

Lawrence (“Larry”) Stager was born January 5, 1943, on a farm near Dunkirk, Ohio. He is the first in his family to go to college. He chose Harvard College, graduating in archaeology and history of the Ancient Near East with a B.A. *magna cum laude* in 1965. He continued his studies there under the tutelage of G. Ernest Wright and Frank Moore Cross, among others, earning his M.A. in 1972 and his Ph.D. (‘with distinction’) in 1975, with a dissertation dealing with desert farming. He went on to teach Syro-Palestinian Archaeology at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago from 1973-1985, before returning to Harvard to an endowed chair, as the inaugural Dorot Professor of the Archaeology of Israel, and Director of the Semitic Museum. He retired in 2012, after 40 years of teaching, and serving as primary director of over fifty doctoral students and their dissertations.

His field research and writing have focused on Canaanites, Phoenicians, Philistines, and Israelites. Since 1965 Stager has been active in archaeological fieldwork in the the Levant and the Mediterranean: he was co-director with Anita Walker of the excavations at Idalion, Cyprus. He then turned his attention farther west, directing the Punic Project at Carthage from 1975-1980, with excavations at the Commercial Port and in the Tophet. And for the last 25 years he has directed and recently co-directed with Daniel Master the Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, Israel.

Among his popular works is the award-winning *Life in Biblical Israel* (co-authored with Philip King) and *Ashkelon Discovered* (from the Bronze Age through the Medieval Period). *Ashkelon 3: The Seventh Century B.C.* won the Levi-Sala Book Prize, for best final excavation report on a site in Israel. This is one of a projected twelve-volume series of technical reports, of which volumes 5, 6, and 7 will go to press by the end of this calendar, as will the final report dealing with the Tophet of Carthage.

In 1999 Stager teamed up with Robert Ballard on a seaborne excursion that discovered by remote sensing and robotics two Phoenician shipwrecks, swamped in the deep-sea ca. 750 B.C., carrying cargo of over 800 wine amphoras being shipped from Tyre to Egypt. This amazing discovery appears as a National Geographic Society video entitled “Lost Ships of the Mediterranean.”

Stager elaborated an economic model for commercial maritime kingdoms in contrast to the land-based agrarian ones in a paper entitled “Port Power in the Early and the Middle Bronze Age,” and has successfully applied it to later periods, including Phoenician ports in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

In his synthesis of Israelite society, he studied this land-locked culture in its physical setting in the highlands, its livelihood as kin-based agro-pastoral villages, its houses and family structures, and its demographic features in a pioneering article entitled “The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel,” the most frequently cited and downloaded article published by the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*.

Stager gave the Schweich Lectures; his subject, “Ashkelon: Seaport of the Canaanites and the Philistines,” to be published next year as a monograph of the British Academy. He was recently named a

Corresponding Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. In 2008 he was honored with a Festschrift of 50 essays, *Exploring the Longue Duree* (ed. J. David Schloen). The essays cover an array of topics reflecting the wide range of Stager's intellectual interests, especially ancient economies and societies.