The Color of Thunder

Archaeology in Central and Southwest China: Travels in Guizhou

Preserving Early Photographs: Peabody–Weissman Preservation Center Daguerreotype Project

The Changing Demographic World of Maya Farmers
Introducing the Robert Gardner Photography Fellowship Series

We are pleased to announce the publication of Avenue Patrice Lumumba: Photographs by Guy Tillim, the first book to result from the Robert Gardner Fellowship in Photography at the Peabody Museum. South African photographer Guy Tillim used his fellowship to travel through Angola, Mozambique, Congo, and Madagascar, documenting the grand colonial architecture and how it has become part of a contemporary African stage.

An exhibition of Guy Tillim’s photographs opens at the museum on Wednesday, April 29, 2009, at 5:00 P.M. and will remain on view through September 8, 2009. Guy Tillim will give a gallery talk and sign books at the opening reception.

Avenue Patrice Lumumba
Photographs by Guy Tillim
Published by the Peabody Museum Press and Prestel Verlag, Munich
128 pages, 60 color photographs
Hardcover $65*

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*Museum members receive a 10% discount off the retail price.
Contents

The Director's Desk 2
William L. Fash

News & Notes 3

The Color of Thunder 4
Castle McLaughlin

The Registrar's Desk 12
Genevieve Fisher
Museums and Collecting

Archaeology in Central and Southwest China: Travels in Guizhou 14
Rowan Flad

Preserving Early Photographs:
Peabody–Weissman Preservation Center Daguerreotype Project 19
India Spartz

The Changing Demographic World of Maya Farmers 22
Karen L. Kramer

Student Studies 26
Elizabeth Gettinger
Getting Out of the Classroom

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On behalf of Peabody Museum staff, I hope that you will enjoy the new format for our tried and true newsletter Symbols. These are busy and challenging times for everyone—the global village is indeed inter-connected as never before—so we were pleased that we had budgeted for this change over a year ago. We, like everyone else, have already begun belt-tightening, so in the coming year the Museum will be living “less is more” in all aspects of the Peabody’s operations.

Fortunately, the past several years have enabled us to achieve many of the goals that I set for the Peabody. First and foremost, we have increased the use of the museum’s collections for teaching and research by 300 percent over the past five years. Faculty and students from seven different departments in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and four different Schools of the University have availed themselves of the Peabody’s vast and priceless collections. We’ve also had the pleasure of working with students on all of our most recent exhibitions as assistant curators, co-curators, and in the case of REMIX and the new Digging Harvard Yard exhibitions, as curators.

Likewise, our outreach to the Boston area and New England public schools systems and communities has been greatly enhanced this year by the Peabody resuming operation of its educational programming. The outreach to broader communities will also get a boost in our World Cultures Forum, which this fall will celebrate both the Day of the Dead on November 2, and Sufism in September and October with the publication of a new book (Sacred Spaces) and a new exhibition in the photo gallery. For this spring, the photo gallery will see the installation of many of the works of our first Robert Gardner Fellow in Photography, Guy Tillim, whose book of photographs of contemporary Africa, Avenue Patrice Lumumba, has already sold out the first printing in Europe. We’ve also managed to publish more books, and more different kinds of books, than at any time in recent memory, through the Peabody Museum Press and our publishing partners.

Of course we will now have to work harder than ever to maintain our programs and projects in all these arenas with fewer resources, but the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology counts, as ever, on a very dedicated staff as well as increasing intellectual input of many faculty across Harvard University. One important mechanism for doing this is our entirely revamped website, which is easier to use and provides vastly more information about ongoing and recent work than we were able to make accessible previously. So do come visit us at: www.peabody.harvard.edu/.

In this issue, we are pleased to publish a series of brief reports on the superb work of Harvard faculty and students and the Museum’s professional staff. Castle McLaughlin’s article serves as a lead-in to the exhibition that she curated with Butch Thunder Hawk entitled Wyohpiyata: Lakota Images of the Contested West. The opening will coincide with the kickoff event for our annual Weekend of the Americas, whose theme this year is “Visualizing Power: Plains Pictographic Arts,” opening on Friday April 3. The keynote speaker for the Weekend and the opening is Nathaniel Philbrick (author of Mayflower and In the Heart of the Sea), and we hope to see you there.

William and Muriel Seabury Howells Director, Peabody Museum
David Carrasco, Neil L. Rudenstine Professor of the Study of Latin America, is on academic leave in 2008-2009. His new abridgement with interpretive essays of Bernal Diaz del Castillo’s sixteenth-century memoir of the “discovery” of Mesoamerica, The History of the Conquest of New Spain, was published by the University of New Mexico Press, 2008. His co-edited (with Scott Sessions) Cave, City and Eagle’s Nest: An Interpretive Journey Through the Mapa de Cuauhtinchan #2, also published by the University of New Mexico Press (2007), was the topic of a review in the New York Review of Books, December 18th.

Rowan Flad, Associate Professor, Archaeology Wing, was awarded several grants in 2008–2009: a $30,000 Collaborative Research Grant from the Luce Foundation Initiative on East Asian Archaeology and Early History, with Gwen Bennett, Li Shuicheng, 2008–2011; and a $30,000 ICRG grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research with Li Shuicheng, Gwen Bennett, and Pochan Chen, 2008–2009; and a $10,000 Research Workshop grant from the Chiang Ching-kuo, 2008.

Michael Herzfeld, Professor, Social Anthropology Wing, was recently appointed board member of the newly founded Centre for Architecture and Human Rights, based in Bangkok, and appointed to the editorial committee of Ethnologie Française and editor-at-large for Anthropological Quarterly with specific responsibilities for a new feature titled Polyglot Perspectives — a series of articles presenting important anthropological research and theory that has been published in languages other than English. Michael’s film Monti Moments: Men’s Memories in the Heart of Rome, received a Diploma in the debut competition of the IVth Moscow International Ethnographic Film Festival (theme: “Mediating Camera”) in October 2008. His new book Evicted from Eternity: The Restructuring of Modern Rome (University of Chicago Press, 2009) will appear in March 2009 and is dedicated to Professor Stanley Tambiah.

Arthur Kleinman, Esther and Sidney Rabb Professor of Anthropology, was awarded the AAA Society for Medical Anthropology’s George Foster Award for practicing medical anthropology. In July 2008, Arthur became Director, Harvard’s Asia Center.

David Pilbeam, Henry Ford II Professor of Human Evolution, is enjoying a year’s sabbatical, following two years of unanticipated “interim-deaning,” getting happily reacquainted with his research group.

Jason Ur, Assistant Professor, Archaeology Wing, directed the second field season of the Hirbemerdon Tepe Survey in Diyarbakir Province, Southeast Turkey. This project investigates the changing spatial relationships between agriculture, pastoralism, and settlement in northern Mesopotamia since the Neolithic. Project participants in 2008 included Emily Hammer and Lauren Santini, graduate students in Anthropology. A report will appear in the 2009 volume of the Journal of Field Archaeology.

New Faculty
Matt Liebmann joined the Department of Anthropology as assistant professor in the Archaeology Wing in January. His research focuses on the archaeology of native North America. Matt earned his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in 2006, and was an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the College of William and Mary prior to joining the faculty at Harvard. Matt’s primary research interest is the archaeology of the American Southwest, particularly the effects of European contact on Pueblo Indians in New Mexico. His continued on p. 28
**Wiyohpiyata:** *Lakota Images of the Contested West,* presents nineteenth-century drawings on paper by Lakota (western Sioux) warriors together with historic artifacts from the Peabody collections and contemporary Native art in a gallery space envisioned by Lakota artist and co-curateur Butch Thunder Hawk. The drawings are selections from a rare Plains Indian “ledger book” allegedly found on the Little Big Horn battlefield after the defeat of Custer’s Seventh Cavalry in 1876 and later bound and donated to Harvard’s Houghton Library.¹ Several years ago, Houghton staff recognized the unusual nature of the volume, and realized it might be subject to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The library formed a collaborative partnership with the Peabody Museum and with the Standing Rock Sioux tribe to investigate the history and significance of the ledger, which had been unknown to scholars and tribal resource managers. The resulting Peabody exhibit presents this remarkable visual document in a dramatic, multi-media gallery that experiments with communicating ideas through ambient effects and installation art.

**The Ledger**

The term “ledger art” refers to a genre of Plains Indian pictographic drawing that emerged during the nineteenth century when Plains peoples acquired Euroamerican pencils, inks, and paper through trade, raiding, and warfare. Plains warriors, who had conventionally executed narrative drawings of their deeds and war honors on hide tipis and garments, began to record their experiences on the pages of bound accounting ledgers, books, and other paper documents. “Ledger drawings” are typically rendered in a two-dimensional, pictographic style that focuses attention on the details of single events, especially experiences of war and hunting. Several thousand such drawings survive in museum and private collections, most created by known individuals in the decades following the forced confinement of Plains peoples on reservations. Unfortunately, many ledgers have been dismantled and dispersed, so that relatively few drawings remain in their context. Consequently, the study of ledger art has focused primarily on the drawings, individual artists, and works created between 1880 and 1930, rather than on ledgers as a whole.

The Houghton ledger, in contrast, contains seventy-seven original drawings created by at least five active, independent warriors, probably Lakotas, during the 1860s and 1870s, while Angloamerican expansion into the West was igniting conflict and warfare between Native peoples and the United States government. The ledger is an artifact of this militarized cross-cultural engagement, which culminated in the now legendary Little Big Horn fight on June 25, 1876, when several thousand Lakota and Cheyenne warriors annihilated General George Armstrong Custer’s

Thunder Hawk created an encompassing gallery environment that expresses the concept of "wiyohpiyata," (west) ... both a celestial orientation and a concentration of natural and supernatural forces.
Seventh Cavalry. The images constitute an important Lakota visual history of the tumultuous decade that led up to the confrontation at the Little Big Horn River, and some of them convey a sense of immediacy reminiscent of “stop action” photography. As a group record, they are a valuable resource for investigating the social role of drawing in Lakota communities, the significance of ledgers as material objects, and the interplay between individual and tribal drawing conventions and styles.

Soon after it was collected, the Lakota ledger was bound into a book format and prefaced with an elaborate, illustrated introduction composed by James “Phocion” Howard, a Chicago newspaper reporter who apparently acquired the ledger shortly after it was discovered on the Little Big Horn battlefield. Howard’s introduction ostensibly records the known history of the Lakota ledger and provides an interpretation of many of the drawings, all of which are presented as the work of a warrior named Half Moon. Howard joined his introduction to the ledger by binding them in Moroccan leather and titled the manuscript “The Pictorial Autobiography of Half Moon, An Unkpapa [Hunkpapa] Sioux Chief.” A subtitle adds “who was Killed in the Battle of the Rosebud, June 18, 1876, And who, with Four other Chiefs, was found lying in State on the Custer Battlefield, June 28.”

Howard’s introduction frames the ledger images within a contemporary Angloamerican response, creating a dialogic, composite record of how Lakota and non-Indian peoples represented one another at a crucial moment in their “entangled” histories. While the text reveals how poorly Howard knew his subject, the graphic style and content of the introduction reveal that his misunderstandings were formed by prevailing popular cultural representations of Native peoples. In turn, Howard’s interpretation of the images contributed to the American reading public’s impressions of Plains peoples when his “book” was featured in an 1890 issue of Frank Leslie’s Illustrated News.

Thus, this composite, cross-cultural document not only preserves a rare set of Lakota drawings, but constitutes a rich resource for a broad investigation of the role and nature of nineteenth century Indian and Angloamerican visual cultures as they developed from and contributed to a joint history of contact and conflict.
The Ledger as a Cross-Cultural Palimpsest

The ledger is a literal palimpsest, with the history of its construction inscribed on its pages by a succession of Indian and non-Indian owners. It apparently began as a lined accountant’s ledger owned during the 1860s by an American civilian by the name of J.S. Moore, who penned his name in Spencerian script at the top of the first page. Moore used the ledger as a journal, writing in it several lists of names and places presumably related to his travels across the western United States. At some point it was taken from him by Plains Indian war­riors, probably Lakotas, who “repurposed” it as an archive of their collective achievements. Turning the ledger horizontally, they used ink, graphite, colored pencils, and native earth pigments to cover the pages with their drawings, sometimes superimposing them over Moore’s handwritten entries.

Each of the warriors focused on recording their successes in battle and in taking horses and mules from their enemies. By capturing the ledger from an enemy and filling the pages with their great deeds, the warriors may have sought to invest the ledger itself with a concentration of power that could aid them in future battles. The artists depicted the cultural identities of their enemies by emphasizing key features such as hats, garments, and hairstyles. Their careful renderings of U.S. soldiers, including details of their military uniforms, horse gear, and other accouterments, indicate that many of the events shown occurred during the 1860s.

The tight focus of the drawings on specific actors, however, makes it difficult to determine exactly where and when the illustrated events took place. Howard’s introduction states that J.S. Moore was killed near the Big Horn Mountains while returning from a gold-mining trip to Virginia City, Montana, in 1868. If so, Moore chose a dangerous time to travel in that region. Between 1866 and 1868, the Bozeman Trail between the North Platte River and Virginia City was the staging ground for Red Cloud’s War, (1866–68) during which the Oglala Lakota leader, Red Cloud, galvanized armed resistance to white encroachment on Indian lands in the valley of the Powder River. The Lakotas and their Cheyenne allies were so relentless in their attacks on white trespassers, both civilian and military, that the United States was forced to abandon three military forts along the Bozeman Trail at the end of 1868.

Red Cloud’s war was the culmination of rising tensions over the flood of westward migration that followed the discovery of gold in California in 1848, and subsequent gold and silver strikes in Colorado and Montana. The development of overland trails across the Plains, leading to the West Coast and Rocky Mountains, triggered a cascade of devastating impacts on indigenous peoples, as ungovernable numbers of emigrants violated treaty stipulations, degraded water, grass, timber, and other resources, and depleted game animals, including once-mighty herds of bison. When U.S. territorial expansion intensified after the Civil War, a state of “total war” ensued on the Plains, dividing both national politicians and native leaders into factions favoring peaceful solutions or warfare. A significant number of
young Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Comanche men refused to accommodate to land cessions and reservation life, choosing to pursue armed resistance, hunting, and raiding. Powerful war leaders emerged, and the men’s war societies to which they belonged grew in influence and began to cross-cut tribal boundaries among allied groups.

The practice of producing group war records, often executed on the pages of captured books, written documents, and ledgers, seems to have developed most strongly among these bands of resistance fighters, who began concentrating in the relatively isolated Powder River Valley by the middle of the 1860s. Although by treaty recognized as Lakota territory, this Northern Plains bison range became the arena for the final battles between the U.S. military and Plains peoples during the 1870s. While tribal and intertribal drawing styles are poorly understood, the Houghton ledger images suggest that the artists who drew them may have included Oglala Lakotas and their allies who fought to turn Angloamerican civilians and military forces away from this stronghold during Red Cloud’s War, 1866–68. Their exact identities, and how the ledger arrived at the Little Big Horn battle nearly a decade later, remain a mystery.

The only known source on the Houghton ledger’s subsequent history is narrated in Phocion Howard’s later introduction. According to Howard, the ledger was found in a funerary tipi after the Little Big Horn fight by a soldier seeking tipi poles to use in making litters for transporting the wounded survivors of Major Reno’s command. Shortly thereafter, the soldier presented the ledger to Howard, who was then on assignment with other U.S. Army troops prosecuting the 1876 Centennial Campaign against militant Lakota and Cheyenne bands. Howard’s story is independently supported by first-person accounts recorded by other military personnel who were present after the battle, which reference the discovery of a ledger book later given to a Chicago reporter. Howard’s modification and sale of the ledger, however, raise some doubt about his claim that it was recovered from the Little Big Horn battlefield.

Regardless of his motives and veracity, by transforming the ledger into a book, a battle artifact, and a commodity, Howard produced a compelling record of late nineteenth-century

**ARTISTS, ACTORS, AND NAME GLYPHS**

In many later ledger drawings, individual subjects are identified by "name glyphs"—small pictographs drawn above a warrior that represent his name. Unfortunately, only one of the artists in the Houghton ledger used this convention (right), which can be very helpful for identifying the actors and events represented in the drawings. The glyph depicts a raptor connected to the sky by a jagged line indicative of sacred noise, suggesting the name "Thunder Hawk," (in Lakota, Cetan Wakiyan) or a similar concept. There were several prominent Lakota men with that name during the nineteenth century. A Sans Arc or Miniconjou Lakota warrior named Thunder Hawk was active in the Red Cloud War before his death fighting the Red River metis in 1873. Another

Hunkpapa, Thunder Hawk was a prominent band leader who survived into the 1880s, and a third Oglala Thunder Hawk participated at the Little Big Horn battle. Exhibition co-curator Butch Thunder Hawk is a descendant of the Hunkpapa leader.
popular culture that testifies to the American public’s passionate interest in the Little Big Horn battle. Stunned by Custer’s complete defeat, which left no survivors, many Americans became fascinated with Hunkpapa Lakota Sitting Bull and other war leaders who had participated in the battle. Howard was no doubt aware that Sitting Bull’s own “pictographic autobiography” was published to wide acclaim by Harper’s Weekly in July of 1876. While he attributed his interpretations of the ledger drawings to information provided by Shoshone scouts, few of the statements in his introduction seem plausible, including the identification of “Half Moon.” It seems likely that his presentation of the ledger as an “autobiography” of a Hunkpapa chief named “Half Moon” was influenced by the Sitting Bull precedent and by European and American assumptions that artists worked alone. Howard apparently edited and re-ordered the leaves of the ledger so that the sequence of drawings more closely resembled the chronological narrative of an individual warrior’s life. He then engaged a pen and ink artist to write and illustrate his introduction. The pen and ink sketches, meant to portray vignettes from “Half Moon’s” life, emulate the style of F.O.C. Darley, whose fanciful illustrations for James Fenimore Cooper and other popular authors influenced generations of artists and readers.

In March of 1890, “The Pictographic Autobiography of Half Moon” was profiled in the pages of Frank Leslie’s Illustrated News, a popular monthly and Harper’s chief competitor. The author of the feature, identified as Captain Calvin Gray, describes having encountered the folio in the salon of prominent New York City bookseller Edmund F. Bonaventure. In 1930, Howard’s “book” was donated to Harvard University as part of a large bequest.

Wiyohpiyata: The Installation
The exhibition title, Wiyohpiyata: Lakota Images of the Contested West, reflects an objective to create an exhibit that acknowledges the many complexities of this hybrid ledger book while foregrounding both past and present Lakota perspectives on the ledger drawings. Co-curator Butch Thunder Hawk, Hunkpapa Lakota, who grew up on the Standing Rock reservation and teaches traditional and contemporary arts at United Tribes College in Bismarck, North Dakota, assumed primary responsibility for crafting the gallery installation, which features his original graphic and three-dimensional artwork. Thunder Hawk spent several summers in the Peabody, studying the ledger and working with Castle McLaughlin co-curator, Sam Tager exhibits designer, and other exhibits and curatorial staff to select key elements and themes and generate a coherent design plan. Castle McLaughlin, Ilisa Barbash, associate curator of visual anthropology, and Lucien Taylor assistant professor of anthropology, traveled to Standing Rock to consult with research partner and tribal archaeologist Byron Olson, meet

Butch Thunder Hawk examining the Ledger facsimile in his studio. Photo courtesy Dennis Neumann.
and “images” in unexpected relationships, and used the ledger drawings in multiple sizes and formats to achieve varied effects. Working with Butch Thunder Hawk enabled us to evoke and express selected aspects of “Lakota culture” rather than describing it in third-person text, which we wanted to use sparingly.

In examining the ledger drawings, Thunder Hawk was impressed by how strongly the artists linked their war stories to a set of wakan or sacred powers that are foundational in Lakota cosmology and religion. The warriors depict themselves, their horses, and their shields painted with symbols referencing and evoking their relationships with the celestial and supernatural forces governing war, and with their personal spirit helpers. In response, Thunder Hawk created an encompassing gallery environment that expresses the concept of “wiyohpiyata,” the Lakota word for the direction west. “Wiyohpiyata,” is both a celestial orientation and a concentration of natural and supernatural forces. These include Wakinyan, the winged or thunder beings (often represented as thunderbirds), who govern storms and warfare through their intermediaries, such as raptors, swallows, dragonflies, and horses, all of which, when in this guise, are further associated with the colors blue and black. Guided by holy men, warriors sought communication with these forces through prayers, dreams, and rituals. Careful preparation could evoke their protective presence during the heat of battle, which brought supernatural forces into close contact. By amplifying and animating this network of references throughout the gallery, Thunder Hawk’s design re-contextualizes the drawings within Lakota metaphysics and culture.
Visitors enter the gallery through a “threshold” formed by a dramatic Thunder Hawk wall drawing in which a mounted warrior from the ledger gallops through a cosmological landscape amidst a hail of arrows. The ceiling of the gallery interior is dominated by a tumultuous skyscape painted by Wayne Pruse at United Tribes College and printed on billowing fabric. Silver mobile elements hang suspended from the beams. At the far end of the gallery, the sky banner descends into a vertical panel displaying a photographic portrait of Sitting Bull, the presiding spirit of the resistance movement on the northern Plains. Horses and bison gallop across the reverse face of the banner. The rumble of thunder evokes the presence of a thunderstorm, recalling the explosive force of battle.

An introductory section divided into “Lakota Powers” and “The Contested West” contrasts the profound differences in meaning between “Wiyohpiyata,” and the expansionary “West” of American historical narratives, with the original “Half Moon” document encased on a pedestal positioned between the two sections. In the “Contested West,” visitors walk on a floor map of the Plains as they view installations that address the broad historical contexts of national expansion, the Plains wars, and the development of ledger art. A slide show of historic images illustrates how Euroamerican technologies of visualization (e.g., mapping, photography, engraving) have been used to facilitate, promote, and memorialize national and individual stories of westward immigration during the nineteenth century.

“Lakota Powers” uses immersive installation techniques to convey the metaphysical significance of wiyohpiyata in a more direct, less mediated way. An historic Lakota shield, an eagle feather bonnet once worn by famous Lakota warrior Rain in the Face, are set into a rock wall; Thunder Hawk’s voice and ambient video are used to convey the spiritual basis of Lakota life and warfare. Sacred places in the landscape, such as buttes where spirits lived and men performed vision quests (hanbleceyta) before undertaking important actions, were essential for achieving reciprocal relationships with higher powers. The earth paints that men used to draw sacred iconography that called in the spirits had transformative power. An immersive video installation of waving grass recalls the significance of motion in Lakota thought, while video footage of a golden eagle animates Rain in the Face’s bonnet.

In the central area of the gallery, the ledger drawings are organized into themes suggested by their subject matter: Warrior Societies, War Deeds, Enemies, Horses, and Courting. Each of these thematic installations combines ledger drawings, objects, and images into distinctive arrangements.

continued on p. 18
Recently, the ethics of museum acquisitions have been spotlighted in the media. The questionable circumstances surrounding the collecting of Greek and Roman art by the Getty Museum and gifts of Ban Chiang artifacts made to California museums have cast long shadows across the museum profession. As a teaching and research institution, collecting is central to the Museum's educational mission. Collections inspire academic inquiry, support an understanding of the cultural, biological, and spiritual lives of past and present people, and generate new knowledge. In a single year, the Peabody typically receives about forty new collections, ranging in scope and scale from a single Southwestern necklace to thousands of documents and photographs recording the lives and work of renowned anthropologists.

Acquisition Guidelines
The Peabody and its Harvard University colleagues have a history of leadership in the protection of cultural property, through the development of judicious policy. In 1971, the Harvard University Museums Council issued its “Statement of Policy on Acquisition and Decession” (the “Bond Report”), stipulating that the Museum should have reasonable assurance under the circumstances that a potential acquisition was not exported after July 1, 1971, in violation of the laws of its country of origin and/or the country where it was last legally owned. Following the requirements articulated in the Bond Report, the Peabody makes every effort to ascertain that items offered are not stolen, wrongfully converted, or acquired under false pretences. For the Peabody Museum, the provenance, or history of ownership, of acquired items is a matter of public record.

Only within the past few years has accelerating concern within the wider museum community precipitated the adoption of a common set of expectations and professional practices. In June 2008, the American Association of Art Museum Directors issued a report on the acquisition of archaeological materials and ancient art;¹ in July 2008, the American Association of Museums published a similar set of guidelines.² Both documents follow Harvard University’s Bond Report in adopting a threshold date based on the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970).

It Is a Complicated Legal Landscape for Museums
In addition to the Bond Report, the Peabody Museum adheres to all federal and state legislation, including but not limited to the Antiquities Act (1906), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (1979), and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990). These laws restrict the excavation, transfer, and disposition of archaeological material from federally and tribally owned and controlled lands. While these laws pertain to archaeological resources found on public or tribal lands, archaeological finds from privately-held lands are most often controlled by the landowner.
In 1959–1960, Mary Schmidt and her husband were working on behalf of Harvard University to develop a Southeast Asian school for regional planning. Their travels, sometimes in the company of Martin Myerson, then a U.N. advisor, and the renowned anthropologist Clifford Geertz, brought them to the Dayak area in Borneo. Mrs. Schmidt, with an eye to the future, acquired this baby carrier from a woman in the Dayak village where she and her husband were staying.

Consequently, knowing the exact location where an object was found becomes an important factor in determining whether or not the museum is able to accept domestic collections.

Another consideration affecting the museum’s ability to receive collections relates to legislation regulating fish and wildlife. The cultural collections offered to the Peabody Museum often incorporate plant and animal components. A Hopi katsina figure from Arizona might be dressed with bird feathers, or a baby carrier from Borneo might be adorned with animal teeth. We work with donors and with our colleagues in the Museum of Comparative Zoology to identify the species of plants and animals represented. The Museum can only acquire wildlife materials that have been legally collected, possessed, transported, exported, imported, or sold or otherwise transferred. In order to ensure compliance with laws and treaties, the Registrar’s Office reviews information about potential acquisitions incorporating wildlife with reference to the relevant legislation, including the Lacey Act, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Wild Exotic Bird Conservation Act, the African Elephant Conservation Act, and the Antarctic Conservation Act.

**Working with Donors**

Many potential donors have at best partial documentation about their collections. In some fortunate situations, the donor may have retained a sales receipt, auction catalogue, or import/export documents, recorded the object’s acquisition in a diary, arranged for its insurance, received it under the terms of a will, listed the object in a household inventory, mentioned it in correspondence, or facilitated its publication. These acts place the object’s provenance in time and space and enable the museum to assess its potential acquisition against any legal concerns. Donors without complete documentation must provide a notarized affidavit addressing the date and circumstances under which they acquired the collections being offered.

To ensure compliance with all relevant laws, the Peabody Museums requests that the donor or seller of any cultural item containing fish or wildlife parts provides detailed information about how the cultural item was acquired, including documentation demonstrating that it was collected in compliance with all laws and regulations of the United States and, if applicable, its country of origin.

Performing due diligence for a potential acquisition also requires seeking information about factors specific to the type of object and its place of origin. In addition to listings of stolen property such as the Art Loss Register and those, continued on p. 29
Central and Southwest China have recently become increasingly important in archaeological research in China. Central China, which includes the provinces of Hubei and Hunan in the Middle Yangzi river valley, Sichuan in the Upper Yangzi river valley, and Chongqing municipality in between, and Southwest China, including the provinces of Yunnan and Guizhou (see Figure 1), were the focus of a session, organized at the Society of East Asian Archaeology (SEAA) quadrennial conference in Beijing in June 2008. Participants focused on new discoveries and recent research projects in Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, and Chongqing. The session provided a broader regional context for the archaeological survey project that I currently help direct in the Chengdu Plain of Sichuan Province.¹

The Chengdu Plain Archaeological Survey (CPAS) has been underway since 2005. It involves a collaborative effort of archaeologists from Harvard University, Peking University, the Chengdu City Institute of Archaeology, Washington University in St. Louis, National Taiwan University, and UCLA. Several Harvard graduate students have been involved over the past couple of seasons (Figure 2). This survey seeks to understand the emergence of complex societies in a region of China long overlooked in grand syntheses of Chinese prehistory. We are systematically collecting data on settlement patterns, environmental change, subsistence practices, and other aspects of past behavior that will illuminate the conditions under which societies developed during the period from the third millennium to first millennium BC, and the social practices that constituted this development.

If we are to understand this process, however, we need to keep the regional context in mind. The relationships between sites in the Chengdu Plain and those in the surrounding areas must be understood. With this in mind, I have spent parts of the last two years visiting archaeological sites in this region including trips to Chongqing, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Hubei. The Guizhou portion of this effort took place after the 2008 SEAA conference. Archaeology in Guizhou is, in many ways, still in its infancy, but it is

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¹ The Chengdu Plain Archaeological Survey (CPAS) has been directing archaeological research in Sichuan Province since 2005. It involves collaboration between Harvard University, Peking University, the Chengdu City Institute of Archaeology, Washington University in St. Louis, National Taiwan University, and UCLA. Several Harvard graduate students have been involved over the past few seasons. This survey seeks to understand the emergence of complex societies in a region of China that has been historically overlooked in grand syntheses of Chinese prehistory. The project systematically collects data on settlement patterns, environmental change, and subsistence practices to illuminate the conditions under which societies developed during the period from the third millennium to first millennium BC, and the social practices that constituted this development.

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an area with great potential. Here I outline several highlights of this trip and emphasize the incredible potential of this region.

I arrived in Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou, on June 26th and stayed until July 3rd, during which time, I was given a whirlwind tour of archaeological sites and rural villages where local residents who identify with various minority ethnic groups provide glimpses of non-Han cultural practices as an attraction for tourists. My tour was arranged and organized by the Guizhou Provincial Institute of Archaeology, and directed by Mr. Li Fei, an archaeologist in the institute who gave a talk last year in the Harvard East Asian Archaeology Seminar during a visit to the Cambridge area (http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~anthro/eaas/). Although I had extremely memorable ethnographic experiences during this trip, including the fortuitous opportunity to watch traditional dragon-boat races at Shidong on the Qingshui River of Eastern Guizhou by members of the Miao ethnic group who inhabit the region and who celebrate Duanwujie (the "Dragon boat festival") on a different day from the Han majority (Figure 3), my primary interest was in archaeological sites. Four types of archaeological remains provided a snapshot of the diversity of material in this region (Figure 4).

Our first stop was a region south of Guiyang that is under investigation by the Guizhou Provincial Institute of Archaeology as part of the nationwide survey of cultural relics that is currently underway in China. Under the auspices of this survey, the Provincial Institute is recording and documenting the condition of known sites (i.e., sites identified in previous nationwide surveys or found during subsequent archaeological studies) and systematically investigating, as much as possible, the entire province to identify previously unknown sites. This is, by any measure, a monumental task, and the Guizhou Institute is relatively small. Nevertheless, they have forged ahead admirably. Their area of research during my trip was the Huaxi region south of Guiyang in the highland area called Gaopo ("High-slope") Township.

The focus in this area is cave coffins that are commonly associated with the Miao ethnic group in this region. We first visited a known site called Jiading that has been under the protection of the cultural relics authority since 1997. This cave is relatively large, with two entrances and over 200 wooden coffins of a variety of sizes. Some very small examples are
thought to have been cenotaphs, with the most recent example constructed for a local soldier who was killed during the Korean War. Although this cemetery is no longer actively used, local Miao with the surname Wang still attend to the burials in this site. The cave is a fascinating example of an ethnographic site that is rapidly becoming a purely archaeological relic of a rapidly disappearing burial practice.

A second category of sites visited during my trip were cave sites with Paleolithic or Neolithic remains. These are everywhere in the karstic landscape of Guizhou. Over 200 are known, and a fair number of these have been at least partially excavated. Among the excavated examples, however, few are well published. These include such sites as Pan Xian Dadong, but ironically the "best" sites have received the least amount of work. Apparently local archaeologists, who would like to investigate these sites, do not have the manpower to conduct excavations because of the non-stop demands on their time for salvage work and projects like the current cultural relics survey. Sites that do receive attention tend to be those that local archaeologists "give up" to national research institutes like the Institute for Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP) – the unit that led the international effort to investigate Pan Xian Dadong. There is incredible potential in this region for extensive work on late Pleistocene and early to middle (and perhaps even late) Holocene remains in these many caves.

Our first cave site that did not have coffins was also a stop on our first day of travel. Known as Heiliandong, it comprises two large caves and a small one. The largest of these caves is about 22 meters deep, but the others are quite shallow. On the floor surface at this cave and others we visited, a few minutes of investigation resulted in the collection of stone flakes and thin black pottery. This material is characteristic of early sites in the region, although little dating has been done to precisely identify the chronology of this pottery. At present it is simply identified as "Neolithic." Later material, including porcelain and coins, demonstrate, even in the superficial nature of surface collections, the long-term use of these caves.

I continued to visit cave sites throughout my travels. Some were planned visits, including stops at the site of Chuandong cave in Anshun...
County, a protected monument since 1988. The site has been excavated three times by scholars from Nanjing University and IVPP. Another was the impressive site of Feihushan, one of our last stops on my tour. This cave lies in a solitary karstic hill in the middle of rice-paddies—a very picturesque locale. Excavations here are among the few published studies of Neolithic cave sites in the region. We spent the better part of an afternoon collecting material from this site for the Provincial Institute. Other visits were impromptu stops at caves we noticed while driving past. These included a site called the Zhengjia cave in Western Guizhou. Although probably a site that housed prehistoric occupation, the floor of this cave was mostly covered by concrete, and, although it is a protected cultural site, it seems that its significance comes from a period of use as an ammunition dump during the years of resistance in the 1940s.

A third set of archaeological material included in this survey was the rock art of Guizhou. We visited the site of Wushan in Longli County where several extensive sets of rock art came to the attention of archaeologists in 2002. The Institute of Archaeology then conducted a relatively full survey of the cliff face in 2004. The chronology of the art is not yet clear, although it is thought to date to the Bronze Age. Several motifs appear repeatedly in the art including designs that look like horses, sometimes with riders (Figure 5), and others that seem to depict humans leading cattle with humped backs by a rope (Figure 6). Unfortunately, local attempts to promote tourism at the site have hindered the potential to answer more questions about the site function and date. Uneven areas of ground surface below the cliffs have been flattened and covered with concrete. It is not clear when future work will be conducted.

A fourth archaeological focus of our travel in Guizhou was a visit to sites in the Tianzhu region along the Qinshui River, further downstream and closer to Hunan Province than the location of the Dragon Boat race. Archaeologists from the Guizhou Institute surveyed this region in 2004 in preparation for the construction of a dam on the river that will flood many of the riverbank sites. The survey located a number of Neolithic sites including the Pojiao site shown in Figure 4. These sites were all close to the riverbank, and seem to be associated with the Gaomiao-culture that has come to light recently in Hunan. The Gaomiao-culture has been dated to ca. 7800–6000 BP based on the research in Hunan and the material in Guizhou is very similar in terms of ceramic characteristics. The sites are all small with coarse sandy-reddish pottery and thin black sandy pottery as well as very large stone flakes.

Archaeology in Guizhou is very diverse, and has a lot to contribute to the understanding of prehistoric people in the upland regions of interior southern China. All four of the
archaeological site types that I visited are not yet well understood and require significantly more research. This research will need to be intensive and local, but it will also need to put these finds in the context of broader patterns of activity in Central and Southwestern China. The future of my fieldwork in Sichuan and the future work in Guizhou will be intertwined.

Notes


The Color of Thunder, continued from p 11

All highlight Plains objects from the Peabody’s collections, many associated with important nineteenth-century leaders. Featured objects include a rare painted tipi liner, several remarkable war bonnets, silver bracelets thought to have belonged to Sitting Bull, arrows from the Little Big Horn battlefield, and a German silver pectoral made by contemporary Brule Lakota artist Mitchell Zephier. A highlight of the “Horses” section is a carved and painted horse effigy that Thunder Hawk created to honor a blue roan war horse whose achievements and ultimate death are depicted in the historic ledger. This story is extended through video footage of living blue roan Nokota horses, which descend in part from horses confiscated from Lakota people when they surrendered to the United States military in the 1880s.

The alcove of the gallery offers visitors the opportunity to browse facsimiles of the entire Half Moon book and to view nine short videos, in which Byron Olson and members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe discuss tribal life, the Lakota ledger, and the contemporary legacy of warrior culture.
Among the Peabody Museum’s vast collection of photographs are a group of thirty-six daguerreotypes, including some of the oldest images of American slaves. Both rare and delicate, these images have now been preserved for future generations of scholars through the efforts of Harvard’s Weissman Preservation Center and the Mellon Foundation. The daguerreotype treatment project began in 2007 as a joint summer internship project between the Peabody Museum and the Weissman Preservation Center; this summer project quickly transformed into a comprehensive preservation initiative spearheaded by Weissman photo conservators Brenda Bernier and Elena Bulat.

The daguerreotypes came to the Peabody Museum from the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ) around 1935. The images were placed in long-term storage and then “re-discovered” more than forty years later in 1977.¹

All but four of the daguerreotypes can be traced to Louis Agassiz, a mid-nineteenth-century Harvard faculty member and founder of the MCZ, who probably collected them as research tools for his theory of “special creations” or polygenesis, which held that each race was a distinct species.²

The collection includes a compelling series of portraits depicting African American slaves, taken in 1854 by Joseph T. Zealy of Columbia, South Carolina. Commissioned by Agassiz’s colleague, Dr. Robert Gibbes, these portraits represent the earliest known documented images of Southern slaves in the United States. Amazingly, when the images were re-discovered, the original hand-written labels identifying each person were still affixed to the velvet fabric within the decorative cases. Aside from the Zealy images, the remaining portraits also feature Chinese, Native American, and Hindu individuals taken by photographers Lorenzo G. Chase of Boston, Frederick and William Langenheim of Philadelphia, and E.T. Whitney of Rochester, NY.

In 1839, Louis Daguerre patented the daguerreotype in France, the earliest form of photography.³ The daguerreotype produces a one-of-a-kind positive image that is chemically fixed onto a thin copper plate.
Removing the seal from a plate package:

A daguerreotype usually consists of the image printed on a copper plate, plus a matte plus a glass cover and a seal, in this case a newspaper seal to hold the package together. The package is then placed in a fabric-lined hinged leatherette case. *Photo by Elena Bulat.*

with a highly polished, mirror-like coating of silver. Daguerreotypes are delicate and highly vulnerable to tarnishing; they are usually sealed beneath a pane of glass to protect the image from pollutants and oxidation. The American daguerreotype is typically packaged inside an elegant hinged case made of wood and leather and the Peabody’s collection is no exception. Each image is framed in a shiny brass frame and set inside a richly colored embossed velvet package wrapped within a decorative case.

By 1860, as new photo processes such as the tintype and ambrotype became available, the daguerreotype became obsolete. The beautiful and complex daguerreotype, however, is an important testament to the pioneering technology that shaped modern-day photography.

In the past, conservation assessments and stabilization treatments for the daguerreotypes were costly and usually done solely for the purpose of exhibition loans. Thus, of the thirty-six Peabody daguerreotypes, only five had previously undergone major treatments. Over time, it became clear that to fully understand each image, future treatment should include the entire collection of these stunning examples of early American photography.

Thankfully, this was made possible in 2007, when photo conservation intern Jessica Keister of the Winterthur Museum/University of Delaware agreed to a joint summer internship between the Peabody Museum and the Weissman Preservation Center. Under the direction of photo conservators Elena Bulat and Brenda Bernier and the Peabody’s head conservator T. Rose Holdcraft, and senior archivist India Spartz, the daguerreotypes were temporarily transferred to the Weissman Preservation Center where Jessica conducted condition reporting and image assessments. As the project progressed, it was apparent the images were not only in dire need of extensive conservation, but they were certainly worthy of a full-scale preservation and treatment project.

Upon Jessica’s departure in the fall of 2007, Elena Bulat proposed to continue the project and carry out the complex tasks of fully treating and documenting each image under the auspices of a multi-year Mellon Foundation grant. The Mellon Foundation gift allowed for a University-wide preservation program for Harvard’s more than 7.5 million photographs. Therefore, the daguerreotype treatment project was a perfect match for fulfilling the Foundation’s goals of preserving these important photographic images now and in the generations to come. Ms. Bulat began compiling past conservation records from 1988–2001 and conducted oral interviews with former Peabody photo archivist Dan Jones to capture undocumented treatments prior to 1988. Some of the minor treatments included cleaning the plates, re-sealing protective bindings, and replacing glass inserts as needed.

Ms. Bulat also compiled treatment proposals that included shooting “before” digital pictures of each daguerreotype, removing old adhesives from plates, replacing old bindings with archival Filmoplast tape, replacing corroded glass with a new borosilicate (Pyrex) variety, surface cleaning and washing some of the plates (using air blowers and ammoniated water), analyzing and cleaning each unique brass matte, wrapping the verso of each plate in protective polyester sheeting (Mylar), and repairing...
The daguerreotype produces a one-of-a-kind positive image that is chemically fixed onto a thin copper plate with a highly polished, mirror-like coating of silver.

the decorative cases. Finally, to ensure proper documentation, photographer Bob Zinck of Harvard’s Widener Library Imaging Services photographed each image post-treatment using a Sinar 54H digital camera equipped with a 90mm HM APO lens. Each daguerreotype was scanned at 600 dpi and illuminated with an electronic flash on a black backdrop resulting in a comprehensive visual record of the entire collection.

In late 2008, after nearly eighteen months of treatment, the daguerreotypes were returned to the Peabody Museum fully documented, stabilized, and preserved. As research tools, the daguerreotypes represent a complex window into our past while reflecting future scholarship possibilities. According to Robin Kelsey, Loeb Associate Professor of the Humanities, “the study of photography is growing and is part of a larger trend toward the study of visual material in general.”

This timely project allows the Peabody to welcome researchers to make use of these images in contemporary discussions of nineteenth-century race and photography. A selection of the Peabody’s daguerreotypes may be viewed using the online collections tool at http://www.peabody.harvard.edu/col/default.cfm.

Acknowledgments
We are grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Widener Library Imaging Services, and the Weissman Preservation Center for helping to carry out this preservation project. These efforts would not have been possible without the support of Peabody Museum Director Dr. William Fash and the dedicated efforts of the Museum staff, especially Catherine Cezeaux, Steven LeBlanc, and T.Rose Holdcraft. Thank you all very much.

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One of several plate-maker hallmarks found on the back of the daguerreotypes. Photo by Elena Bulat.

Last year global population crossed the 6.5 billion marker. We are well aware of the impact that population growth has on our own lives and the concerns it raises about the environment, sustainability, and quality of life. Population growth is also one of the most remarkable stories of our evolutionary history. Among closely related great apes, the combined effects of long intervals between births and high rates of offspring mortality limit the number of surviving offspring and the potential for population growth. In contrast, humans have a staggering capacity for population growth. The story of how and why humans developed this demographic advantage is critical to understanding the evolutionary success of our species and the factors affecting population growth in modern populations.

In addressing the question of how there got to be so many of us, living natural fertility (non-contracepting) populations provide an opportunity to observe what conditions promote population growth. Most of the world’s foragers and subsistence agriculturalists are adapting to initial exposure to regional and national economies. During the earliest stages of acculturation these societies may experience permanent settlement, the introduction of food production, market foods, mechanized technology, and wage labor for the first time. These populations also often undergo rapid demographic changes. My demographic research has focused on three subsistence populations currently experiencing these transitions: the Maya, a group of agriculturalists from Mexico; the Pumé, South American foragers; and the Tanala, horticulturalists living in the highlands of Madagascar. Study among each of these groups has shown that the early stages of modernization have far reaching effects on fertility and mortality in sometimes surprising and unanticipated ways. Here I offer an example from my research with the Maya to illustrate the effects that modernization can have on fertility.

The Maya that I study are subsistence agriculturalists living in a small, remote village in rural Yucatan, Mexico (Figure 1). At the time of this research, they lived in traditional wattle-and-daub houses, and the village had no running water or electricity. Because of the long distances to larger towns and their lack of transportation, villagers participated only nominally in wage labor, market exchange, and had little access to education or health care. As in many rural indigenous communities worldwide, the introduction of basic mechanized technology is one of the first moderniza-
tions to occur. In the mid-1970s a gas-powered mill (*molino*) and water pump were built in the village (Figure 2). This mechanized technology markedly increases the efficiency with which maize can be ground and water collected. While I did not live in the village during the 1970s, the well was broken for several continuous months during my field work, and women resumed drawing water with ropes and buckets by hand from the 50-meter-deep well, a time-consuming and energetically demanding task (Figure 3). Women also frequently ground corn by hand rather than take it to the *molino*, either because they did not have enough cash on hand or because the *molino* was broken. Consequently I could observe the effects that this labor-saving technology has on women’s lives. Because how quickly women mature and are able to conceive is particularly sensitive to physical activity, I was interested in whether an alteration in their work load would have an impact on the age at which girls reach sexual maturity, marry, and give birth to their first child. The introduction of the labor-saving technology provided a natural experiment to follow changes in subsistence ecology and their affect on fertility outcomes at a level of detail that cannot be observed in the past.

Water and ground maize are crucial to daily Maya life and are produced exclusively by women. When using the mechanized water pump and mill, women save several hours of work per day. What girls then do with this saved time affects their energy balance. If they reallocate the saved time to tasks that are equally or more energetically taxing, there would be little alteration to their daily physical activity level. Alternatively, they might spend the saved time in less taxing ways. By systematically documenting how women spent their time over the course of a year, I found that when the labor-saving technology is available, girls spend significantly less time in energetically expensive activities, such as domestic work or field work, but rather more time in leisure — resting, sleeping, eating, and socializing. They also leave home and marry at a younger age. After
Figure 4. Children collecting water from a spigot after the introduction of a gas-powered pump.

The introduction of mechanized technology, the median age at first birth dropped from 21.2 to 19.5. This younger age at first birth is substantial enough for women to have an additional child over the course of their reproductive careers.

The introduction of labor-saving technology can be linked to the younger age at which women give birth to their first child, because it affects the two conditions necessary for young women to initiate child bearing — physical maturity and exposure to conception. Not only is there a time savings, but the reallocation of time spent in calorically expensive activities to time spent in leisure activities produces a substantial calorie savings. When using the technology, girls save about 325 calories a day. For the Maya, who live at a subsistence level, this represents a significant increase in calories available to spend in other ways, which can relax constraints on how fast girls mature and increase their potential to conceive once they are mature.

Besides physical maturity, the other factor that affects when young Maya women give birth for the first time is the age at which girls leave home to marry. Drawing water by hand from a 50-meter-deep well requires considerable strength, but girls of all ages can carry buckets of water from the centralized spigots to their homes. Likewise, only older teenagers and women have the upper-arm strength to grind maize by hand. But, younger girls are able to carry a bucket of maize to and from the molina. Because the mechanized technology reduces the skill and strength to perform these tasks, a greater age range of family members can help with maize processing and water collection (Figure 4). Maya parents have large families and teenage girls are important contributors to household subsistence. If household work can be accomplished more expeditiously and is less physically demanding, it diminishes the economic value that young unmarried girls provide to the family. Because teenage daughters are less critical as helpers, and younger siblings can more easily make up for the loss of their older sisters, parents are more willing to let their daughters leave home and marry at a younger age.
following the decrease in age at first birth after labor-saving technology was introduced, women went on to have larger completed families than women whose childbearing years preceded the arrival of labor-saving technology.

My most recent study with the Maya found that following the decrease in age at first birth, women went on to have larger completed families than women whose childbearing years preceded the arrival of labor-saving technology. Women who started having children in the 1970s after the mill and pump were introduced had between eight and twelve children.

The results of these Maya studies point to a number of conclusions. Child mortality has declined from preindustrial levels in most parts of the world through basic sanitation, vaccination, and health care initiatives. Fertility levels remain high in many of these communities, leading to unprecedented population growth. Theory tells us that given a family size decision, parents can optionally either have more children and invest less in each one, or increase the quality of life of a fewer number of children. In the absence of the opportunity to invest in their children's education, skill acquisition, health, nutrition, material goods, or training, parents globally appear to maintain or even increase family size.

The relationship between economic and demographic transitions is not novel to today's traditional communities. Various changes in subsistence intensification have occurred many times in the past through the introduction of new technologies. For example, changes in activity levels and dependable food supplies is one explanation for increased fertility in the transition from hunting and gathering to agriculture in the past. Studying demographic changes in small-scale subsistence societies offers insight into more effective ways to manage population growth. Understanding the relationships between development initiatives, nutrition, health, and fertility is a crucial contribution of demographic anthropology to our increasingly globalized world.

Notes
2. For an ethnographic overview of this Maya village see K. Kramer, *Maya Children: Helpers at the Farm* (Harvard University Press, 2005).
When I first arrived at Harvard in the fall of 2005, I had no idea of the opportunities that awaited me. Mesoamerican archaeology had been an interest of mine for a long time—since my freshman year of high school—but I had not applied to or chosen Harvard based on its Mesoamerican program or world-class archaeology museum. So that fall, sitting in a classroom and hearing about the Harvard field school in Copan, Honduras, I was pleasantly surprised by the multitude of educational experiences at my disposal. Over the next three and a half years, I expanded my knowledge of archaeology and anthropology while developing an interest in museum work through my experiences at Harvard and abroad. Over that time, I have become part of two communities, at the Peabody Museum and at Copan, and my time in these two places has been invaluable to my education and identity.

That first fall, I was excited to take Professor William Fash’s introductory course, Foreign Cultures 34: Mesoamerican Civilizations, where I heard about the field school in Maya archaeology and epigraphy at Copan. The site of Copan is one of the most important Maya archaeological sites and one with a long history of Peabody Museum exploration and research. All it took was mention of my previous travels to Mexico and interest in Mesoamerican archaeology, and was I was offered a spot in the field school. By that point, it was clear that my time at Harvard would not be a normal college experience, and that I was going to have opportunities that would be unfathomable elsewhere. The chance for a freshman to work with several esteemed Maya archaeologists was an opportunity I never thought I would have. That summer, ten other undergraduates and I excavated a site near the Principal Group in Copan doing a form of rescue archaeology at the spot where a new tourist center was going to be built. We didn’t find much (by Copan standards), but the knowledge I gained there I could not have gotten in a classroom. My fellow students and I learned the basic methods of archaeology and epigraphy, the history of Copan, and a significant amount of Spanish vocabulary (my 4 years of Spanish education in school were nothing compared to what I learned in Honduras). But more importantly, the field school sparked my interest in museum studies and affirmed my interest in Maya archaeology. I knew that I had chosen the right concentration—and the right school to study it.

The next year, I was offered a spot in the Harvard College Internship program in Copan as an alum of the field school, as well as an internship at the Peabody Museum. My work at the Peabody began that spring with research on Copan and the ballcourts and working on translations and other projects. During the first month of the summer after my sophomore year, I worked at the Peabody continuing some of the research projects and beginning a new project digitalizing Gordon R. Willey’s slide archives. Willey was one of the last truly broad-based Americanist archaeologists, excavating
sites all over North, Central, and South America, including Copan, which he excavated from 1975 to 1978. He amassed a vast collection of thousands of photos from those sites—superb images of excavations, archaeologists, artifacts, architecture, and local people and cultures. These were of immense value, given how many of the sites have changed since Willey’s excavations from the 1930s through the 1970s. We felt that it was important to protect the pictures by digitizing them, saving them for the education of future generations of students and scholars. This project helped me not only to appreciate one of the great archaeological minds of the previous generation, but also to gain a feeling for the great contribution a single person can make to the field of archaeology and the wealth of information that remains at sites still waiting to be excavated.

I spent the latter part of that summer with the internship program in Honduras, an experience that I consider a turning point in my education, not only as a student but also as a citizen of a world I realized I knew embarrassingly little about. The first two weeks of the internship were a tour around Honduras, with stops at various cultural, archaeological, historical, and ecological sites where we met with anthropologists and local members of the communities and discussed Honduran cultural patrimony, history, and identity. Our group—composed of American graduate and undergraduate students and archaeological technicians from Copan—visited museums, participated in a Garifuna (Black Carib) Punta dance, and witnessed an India Bonita competition at a local school.

Those two weeks helped me contextualize Copan in the history of all of Honduras and led me to develop questions about ethnic identity that would later become the basis of my senior thesis research. But they also opened my eyes to the rich, vibrant, and varied culture that exists in Honduras today, aspects of which I had no idea existed and wouldn’t likely have encountered from the comfortable confines of a Harvard classroom. For the first time, I realized a world existed outside of the farms of Indiana and the ivory towers of Harvard, with cultures distinct from my own and yet strikingly similar, with people who faced problems I couldn’t comprehend, yet enjoyed the same music that I did. Upon arriving in Copan after the tour, we completed a three-week excavation at the site of Rastrojon in the Copan Valley with the PARACOPAN project and each student took on a community project; mine was the development of an educational program for Honduran schoolchildren in the Copan Sculpture Museum. Through my increasing familiarity with the Spanish language, my friendships with local Copanecos, and my involvement with the community and schools, I felt like I was becoming a member of a community thousands of miles from the place I called home.

During my junior year at Harvard, I continued to work on the Gordon Willey slide collection. The final product will be a webpage on the Peabody Museum’s website with Willey’s images that will allow students to research and experience American archaeological sites, while also allowing archaeologists to interact with the page, updating information about sites and excavations, and even including images showing how the places
have changed over time. A separate, year-long class on the Archaeology of Harvard Yard, with elements of both fieldwork and museum studies, provided me with knowledge of New England archaeology and firsthand experience in historical archaeology. Through this course I was able to explore my interest in identity from a North American perspective. The class also gave all of us students a glimpse into the processes of artifact cataloging and exhibition in the Peabody Museum. I returned to Copan for the third straight summer, armed with two years of knowledge of the history and archaeology of Copan, and excited to tackle questions of ancient ethnic identity at Copan, through the study of ceramics, sculpture, and architecture.

The Harvard Field School was in Copan at the same time, participating in the PARACOPAN project. The data excavated by the field school will be immensely helpful in my own research as well as the research of countless archaeologists, as the students found evidence of continuous occupation of Rastrojon from the Classic Period through the Terminal and Postclassic periods, thus far found only at Copan.

By the end of the summer, I realized what a tremendous and unique opportunity I have had as a result of being at Harvard and its Peabody Museum. After all this time, I feel that I have become part of a community, both at Copan and the Peabody Museum. Excavating and researching for three consecutive years at the same site is something most undergraduates can only dream of, not to mention that I have been working at America’s oldest anthropology museum for two and a half years. This continuity in my education allowed me to learn the methods of excavation and the basics of museum work, develop my own interests and questions, and apply these questions to the archaeological record through my own research and analysis. My work in the Peabody has given me the opportunity to study artifacts firsthand and learn from archaeologists and curators at the top of their fields. Through all this I have gained an understanding of the complex process of research development, excavation, and curation, a knowledge that I would lack had I not set down my books and gone outside the classroom, taking advantage of the myriad opportunities Harvard provides. My hope is that through projects such as the digital Gordon Willey photo archives and website and my work with the Harvard Anthropology Club, I will have contributed something important to the community that gave me so much throughout all my undergraduate years here.

dissertation, which won the 2007 Society for American Archaeology Dissertation Award, investigates the archaeology of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, one of the most successful Native American insurrections in the history of New World colonization. From 2003 to 2005, Matt worked as the Tribal Archaeologist for the Pueblo of Jemez, and he continues to collaborate closely with the tribe in his ongoing research on ancestral Jemez archaeology. His recent publications include a 2008 article in American Anthropologist entitled “The Innovative Materiality of Revitalization Movements,” and an edited volume (co-edited with Uzma Rizvi) entitled Archaeology and the Postcolonial Critique, published by Altamira Press.

Iain Davidson is Visiting Professor of Australian Studies at Harvard this year. He is Professor of Archaeology, emeritus, University of New England (Australia). He has recently completed an edited volume with R. McDougall, The Roth Family, Anthropology and Colonial Administration. (Left Coast Press, 2008).
including the International Council on Museums (ICOM) "Red List" and UNESCO World Heritage Danger List, detailing at-risk cultural resources, concerns are raised by objects linked to war zones or areas prone to looting, evidencing unusual condition, or associated with individuals of questionable reputation.

Transparency and accountability, in concert with the scholarly consideration, are the primary aspects of the museum’s acquisition process. The museum reviews potential acquisitions at monthly meetings of its Collections Review Committee. The permanent members of this Committee are the Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs, Director of Collections, Curatorial Department Heads, Conservator, Collections Manager, and Registrar. Faculty Curators, Archivist, Associate Curator of Visual Anthropology, Associate Curator of Osteology, and Associate Curator of Native American Ethnography are invited to advise the Committee as appropriate. The Committee is assisted by the Assistant Registrar. The Collections Review Committee’s recommendations for object acquisition are sent in writing to the Director. Only the Director, acting on behalf of the President and Fellows of Harvard College, is authorized to accept title. If a potential acquisition is approved, the donor is asked to sign a Deed of Gift transferring title, or in the case of a purchase, to complete a warranty of sale.

As recent court cases, activities by law enforcement agencies, and increased public scrutiny have demonstrated, museums conduct their acquisition activities within a changing landscape. These developments, in fact, offer museums tremendous educational opportunities. Museums need to embrace these challenges by constructing and facilitating dialogues about the preservation and stewardship of our global cultural heritage. Publicly articulated acquisition policies and procedures, framed by the museum profession’s best practices, serve an important role in advancing this discussion.

Notes

NEW UPCOMING EXHIBITS

Avenue Patrice Lumumba: Photographs by Guy Tillim
Opens April 29, 2009

Masked Festivals of Canton Bo, Southwest Ivory Coast
Opens May 27, 2009