

FAMSI © 2006: Joseph B. Mountjoy

Excavation of two Middle Formative Cemeteries in the Mascota Valley of Jalisco, México



Research Year: 2004

Culture: Capacha and El Pantano

Chronology: Middle Pre-Classic

Location: Municipality of Mascota, Jalisco, México

Sites: Los Coamajales and El Embocadero II

Table of Contents

[Abstract](#)

[Resumen](#)

[Los Coamajales \(MA-20\)](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Excavation Units and Discoveries](#)

[Conclusions](#)

[El Embocadero II \(MA-19\)](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Excavation Units and Discoveries](#)

[Conclusions](#)

[List of Figures](#)

[Sources Cited](#)

Abstract

The excavations reported on herein are part of a larger project of investigations of the Middle Formative occupation of the Valley of Mascota. The main focus of the project, since 1998, has been the cemetery of El Pantano, radiocarbon dated to approximately 800 B.C., and which has now been totally excavated with support from the National Geographic Society. The funds granted by FAMSI have been used to conduct excavations in two other Middle Formative cemeteries, one (Los Coamajales, ca. 1000-850 B.C.) radiocarbon dated earlier, and the other (El Embocadero II, ca. 800 B.C.) radiocarbon dated later, approximately contemporary with El Pantano, in order to expand our understanding of the development of Middle Formative habitation of the valley.

Resumen

Las excavaciones reportadas aquí formaron parte de un proyecto más amplio de investigaciones de la habitación Formativo Medio del valle de Mascota. El enfoque principal del proyecto, desde 1998, ha sido el sitio panteón de El Pantano, fechado por radiocarbono a aproximadamente 800 a.C., el cual ya ha sido ya excavado en su totalidad utilizando fondos proporcionados por la National Geographic Society. Los fondos proporcionados por FAMSI han sido utilizados para llevar a cabo la excavación de otros dos panteones del Formativo Medio, uno (Los Coamajales, cerca de 1000-850 a.C.) fechado de radiocarbono anterior, y el otro (El Embarcadero II, cerca de 800 a.C.) radiocarbono fechado más tarde, aproximadamente contemporáneo con El Pantano, para ampliar nuestro conocimiento sobre el desarrollo habitacional del Formativo Medio en el valle.

Los Coamajales (MA-20)

Introduction

This cemetery is located in the mountains that border the southern side of the Mascota Valley, at an elevation of 1640 meters above sea level, approximately 500 meters above the level of the valley floor ([Figure 1](#)). The name Los Coamajales refers to the general area, but the local name of the cemetery is "Las Lomas", due to the two almost barren hills of special volcanic earth that stick out in this area: Loma #1 and Loma #2 ([Figure 2](#)). The cemetery is not associated with any habitation area, so it appears that the remains buried here came from some settlement still not located, somewhere around the base of the mountains (see later discussion).

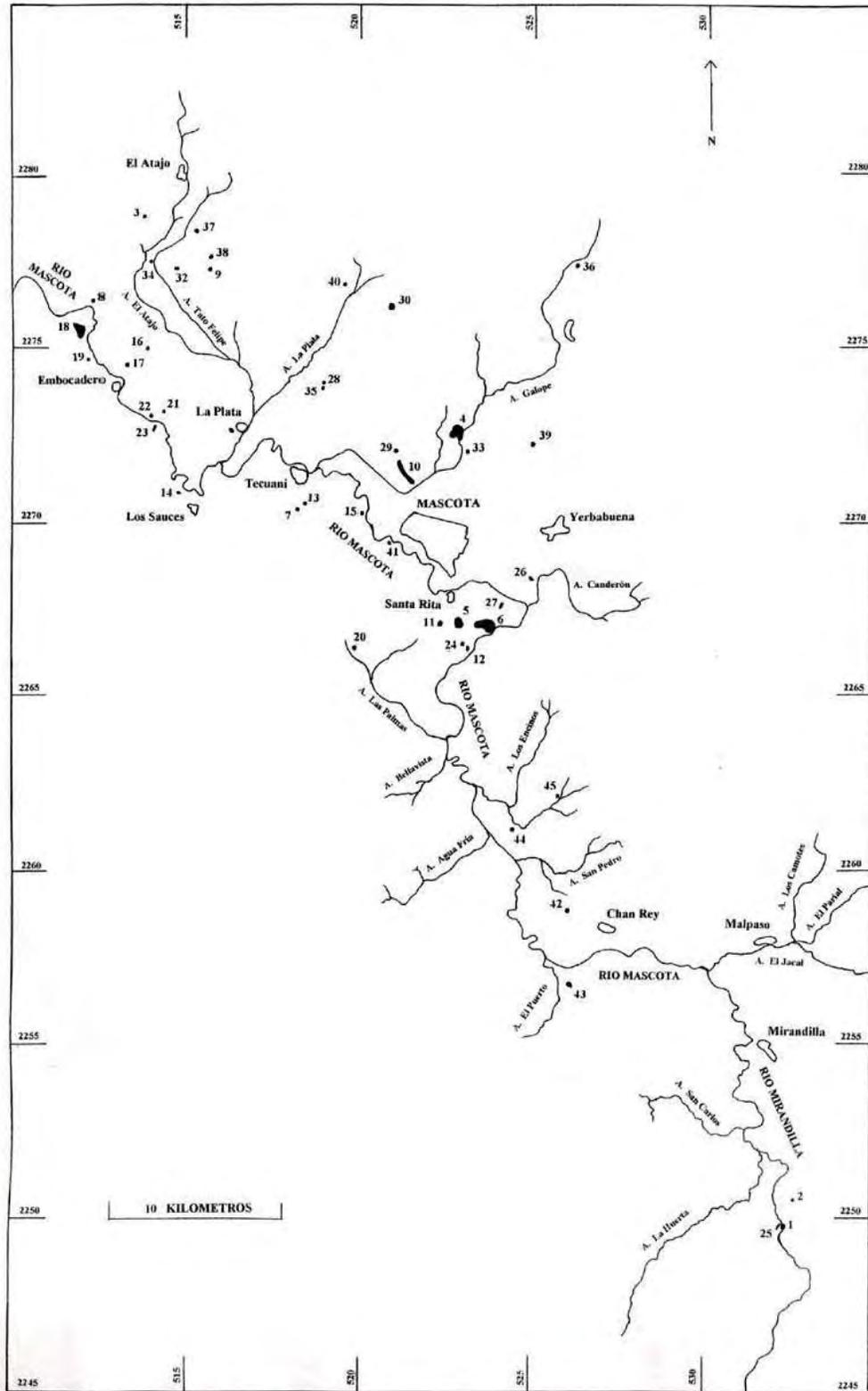


Figure 1. Map of the Mascota Valley showing the location of sites including Los Coamajales (MA-20), El Embocadero II (MA-19), and El Pantano (MA-9).

Our first visit to the site was on the 19th of May, 2002, and we were guided by a Mr. Sanchez, 37 years old, who had participated in the original looting of the site and who had recently come back to the site with some friends to continue exploring the site. The information that he gave us is somewhat suspect, being as he suffered a terrible automobile accident in the United States that left him six years in a wheelchair, some steel plates in his head, and with certain mental problems. Nonetheless, it has been possible to verify some of the information he gave to us, so I am providing his account of previous explorations of the site.

It was in 1988 that a Mr. "Remigio" from Mexicali came to Mascota with the fervent intent of locating a treasure that his father "left" him. Remigio at that time was about 50 years old and was almost blind from diabetes. His father, as a young man, had earned a living by collecting pinewood from the mountains of Los Coamajales for making charcoal, and on his deathbed, he had given Remigio a map indicating a place where an "Indian treasure" could be found. Upon arriving at Mascota, Remigio hired four men at 200 pesos each, and horses, and they went up into the mountains, map in hand, to the place indicated as the location of the treasure. They found the pine trees in exactly the same places on the hills as indicated on the map. They spent 15 days at the site, eating and sleeping there, and while they worked, from time to time they were joined by others.

MA-20 LOS COAMAJALES

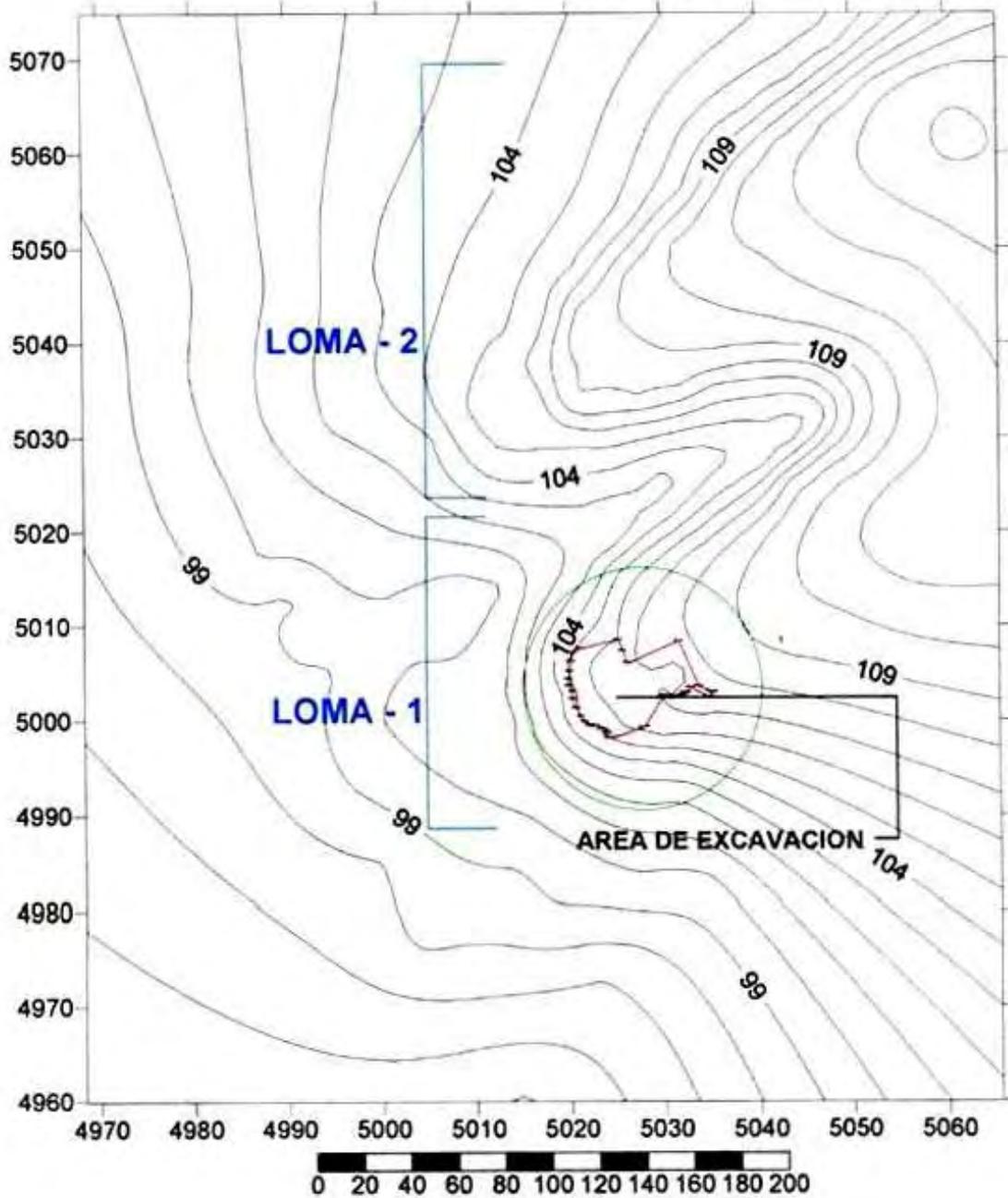


Figure 2. Map of the Los Coamajales (MA-20) site.

The map indicated that there were some 60 large jars buried in the site (apparently in Loma #1), but they dug up only 30. Some of the jars had "triple bodies", apparently in the form of a "bule" according to a drawing Mr. Sanchez made for me. He reported having found big, medium-sized, and small jars, all approximately at a

depth of 50 cm below the surface, sometimes placed one right beside another. The jars had many designs of different kinds, and some of them had burned bones inside. They were found in the soft yellowish-soil topsoil rather than in the reddish soil (subsoil). They located many of the jars by jabbing steel rods down into the soft soil, and by using this method they broke some of the ollas. They also found seven metate grinding stones with pronounced "feet", as well as a marble-like stone that was not marble and was purple in color. Remigio took the unbroken jars back to Mexicali. One of his brothers-in-law, a mason who lives in Puerto Vallarta, took one of the pretty stones and hid it in one of his pockets.



Figure 3. Decorated sherds from the looting at Los Coamajales.

Apparently some eight months before our visit to the site, Mr. Sanchez returned with two friends to explore Loma #2 (remains of their camp were still visible), leaving a huge deep excavation right on the front end of the hill, as well as some sherds and many burned bones scattered in the backdirt. He took a bag full of sherds, burned bones, and pieces of charcoal out of its hiding place on the side of Loma #2. He gave me that material, and in [Figure 3](#), above, are pictured some incised sherds that coincide in form and decoration to some Capacha pottery from Colima (Kelly 1980: Figure 20d), as well as a large sherd of a jar decorated with red paint, raised lines and bumps, and a triangular punctate filled zone ([Figure 4](#), shown below), all forms of decoration found on Capacha pottery, although not in this same combination. Within the donated collection and the pottery collected from the surface of the site on the day of our visit, we found one sherd with incised lines associated with zone punctate, five sherds of the same vessel decorated with raised bumps and lines, as well as some more sherds of the Capacha vessel ([Figure 3](#)), and 13 sherds of vessel rims: seven from jars, four from the same "tecomate", and two from a "bule".



Figure 4. Sherd decorated in incised, bumped and raised line design, from the looting at Los Coamajales.

After our visit to the site, Mr. Sanchez did me the favor of coming to my house to view photos and drawings of "Capacha" vessels published by Kelly (1980) and show me which of those pieces were similar to those they found at Los Coamajales. He indicated that they found pieces similar to the following ones illustrated by Kelly (1980): Figs. 16f (some 6 vessels with 3 levels instead of 2); 17d, g and h; 18b; 19b (with the same pattern of incisions); and 22a. According to Mr. Sanchez, they did not find bowls, "tecomates", trifids, or figurines, although he found a figurine similar to that pictured in Fig. 32c when he was digging a water well near an old abandoned house at the Las Palmas ranch at the base of the mountains. He also mentioned that they found some obsidian projectile points at Los Coamajales.

Excavation Units and Discoveries

The site of Los Coamajales (MA-20) consists of two hills of volcanic-derived earth, both with the lowest elevation on the western end and rising in elevation toward the east ([Figure 2](#)). These hills stick out in this part of the mountains for the almost total lack of stones, although stones and boulders are common on all the surrounding hillsides. The uppermost layer of earth is very soft and yellowish in color. The subsoil is harder, and in some parts of an almost dark green color, whereas in other areas, it is reddish. It seems obvious that the pre-hispanic people chose the hills in this spot

for burying their deceased, due to the special type of soil found here. Nathan Mountjoy was put in charge of the excavations at the site, and assisted by Jorge Alejo, Pilar Padilla, Octavio Esparza, Hugo Esparza, and Joseph B. Mountjoy.

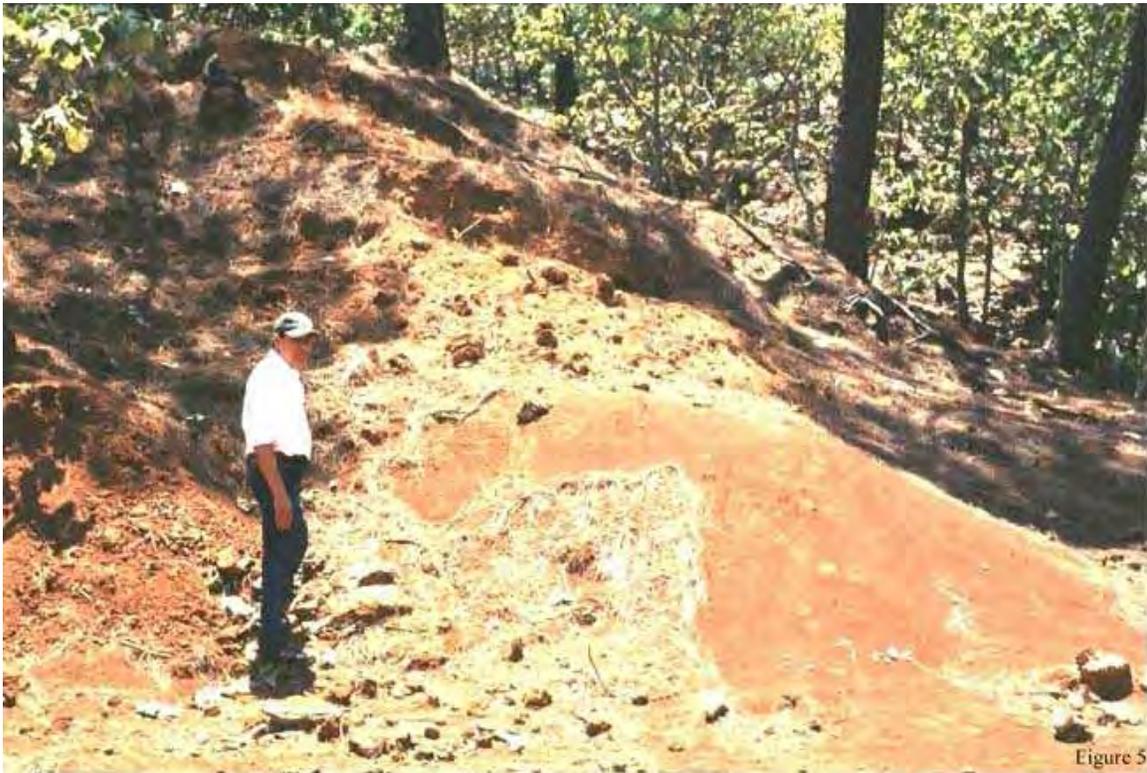


Figure 5. Area of looting on the western extremity of Loma #1.

Loma #1

We conducted excavations in both of the hills, but we had the best results in this hill. We began at the extreme western end and worked our way upslope to the east. On the western end of the hill, we found large looted areas ([Figure 5](#), shown above, and [Figure 6](#): areas #1–#4), as well as two other areas of looting ([Figure 6](#): small looted area and large looted area). In these looted areas, we found evidence of cremated bodies; the burned bones had probably originally been inside of large jars and placed in pits that penetrated the subsoil. Between these looted areas, we found some pottery and cremated bone in features with better integrity, and by the end of the explorations, we had found two pits with even better integrity ([Figure 5](#)): pit #1 which probably was a looted shaft-and-chamber tomb, and pit #2 which was an unlooted shaft-and-chamber tomb.

This last tomb was found through a method of using a copper rod 1.80 meters in length that was hammered down to the depth of the hard subsoil at one-meter intervals. Then Nathan Mountjoy entered the depths recorded into a computer program that produced a topographic map of the subsoil. We excavated in each

area where the map indicated a dip in the subsoil, and in this way, we found pit #2, fortunately not found by the looters. Also, in the western part of the area, we used a system of squares two meters on a side, as a control for registering finds that we could not attribute to a looted area, a feature, or a pit. The entire excavation was mapped with a Total Station.

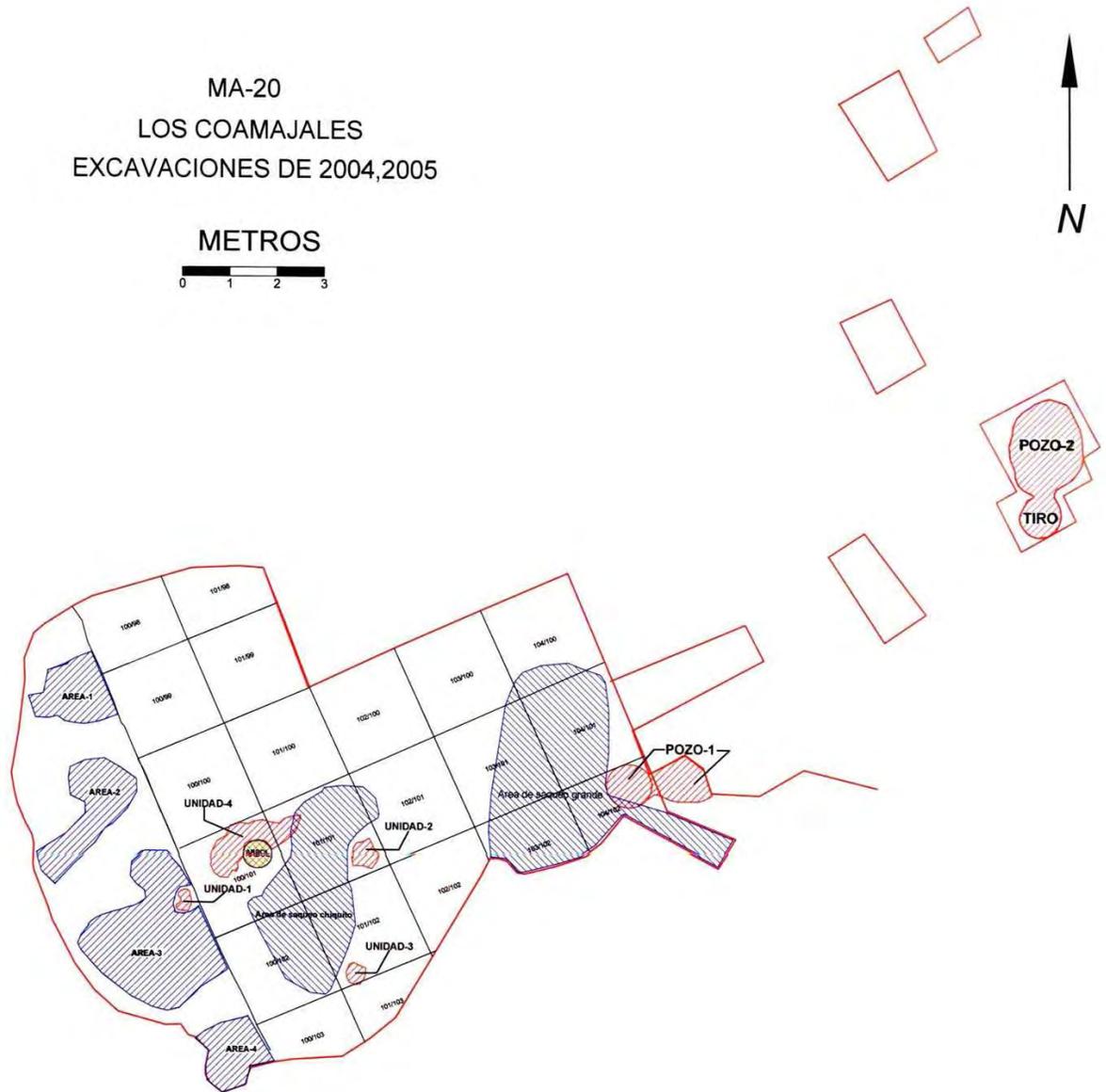


Figure 6. Map of Loma #1 including the excavated units.

Before beginning the excavation of Loma #1, we made a surface collection, finding (lot #1):

174 eroded sherds

43 natural color body sherds

11 natural color rim sherds (8 jars; 3 bowls)

8 reddish-orange body sherds

1 reddish-orange rim sherd (1 bowl)

13 sherds with decoration in relief

 6 raised line (Kelly 1980: Figure 27a and b; Figure 29h and i)

 3 incised

 3 incised and zone punctate (Kelly 1980: Figure 29b and e)

1 modeled

1 polishing stone of trapezoidal shape (Kelly 1980: Figure 45b; Oliveros 2004: Figure 51)

1 river rock

49 bones and 1 tooth, burned/calcined



Figure 7. Area excavated on the western extremity of Loma #1.

Next we excavated the general area of the western end of the hill in an attempt to remove the looting backdirt in search of burials ([Figure 7](#), shown above), recovering (lot #2):

20 eroded sherds
320 natural color body sherds
38 natural color rim sherds (23 from everted-rim jars; 6 from vertical-rim jars;
5 from "tecomates"; 4 from bowls)
5 reddish-orange body sherds
41 sherds with decoration in relief
7 raised line (at least from 2 different jars) (Kelly 1980: Figure 27a and b;
Figure 29h and i)
5 incised
14 incised and punctate, fine (12 from the same jar)
5 incised and punctate, large (from 3 different large jars) (Kelly 1980: Figure
29b and e)
6 raised line with large punctuates (from the same jar)
1 incised and spiked (from a small bowl)
3 incised and raised line
1/4 of a rectangular stone of white serpentine with blue veins, (for grinding?)

Looted Area #1 (lot #3)

19 eroded sherds
31 natural color body sherds (14 from one vessel, 4 from another)
1 natural color rim sherd (jar with an everted rim)
4 reddish-orange body sherds (all from the same vessel)
3 sherds with decoration in relief
3 incised
1 fragment of a river rock



Figure 8. A snuff/lime dipping pot.

Looted Area #2 (lot #4)

76 eroded sherds

109 natural color body sherds (many from the same vessels registered in lot #2)

18 natural color rim sherds (6 from everted-rim jars, 6 from little everted-rim jars,
2 from small bowls, 1 from a large bowl, 3 from "tecomates")

8 reddish-orange body sherds

1 reddish-orange rim sherd (from a large everted-rim jar)

25 sherds with decoration in relief

3 incised

3 punctate

1 raised line

18 incised and punctate, fine (from the same vessel registered in lot #2)

1 "snuff/lime dipping vessel", similar to tiny vessels found at El Opeño, Michoacán
(Oliveros 2004: Figure 29) and at Apulco, Jalisco (Greengo and Meighan
1976: Figure 4d-i), (Figure 8, shown above)

1 flake of gray obsidian

1 river cobble

1 volcanic stone

2 fragments of gray obsidian projectile points ([Figure 9](#), shown below)

3 pendants of clear quartz ([Figure 10](#), shown below)

1/2 of a rectangular tablet of sedimentary (?) rock of purplish color with

cream-colored and green-colored inclusions, hardness less than 3.0, of the same form as an incised tablet found in pit #1 at the El Pantano (MA-9) site



Figure 9. Fragments of two obsidian projectile points.



Figure 10. Three pendants of clear quartz.

Looted Area #3 (lot #5)

15 eroded sherds

94 natural color body sherds (16 from a large, thick jar, 2 from a cylindrical jar)

4 natural color rim sherds (2 from a small everted-rim jar, 1 of a jar with a vertical rim)

20 sherds with decoration in relief

18 incised and zone punctate (Kelly 1980: Figure 29b and e)

1 incised and spiked

4 fragments of burned/calcined bone

Looted Area #4 (lot #6)

2 eroded sherds
11 natural color body sherds
1 natural color rim sherd (1 everted-rim jar)
1 sherd with decoration in relief
 1 incised

Feature #1 (lot #7)

67 natural color body sherds (at least 8 from the same large jar, 11 from a large jar with a reddish-orange false slip)
4 natural color rim sherds (2 small everted-rim jars, 1 large everted-rim jar, 1 small bowl)
4 sherds with decoration in relief
 1 incised
 1 incised and raised line
 2 spiked
2 porous volcanic rocks (possibly burial markers)

Square 100/100, 0-50 cm (lot #9)

46 eroded sherds
74 natural color body sherds
2 natural color rim sherds (from the same small everted-rim jar)
8 sherds decorated in relief
 1 incised
 4 incised and zone punctate (from three different vessels) (Kelly 1980: Figure 29b and e)
1 rough volcanic rock
1 trumpet-shaped pendant of clear quartz ([Figure 11](#), shown below)
1 fragment of a cylindrical-shaped pendant of clear quartz
89 fragments of burned/calced bone



Figure 11. One pendant of clear quartz.

Square 101/100, 0-60 cm (lot #10)

- 15 eroded sherds
- 41 natural color body sherds
- 3 natural color rim sherds (2 small everted-rim jars, 1 miniature bowl)
- 7 sherds with decoration in relief
 - 1 incised
 - 1 punctate
 - 1 spiked
 - 2 raised line (from the same vessel registered in lot #2)
 - 2 incised and zone punctate, fine (from the same vessel registered in lot #2)
- 3 fragments of milky quartz
- 34 fragments of burned/calced bone

Square 102/100, 0-70 cm (lot #11)

- 42 eroded sherds
- 26 natural color body sherds
- 1 natural color rim sherd (1 small everted-rim jar)
- 2 reddish-orange body sherds
- 6 sherds with decoration in relief

- 3 incised and punctate, fine (from the same vessel registered in lot #2)
- 1 incised
- 2 punctate
- 4 fragments of burned/calced bone

Square 104/100, 0-40 cm (lot #12)

- 9 eroded sherds
- 3 natural color body sherds
- 2 sherds with decoration in relief
- 2 incised

Square 103/100, 0-60 cm (lot #13)

- 10 eroded sherds
- 7 natural color body sherds
- 1 sherd with decoration in relief
- 1 punctate
- 1 fragment of burned/calced bone



Figure 12. Feature #2.

Figure 12

Feature #2, 30-40 cm (lot #14)

Here we found sherds of two jars broken by the looters ([Figure 12](#), shown above): one natural color jar quite eroded on the exterior and without the rim; the other with an incised line around the neck from which there are pendant incised triangles filled in with punctuations (Kelly 1980: Figure 29b and e). This jar ([Figure 13](#), shown below) was restored by students from the School of Conservation and Restoration of West México. Furthermore, from this context was recovered a date from a sample of carbon extracted from the bones burned in the crematory fire: 2840 ± 40 conventional date, calibrated at 1100 to 900 B.C. with 95% probability, and the intersection with the calibration curve at the date of 990 B.C. (Beta-202346).

1 possible fragment of burned clay

14 fragments of burned/calced bone that were not sent for dating

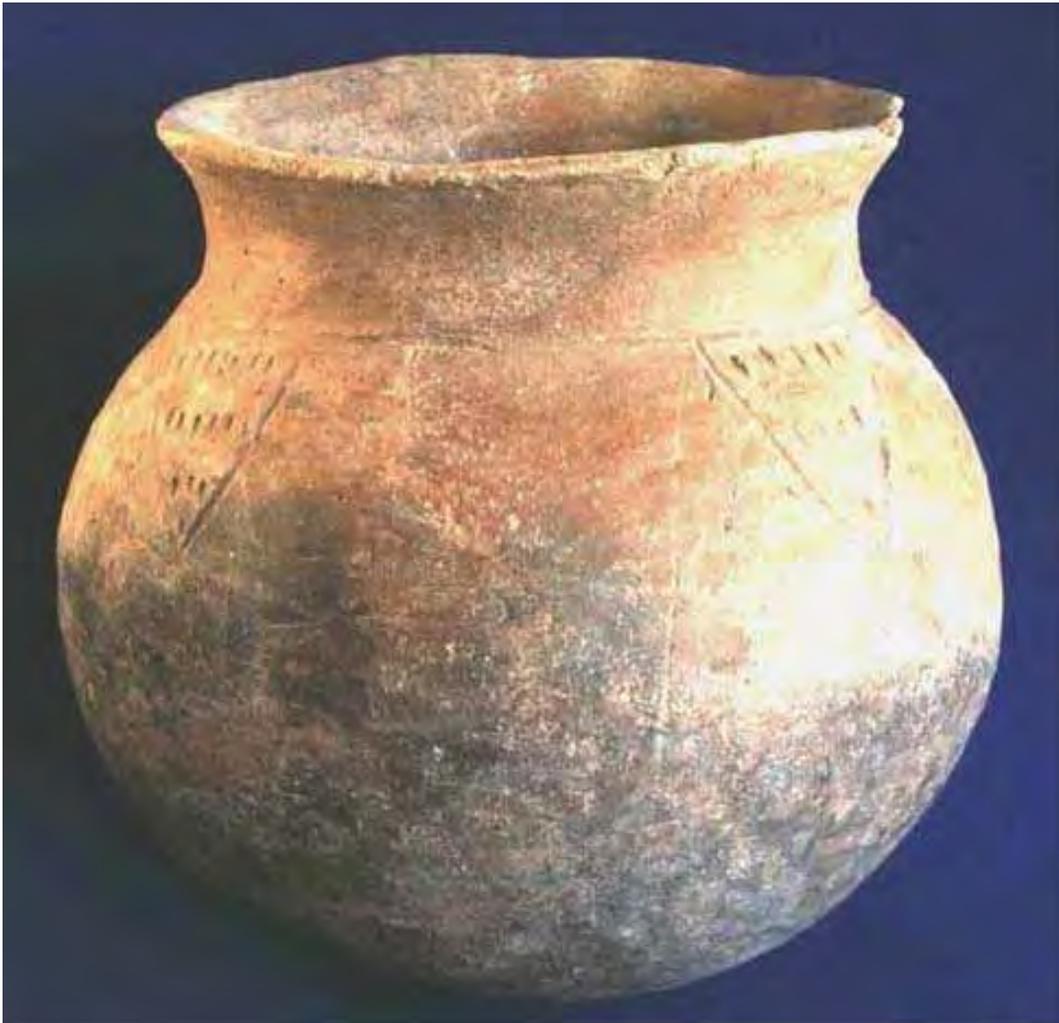


Figure 13. A Capacha jar from Feature #2, restored.

Square 101/101, 0-40 cm (lot #15)

2 eroded sherds
27 natural color body sherds
2 natural color rim sherds (1 small everted-rim jar, 1 "tecomate")
3 sherds with decoration in relief
 1 incised
 2 spiked (from the same vessel)

Square 102/101, 0-40 cm (lot #16)

3 eroded sherds
28 natural color body sherds

Square 102/102, 0-40 cm (lot #17)

8 eroded sherds
2 natural color body sherds
1 river cobble (the other half of the stone registered in lot #15, possibly a rustic "mano" grinding stone)
3 fragments of burned/calcined bone

Square 103/101, 0-60 cm (lot #18)

3 eroded sherds
22 natural color body sherds
5 sherds with decoration in relief
 2 incised
 1 incised and punctate
 2 punctate

Feature #3, 10-20 cm (lot #19)

5 eroded sherds
35 natural color body sherds (5 from one jar and 17 from another)
9 natural color rim sherds (4 from small everted-rim jars, 1 from a small bowl)

Square 102/102, 0-40 cm (lot #20)

7 natural color body sherds



Figure 14. Feature #4.

Feature #4 (lot #21)

This material was found in original context among the roots of a pine tree in an area not reached by the looters, although the roots did break apart the pottery vessels ([Figure 14](#), shown above). We found the remains of three large jars: 1 of natural color, without decoration, 25 cm high and 28 cm in diameter; 1 with raised line decoration (Kelly 1980: Figure 27a and b; Figure 29h and i) 26 cm in diameter; 1 with decoration of incised lines around the neck and pendant incised triangles filled in with punctuations (Kelly 1980: Figure 29b and e), 26 cm high and 27 cm in diameter. This last jar was restored by students from the School of Conservation and Restoration of West México in Guadalajara ([Figure 15](#), shown below).



Figure 15. A Capacha jar from Feature #4, restored.

Square 100/99, 0-40 cm (lot #22)

10 eroded sherds
72 natural color body sherds
8 natural color rim sherds (3 from jars with a vertical rim, 5 from everted-rim jars)
12 sherds with decoration in relief
 9 incised
 1 incised and zone punctate (Kelly 1980: Figure 24a)
 1 punctate
 1 spiked
1 unmodified flake of basalt
288 fragments of burned/calced bone
1 fragment of a molar tooth

Square 101/99, 0-40 cm (lot #23)

13 eroded sherds
104 natural color body sherds
10 natural color rim sherds (3 from everted-rim jars, 4 from small everted-rim jars–
 3 from the same jar, 2 from small bowls, 1 from a "tecomate")
16 sherds with decoration in relief
 9 incised (6 from the same jar)
 1 punctate
 4 zone punctate (2 from the same jar registered in lot #22) (Kelly 1980:
 Figure 24a)
 1 spiked
1 large piece of burned clay (possibly daub)
2 pendants of clear quartz (1 in two pieces)
1 possibly utilized flake of rhyolite
6 large pieces of iron pyrite (probably from the same big ornament) ([Figure 16](#),
shown below)
182 fragments of burned/calced bone (including some ribs) (*In this case, as in
 the other lots, it is rare to find any bones obviously from an adult.)



Figure 16. Fragments of a piece of modified iron pyrite.

Pit #1, Feature #1, 0-90 cm (lot #24)

This is a burial and offerings that were possibly deposited in a shallow shaft-and-chamber tomb, but the area of the shaft and part of the chamber were severely damaged by the digging of the looters. Radiocarbon analysis of carbon extracted from a sample of the burned human bones found within the chamber yielded a conventional date of 2680 ± 40 years BP, calibrated to 900 to 800 B.C. with 95% certainty and the intersection of the calibration curve at the 820 B.C. point (Beta-211717).

15 eroded sherds

43 natural color body sherds that are not from the two principal vessels

6 natural color rim sherds that are not from the two principal vessels (5 are from everted-rim jars, 1 from a vertical-rim jar)

89 sherds with decoration in relief: 13 from a reddish-orange painted jar with raised lines;

76 from a cylindrical bottle with incised lines and fine punctations in a band around the neck. This vessel is in the process of restoration, but it was possible to put together sufficient pieces to draw and measure it: 45 cm high; 20 cm in diameter at the base; 10 cm in diameter at the mouth ([Figure 17](#), shown below).

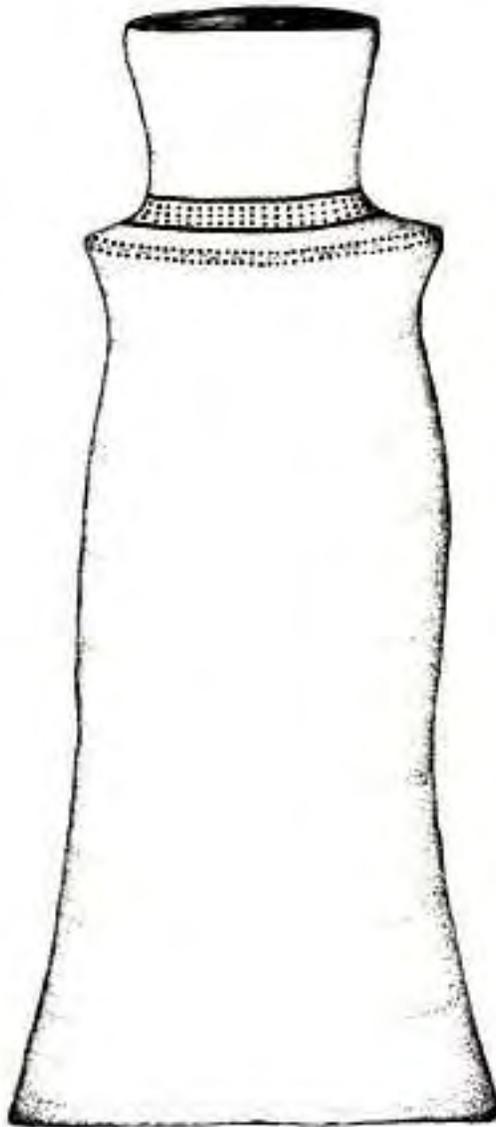


Figure 17. A drawing of a cylindrical bottle found in Pit #1, Feature #1.

Square 101/98, 0-40 cm (lot #25)

1 natural color rim sherd (1 vertical rim)



Figure 18. A cup decorated in spikes modeled in relief, found in Pit #1, Feature #2.

Pit #1, Feature #2, 90 cm (lot #26)

1 cup with orange paint on the exterior and decoration in relief consisting of a line of spikes or bumps around the shoulder ([Figure 18](#), shown above). This cup was found in a "niche" in the burial chamber that was not explored by the looters. The cup measures 7.0 cm in height, the exterior diameter of the mouth 8.3 cm and the interior diameter of the mouth 5.5 cm.



Figure 19. The place in Loma #1 where a large shaft-and-chamber tomb was found, Pit #2, Feature #1.

Pit #2, Feature #1 (220 cm maximum depth)

This was a shaft-and-chamber tomb found in a part of loma #1 not reached by the looters ([Figure 19](#), shown above). As we found the tomb, the roof of the chamber had collapsed onto the floor, and at one side, there was an opening at the bottom of the shaft, sealed with stones, that gave access to the chamber via a step carved out of the hard subsoil ([Figure 20](#), shown below). We did not find any human remains in the chamber, probably because the body or bodies were deposited un-incinerated and the acidic subsoil within which they became sandwiched destroyed the remains. We found the following offerings on the floor of the chamber.



Figure 20

Figure 20. Excavation of the jaguar vessel on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.



Figure 21. The jaguar-form vessel found in the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

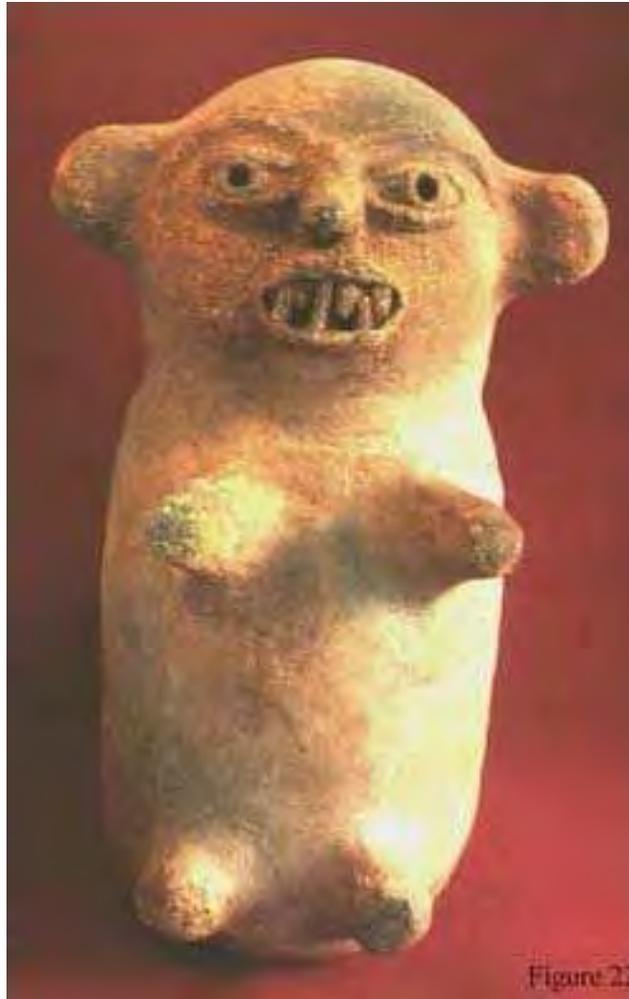


Figure 22. Another view of the jaguar-form vessel found on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

- 1 ceramic vessel in the form of a jaguar, 13.6 cm in height, 32.0 cm in length from the face to the tail ([Figures 21](#) and [22](#), shown above)
- 1 cup with reddish-orange paint on the exterior, crudely made, asymmetrical, only slightly smoothed, and fragile. It measured 11.0 cm in height and the diameter of the exterior of the mouth measured from 10.0 cm to 11.0 cm. ([Figure 23](#), shown below)
- 6 fragments apparently from 2 un-fired figurines (Kelly 1980: Figure 33a, aa, c, and d)
- 3 plaques of iron pyrite, with one polished face ([Figure 24](#), shown below) (Oliveros 2004, plate 8, photo 1)
- 3 unmodified volcanic stones (2 of them in fragments)
- 3 slabs of porous volcanic stone that formed the main part of the tomb door
- 15 small, porous, volcanic stones that were used as fill around the main stones of the tomb door

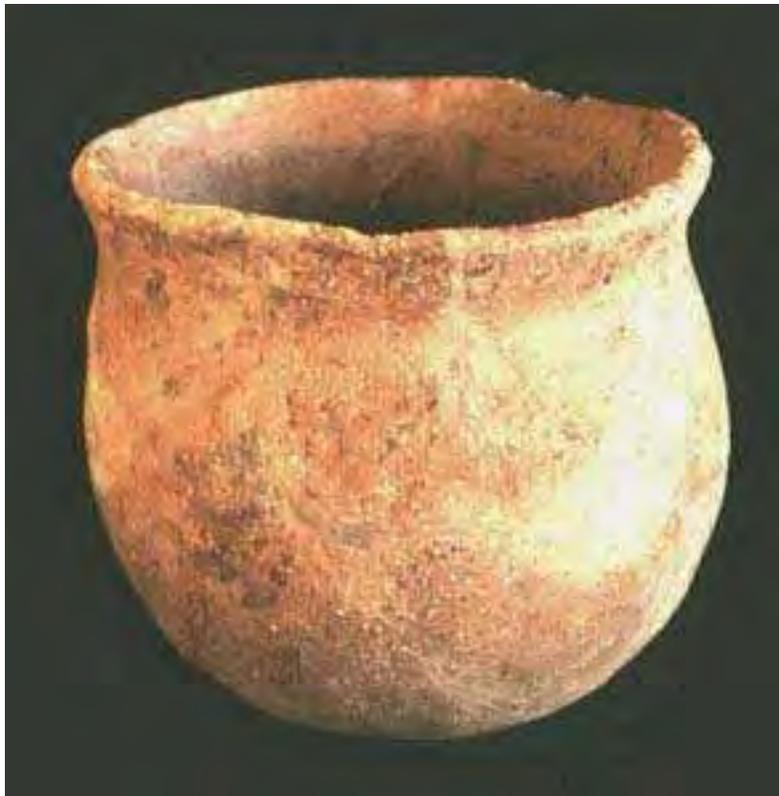


Figure 23. A pottery cup found on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

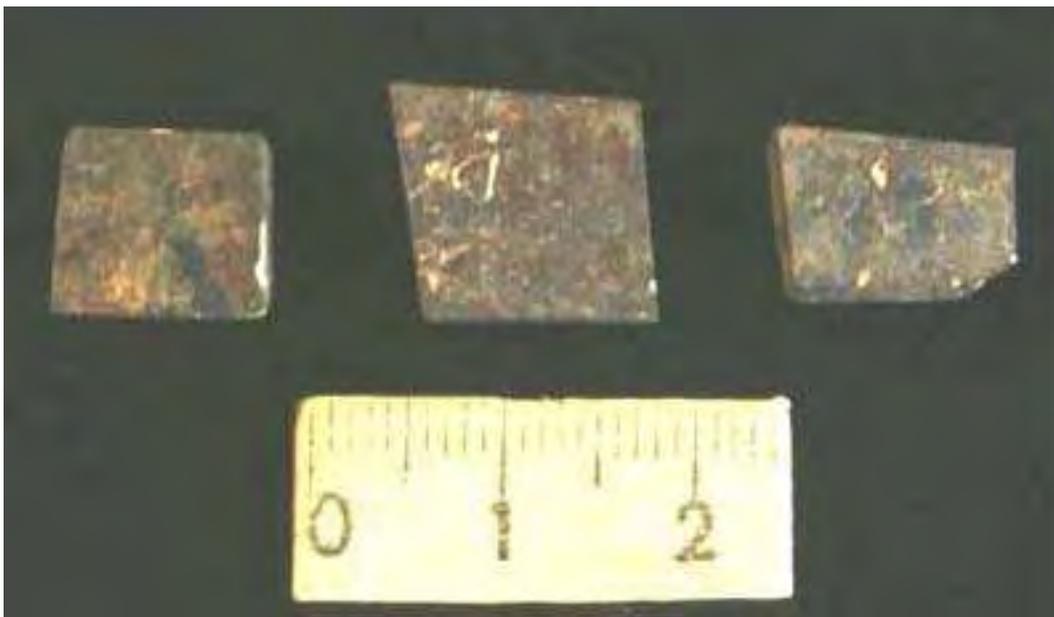


Figure 24. Iron pyrite plaques found on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

Loma #2

Looters' Pit (lot #28) (Figure 25)

19 natural color sherds from a vessel in the form of a "guaje/tecomate"
102 fragments of burned/calcined bone, of an adult, judging from the size and thickness of the bones

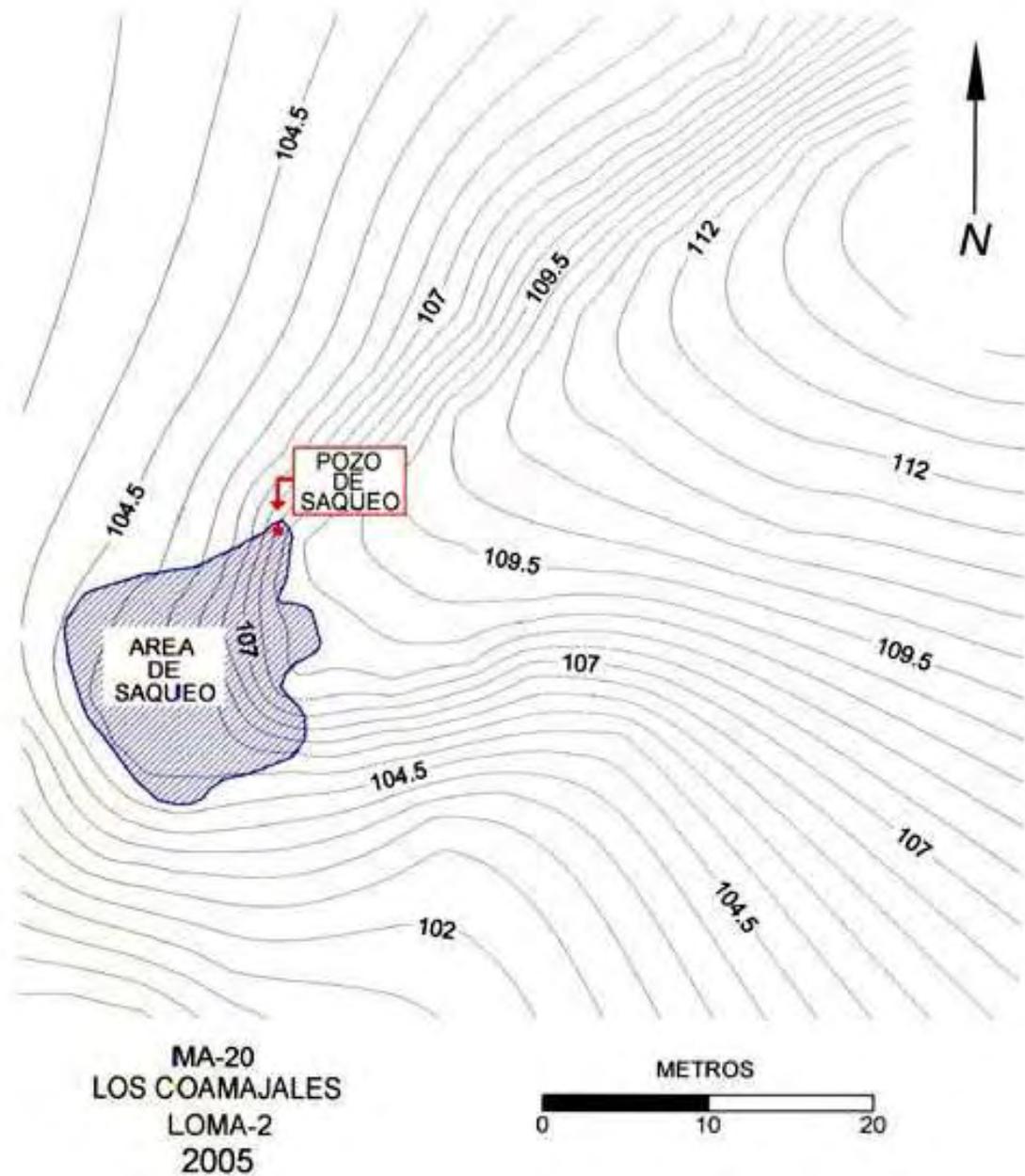


Figure 25. Map of Loma #2 at Los Coamajales.

Conclusions

The artifacts found in this site that are similar to ones found at the El Opeño site in Michoacán (Oliveros 2004), the Capacha phase sites in Colima (Kelly 1980), as well as Capacha material looted from a site near Apulco, Jalisco (Greengo and Meighan 1976), include: jars with incised, raised and spiked decoration; vessels of "tecomate" form; the "snuff/lime dipper" ceramic vessel; a pottery polisher in the form of a trapezoid; the clear quartz pendants in trumpet form; un-fired figurines; iron pyrite ornaments; and rectangular plaques of fine-grained stone. These indicate at least a partial contemporaneity of artifacts from these three areas with those found at Los Coamajales.

The only radiocarbon date ever obtained for the Capacha phase in Colima is not reliable, and the average of the central radiocarbon dates from the tombs recently excavated at El Opeño is approximately 1200 B.C. (Mountjoy 1998). The central radiocarbon date from Los Coamajales that we have from carbon derived directly from cremated human bones found in Feature #2 in association with a jar of form and decoration typical of Capacha seems to be a date totally acceptable for the earliest sub-phase of the Capacha tradition, the sub-phase that is anterior to the sub-phase represented in the El Pantano (MA-9) site. El Pantano contains some burial offerings of types attributed to the Capacha phase in Colima (Mountjoy and Mountjoy 2005), and the relevant material at El Pantano has been radiocarbon dated to approximately 800 B.C. (Mountjoy 2001). Therefore, the earliest phase of Capacha should date within the range of 1200 to 900 B.C.

There are other discoveries of much importance from the excavations at Los Coamajales. One of them is the discovery of a shaft-and-chamber tomb that without a doubt can be attributed to the Capacha tradition, a question that has remained unanswered for more than 30 years (Mountjoy 1994; 1998), and which forms the long absent link between the stairway-and-chamber at El Opeño (Oliveros 2004) and the shaft-and-chamber tombs well known from Colima, Jalisco, and Nayarit during the Late Formative and Early Classic (300 B.C. to A.D. 300) (Pickering and Cabrero 1998).

Other important discoveries at Los Coamajales that relate to understanding the Middle Formative in West México include: the earliest evidence of cremation of human remains; early and ample evidence of sophisticated lapidary work in clear quartz; some of the earliest iron pyrite ornaments found in West México, as well as in Mesoamerica; and a sensational pottery vessel in the form of a growling jaguar that ought to have some relationship to the cult of the jaguar so well known among the Olmecs of southeastern México.

El Embocadero II (MA-19)

Introduction

I registered this site, located in the southwestern part of the Mascota Valley at an elevation of 1,270 meters above sea level ([Figure 1](#)), on the 18th of May, 2002. It was in 1999 that two of the Esparza brothers, Enrique and Isaac, who cultivate this area, found some archaeological pieces exposed at a depth of 60 cm below the surface in the western profile of the road that gives access to the fields on the mesa to the north of the rancho El Embocadero. They set to work excavating at the spot and recovered a "dog" of stone (14.5 cm in length and 4.0 cm in width) with criss-crossed incised lines on the back; a small metate (11.5 cm long and 7.5 cm wide) with four high "feet"; a *molcajete* (8.2 cm in diameter) with four "feet"; and a small jar (9.0 cm in height and 6.0 cm in diameter) painted orange both inside and out. It was reported that they found three additional small jars at this spot, but accidentally broke them with the pickaxe. I drew and photographed the recovered pieces, and I inspected the place of the discovery. I asked Enrique to watch over the site because the discoveries there seemed to pertain to the same Middle Formative culture we were investigating at El Pantano, directly on the other side of the valley, and I wanted to excavate this site as soon as we finished with El Pantano. I trusted his promise to watch over the site, in part because his nephew, Octavio, was working with us on the excavation at El Pantano.

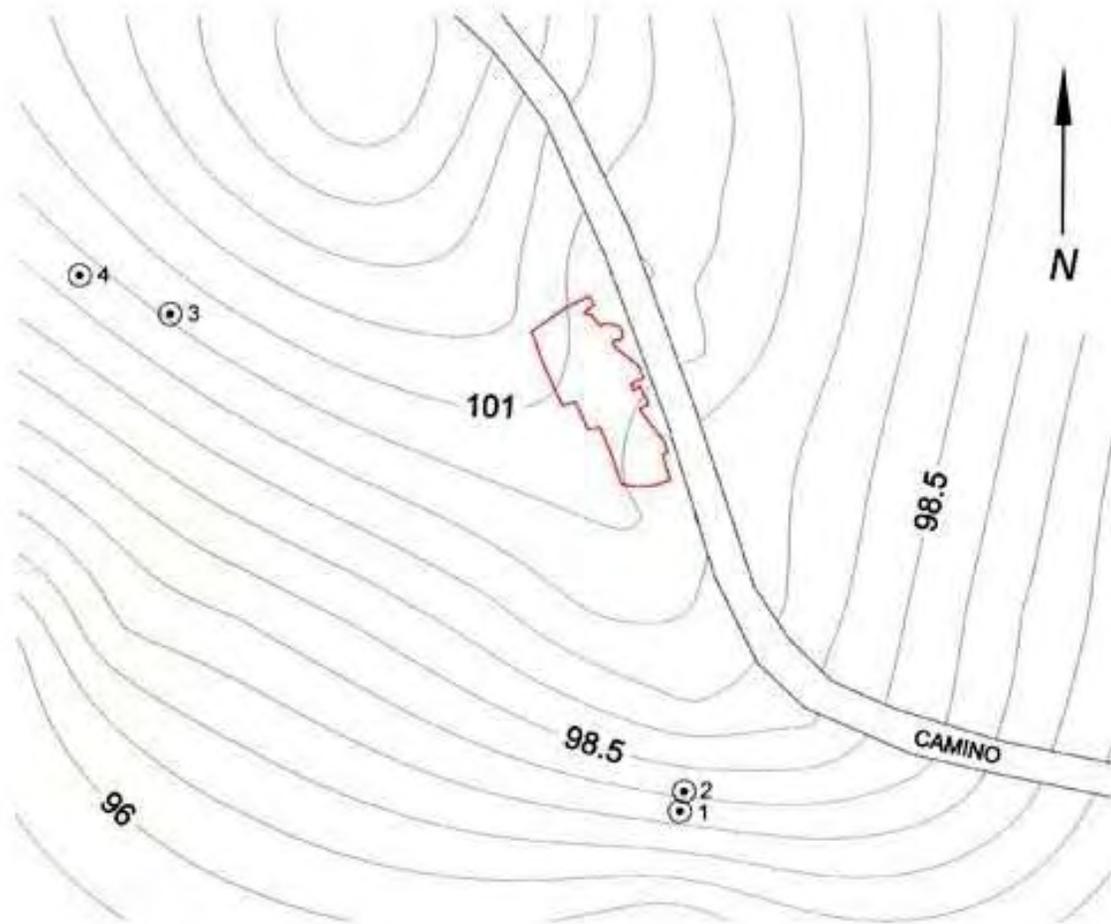
During the field season of 2004-2005, I discovered that in the spring of 2003, Enrique and Isaac had let some professional looters excavate in the site with the understanding that they would divide the treasure half-and-half with them. According to Isaac, it was a mason named Agustín, from Mascota, a man who was working on the access road when the first pieces were discovered, who invited four men (two of them brothers) from Tala, Jalisco to come and excavate in the site. These men, who had previously worked in the construction of a health center in a nearby village, Juanacatlán, came to the site during Holy Week vacation, and dug for three or four days, a while in the morning and again in the afternoon, leaving their wives and children to entertain themselves at a nearby lake, La Presa.

According to Enrique, the looters used steel poles and shovels. First they cleaned the remains of old corn stalks and shucks off the surface of the site and tested the soil every meter or so with the steel poles, starting just to the west of the original find. At each spot where they found soil of mixed color and texture, they would dig, finding in this manner four tombs in an area some ten meters in diameter. Upon finding an extended burial, they would go directly for the skull, where they believed most of the offerings would be located. Enrique calculated that they found about ten jars, but they broke them looking for "treasure" inside, and the fragments were left scattered over the site or stuck on the top of nearby fence posts. In the first tomb they found a "dove" of stone inside one of the jars, a large seated male figurine (as if going to the bathroom) and six faceted pendants of clear quartz. They also found

three small metates in the pits they dug, and may have found other things that Enrique never saw.

Isaac told us that the looters were very worried that they were going to be discovered, and they asked if the Federal Police ever entered this rather remote area. The morning of Saint Friday, they said that they were going with their families to La Presa and that they would be back later, but they never came back, taking with them all of value they had found at the site. It is also possible that they had learned that the real owner of the site, the father of Isaac and Enrique, of whom they had never asked permission to excavate, had learned of their activities and planned to go chase them off the land that Friday.

Octavio saw the spoils of the looting and described to me what seemed to have been shaft-and-chamber tombs. Apparently the looters first found a pit and would dig down into the pit until they found a "little cave" off to one side. Octavio salvaged some of the pots that they had thrown out of the excavations. According to Octavio, Isaac, and Enrique, the four pits that they dug extended in a line out to the west of the original find.



MA-19
EL EMBOCADERO II
2005

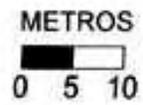


Figure 26. Map of the El Embocadero II (MA-19) site.



Figure 27. The western profile of the field access road.

Considering the importance of this site for our study of the Middle Formative in the Mascota Valley, and hoping to salvage all the information possible from the cemetery before it suffered any further depredation, as soon as we were coming to the end of the excavation at El Pantano (MA-9), we began to study the El Embocadero II (MA-19) site. First, we mapped the site, including four rocks with petroglyphs that may or may not be contemporary with the burials ([Figure 26](#)). Then, we shaved down the profile along the western side of the access road, taking as our central point the spot of the original discovery (Pit #1) ([Figure 27](#), shown above); studying and making a drawing of the stratigraphy ([Figure 28](#)). From the spot of Pit #1, we began to excavate westward, finding and excavating in the process, the fill of four looted pits ([Figure 29](#), Pits 2, 4, 5, and 12). However, to the northeast and the southeast of the looted burials, we found ten un-looted burial pits/tombs ([Figure 29](#), Pits 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, and 15), as well as one isolated pit that was not for burial purposes ([Figure 29](#), Pit #10) ([Figure 30](#), shown below).

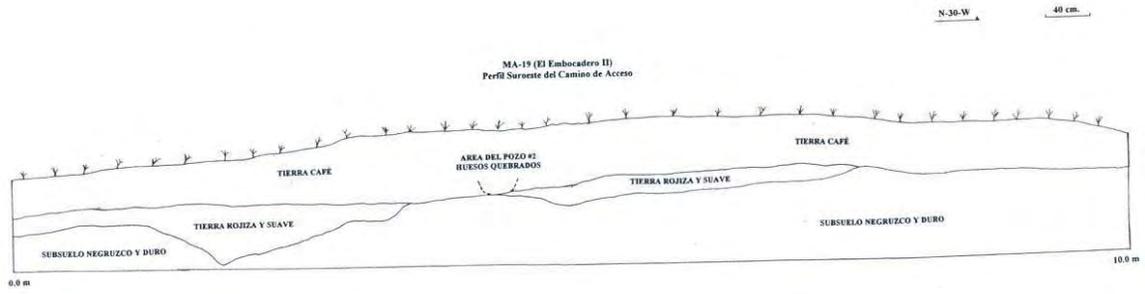


Figure 28. A drawing of the stratigraphy of the western profile of the field access road.

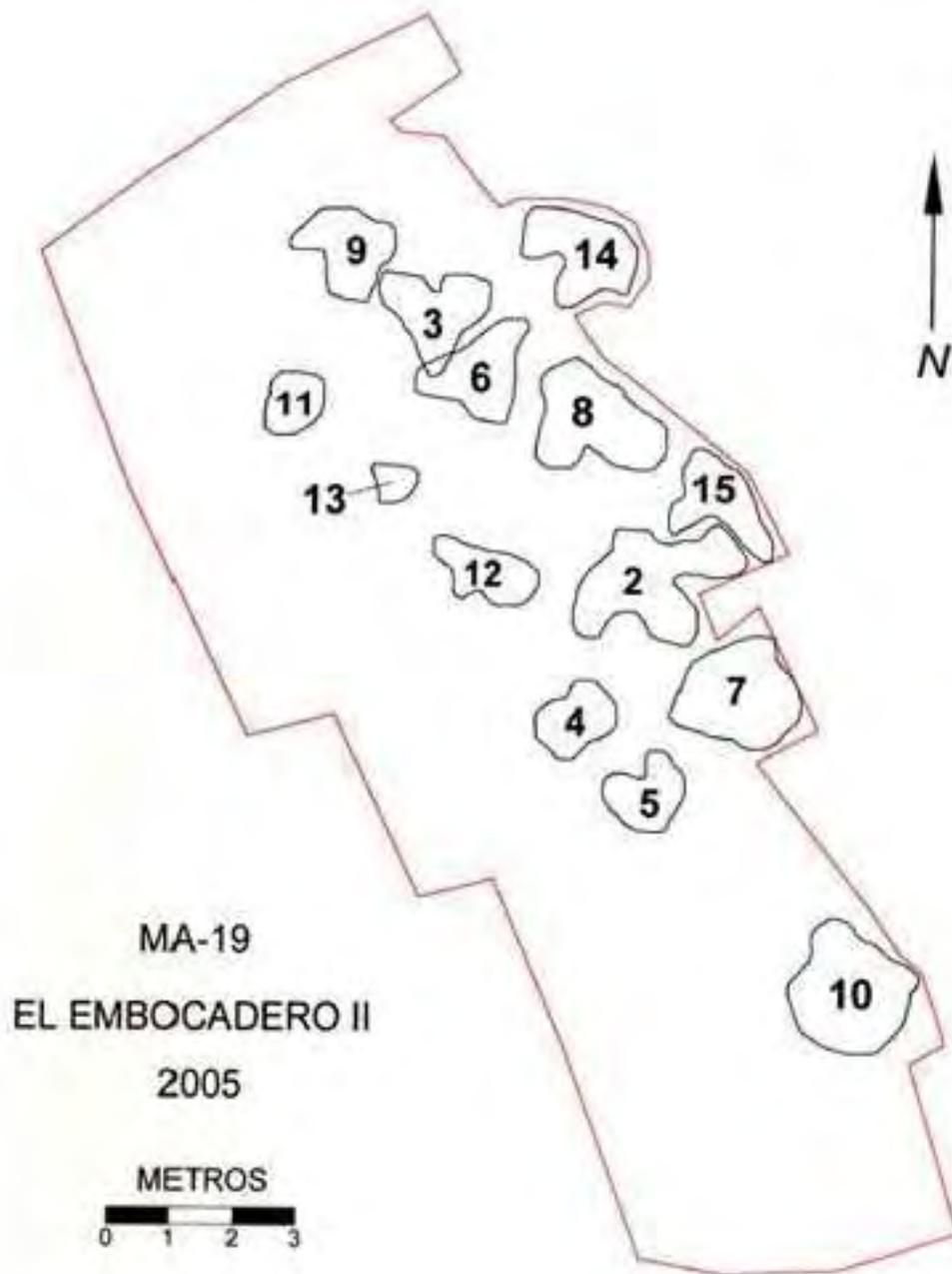


Figure 29. Map of the excavated pits.



Figure 30. Photo of the excavated area in the MA-19 site.



Figure 31. Stone jewelry (upper row: jadeite bead from lot #16, A-3; amazonite bead from lot #18, A-14; faceted pendant of clear quartz from lot #34, A-6; faceted pendant of clear quartz from lot #18, A-8; faceted pendant of clear quartz from lot #29, A-1. lower row: iron pyrite doublet ornaments from lots #18, A-12; #19, A-1; and #18, A-13.)

Excavation Units and Discoveries

General Area (lot #1)

27 natural color body sherds
18 orange body sherds
5 orange rim sherds (from three different everted-rim jars)
1 non-utilized flake of gray obsidian
1 iron pyrite doublet ornament ([Figure 31](#), shown above, lot #19, artifact #1)
13 fragments of human bone
2 human teeth

Pit #2, (lots #3, #4, and #5)

This was a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft on the northern side and three chambers, two to the south and the third to the east. We found the lower legs and feet of an extended adult in the far southern part of the pit, the remains of the burial of an infant in the southwest chamber, and the burial of a man between 25 and 35 years of age, in bundle form, in the northeast chamber. It was in this Pit #2 that the looters apparently found the large seated male figurine, the stone "dove", and the six faceted pendants of clear quartz. Nevertheless, we recovered many things in the fill of the looters' pit that they missed.



Figure 32. Atlatl ornament (lot #3).

- 17 natural color body sherds
- 11 orange body sherds
- 1 reddish-orange body sherd
- 1 sherd with decoration in relief
 - 1 incised
- 1 body of a solid pottery figurine
- 1 atlatl ornament of white-beige agate stone in the shape of a cruciform ([Figure 32](#), shown above)
- 3 non-utilized flakes of gray obsidian
- 28 unmodified pebbles of turquoise ([Figure 33](#), shown below)
- 2 tubular beads of bone ([Figure 34](#), shown below)
- 6 pendants of perforated feline teeth ([Figure 34](#), below)



Figure 33. Pebbles of turquoise (lot #3).



Figure 34. Tubular bone beads and perforated feline teeth (lot #3).

The Cultivated Zone over Pit #3 (lot #6)

4 natural color body sherds
8 orange body sherds
1 red body sherd



Figure 35. Pit #3, Feature #1.

Pit #3, Feature #1 (lot #7)

This is a shaft-and-chamber tomb that contained three bundled burials within the chamber, each one with offerings ([Figure 35](#), shown above). It appears that the bones of each burial were cleaned and arranged in a special way, then wrapped in a fine fabric, perhaps a textile, before they were placed in the chamber.

Burial #1: Male, approximately 25-35 years of age, with the skull on the southern end and the long bones to the north, with the vertebrae arranged along the central portion between the long bones.



Figure 36. Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #1, reddish-orange jar (lot #7, artifact #1).

1 pinkish-orange jar, 17.5 cm high ([Figure 36](#), shown above)

1 small orange jar with incised decoration, 12.5 cm high ([Figure 37](#), shown below)

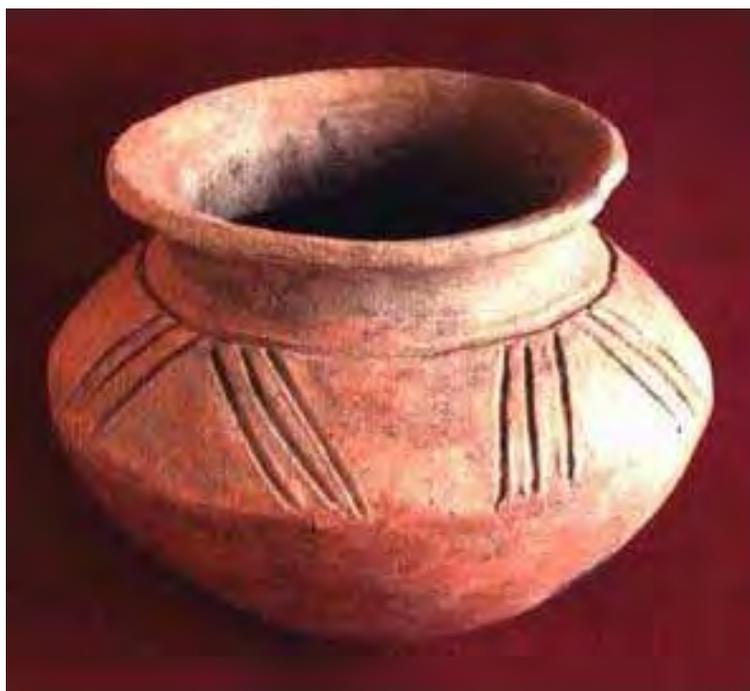


Figure 37. Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #2, orange jar with incised decoration (lot #7, artifact #2).

Burial #2: Male, approximately 20-25 years of age, with the skull on the northern end and the long bones extending to the south, with ribs enveloping the long bones.



Figure 38. Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #6, male figurine (lot #7, artifact #6).

- 1 male figurine painted orange, with incisions indicating lines of tears, a necklace around the neck and on the upper chest, and a decorated belt ([Figure 38](#), shown above).
- 1 small orange jar with incised decoration and evidence of a "killing" blow on the rim, 12.8 cm in height and 15.8 cm in diameter ([Figure 39](#), shown below).



Figure 39. Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #5, orange jar with incised decoration (lot #7, artifact #5).

Burial #3: Female, approximately 15-16.5 years of age, with the skull on the eastern end and the long bones extending westward and enveloped by the ribs.

1 small orange jar with raised line decoration, 11.5 cm in height ([Figure 40](#), shown below)

1 small orange jar 10.5 cm in height and 14.0 cm in diameter



Figure 40. Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #3, orange jar with raised line decoration (lot #7, artifact #3).

Fill of Pit #3 (lot #8)

- 9 natural color body sherds
- 9 orange body sherds
- 1 pink rim sherd (of an everted-rim jar)
- 2 non-utilized flakes of gray obsidian
- 22 fragments of bone, probably human
- 3 human teeth
- 1 bone from the edge of a turtle shell

Pit #4, looting fill (lot #9)

This was apparently a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft located on the northern side.

- 47 natural color body sherds
- 2 natural color rim sherds (of jars)
- 14 orange body sherds
- 3 orange rim sherds (of jars)
- 4 reddish-pink body sherds
- 2 flakes of gray obsidian (1 utilized and one not utilized)
- 1 projectile point of gray obsidian
- 1 triangular stone slab

82 fragments of human bone
6 human teeth (1 from an infant and 1 from an adolescent)

Pit #5, looting fill (lot #10)

This was apparently a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft on the northeastern side.

- 2 eroded sherds
- 19 natural color body sherds
- 2 natural color rim sherds (2 small jars)
- 16 orange body sherds (1 possibly from a bottle)
- 2 orange rim sherds (2 everted-rim jars)
- 1 reddish-orange body sherd
- 2 orange sherds with incised design
- 1 Aztatlán red on buff sherd from the Early Postclassic (1 bowl)
- 1 unmodified blue and red rock
- 3 non-utilized obsidian flakes (2 gray, 1 brown—probably Aztatlán)
- 2 utilized flakes of gray obsidian
- 1 necklace ornament of slate in anthropomorphic form ([Figure 41](#), shown below)
- 2 ornaments probably from the same necklace, of spondylus shell and anthropomorphic form ([Figure 41](#), below)
- 3 fragments of human skull
- 1 human molar tooth with the crown worn down almost flat



Figure 41. Anthropomorphic ornaments of spondylus shell, slate, and spondylus shell (lot #10).

Pit #6, Feature #1 (lot #12)

This is a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft on the south side and a burial, probably of an adult, (measuring 165 cm long, but with the bones very damaged by the activity of one or more animals), lying extended within the chamber accompanied by two jars placed by the left shoulder ([Figure 42](#), shown below).



Figure 42. Pit #6, Feature #1.

- 1 natural color jar, 18.0 cm in height and 21.0 cm in diameter
- 1 small orange jar, 10.5 cm in height and 15.3 cm in diameter

Pit #7, Feature #1 (lot #14)

This is an extended burial of an adult or sub-adult, resting on the stomach, with the skull on the northwestern end and the face turned toward the southeast, without offerings, and placed above the chamber of a shaft-and-chamber tomb ([Figure 43](#), shown below).



Figure 43. Pit #7, Feature #1.

Pit #7, Feature #1, fill (lot #15)

- 1 eroded sherd of a flat-based bowl, Aztatlán paste (Late Postclassic)
- 25 natural color body sherds
- 2 orange body sherds
- 1 orange rim sherd
- 7 non-utilized flakes of gray obsidian
- 1 cylindrical volcanic stone, broken

Pit #7, Feature #2 (lot #16)

This is a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft on the eastern side and the burial of a male 25 to 35 years of age, extended with the skull on the northwestern end of the chamber, the feet sticking up into the shaft, and three offerings: a jadeite bead placed on the upper part of the chest, and 2 jars placed over the left arm of the skeleton ([Figure 44](#), shown below).

- 1 orange jar, 15.0 cm in height and 18.0 cm in diameter
- 1 small orange jar, 9.5 cm in height and 14.0 cm in diameter
- 1 jadeite bead ([Figure 31](#), upper line #1)



Figure 44. Pit #7, Feature #2.

Pit #8, Feature #1 (lot #18)

This is an extended burial of a person of non-determinable sex and between 12 and 18 years of age, the body measuring 160 cm in length, the burial pit extending over the chamber and part of the shaft of a small shaft-and-chamber tomb, and the skeleton accompanied with various offerings ([Figure 45](#), shown below). This burial was found so close to the surface that the rim of the mouth of the "water cover" vessel had been broken by cultivation machinery.



Figure 45

Figure 45. Pit #8, Feature #1.



Figure 46. Large solid male seated figurine (lot #18, artifact #1).

- 1 solid anthropomorphic masculine figurine, 21 cm in height ([Figure 46](#), shown above)
- 1 orange jar, 14.8 cm in height, 20.5 cm in diameter and with decoration consisting of a line of bumps around the body that give the vessel a squash-form appearance ([Figure 47](#), shown below)
- 1 axe of blue-black basalt, 11.6 cm in length ([Figure 48](#), shown below)
- 1 orange jar, 14.3 cm in height and 15.5 cm in diameter
- 1 orange jar, 16.5 cm in height and 22.5 cm in diameter
- 1 reddish jar, 20.0 cm in height and 19.9 cm in diameter, and modeled in the "water-cover" shape (representing a jar, sitting in the mouth of a jar) ([Figure 49](#), shown below), (a common form among the vessels found in the El Pantano site)
- 1 deer antler, 10 cm long, and pointed apparently for use as a stone flaker
- 2 iron pyrite doublet ornaments ([Figure 31](#), lower line, #1 and #3)
- 1 faceted pendant of clear quartz ([Figure 31](#), upper line #3)
- 1 bead of white and blue stone (amazonite?) ([Figure 31](#), upper line #2)
- 1 reddish-colored stone, modified



Figure 47. Orange squash-form jar (lot #18, artifact #2).



Figure 48. Basalt axe (lot #18, artifact #3).



Figure 49. Reddish "water cover" form jar (lot #18, artifact #6).

Pit #8, fill (lot #19)

- 18 natural color body sherds
- 3 natural color, rim sherds (2 jars and one miniature "tecomate")
- 7 orange body sherds
- 1 orange rim sherd (of a jar)

1 leg and foot of a solid figurine



Figure 50. Pit #8, Feature #2.

Pit #8, Feature #2 (lots #20, #21, and #22)

This is a small shaft-and-chamber tomb of a size to accommodate the burial of an infant from four to eight years of age according to the teeth, placed in the chamber on top of two large sherds from the bottom of a jar, and the shaft of the entrance was on the south side of the chamber ([Figure 50](#), shown above).

6 natural color sherds (in the fill)

2 large sherds from the bottom of a large orange jar, upon which were placed the remains of the infant

3 non-utilized flake of gray obsidian (in the fill)



Figure 51. Pit #9, Feature #1.

Pit #9, Feature #1 (lot #23)

This is a shaft-and-chamber tomb, with the shaft on the southern side, and the burial, probably of an adolescent, with the skull on the western end of the chamber, the femurs in the eastern side, and the lower legs and the feet flexed toward the south and extending up to the edge of the shaft. The skeleton was accompanied by three offerings: a jar near the left arm and a jar with a strombus shell inside, resting on the right arm ([Figure 51](#), shown above).

1 natural color jar, 15.5 cm in height and 21.5 cm in diameter

1 "*Strombus galeatus*" shell (found inside of the jar described above) ground smooth on the exterior and with two holes for suspending it on the chest ([Figure 52](#), shown below)

1 small orangish-red jar, 10.0 cm in height and 12.1 cm in diameter



Figure 52. "Strombus galeatus" shell chest ornament (lot #23, artifact #2).

Pit #9, fill (lot #24)

3 natural color body sherds
1 orange body sherd

Pit #10, fill (lot #25)

This was possibly a trash pit and apparently dates later than the burials at the site.

57 natural color body sherds
6 natural color rim sherds (5 jars, 1 bowl)
17 orange body sherds
7 red body sherds
1 red-on-cream sherd, probably of Amparo type in the Early Classic
2 fragments of figurines
1 piece of fired clay
1 prismatic blade of brown obsidian, Aztatlán, Late Postclassic
1 un-perforated feline tooth

Pit #11, Feature #1 (lot #27)

This is apparently the remains of the chamber of a shaft-and-chamber tomb, a large part of which was destroyed by the cultivation of the site that has been lowering the surface of the site gradually over many years, with two bundle burials laid side by side and oriented with the skulls toward the northeast, the first (of a female 12 to 18 years of age) without associated offerings, and the second (an infant from two to four years of age) with three associated offerings ([Figure 53](#), shown below).



Figure 53. Pit #11, Feature #1.

- 1 orange jar, 9.5 cm in height and 15.8 cm in diameter
- 1 jar under restoration
- 1 scraper of gray obsidian

Pit #11, fill (lot #28)

- 4 natural color body sherds
- 4 orange body sherds
- 1 natural color rim sherd (of a jar)
- 1 orange rim sherd (of a jar)

Pit #12, looting fill (lot #29)

This was apparently a shaft-and-chamber tomb, with the shaft on the southeast side.

- 1 natural color cooking jar, 15.6 cm in height, with a lot of carbonized residue on the bottom of the interior that was recovered and submitted for radiocarbon dating.

The date obtained was 820 B.C.–770 B.C., calibrated to 95% confidence, with the calibration intersect at 800 B.C. (Beta#211716).

19 orange sherds from the same jar
1 jadeite bead ([Figure 31](#), upper row, #5)

Pit #13, Feature #1 (lot #30)

This seems to be what was left from a shaft-and-chamber tomb that was almost totally destroyed by cultivation of the site, and the chamber contained at least one burial of un-determined sex, but from 12 to 18 years of age and accompanied by at least three offerings.

2 feline teeth perforated for use as ornaments
1 non-utilized flake of gray obsidian

Pit #13, fill (lot #31)

4 orange body sherds
2 non-utilized flakes of gray obsidian

Pit #14, Feature #1 (lot #32)

This is a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft on the northwestern side and the burial of a female from 23 to 25 years of age, the body extended and lying on the back in the chamber, with the skull almost directly to the west and the feet toward the east. The skeleton was accompanied with two jars placed just to the right of the pelvis ([Figure 54](#), shown below), and the body measured 151 cm in length.



Figure 54. Pit #14, Feature #1.

1 orange jar, with a "killing" break on the rim, 14.0 cm in height and 19.2 cm in diameter

1 orange jar, 10.8 cm in height and 13.8 cm in diameter

Pit #14, fill (lot #33)

4 natural color body sherds

1 natural color rim sherd (1 jar)



Figure 55. Pit #15, Feature #1.

Pit #15, Feature #1 (lot #34)

This is a shaft-and-chamber tomb with the shaft on the left side and an extended burial of a male 8.5 to 13.5 years of age, lying on his back in the chamber and accompanied by several offerings, above all, two faceted pendants of clear quartz that were placed over the upper incisor teeth ([Figure 55](#), shown above). It is very possible that the original discovery by the Esparza brothers was a burial with associated offerings placed in a pit over this chamber, as was the case with pits #7 and #8.



Figure 56. Projectile point of gray obsidian (lot #34, artifact #3).

- 1 orange jar, 18.5 cm in height and 23.0 cm in diameter
- 1 small brownish-red jar, with paint on the lower half of the body, 7.0 cm in height and 10.5 cm in diameter
- 1 projectile point of gray obsidian ([Figure 56](#), shown above)
- 1 solid figurine, 18.5 cm in height ([Figure 57](#), shown below), and of a size and style identical to some of the figurines found at El Pantano
- 2 faceted pendants of clear quartz ([Figure 31](#), upper row, #3 and #4)
- 1 polishing stone of basalt
- 1 non-utilized flake of gray obsidian
- 1 concentration of red pigment



Figure 57. Solid figurine (lot #34, artifact #4).

Pit #15, fill (lot #35)

- 9 natural color body sherds
- 5 orange body sherds
- 1 brownish-red, highly polished, body sherd

The Plow Zone between Pits #4 and #12 (lot #36)

- 1/2 of an orange painted jar, 13.7 cm in height
- 28 natural color body sherds
- 3 natural color rim sherds (probably from the same jar)
- 42 orange body sherds
- 23 fragments of human bone
- 2 human teeth (including one un-erupted molar)

The area just to the south of pits #3 and #6 (lot #37)

It is possible that the two jars and one stone that were found almost on the surface here came from the looting of pit #12 and were discarded by the looters in the earth to the north of pit #12.

1 small natural color jar decorated with a line of bumps around the midsection of the body,

10.0 cm in height and 11.0 cm in diameter

1 smooth gray volcanic rock

1 small orange jar, 9.5 cm in height and 13.1 cm in diameter

Conclusions

Many of the burial offerings recovered from the El Embarcadero II (MA-19) cemetery are the same or are very similar to offerings found at the El Pantano (MA-9) cemetery, including: jadeite beads; iron pyrite doublet ornaments; faceted pendants of clear quartz; some solid figurines very similar to those found at El Pantano; the presence of the "water cover" form of ceramic vessel; the use of pinkish paint; a grinding/cracking "mano" in the form of a dog; and a cruciform ornament. Nonetheless, there are some things found at El Embarcadero II that have no correspondence to items recovered at El Pantano, including: anthropomorphic ornaments of spondylus shell and slate; a bead apparently of amazonite; a chest ornament of a strombus shell; pebbles of raw turquoise; and perforated feline teeth.

Furthermore, there are certain differences above all in the pottery vessels and the figurines that, in spite of the early radiocarbon date, seem to indicate that the El Embarcadero II cemetery is somewhat later, and certainly not earlier than the El Pantano cemetery, for example the rarer presence of pink paint and the "water cover" vessel form that are more prevalent in El Pantano; the absence of bottles like those found at El Pantano and the absence of the "tecomates" found at Los Coamajales; the representation of clothing on one of the figurines, something not found on any figurine at El Pantano; the incised decoration of the jars that appears more derived from the El Pantano decoration than from the incised decoration from Los Coamajales; and the paste and temper of the pottery that is quite finer than that of the Los Coamajales pottery, as well as generally finer than the El Pantano pottery.

Another find of great importance at El Embocadero II is that the many shaft-and-chamber tombs there provide another Middle Formative link between the stairway-and-chamber tombs of El Opeño (Oliveros 2004) and the famous shaft-and-chamber tombs of Colima, Jalisco, and Nayarit that date from the Late Formative/Early Classic (ca. 300 B.C. to A.D. 300) (Pickering and Cabrero 1998). Curiously, the cemetery at El Pantano that probably dates either at about the same time as the one at El Embocadero II, or between Los Coamajales and El Embocadero II, does not

have any shaft-and-chamber tombs. This is probably due to the lack of subsoil suitable for excavating a chamber. In certain burials at El Pantano, there is a clearly defined shaft, but extending out from the shaft is a chamber or pit that was excavated open to the sky, within which at times we have found up to two or three levels of burials accommodated vertically in the form of a "sandwich".

List of Figures

Los Coamajales

[Figure 1](#). Map of the Mascota Valley showing the location of sites including Los Coamajales (MA-20), El Embocadero II (MA-19), and El Pantano (MA-9).

[Figure 2](#). Map of the Los Coamajales (MA-20) site.

[Figure 3](#). Decorated sherds from the looting at Los Coamajales.

[Figure 4](#). Sherd decorated in incised, bumped and raised line design, from the looting at Los Coamajales.

[Figure 5](#). Area of looting on the western extremity of Loma #1.

[Figure 6](#). Map of Loma #1 including the excavated units.

[Figure 7](#). Area excavated on the western extremity of Loma #1.

[Figure 8](#). A snuff/lime dipping pot.

[Figure 9](#). Fragments of two obsidian projectile points.

[Figure 10](#). Three pendants of clear quartz.

[Figure 11](#). One pendant of clear quartz.

[Figure 12](#). Feature #2.

[Figure 13](#). A Capacha jar from Feature #2, restored.

[Figure 14](#). Feature #4.

[Figure 15](#). A Capacha jar from Feature #4, restored.

[Figure 16](#). Fragments of a piece of modified iron pyrite.

[Figure 17](#). A drawing of a cylindrical bottle found in Pit #1, Feature #1.

[Figure 18](#). A cup decorated in spikes modeled in relief, found in Pit #1, Feature #2.

[Figure 19](#). The place in Loma #1 where a large shaft-and-chamber tomb was found, Pit #2, Feature #1.

[Figure 20](#). Excavation of the jaguar vessel on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

[Figure 21](#). The jaguar-form vessel found in the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

[Figure 22](#). Another view of the jaguar-form vessel found on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

[Figure 23](#). A pottery cup found on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

[Figure 24](#). Iron pyrite plaques found on the floor of the shaft-and-chamber tomb, Pit #2, Feature #1.

[Figure 25](#). Map of Loma #2 at Los Coamajales.

El Embocadero II

[Figure 26](#). Map of the El Embocadero II (MA-19) site.

[Figure 27](#). The western profile of the field access road.

[Figure 28](#). A drawing of the stratigraphy of the western profile of the field access road.

[Figure 29](#). Map of the excavated pits.

[Figure 30](#). Photo of the excavated area in the MA-19 site.

[Figure 31](#). Stone jewelry (upper row: jadeite bead from lot #16, A-3; amazonite bead from lot #18, A-14; faceted pendant of clear quartz from lot #34, A-6; faceted pendant of clear quartz from lot #18, A-8; faceted pendant of clear quartz from lot #29, A-1. lower row: iron pyrite doublet ornaments from lots #18, A-12; #19, A-1; and #18, A-13.)

[Figure 32](#). Atlatl ornament (lot #3).

[Figure 33](#). Pebbles of turquoise (lot #3).

[Figure 34](#). Tubular bone beads and perforated feline teeth (lot #3).

[Figure 35](#). Pit #3, Feature #1.

[Figure 36](#). Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #1, reddish-orange jar (lot #7, artifact #1).

[Figure 37](#). Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #2, orange jar with incised decoration (lot #7, artifact #2).

[Figure 38](#). Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #6, male figurine (lot #7, artifact #6).

[Figure 39](#). Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #5, orange jar with incised decoration (lot #7, artifact #5).

[Figure 40](#). Pit #3, Feature #1, artifact #3, orange jar with raised line decoration (lot #7, artifact #3).

[Figure 41](#). Anthropomorphic ornaments of spondylus shell, slate, and spondylus shell (lot #10).

[Figure 42](#). Pit #6, Feature #1.

[Figure 43](#). Pit #7, Feature #1.

[Figure 44](#). Pit #7, Feature #2.

[Figure 45](#). Pit #8, Feature #1.

[Figure 46](#). Large solid male seated figurine (lot #18, artifact #1).

[Figure 47](#). Orange squash-form jar (lot #18, artifact #2).

[Figure 48](#). Basalt axe (lot #18, artifact #3).

[Figure 49](#). Reddish "water cover" form jar (lot #18, artifact #6).

[Figure 50](#). Pit #8, Feature #2.

[Figure 51](#). Pit #9, Feature #1.

[Figure 52](#). "Strombus galeatus" shell chest ornament (lot #23, artifact #2).

[Figure 53](#). Pit #11, Feature #1.

[Figure 54](#). Pit #14, Feature #1.

[Figure 55](#). Pit #15, Feature #1.

[Figure 56](#). Projectile point of gray obsidian (lot #34, artifact #3).

[Figure 57](#). Solid figurine (lot #34, artifact #4).

Sources Cited

Greengo, Robert E. and C. Meighan

- 1976 "Additional Perspectives on the Capacha Complex of Western México." In *Journal of New World Archaeology*, Vol. 1, No. 5, pp. 15-23.

Kelly, Isabel T.

- 1980 "Ceramic Sequence in Colima: Capacha, an Early Phase." In *Anthropological Papers of the University of Arizona*, No. 7. University of Arizona Press. Tucson.

Mountjoy, Joseph B.

- 1994 "Las tres transformaciones más importantes en la habitación indígena de la costa del Occidente de México." In *Transformaciones Mayores en el Occidente de México*, ed. Ricardo. Ávila P., pp. 167-178. Universidad de Guadalajara. Guadalajara, Jalisco.

- 1998 "The Evolution of Complex Societies in West México: A Comparative Perspective." In *Ancient West México: Art and Archaeology of the Unknown Past*, ed. R. Townsend, pp. 251-265. The Art Institute of Chicago and Thames and Hudson.

- 2001 "Excavaciones recientes en el sitio de El Pantano, un panteón del Formativo Medio en Jalisco." Ponencia presentada en el simposio *Nuevos aportes para la arqueología del norte y el occidente de México*. Museo Nacional de Antropología. México, D.F., entregado para su publicación.

Mountjoy, Joseph B. and N. Mountjoy

- 2005 "Capacha in Mascota." Ponencia presentada en las juntas de la Society for American Archaeology. Salt Lake City, Utah.

Oliveros M., José Arturo

- 2004 *Hacedores de tumbas en El Opeño, Jacona, Michoacán*. El Colegio de Michoacán y el H. Ayuntamiento de Jacona.

Pickering, Robert B. and M.T. Cabrero

- 1998 "Mortuary Practices in the Shaft-Tomb Region." In *Ancient West México: Art and Archaeology of the Unknown Past*, ed. R. Townsend, pp. 71-87. The Art Institute of Chicago and Thames and Hudson.