

# "NO PAIN, NO REAL ARCHAEOLOGY": BODILY EXPERIENCES OF MEXICAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS

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## Positionality

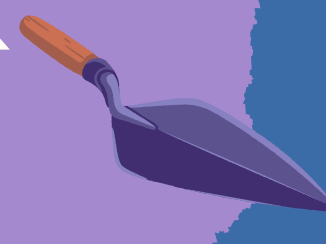


We are a Mexican working-class group, product of public education, from the same cohort, specialized on the archaeological study of the people and places within the Mesoamerican region.

In Mexico, the archaeology is a state monopoly marked by its nationalistic character. Personnel without tenure are working under the outsourcing model, hiring outside companies or individuals to perform fundamental tasks. Several internal voices working for INAH are claiming that this system leads to exploitative and unethical practices. Consequently, there are just a few career advancement opportunities for academic development, leading to increased instability and job insecurity with short-term contracts, low wages, and minimum benefits. This creates a precarious work environment, hence impacting our body in various ways with emotional, psychological, and physical effects.

Traditional archaeology in Mexico has embraced the philosophy of "no pain, no real archaeologist," which is prevalent so far in the minds of a lot of colleagues. Since we were students we were in field practices with no proper safety equipment and no proper training. School practices prepare students for the precarization that is prevalent in the archaeological labor practices.

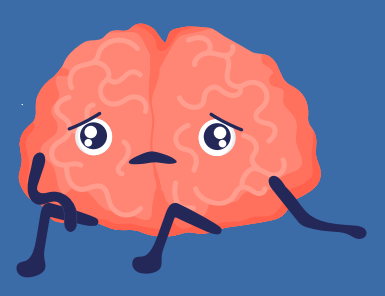
## Our experience since students in fieldwork



The body is a culturally constituted object, although naturalized by practices, devices, knowledge and technologies, thus each person is the representation of the world (Battán 2015.)

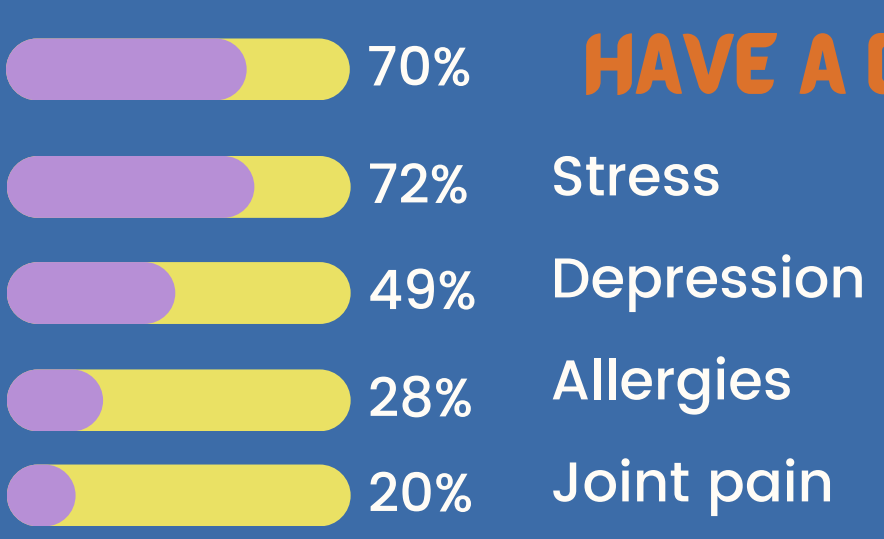
The corporality (the physical, biological, social and cultural expression) tells us something (gestures, postures, ornaments, what it shows and what it hides, etc.) on something else that passes through it (power, desire, the social, discourse, etc.), so the body is subject to affects and ruptures (Barragán, 2011).

## The body as a receptacle of violent labor



As long as we romanticized violent practices as a normal part of professional archaeology, they had direct impact on physical and mental health:

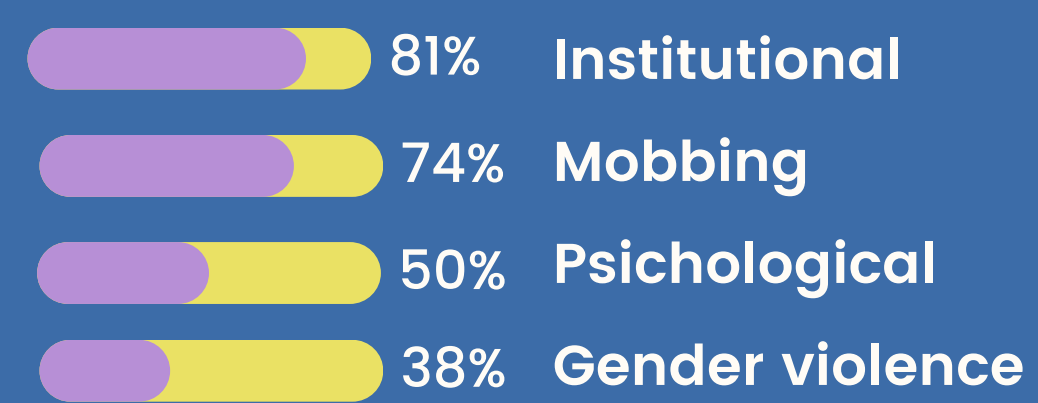
- Suffering as the price to be successful
- Low salaries
- Absence of social security
- Competitive and demanding, academic environments in toxic ways
- The demand for proper security equipment as a sign of weakness,
- Inappropriate feeding
- Not getting enough sleep
- Exposition to common and organized delinquency
- Respiratory diseases produced by inhalation of spores and fungus
- Invisibilization
- Heatstroke
- Emotional instability, and depression
- Burnout
- Death of colleagues derived from negligence
- Long term effects: Joint pain (hands, arms, wrists, knees)
- Muscular pain (back and shoulders)
- Extreme tiredness
- Effects in skin (skin burns, skin spots)
- Chronicle diseases (such as cancer, allergies, etc.)



### MOST COMMON CONDITIONS



### TYPES OF VIOLENCE AFFECTING OUR BODIES



### MEDICAL ATTENTION

**Survey**  
 Sample: 52 individuals

Battán, A. (2015). Corporeidad y experiencia: una relectura desde la perspectiva de la encarnación (embodiment). Itinerario Educativo, 66, 329-345; Barragán, Anabella. (2011). El cuerpo experiencial en el proceso salud-enfermedad-atención: objeto de estudio de la antropología física. En: Barragán, Anabella y Lauro González Quintero (Coords). La complejidad en Antropología física. Tomo II. INAH. México.