind of natural defense. The central area of Santa Isabel is surrounded by large, flat terrain, which along with nearby water sources must have been perfect for agricultural needs.

The site of Santa Isabel has the characteristic settlement pattern of the Middle Preclassic Period. The sites of this period are characterized by narrow elongated plazas that are surrounded by ceremonial structures . In some cases plazas are divided by a single line of mounds . The mounds are oriented slightly east of north and sometimes the main pyramid faces another structure of smaller size having a plain stela erected in the front (Ibid).

The people of Santa Isabel took advantage of the natural topography to build their buildings. This means that some sections of natural elevations were used as the base of their structures or platforms usually using the sterile soil, which is harder in composition, as the house or temple foundation. The use of sterile soils as construction material is very common for the Middle Preclassic in the Central Highlands , and some Kaminaljuyu mounds like the A- IV -1 (Velasquez and Hermes 1992:77), and Mound 2 at Naranjo (Arroyo 2006, 2007) were made in the same way.

For some unkown reason, the central area of Santa Isabel was abandoned at the end of the Middle Preclassic , as most of the sites of the time were. Following Murdy and Sanders' idea (1982), this is the result of the centralization of power that Kaminaljuyu was experiencing . But unlike other settlements on the valley, Santa Isabel was not abandoned completely , as two ceremonial structures were built to the south and remains of a house were found there as well. Sporadic activity was carried on the central area, including a ceremony where seven vessels were offered and, also, one bottle shaped pit filled with ceramics and lithics.

Michels (1979) has argued that various chiefdoms existed during the Preclassic within the Central Valley of Guatemala, the main being Kaminaljuyu. According to his scheme, the plain of Canchon was part of another chiefdom, the Amatitlan Chiefdom, which by its excellent location could control the access to the valley from the south coast. The earliest ceramics found in Santa Isabel hold great decorative similarities with the ones from the south coast for the same period of time (Arroyo 2011, personal communication), suggesting that the population which came to populate the valley migrated from the coast, but this interpretation is base solely on ceramic similarities, which is not a marker of identity but more of a sharing of the same cultural sphere.

According to Michels, along with the chieftainship of Chimaltenango, both the chieftain of Kaminaljuyu and Amatitlan formed a strong trade network for the Middle Preclassic, however, in the Late Preclassic the story was different. Most sites were abandoned and the population was concentrated in Kaminaljuyu, leaving the plain of

Canchon practically uninhabited, or at least, there is no strong political entity, but rather residential character settlements like the one in Santa Isabel.

What role did then Santa Isabel in Guatemala dynamics of the valley ? Following the scheme proposed by Michels, the site belonged to the chieftainship of Amatitlan, whose main center was located in the area of Canchon for the Middle Preclassic. Could Santa Isabel be that main center? Comparing the settlement pattern of the sites within this area, Santa Isabel was not the biggest one. Both Canchon and Piedra Parada were located more strategically, so Santa Isabel was not the main center, but for sure was part of of the Middle Preclassic panorama.

Michels interpretation of the sociopolitical structure of the valley as a chiefldom is mainly based in the settlement pattern, the size, and distributions of sites. Michael Love (2011) considers that Kaminaljuyu reached a statehood level based too, in the "settlement hierarchy … and the highly structured government it implies". In his model, there is a five-tiered hierarchy for the valley in which the dominant state, Kaminaljuyu, will have secondary centers under its control and one of these was indeed Santa Isabel.

The importance of the southern part of the valley is sometimes overshadowed by the size and influence of Kaminaljuyu, and their settlements have been less studied. But it is undeniable that these sites were located on a crossing route from the coast to the highlands, just as they function in this area today. The sizes of the sites suggest that in this southern part of the valley there was a social organization different from the north. This structure appears to be that of a group with different hierarchies whose major sites such as Santa Isabel, Piedra Parada and Canchon,and Cieneguilla were on a similar

social level, while in the central valley, Kaminaljuyu seems to have centralized power. Unfortunately, we do not know the extent of Middle Preclassic occupation at Kaminaljuyu and one can only make specific references to specific findings as there is no complete picture of the time.

The social dynamic of the Central Highlands were probably more complex that those discussed here, more intensive excavations are needed in other areas to have enough data to elucidate the cultural panorama of the region, something that its now impossible for the central valley due the high rate of destruction of archaeological sites. Rescue projects are the last chance of recovering the information necessary to reconstruct the socio-political history of the highlands of Guatemala and as archaeologist its our responsibility to carry out researches that can aid to built a comprenhensive paranorama and to think not only in the importance of archaeological sites as sources of knowledge about the past, but also, in the role that those sites played nowadays.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM RESCUE PROJECTS

The hardest task when carrying on a rescue project is to find a balance between one's role as an archaeologist, who must adhere to professional standards, , and one's role as an archaeologist who works for the person or company who hires him/her. After working in some rescue projects I have learned some lessons that will help me to improve my future work and are aspects that one can learn only with experience.

All archaeological rescue projects are unique. It´s not the same to excavate an empty lot where mounds once stood, single mounds , whole sites where land development is being carried out, or a site whose surroundings will be developed in years to come. Below I list some of criteria that I think need to be considered.

Honest and clear communication.

Clear communication is the key element to do a good rescue project. From the beginning there has to be a clear notion of what are the expectations. What exactly does the client want? What are the expectations at the end of the project? For example, is the client funding the project with the intention of getting some of the excavated area outside the *poligono de protección* liberated? Of course few clients will state this last goal clearly, but at the end it is often the main reason they do the project. Another aspect to have clear since the beginning of the project is how the cultural law works and the legal sanctions that breaking the law carries. But mostly the client should understand what the law protects.

A rescue project does not necessarily mean that some of the land will not be protected

The fact that an archaeologist did a rescue project doesn't mean that the area would be liberated and that´s one of the biggest challenges archaeologists face. The

client's idea is that as long as excavations are carried out, flat areas are going be liberated. But this will depend on the findings. The key factor, to clarify the goals of the project, will be the research proposal. If an archaeologist has huge sites, with mounds of considerable height, it is important to recognize that these will not be *area liberada* so the focus of investigations should be in other areas that don't have such obvious remains.

Excavations in Santa Isabel were carried out only in the central area of the site where all the mounds where located, an area that was never going to be liberated because of the amount and size of the mounds. Nonetheless, the owners of Santa Isabel thought that the excavations in the central area were enough to liberate some other parts of the site that were not excavated. Sometimes as an archaeologist we are afraid that we will only have one chance to excavate a certain site, so we focus our attention to the main part of the archaeological site. And that's exactly what I did, even though I knew that most of the area would be protected: I did my research there instead of directing my attention to other areas that were more likely to be "liberated" and, as a result, potentially unavailable for future study

Again, when excavating sites with several mounds, the possibility of having more than one season of field work should be considered and discussed with the owner of the land. The more, in hindsight, that I analyze what I did in Santa Isabel, the more I realize that I focused my attention in the wrong direction.

Not every mound can be protected.

Yes, even though this seems very hard to believe, not everything can be protected, and unfortunately low mounds can be destroyed when carefully excavated. This is what happened with one of the low platforms at Naranjo. Properly known as the South Platform, this long structure was less than a 1m in height and the owners requested its liberation. After some deliberation from the cultural authorities, it was agreed that the only way for doing that would be to have 75% of the structure excavated in order to get as much information as possible. Again, the parameters of what to protect must be established beforehand in order to prevent misunderstadings. But it is also worth noticing that there might be some exceptions, like the platform at Naranjo.

Not all of the entire archaeological site will be protected, so excavate as much as you can.

While the laws favor the preservation of large mounds, they do not adequately protect the large flat areas between them which, in ancient times, served as plaza spaces. As a result, at the end of a rescue project, random mounds may be protected, but the spaces between them are "area liberada." This results in very disconnected remains where the spaces in between mounds – where ancient people gathered, and which are important for understanding the way sites were spatially organized and conceptualized – are destroyed. In Naranjo for example, most of the main plaza was liberated so the

monuments located in it where relocated close to the bigger mounds in the designated protected area. In other words, the monuments no longer stand in their original context. One of the mounds was located far away from the protected zone and was left standing by itself, and by itself, it's hard to contextualize it and relate it to the other mounds. The site of Taltic is another example of this. Mounds were protected individually and don't form a unity; mounds are isolated from each other and the area between them is filled with houses.

In Santa Isabel it was the total opposite situation. Before the field work, the two southernmost mounds were separated from the rest of the mounds by a road, but after fieldwork, and by the insistence of the owners, that road was relocated and now all of the mounds form a unity and they can be interpreted as the same site. This was a specific case but the ideal is to try to keep the protected mounds in the same buffer protected area. This was possible for two main reasons: 1. Cecilia Bianchi, the owner of the land, was always interested in protecting the mounds and 2. The Fraijanes city hall was planning the construction of a road in that area and saw the opportunity to collaborate with the family.

Think of socializing your research with the local population and local authorities.

The *Acuerdo sobre identidad y derechos de los pueblos indígenas (Article III. Cultural Rights, C. Spirituality)* stipulates that indigenous groups have the right to perform their ceremonies in archaeological sites. Because of this, owners of the land

where sites are located are afraid of releasing information about rescue projects to the public, for fear that attention will be drawn to archaeological remains that will soon be destroyed or, at the very least, made inaccessible to future study or veneration. In spite of these circumstances, in my opinion, it is important to socialize your research as much as you can. By this I mean that, if there are communities nearby or where you are doing your research, try to include them and give them a tour of your excavations. In Santa Isabel I didn´t think to have a presentation for the people living nearby the site. Now, when I look back, I realize that I should have, not only for them to learn about history, but also to show them what we archaeologists do. The local population needs to understand the importance of our work and the cultural value that these places have. While I think that the best practice would be to run this sort of workshop or presentation to the public while excavations are going on, if this is impossible, then at the very least I would recommend that a presentation be given at the conclusion of the excavations.

THE ROLE OF AN ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE WITHIN AN URBAN CONTEXT

Guatemala is a multiethnic country and Guatemala City a great example of this cultural diversity. Ladinos, mestizos and indigenous interact everyday in a city that that is reinventing itself and with this process disassociating from its prehispanic past, a process that is slowly starting to change, mostly, because of the collaboration between the city's town hall and Kaminaljuyu Archaeological Park.

For over 10 years the town hall has made a number of improvements that include more green areas, municipal parks, relocation of street vendors , recovery of historic neighborhoods and propeling cultural activities within the population, specially among young people; but with exception of the Mural de la Culebra, few efforts have been done to rescue or promote the cultural past. Anyone who lives in the city knows how the politics work and this is a topic that is out of the scope of this research, but usually, the town hall and the state's cultural authorities de not belong to the same political party, preventing or hindering collaborations.

The most obvious way of collaboration is this aspect would be with the Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología and with the Kaminaljuyu Archaeological Park, both institutions under the umbrella of the Ministerio de Cultura. The Kaminaljuyu Archaelogical Park has been open to the public since the 1960's, but it was not until 2010 that an archaeologist was appointed to be the coordinator of the park. Before that, only operational staff was there. For many years the park seemed to be abandoned and in our casual conversations with the neighbors they usually commented that the park was the ideal place for couples or to go and play hide and seek in the Acropolis tunnels. The park was seen as a park and not like an archaeological site or, in this case, an archaeological park, and the most frequent visitors were the indigenous spiritual leaders.

Some years ago the maintenance of the park was passed into the hands of the Departamento de Monumentos Prehispanicos y Coloniales and with it, the resurgence of the park began. More funds were assigned to the maintenance of the park and for the first time, an archaeologist, Dra. Bárbara Arroyo, became the coordinator of the park and her

efforts alongside with the town hall and the Direccion General del Patrimonio have given the park another look and increased popularity. And the number do not lie: since the improvements the influx of people to the park has almost tripled (Arroyo 2013). For having been almost abandoned, the park is now recovering its glory, but ¿What does the park means for the people who visit places like this?

Establishing the ancient role of an archaeological site is hard when little work has been done there, but it's even harder to determine what role such a site plays nowadays for people. In Guatemala there are more than 2000 archaeological sites (http://mcd.gob.gt/direccion-de-patrimonio-cultural-y-natural/) but only six are oficially declared as archaeological parks (Vasquez personal communication) and are categorized as national heritage, which can be defined as the *"contemporary use of the past*" (McManus nd:59). Archeological sites and parks have different meanings for a range of interest groups. For the archaeologists these represent places where great discoveries have been made, for indigenous religious leaders they are places of cosmic wisdom and knowledge, and for the goverment they can represent potential sources of income as touristic places. Besides these three groups there's another one that is the most important one when dealing with urban archaeological parks, and that is the local people, the ones that live within the boundary of the park and in adjacent areas with dispersed mounds. Do they really care for them? When Erick Ponciano excavated one of the mounds of Kaminaljuyu, D-III-10, he got the impression that the people living around it didn't care about it. As he concluded, *"...no se puede separar la existencia de vestigios*

arqueológicos precolombinos con la realidad actual de una poblacion que se manifiesta contraria a la existencia misma de dichos vestigios " (Ponciano 2009:47).

Although he was referring to the population living around Kaminaljuyu, his observation was not far away from reality and in other parts of the country there are similar cases, but on the other hand, there a lot of places where the local population, sometimes without the state's help, take care of the archaeological sites. But there's a constant struggle between governmental agencies charged with protecting archaeological sites; private enterprise and local residents who destroy ruins to gain space for factories, agricultural fields, and housing; and tourists who want access to sites with limited carrying capacity (Hoffmann *et al.* 2002:32).

Archaeological parks, prehistoric or historic sites preserved and interpreted for the public, have always been obvious tourism magnets for the communities in which they are located, and in many cases this has been a driving concern for their preservation and development (Ibid 47). Archaeological sites located in urban contexts have specific characteristics for preservation and presentation to the public. From the point of view of heritage education, this type of open air heritage causes challenges to people who find it difficult to imagine original historic sites, which implies serious problems for the understanding of the general public (Grevtsova 2012:1). This is completely true for the case of Kaminaljuyu: the adobe structures that are exposed in the Acropolis are really hard to understand and people have a hard time picturing how it might have looked in ancient times.

When you think about an archaeological park in Guatemala you have images of big stone temples and carved monuments, but in Kaminaljuyu you only have a small amount of exposed architecture and the rest is under vegetation, in the shape of mounds, but there's not a lot to see. Some visitors to the park even have complained about it (Sanchez personal communication). They feel that the park doesn't offer the required amount of archaeological vestiges worth paying for. Little by little, the park has been creating mechanisms to explain to the public the importance of Kaminaljuyu in order for them to feel a sense of belonging and to reinforce its role not only as a touristic place, but also as a cultural space where you can learn about the past. Whether people feel that they can identify themselves with the archaeological site is a research question that needs to be analyzed more deeply, but regardless of the answer, these archaeological parks can become a symbol of cultural identity and places to promote the diversity of cultures that existed, and exist, currently in the country.

So what about Santa Isabel, can it become an archaeological park too? Well, maybe in the future it will be declared as a park, but now it is just a protected archaeological zone with no exposed architecture, just mounds and a plain monument. So far there hasn't been a lot of construction going on in the area, but the plan is to have a series of residential complexes in the surrounding area, so the mounds will be located between houses. The question that arises here is, Would people care about the mounds? And if it's declared as a park, a public park, would people go? And, in a broader aspect, we can ask , who cares about the archaeological sites?

Santa Isabel is located on private land, a public road runs through the site (but after the field work, this road was relocated to protect all the mounds), and it was obvious during the time that we were working that some kind of archaeological work was happening. But despite this, we got little attention from the neighbors. During the three months of excavations in Santa Isabel, only once outsiders came to ask about what we were doing, in fact, all the workers of the finca only approached us in the beggining of the season to question our work and to ask for jobs. But after that initial contact, only the guys responsible for the cows would approach the excavations once in a while to see what we were finding, but the others would just see us but keep their distance.

It was interesting for me the disinterestedness that the people living inside the Finca Isabel showed toward our work, and the only reasonable explanation that I could find was that they were afraid to ask us and to even talk to us. They know they are living near or above the remains of a old settlement, they found ceramics and lithics when plowing their land, but they simply didn't show any interest to know more about it and it was my mistake for not involving them in a more active way, like weekly visits to the excavations or talks about our findings.. But for them the site didn't appear to have any meaning at all.

The local authorities of Fraijanes didn't show too much interest in our work, only once the mayor came to see what we were doing, but he never offered any kind of help in terms of collaboration. But something that he did acknowledge was the effort of the Bianchi family, the finca owners, in preserving the mounds, a great example of private ownership with a cultural conscience, one of those that you rarely see.

Archaeological parks will not have the same meaning for everyone and it's up to the individuals to find and appreciate their meaning, to some degree. But we as archaeologists have the responsibility of sharing as much information as we can about the sites, to try to explain what they were in ancient times and to promote their cultural value. But we cannot force people to agree with us. We can attribute various roles to the parks, and people will chose which of those they care about the most. For now, our primary goal should be to protect the remaining mounds that we have in urban areas and for this it's important to have a strong cultural law and an appropriate methodology for doing archaeological rescue projects. In my view, before assigning any role to a site, we must look for ways to protect them.

CHAPTER 5: PROPOSING A METHODOLOGY FOR RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECTS IN GUATEMALA

The increasing number of development projects throughout Guatemala is impacting areas where archeological remains are located. These projects are economically fully supported by national or international organizations, which means that development is ongoing throughout the year, unlike archaeological research projects that mostly take place during the summer, due to academic calendars. Accordingly, the rescue projects associated with these development projects are a great opportunity for archaeologists to get a different source of income besides the work in research projects.

A balance between archaeology and development must be sought in order to fulfill the goals of both agencies. We are entering a new era, and the archeological practice has to adapt itself to the new trends but never lose its scientific component. Because rescue projects are a requirement in areas with or near archaeological remains, most people paying for this job -- the client, in other words -- only cares for the final outcome of the project. The client wants the archaeologist to adhere to a tight working schedule that can restrict the archaeological work in terms of the amount of work and research that can be done.

Almost no one is willing to criticize openly or publicly the work of fellow archaeologists that do rescue projects, but the outcomes of these projects force us to make a thoughtful reflection on this kind of work. Manuel Moreno Diaz (nd) points out that most of the times these projects are “proyectos con personal inconforme pero necesitado

de trabajo, ignorante del área a tratar, desinformado en cuanto a las etapas y exigencias del proyecto, con poca claridad en lo que se debe hacer y el objetivo a tratar, todo ello fomenta el desinterés académico, lo cual lleva sin remedio un grave impacto en la calidad del registro y desarrollo de los contenidos afectados". Moreno Diaz was referring to his colleagues in Veracruz, but this is something that is also common in Guatemala. Anyone working on rescue projects knows about the pressure archaeologists face from the people who hire them. In the end, the client is the one who is paying the archaeologist and expecting that the archaeologist work for their interests.

To avoid this dilemma of for whom the archaeologist will work, some simple steps can be suggested to improve the quality of a rescue project. If it's hard to find the balance between different interests, one idea is to have strict and mandatory procedures for rescue projects. This would be very beneficial for the archaeologist, since he or she would have a legal document that would guide the work, and besides, all rescue projects, regardless of their size, would have the same procedures.

My idea to propose a model for rescue archaeological projects is not intended to criticize current archaeological practice, but to reinforce some points where rescue projects are currently weak. My approach is to see rescue projects not as a simple legal requisite, but as chance to research scientifically and responsibly the different archaeological sites. The steps suggested here are simple, and it's really more like a close collaboration between the archaeologist, cultural authorities and clients than anything else.

This ideas presented here are not solely mine. Dra. Barbara Arroyo has been trying to convince the Direccion General del Patrimonio to create a rescue archaeological department inside the organizational chart of the Departamento de Monumentos Prehispanicos y Coloniales, and the ideas presented here grow out of a collaborative discussion that I have had with Dr. Arroyo during my experience working with her on a number of archaeological projects.

As the first step, I would suggest that any person or company that plans to fund an archaeological rescue project contact the Direccion General del Patrimonio to let them know about their plans, including why and where they are going to work. The authorities should have an updated database with archaeologists that have experience in the specific region or area where the project will take place, and suggest them to do to work. Without this system in place, the company can choose the personnel considered the best, regardless of their qualifications, as long as it complies with the cultural regulations.

After having decided who will do the work, the next step would be the research proposal, which will have some extra requirements than those that the current regulation requests. Besides the general description of the archaeological work (theoretical framework, antecedents, goals, etc.). the proposal should add information about the archaeologist and of the individual or company who's requesting the archaeological project.

1. **Director of the project**: Background information about the archaeologist is needed here, especially outlining his or her previous work in the area or in other rescue projects.

2. **Description of the Development project**. A description of the nature of the development project and why they are doing the rescue project is important to include (for example, will it be a residential complex, a commercial complex, a dam, electrical towers, etc.). I would also advocate that this section include the official name of the project and the company that runs it, antecedents or previous similar work done by the company or by related companies and, if possible, specifications of the total dimensions, in meters or kilometers, of the development project. Also, I think that this section should include a description of the responsibility of the company (the structure for funding the project, how it will provide security during excavations, etc.).

3. **Statement of the legal sanctions:** The legal sanctions for breaking the cultural laws are established under the Ley para la Proteccion del Patrominio Natural y Cultural de la Nacion. But few land developers read the law, so in the proposal the most important aspects of this law should be pointed out, including specific mention of what the different legal sanctions are for not complying with it.

4. **Stipulation of payment method.** Talking with other colleagues, I often hear of the problems that arise after the fieldwork is done, especially in terms of payment. Jose Luis Garrido, a Guatemalan archaeologist, from Universida de San Carlos de Guatemala once told me that most developers won't pay the complete amount of the project's costs until there's a legal resolution about what is not going to be included in the *poligono de proteccion*, but of course, that will depend on the findings of the project (personal communication 2013). Although I recognize that this will always be a source of tension between the government, the archaeologist, and the client and the forces of development more generally, I would suggest that, as fully as possible, some sort of agreement should be reached before work begins between the archaeologist and the company. In other words, final payment should not be dependent upon how much of the site is liberated or not, but on the amount of labor that has been done in order to determine how best to move forward – or not – with development.

5. **Mandatory visit**. After the acceptance of the proposal, I would suggest that a mandatory visit before the beginning of the project, not required nowadays, be done. Present here should be the chosen archaeologist, a representative from the Direccion General del Patrimonio and a representative, or more than one, of the company who's funding the rescue project. This visit must have as a primary goal to recognize the area and to describe its current state. For example, the archaeologist should be able to identify if there are mounds present or not,

describe their state of preservation and to identify, more or less, the extent of the research area. This visit should be also a great opportunity for the cultural authorities to share their impressions of the research proposal and to suggest the necessary changes to it.

But most important, in this visit both the archaeologist and the cultural authorities should make clear what areas for sure are going to be protected, if any, what mounds are "untouchable," (with no hope of being an "area liberada"), and what the legal sanctions would be for breaking the law. I think that it would also be wise to stipulate that, during fieldwork, there is always the chance that some of these preliminary observations and goals might need to be re-prioritized depending on the findings of the excavations. For example, it is possible that some areas will require more work than previously thought and this should be clearly stated in the proposal. Although this will be controversial for the client and development goals, it must be made clear to them that archaeologists cannot predict the outcome of investigations.

6. **About unexpected findings**. If there's an unexpected finding in the excavations (burial, ceramic or lithic caches, buried structures, etc.), it will require more work time than stipulated on the original schedule. In this case, I would argue that a cultural authority should rule if the proposed timeline of work should be extended. If so, the company should agree to pay for this extra time.

7. **Discussion after fieldwork.** As with the visit before the fieldwork, another visit should be done with the same people to the area after the completion of the work. During this post-excavation visit, the archaeologist, a cultural authority, and a representative of the company should meet and discuss the work done. The archaeologist should be able to point out the findings of the project and even make a recommendation, in collaboration with the cultural authority, about what area should be protected. The three parties involved in this visit should take advantage of this visit and share their concerns, conflicts, and ideas for resolution.

8. **After fieldwork.** Even after the end of the fieldwork season, the presence of an archaeologist or an archaeology student, or any other authorized person, should be mandatory until the end of the land movement in the area.

One of the biggest flaws of the rescue projects as they currently stand is that, after the fieldwork has been completed and the written report submitted, there's no supervision of the excavated area. As an archaeologist, I recognize that it's important to have a physical presence in the place even after formal investigations have ended because continuing land clearing and movement can discover features that smaller scale excavations couldn't.

This is something that I learned after working in Naranjo with Dr. Bárbara Arroyo. After the first two seasons of excavations and with most of the area of the main plaza liberated, the land movement was really huge and the heavy machinery was

opening trenches in areas uncovered by our research. This gave us the opportunity to document in a more complete way the different constructional phases of the plaza and even led to the discovery of some fire hearths, bottle-shaped pits, several plain monuments, and one sculpted monument (Paiz *et al.* 2009, Arroyo 2010).

9. **About the written report and results of the archaeological work:** The Direccion General del Patrimonio should demand that the results of the rescue project not only be submitted in the form of a written report, submitted to the Dirección General del Patrimonio Natural and Cultual de la Nacion and the company paying for the work, but also made available to the public. For example, one possibility is that the company could pay for an add in the newspaper where they state what was revealed during the excavations, and how they complied with the cultural laws. Both parts should agree to this and it should a requirement before signing the approval of the proposal.

The cultural activities need to pressure the private companies to promulgate the results of their work, and to not limit that to the written report, which would otherwise just be submitted only to the Direccion General del Patrimonio Natural and Cultural and never seen by the public or even other archaeologists. One of the ways of encouraging this should be through the *Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueologicas en Guatemala*, the country's most relevant archaeological meeting. Regardless of the size of the project, the

results should be presented there, without hiding any archaeologically relevant information.

In 2012 one archaeologist whose name I do not feel comfortable revealing was working for a private company in Huehuetenango. He presented the results of his rescue project, but in his presentation there was no archaeological data at all; it was merely a description of the environment. I was intrigued by his presentation, and approached him during one of the breaks and asked him why he had decided to leave out the information about the archaeological sites. His response was very simple: the representatives of the company banned him from talking about it. In my opinion, this is clearly an unethical attitude, on the part of the company, the archaeologist, and the government. Since rescue projects are seen as the last effort to rescue something, their results shouldn't be hidden from anyone. I believe that full disclosure of results should be an obligatory requirement stipulated by the Dirección General del Patrimonio, and should be one of the clauses included in the research proposal.

The steps proposed here are not the final or the perfect model for rescue projects, but instead an outline of my current thinking based on my experience as well as conversations with a variety of my Guatemalan colleagues over the years. I believe that further feedback from colleagues will enrich this proposed model. Nevertheless, this thesis represents the first effort to articulate and advocate for the standardization of archaeological rescue practices in Guatemala as well as a process through which their

scientific integrity, standards, and cultural value can be preserved, communicated, and protected.

FINAL REMARKS

Rescue archaeological projects are becoming increasingly popular in Guatemala due to an ongoing urban expansion throughout the country, but the results derived from them are often very questionable. So far no one has officially voiced concerns about this archaeological practice, but people in the archaeological community of Guatemala are aware that there should be stricter control over this kind of rescue archaeology. As things now stand, there is no established set of rules for an archaeologist on a rescue project and the archaeologist is basically forced to undertake the job as you learned it in fieldwork on archaeological projects whose conceptual framework and goals are very different from those of a rescue project

The coursework to obtain a degree in archaeology in Guatemala, as I've already outlined, is composed of both theoretical and practical classes that prepare you to go into the field and do an excavation. But working on a research-focused archaeological project versus a rescue archaeological project is a very different thing, and the ethical issues you face in the latter are something for which college doesn't prepare you. In order to have a better archaeological practice in preparation for rescue projects, one of the first steps should be to teach something about the ethical issues behind rescue archaeology and practice. This would, ideally, include some hypothetical questions, including how the student – as a rescue project archaeologist -- would react under certain circumstances.

While in real life one's reactions will depend probably on a lot of factors, it is still good to have training in thinking about these issues.

My concern with ensuring the high quality of rescue projects is based on the fact that we need to be able to understand more about our cultural past, as well as show land developers that archaeological remains are important. In other words, while there is a cultural law that should be respected, we also need to communicate why the law is important not just legally, but culturally. For years, land developers have broken the law constantly without getting any, or almost no, legal sanctions. But with a strong and clear rescue project methodology, it is my sincere hope that land developers will understand their responsibilities and will assume, before even beginning the fieldwork, the possible consequences of their actions.

This kind of work can enable the protection of archaeological sites from total destruction, and this is one of the reasons why rescue archaeology should be undertaken and regulated more thoughtfully. Rescue projects should be characterized as a constant collaboration between archaeologists, developers and cultural authorities, whose interests might be different, but whose end goal should be to find a balance between them. Likewise, archaeologists must be aware of their responsibilities to the archaeological record and cultural patrimony, and must carry out their work in the most ethical way possible.

After a series of conversations about archaeology and culture with my family, friends, and people that I have met throughout the years, I have come to realize that

everyone has an opinion on what is important to them to know about their cultural history . For me, archaeological sites are a reminder of our past, places to go and learn more about our history, to be amazed by their architecture, to admire the fine carving on stone or the art on the ceramic vessels. But that's only what it means to me and I cannot expect that all people, especially those less educated about archaeology, feel the same. With the years I have come to understand that not everyone enjoys learning about the past as much as I do.

I don't know if this disinterest is related to the tension that exists in Guatemala between indigenous and ladino communities, or because people cannot feel a connection with the past. Or whether it is due to the educational system that never emphasized cultural history enough. Or because archaeological sites and parks haven't been able to convey the right message about cultural history. Or perhaps it is simply that people are too busy with their lives to care. All of these aspects are out of the scope of my research, but what I do know is that archaeological sites are an important component of our cultural identity and that we have to protect them as much as we can. This is particularly true in Guatemala, which has always been a multiethnic country. However, archaeology in Guatemala has never effectively embraced this multiethnic identity. When it comes to archaeology, we have had difficulties in promoting this diversity in public education. To this day, most Guatemalans usually use the term "Maya" to describe all prehispanic cultures. Although Guatemala's Maya heritage is undisputedly important, the term "Maya" does not adequately embrace the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of Guatemala. It also conjures notions of the famous lowland Maya of the Peten, rather than

the distinct, yet equally significant, cultural history of the Maya who settled in the highlands and Valley of Guatemala, nor of the other linguistic and cultural groups who moved throughout this country in the past.

The history of how archaeological sites have been slowly disappearing in Guatemala City should open our eyes about what aspects of our culture we consider important and which of those are we willing to protect. The cultural law was implemented quite late (1970), and by that time most of the archaeological remains were gone. But now other areas in the Valley of Guatemala, like Fraijanes, are experiencing the same urban growth and archaeological remains are once again in the hands of the land developers.

What happened in Guatemala City should be a lesson. I believe that it is our responsibility, as archaeologists, to search for ways in which to find a balance between the past and the present and to incorporate that past into the city's daily life. Guatemala's indigenous culture is very much alive, and manifests itself in diverse ways. Although the Guatemalan government promotes this living culture in all its diversity, it has failed to link it with the past, and it has failed to promote and protect archaeological sites, and failed to improve the facilities to visit these sites. The celebrations of the 13th Baktun in Guatemala in December of 2012 marked a landmark in this history, since for about a month, archaeological information and sites were trending in the popular news (http://www.newsinamerica.com/pgint.php?id=20276; http://www.prensalibre.com/mayas_2012/Tikal-supera-capacidad-visitantes_0_832116973.html; http://www.prensalibre.com.gt/mayas_2012/Tikal-abre-

celebracion-Baktun_3_831546838.html; http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20120815/pais/216527). Even people who had never before visited an archaeological site went to see the staged commemorations and embraced them as part of their cultural history. But as soon as the calendarical celebration ended, so did the interest of the state and the general population.

So, in conclusion, I believe that it is in the hands of the archaeologist to promote our past, but before doing so we have to protect it. Rescue projects shouldn't be just about rescuing what's left of an archaeological site but about rescuing our cultural past, one that is slowly disappearing under modern constructions.

APPENDIX A

TABLES

Name of the site	Date visited by Shook*	Excavations **	Protected by the 1970 law	Current state
Aeropuerto	1952	No	Yes	Destroyed
Los Arcos	July 4 1943	No	Yes	Destroyed
Aurora	June 22 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Aycinena	March 9 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
El Balsamo	1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Barcenas	December 6 1941	No	Yes	Destroyed
Bran	1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
La Brigada	March 9 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Campo de Marte	June 14 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Canchon	June 29 1942	Yes	Yes	Only one mound left
Cementerio	March 1 1942	Yes	Yes	Several mounds are the base for modern tombs
Cerrito	December 6 1941	No	Yes	Destroyed
Cerritos	December 6 1941	No	Yes	Destroyed
Cienaguilla	January 25 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Los Cipreses	June 28 1942	No	Yes	Unknown
Clara	April 15 1949	No	Yes	Destroyed
Colonia Abril	December 14 1941	No	Yes	Destroyed
Concepcion Las Lomas	June 14 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Cotio	April 23 1950	Yes	Yes	Destroyed
Cristina	Sept 17 1950	No	Yes	Destroyed
La Cruz	Jan 1 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Cruz de Cotio	July 8 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Charcas	June 7 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Chinautla	March 9 1943	No	Yes	Destroyed
Chuarrancho	March 9 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed

Dale	Sept 17 1950	No	Yes	Destroyed
Dario	June 29 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Name of the site	**Date visited by Shook***	**Excavations ****	**Protected by the 1970 law**	**Current state**
Los Eucaliptos	June 15 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Eureka	July 18 1943	No	Yes	Destroyed
La Falda	June 15 1942	Yes	Yes	Destroyed
Fuentes	Sept 17 1950	No	Yes	Destroyed
Garland	Nov 23 1952	Yes	No	Destroyed
Graciela	June 28 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Guacamaya	April 2 1949	No	Yes	Destroyed
Guias	Sept 17 1950	No	Yes	Destroyed
Guyabo		No	Yes	Destroyed
Jorgia	Nov 22 1942	No	Yes	Only one mound left
Kaminaljuyu		Yes	Yes	More than 75% destroyed, investigated since 1920's
La Palmita	Aug 12 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Lavarreda	March 13 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Lehnsen		No	Yes	Destroyed
Molina	June 1962	No	Yes	Destroyed
EL Mulato	Nov 16 1952	Yes	Yes	One mound left
Naranjo	June 23 1943	Yes	Yes	Mounds and monuments in protected area
Pelikan	June 23 1943	Yes	Yes	Destroyed
Piedra Parada	Jan 25 1942	Yes	Yes	Destroyed
Pilar	June 28 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Piñol	June 1952	No	Yes	Destroyed
Plan Grande	March 13 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Pontezuelas	Aug 5 1975	No	Yes	Destroyed
El Portillo	July 18 1943	No	Yes	Destroyed
La Reformita	Dec 2 1948	No	Yes	Destroyed
Rodeo	June 1952	No	Yes	Destroyed
El Rosario	June 25 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Ross	June 1952	No	Yes	Destroyed
San Antonio El Frutal	June 7 1942	Yes	Yes	Destroyed
San Antonio Sanchez	April 25 1945	No	Yes	Destroyed

San Rafael	June 29 1943	No	Yes	Destroyed
San Vicente	July 6 1947	No	Yes	Destroyed
Name of the site	**Date visited by Shook***	**Excavations ****	**Protected by the 1970 law**	**Current state**
La Sanja	1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Santa Isabel	Nov 22 1942	Yes	Yes	Whole site still standing
Solano	1944	Yes	Yes	Partially destroyed
Taltic	Dec 7 1952	Yes	Yes	Partially Destroyed
Virginia	June 28 1942	No	Yes	Unknown
Villalobos	July 8 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Villanueva	June 7 1942	No	Yes	Destroyed
Vuelta Grande	May 13 1948	No	Yes	Destroyed
Zapote	1942	No	Yes	Destoyed

* Shook's documentation lfyen included surface collections and most of these collections are currently housed at the Direcci'on General del Patrimonio

**My category of "excavations" includes both rescue projects and research-oriented investigations.

Table 1: Archaeological sites in Guatemala City reported and "protected" by the Ley Para la Proteccion del Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion

APPENDIX B

FIGURES

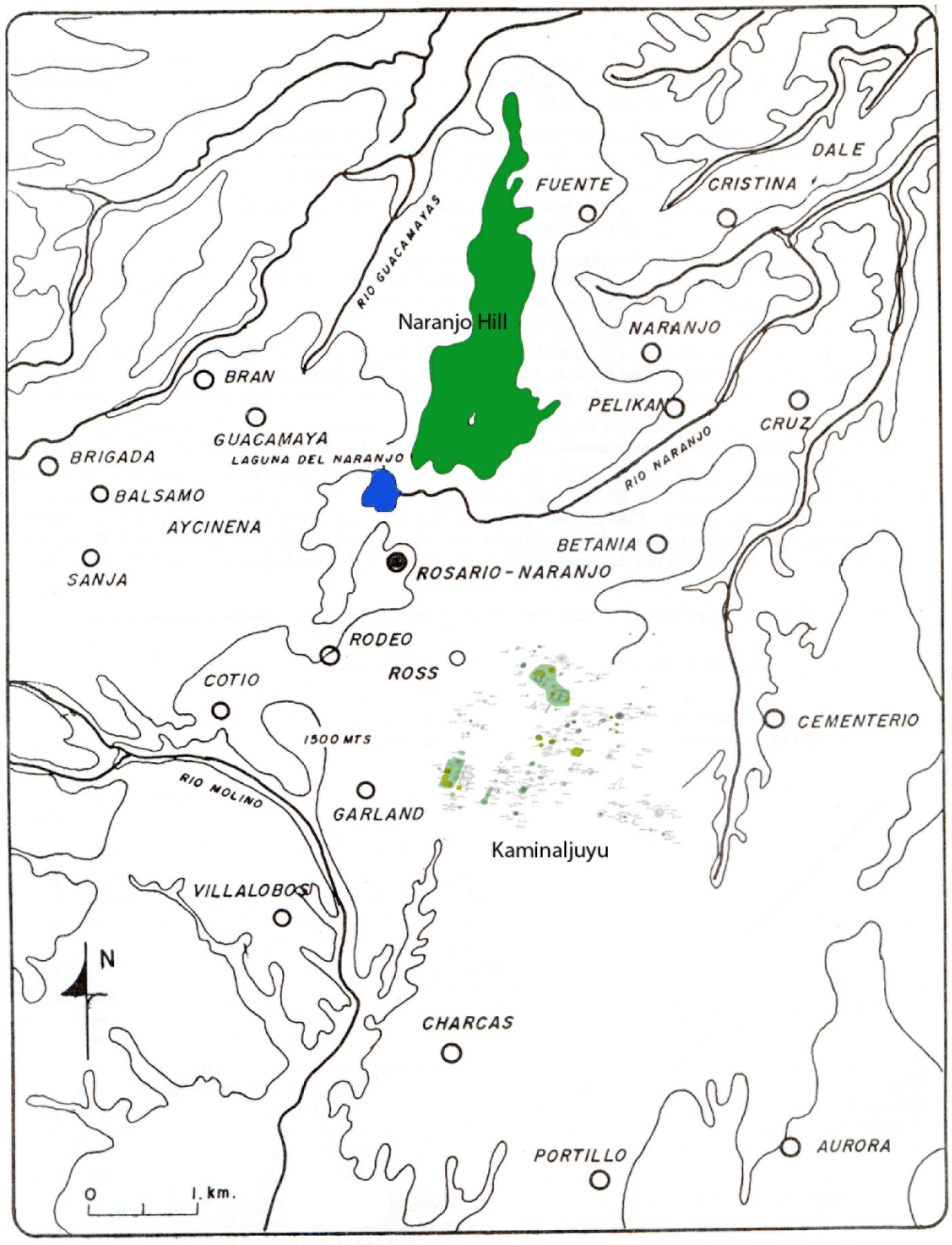


Figure 3.1: Some archaeological sites in Guatemala City reported by Edwin Shook in 1952 (Shook 1952)

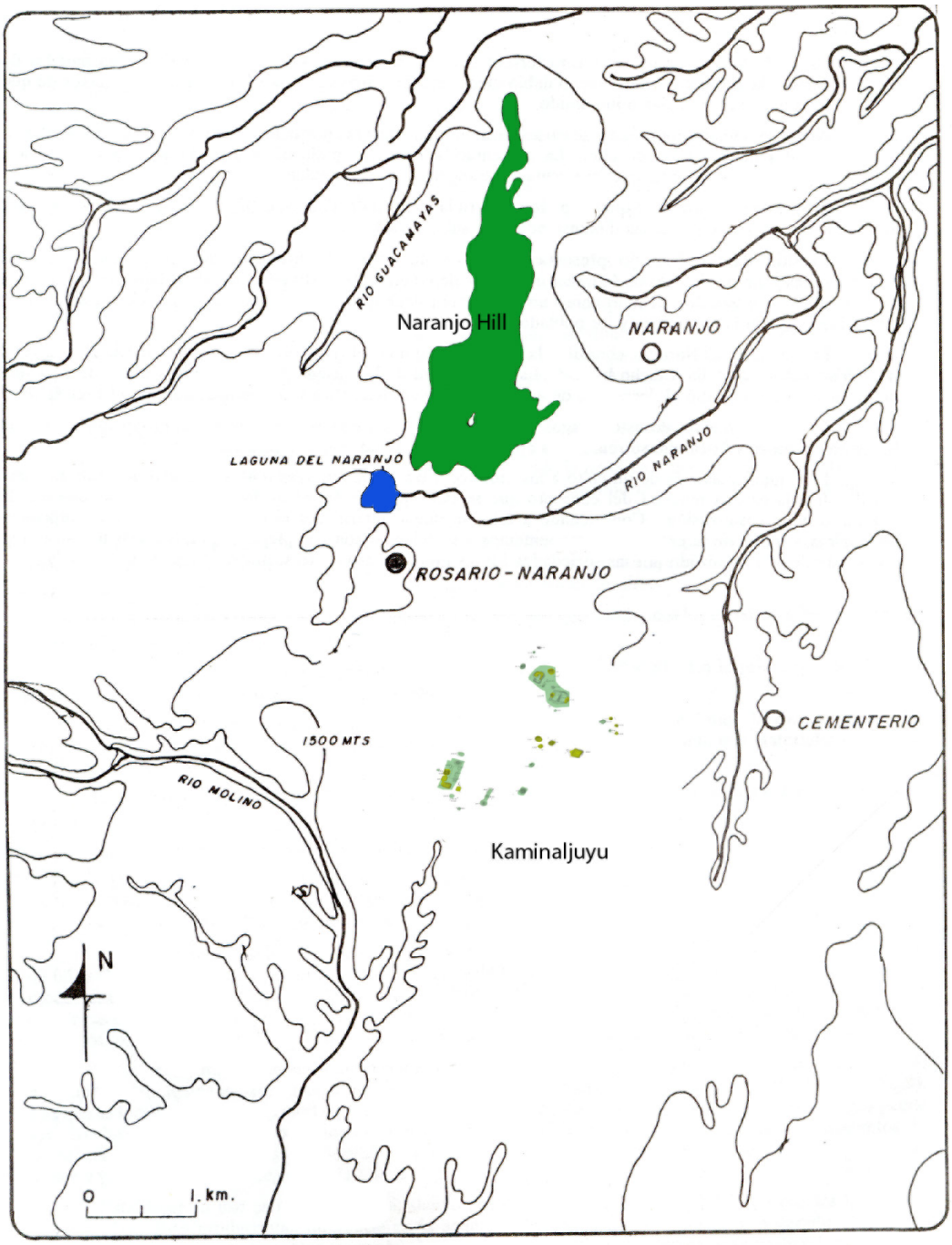


Figure 3.2: Archaeological sites in Guatemala City up to 2013

Destruyen

7 FEB. 1964

Monumento Nacional al Empuje de Tractor

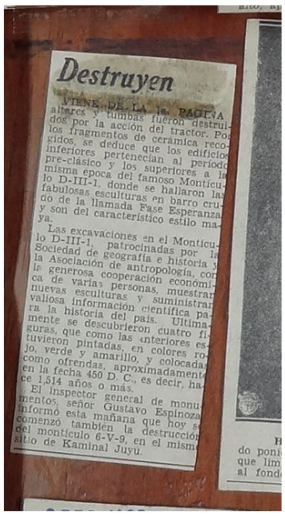
Intereses Económicos Coaligados Contra Acervo Cultural

La ignorancia y los intereses económicos se coaligan contra el acervo cultural de Guatemala — se nos dice con razón—, al denunciar la destrucción del montículo C-V-13 de Kaminal-Juyú, de siete metros de altura, desde ayer atacado por un «troz» tractor para que la intervención de las autoridades llegue tarde a salvar ese monumento nacional, así declarado por ley, con obligación de respetarlo, so pena de los castigos que conforme a la propia ley pueden imponerse.

Dicho montículo se halla en la zona arqueológica precitada, entre la carretera Roosevelt y el camino a San Juan Sacatepéquez y es propiedad de la Nación, aunque se halle en un predio particular, cuyo dueño el señor Rodolfo Urrutia, obtuvo permiso provisional y limitado del Instituto de Antropología e Historia para sacar material para adobes, pero gradual y cuidadosamente, para avisar al Instituto de cualquier indicio de construcción —la cual desde luego se presumía— para después continuar la excavación con arreglo a la técnica y a los intereses culturales del país.

Hasta ayer, se podía ver en ese montículo la huella de una sucesión de estructuras superpuestas, por el corte hecho por el fabricante de adobes y ladrillos, pero en pocas horas las plataformas.

Pasa a la 10 página 3a. columna



Destruyen

VIENE DE LA 1a. PAGINA

Figure 3.3 Destruction of Kaminaljuyu reported by El Imparcial (February 7 1964)

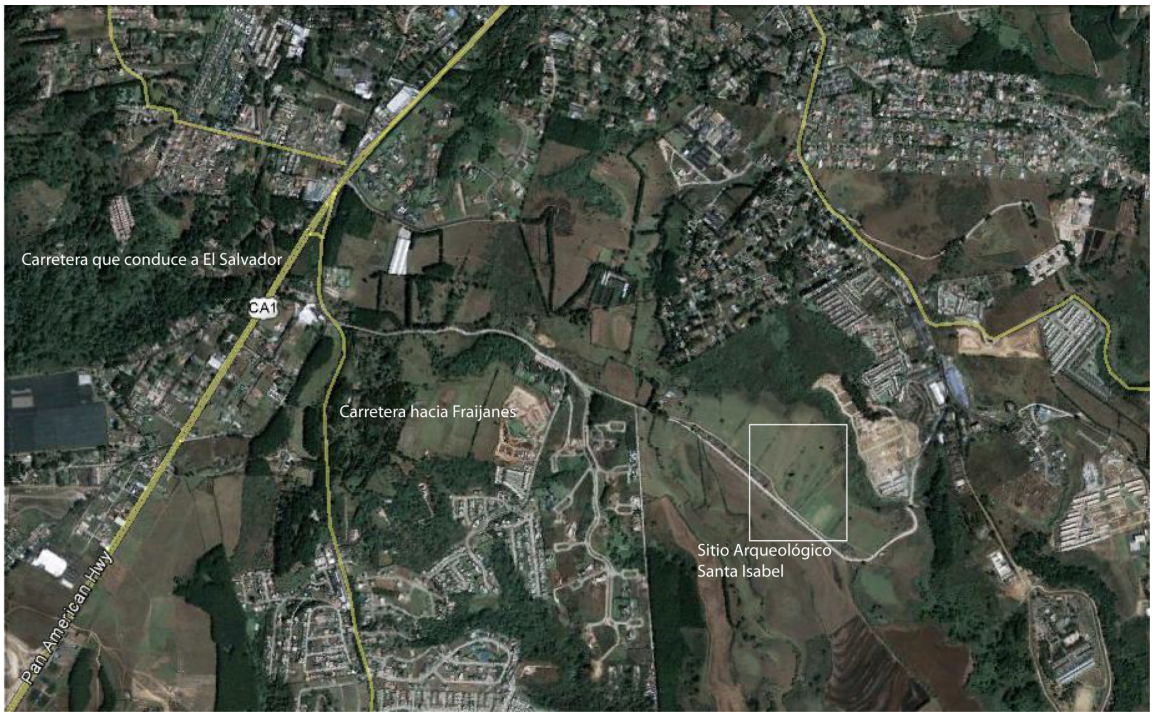


Figure 4.1 Aerial view of the area around Santa Isabel (Note the great number of urban developments).

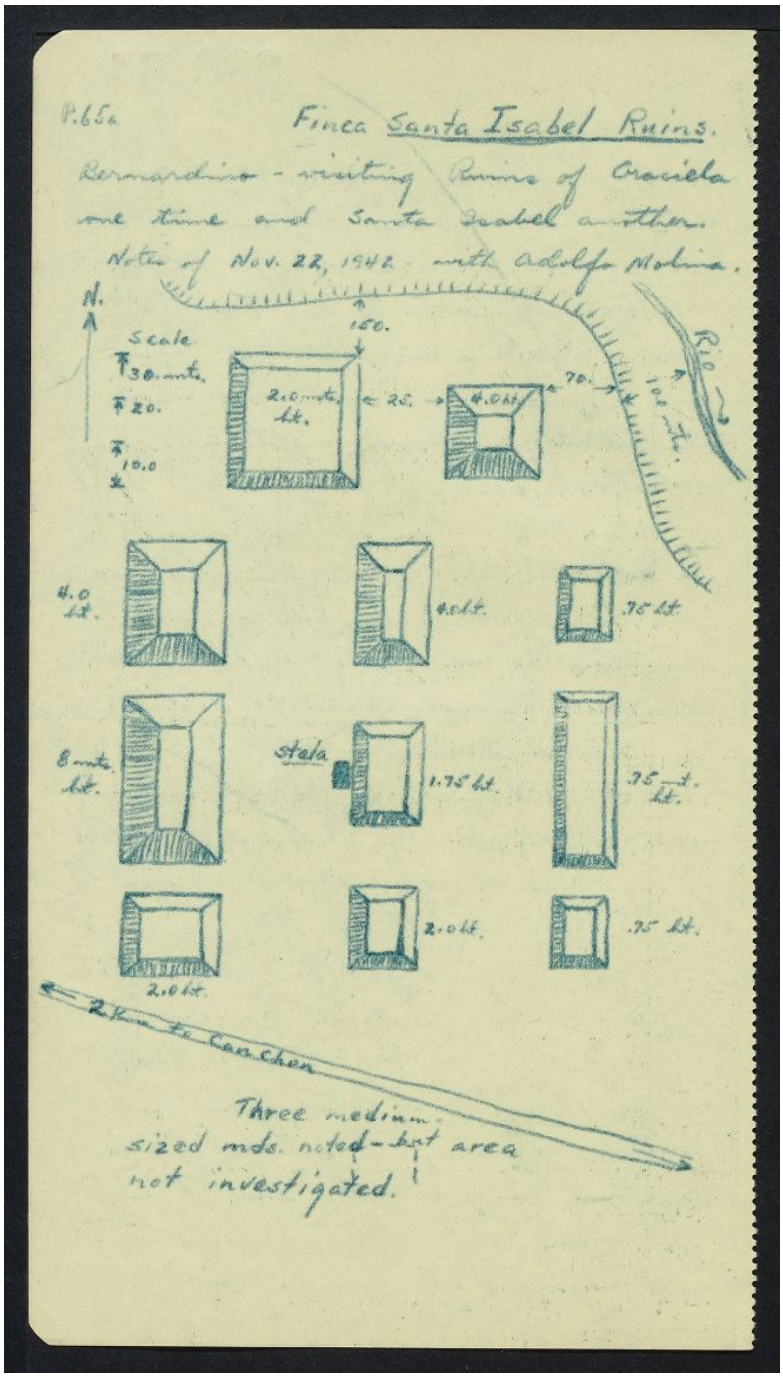


Figure 4.2 Edwin Shook sketch of Santa Isabel (Archivo Shook, Universidad del Valle de Guatemala)

a

b

Figure 4.3 Current use of the land for grazing cows
a. Looking towards Mounds 1 and 2 (note excavations in the background)
b. Looking towards Mounds 4, 5 and 6 (note excavations in the background)

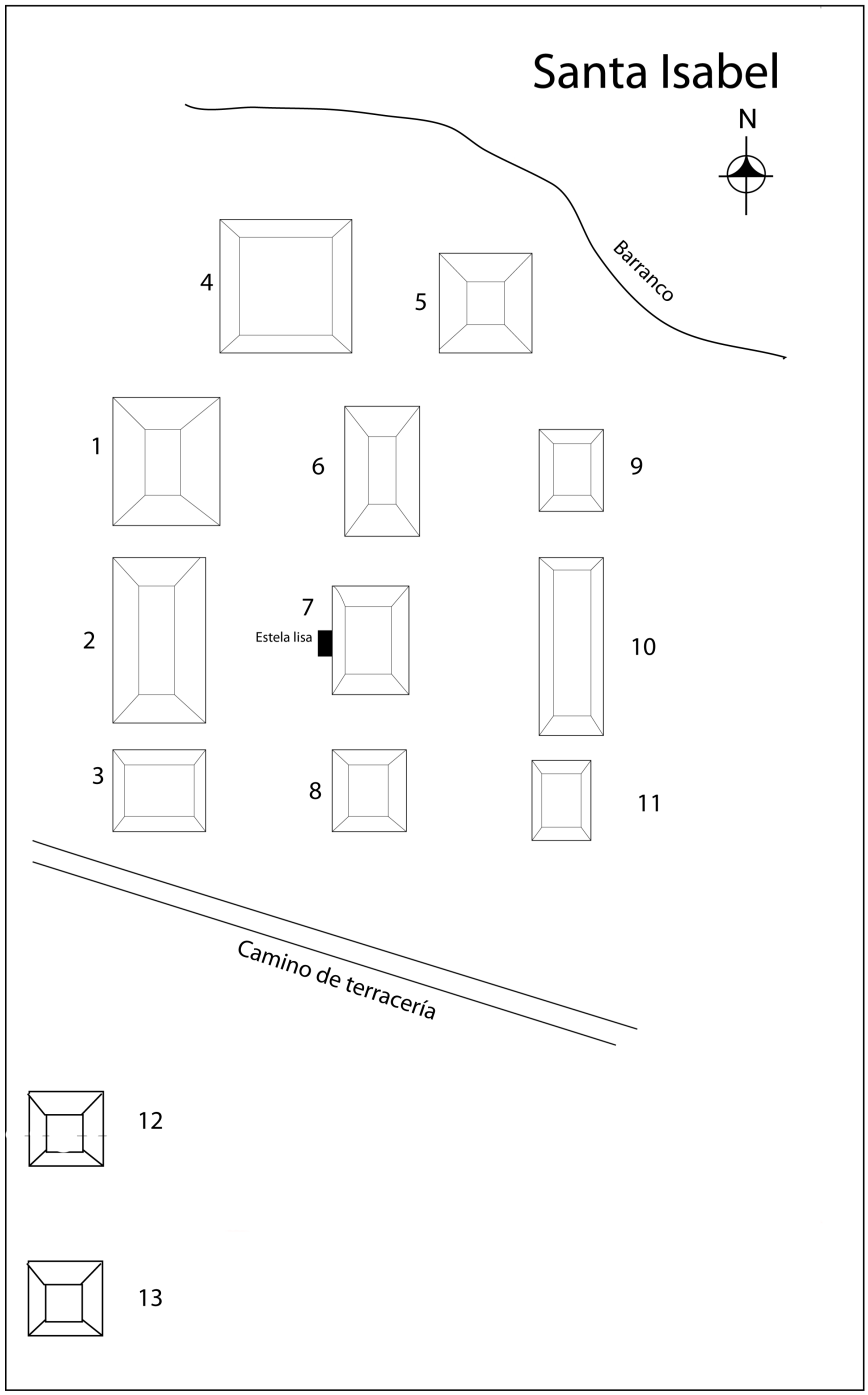


Figure 4.4 Map of Santa Isabel

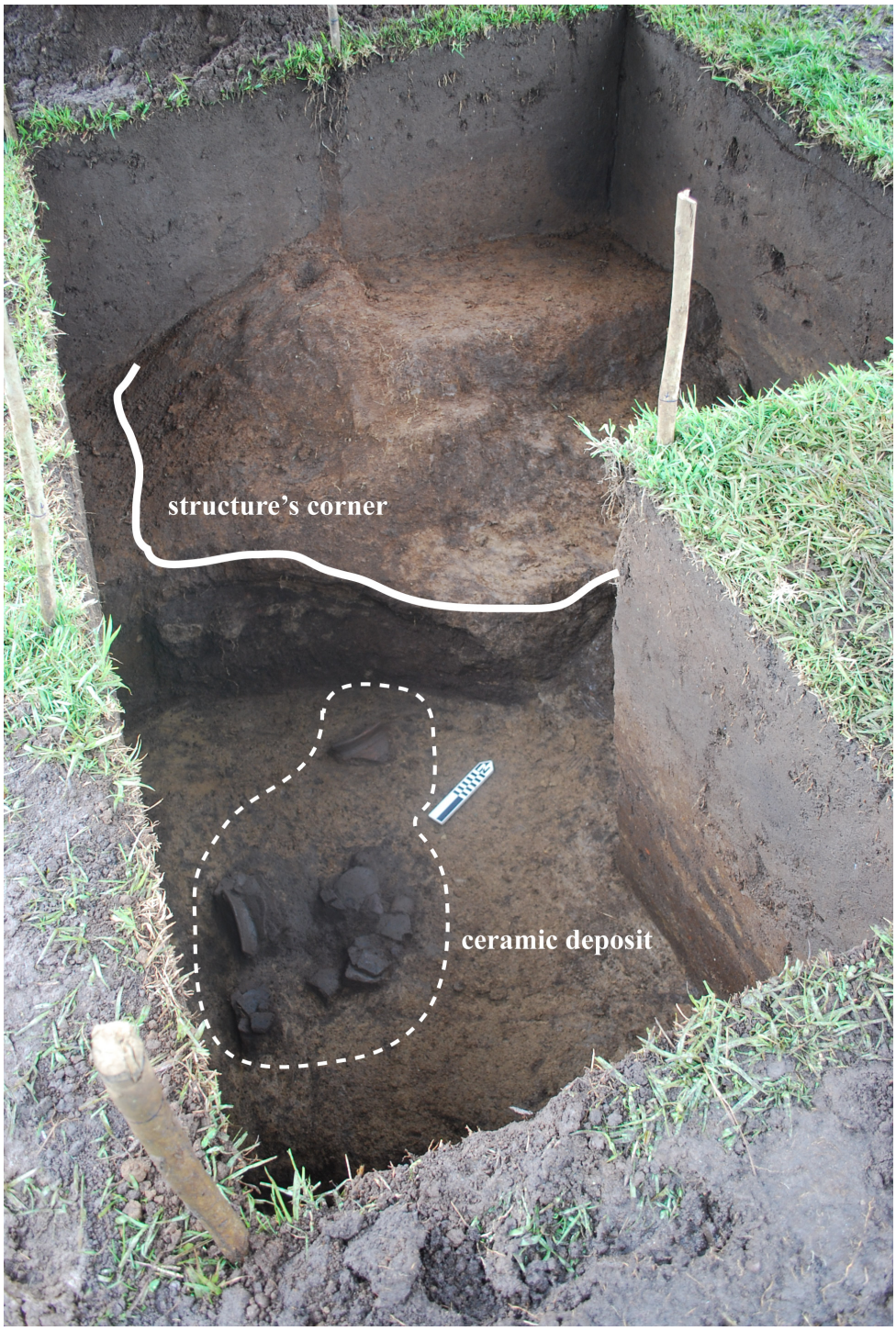


Figure 4.5 Corner of a structure with ceramic deposit associated

a

b

Figure 4.6 Ceramic offering
a. Drawing of the ceramic offering
b. Close-up of the ceramic offering

a

b

Figure 4.7 Plain monument and Mound 2
a. Before excavations
b. During excavation (note the trench on Mound 2)

a

b

Figure 4.8 Plain Monument
a. Before excavation
b. After excavation

a

b

Figure 4.9 Extensive excavations in residential area
a. Ceramic and lithic deposits
b. Close-up of one of the ceramic and lithic deposits

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