

2015 **Peña, J.T.**, and Martínez, V. “The Palatine East Pottery Project: approaches to the dissemination of results.” A.I.A. Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, 1/9/15.

This presentation provides a status report on the Palatine East Pottery Project - or PEPP – a initiative being carried out under my direction that is concerned with the study and publication of the Roman-period pottery recovered in the Palatine East excavations in downtown Rome. Today I will provide a general overview of the project’s work, focusing on our plans for the publication of our results. I will then turn the lectern over to Victor Martínez, the project’s associate director, who will discuss one particularly noteworthy element of PEPP, namely the quantification of the amphoras on the basis of vessel capacity.

>>>The Palatine East excavations were a large-scale research collaboration between the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma and the American Academy in Rome carried out under the direction of Eric Hostetter between 1988 and 1995.

>>>This involved the excavation of a large, third-century AD structure – probably an elite townhouse - situated on the northeast corner of the Palatine Hill.

>>>Palatine East Excavations volume 1, which treats the historical topography of the northeast corner of the Palatine, the site sequence, and the architectural remains, appeared in 2009. >>>Palatine East Excavations volume 2, which presents the finds other than the pottery, appeared this past October. This leaves the site pottery assemblage as the last major unfinished element in the project’s publication program.

>>>The Roman-period element of the Palatine East pottery assemblage consists of ca. 20 metric tons of material recovered in deposits dating from the middle decades of the first to the second half of the fifth century AD. The bulk of this material consists of large secondary refuse deposits dumped into and around the substructures of the building complex from the late third through the second half of the fifth century AD.

PEPP grew out of the program of preliminary pottery study that was carried out under my direction concurrent with the excavations, that is, during the period 1990-1994.

>>>In 1995 I undertook a detailed analysis of the pottery from Context A 105, a large, well-preserved group of materials dumped into the building ca. AD 300 with a view to elaborating the set of methods that would be employed for the study of the entire Roman-period assemblage, publishing this as a monograph in BAR. >>>PEPP got underway in 2001, with a series of three large-scale study seasons. This work was interrupted after 2003, however, due to a variety of circumstances.

>>>Intermediate publication continued, however, with Janne Ikaheimo producing a monograph on the African Cookware in 2003, again in BAR, >>>and Ikaheimo and I authoring a series of articles addressing methodological issues that have appeared in various venues. Since 2007 Victor Martínez and I have continued to work on the materials during the summers supported by a small number of graduate and undergraduate student assistants, >>>and since 2010 I have been able to advance various elements of project documentation during the academic year through the University of California, Berkeley's Undergraduate Research Assistantship Program. Victor Martínez is currently at work on a monograph regarding wine production in southern Italy and Sicily during the late imperial period that is based on his work with the Palatine East amphoras. Our aim is to complete the documentation of the materials, which are stored in archaeological storerooms at the American Academy in Rome's Villa Chiaraviglio, by the summer of 2016 so that these can be consigned to the Soprintendenza.

>>>For its work PEPP has adopted an innovative set of approaches that depart from an explicitly ceramic technological perspective, in which wares are defined as having a distinct fabric, fabrics are defined as a distinct ceramic body resulting from the subjection of a specific set of raw materials to a specific set of processing

operations, >>>and in which forms and form variants are defined as a distinct vessel shape obtained by a specific set of forming and finishing operations.

>>>PEPP also accords considerable attention to the documenting of use alterations – that is, alterations to vessels such as abrasion and the formation of surface deposits apparently resulting from their use – with a view to elucidating vessel function, artifact life history, and site formation processes. >>>PEPP makes extensive use of digital technologies for its work, employing a DinoLite digital microscope to document the fabric of all catalogued sherds, >>>employing a semi-automated tracing routine to convert profile drawings in pencil to finished drawings, and, as you will hear later in our talk, utilizing Harris matrix software to document form manufacturing sequences and AutoCad to estimate amphora capacity from profile drawings.

>>>For the dissemination of our results PEPP plans a two-pronged approach. This will involve first the publication of our full, low-level data and analysis on the web on a rolling basis as the studies of each of the various wares represented in the site assemblage and other elements of the project – compositional studies, methodological essays, and so forth – reach completion. This will then be followed by the publication of a synthesizing monograph in an on-line, open access format.

>>>For the web presentation of our low-level data we will employ *Res Romanae* – the website of the *University of California Roman Material Culture Laboratory*, which is slated for a launch later this month or next. >>>For the permanent archiving of this resource we plan to employ the service provided by the *Online Archive of California*.

>>>The web presentation will have two principal elements, a wares element and a deposits element.

The wares element will have a section concerning each of the wares represented, consisting of an introductory section followed by a typological section. >>>For example, among the sigillatas we recognize three classes of Italian Sigillata >>>defined by their fabric, >>>as documented by thin section, thick section, chip, and, in some cases, chemical composition. >>>For the first of these three classes we have identified 33 distinct forms. >>>For each of these we have worked out the sequence of operations involved in its manufacture, documenting this via Harris Matrix Composer software. >>>Each form is documented by a detailed catalogue description for one or more representative examples. >>>These descriptions follow a logical, structured format, as illustrated here, >>>and will be linked to various categories of supporting documentation.

>>>Turning now to the deposits element of the on-line presentation, it should first be noted that PEPP quantifies the various wares and forms present in each stratigraphic unit by all of the four methods widely employed in Roman archaeology, namely sherd count, weight, estimated number of vessels represented, and estimated number of vessel equivalents, for maximum inter-comparability with datasets from other projects. For this work we employ an explicit, systematic, and logical approach to the definition of rims, bases, handles, and wall sherds.

>>>These data are recorded in a Microsoft Access database. >>>We are also employing two innovative methods for quantification, one of which involves an estimate of the cost of manufacturing a vessel as a function of the amount of raw materials and labor required, and, for amphoras, one that takes account of vessel capacity.

>>>We plan to provide access to these data on the website by means of a user interface based on the Harris matrices for the four sectors of the Palatine East site. We have applied to the UC Berkeley Mellon Digital Humanities Initiative for funding to support the development of this tool during the 2015-2016 academic year. This tool will be designed to function in two distinct ways. >>>First, by activating a stratigraphic unit in the matrix the user will be presented with the pottery data for

this. >>>Second, by activating a ware or form in a list the stratigraphic units in which this is present will be highlighted, providing an overview of the representation of this ware or form across the site sequence.

>>>We plan to submit the final synthesizing monograph to *California Classical Studies*, a series that is specialized in the publication of long-form, data-rich works in all areas of classical studies – on-line and open access, with a print-on-demand option.

>>>Before I cede the podium to my colleague, Victor Martínez for his portion of the presentation, I would like to acknowledge these granting entities and individuals for their generous support of PEPP.