

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION TO PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Anthro 2PA3 - Fall 2008

Dr. Kostalena Michelaki

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Lecture Times and Location: Tuesdays and Fridays 9:30-10:20 am in T-28/001

Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 am

In this course we will cover the methods and strategies archaeologists use to understand the undocumented past. During the first half of the course we will focus on the ways in which regional survey, site excavation and materials analysis are used to answer questions about prehistory. In the second half we will look at research applications that seek solutions to problems in our understanding of long-term human history. We will look at examples of research from around the world that focus on issues of technology and identity, economic transition, social inequality, as well as religious belief and ritual practice, while we will also talk about the relation of archaeology (a discipline that studies the past) with the present. Readings and lectures will focus on case studies in archaeological research. Lab projects will provide an opportunity to engage in the analysis and interpretation of archaeological evidence.

TEXTS

1) Staeck, John P.

2002 *Back to the Earth: An Introduction to Archaeology*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield Press.

2) Kamp, Kathryn

1998 *Life in the Pueblo: Understanding the Past through Archaeology*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press.

3) Coursepack (available from Copies Plus, 9 Sterling St.)

GRADING

Reading Assignments	10%
Lab Projects (3@5% each)	15%
Mid-Term	20%
Research Design Project	25%
Final Exam	30%

Reading assignments will consist of questions about the weekly readings that must be submitted in your assigned lab time in the week following the one in which the reading is assigned. Late reading assignments will be accepted for potential half value for up to one week following the due date, but will not be accepted after that time. Reading assignments will NOT be returned to you. Your TA will review the correct answers in class two weeks after the due date. Feel free to ask him/her about your individual mark. All assignments are available on the web.

Lab projects will involve the analysis and interpretation of archaeological evidence. Three projects will be completed over the course of the term. You will work together in groups, but each one of you will be required to write your own complete summary and interpretation of the results. Your TA will provide in-class advice and guidance. Please read each lab assignment carefully before you come to class. All assignments are available on the web.

The **research design project** will require you to outline and explain a proposed strategy for the resolution of a specific problem in understanding the prehistoric past. Your proposal will describe and explain the relevance of the potentially available evidence needed to resolve a particular problem. A list of specific research topics is already available on the web.

Penalties will apply for all late and missed assignments, unless written medical excuse is provided. Please consult the detailed description of each assignment about the particulars of the penalties. In ALL cases no coursework will be accepted beyond one week after its due date.

The **mid-term** examination will focus on basic knowledge of archaeological evidence, methods, and concepts, and an understanding of their appropriate application and interpretation. The **final** examination will concentrate on the application of methods and evidence toward the solution of archaeological research problems.

SCHEDULED TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Sept. 5:	Introduction: The Scope of Archaeology
Sept. 9-12: READING:	Questions, Evidence, and Research Design Staeck: Ch. 1-3
Sep. 16-19: READING:	Sites, Survey, and Excavation Staeck: Ch. 4, 5: 113-139, 153-160, Kamp: Ch. 1-3
Sept. 23-26: READING:	Dates Staeck: Ch. 5: 139-151, Kamp: Ch. 4
Sept. 30-Oct. 3: READING:	Biological Materials Staeck: Ch. 9, Kamp: Ch. 5-7
Oct. 7-10: READING:	Artifacts Staeck: Ch. 6-8, Kamp: Ch. 8

- Oct. 14:** **REVIEW**
Oct. 17: **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**
- Oct. 21-24:** **Research Design** and Archaeological Interpretation
 READING: Staeck: Ch. 3, 10, Kamp: Ch. 9-11
- Oct. 28-30:** Archaeologies of Technology and Material Culture
 READING: Sillar 2000 and Michelaki 2007.
- Nov. 4-7:** Archaeologies of Social Inequality and Political Integration
 READING: Arnold 1999, Robb et al. 2001
- Nov. 11-14:** Archaeologies of Ritual and Religion
 READING: Marcus and Flannery 1994
- Nov. 18-21:** Archaeologies of Subsistence Change and Intensification
 READING: Fairbairn 2005, Weber 1999
- Nov. 25-28:** **REVIEW**

Anthro 2PA3 – Fall 2007 – Schedule at a Glance			
ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	VALUE	Location
Lab 1	Wed. Oct. 8	5%	KTH B-122
Lab 2	Wed. Nov. 5	5%	KTH B-122
Lab 3	Wed. Dec. 3	5%	KTH B-122
Reading Assignments	Weekly	10%	KTH B-122
Research Design Outline	Wed. Oct. 29	1%	KTH B-122
Research Design Paper	Wed. Nov. 26	24%	KTH B-122
Mid-Term	Fri. Oct. 17	20%	To be arranged
Final	Arranged by Registrar's Office	30%	To be arranged

READINGS

Arnold, B.

1999 'Drinking the Feast': Alcohol and the Legitimation of Power in Celtic Europe. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 9:71-93. (available in the course pack)

Fairbairn, A.

2005 A History of Agricultural Production at Neolithic Çatalhöyük East, Turkey. *World Archaeology*, 37 (2): 197-210. (available on the web)

Marcus, J, and Flannery, K.V.

1994 Ancient Zapotec Ritual and Religion: an Application of the Direct Historical Approach. In Renfrew, C. and Zubrow, E.B.W. eds. *The Ancient Mind: Elements of Cognitive Archaeology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 55-74. (available in the course pack)

Michelaki, K.

2007 More than Meets the Eye: Reconsidering Variability in Iroquoian Ceramics. In *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 31: 143-170.

Robb, J., Bigazzi, R., Lazzarini, L., Scarsini, C. and Sonego, F.

2001 Social "Status" and Biological "Status": A Comparison of Grave Goods and Skeletal Indicators at Pontecagnano. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 115 (3): 213-222. (available on the web)

Sillar, B.

2000 Dung by Preference: The Choice of Fuel as an Example of How Andean Pottery Production is Embedded Within Wider Technical, Social, and Economic Practices. *Archaeometry*, 42(1): 43-60. (available in the course pack)

Weber, S.

1999 Seeds of Urbanism: Palaeoethnobotany and the Indus Civilization. *Antiquity* 73 (282):813-826. (available on the web)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at:

http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
 - Improper collaboration in group-work.
 - Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
- **Academic Skills Counseling and Services for Students with Disabilities** are available through the Centre for Student Development:
tel: 905-525-9140 x 24711,
e-mail: **csd@mcmaster.ca**, website: **<http://csd.mcmaster.ca>**

Guides to effective writing are also available at the university bookstore.