

NEANDERTHALS TO PYRAMIDS: INTRODUCTION TO WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY

Term 1, 2022-2023

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Lecture: Tuesday 7 – 9 pm, HH 302

Office Hours: email to arrange a Zoom meeting

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Course Description

This course introduces the major debates in world archaeology (and the latest major discoveries), focusing on how archaeologists – as social scientists - seek to answer these big questions. We examine how the approaches of a broad-based archaeological/anthropological reasoning are applicable to a wide array of future careers.

Course Objectives

In this course we cover 7 million years of human activity from our earliest ancestors to the rise of major ‘civilizations’, engaging with such big questions as:

- How do we define ‘humanity’ and who were our first ancestors?
- Who were the Neanderthals and what led to their extinction? Did we kill them off?
- Why did it take so long for ‘art’ to appear and what does this early ‘symbolism’ mean?
- Why did we domesticate animals & plants after millennia hunting/gathering wild food?
- Why did we settle in villages, and what impact did settled life have on societies?
- What led us to construct cities and states?
- Why do some people become kings while others remained commoners?
- How did new ideas and inventions spread between people in the past?
- Why does *any* of this matter?

In the process, we also examine some of the methods and theories used by archaeologists in their attempts to answer these questions. At the end of this course, you should thus have developed:

1. An understanding of what constitute the major debates in the study of the human past and an idea as to *how* archaeologists attempt to resolve these questions using the ‘archaeological record’, and theory/logic.
2. An informed opinion as to the grander significance of archaeology as an academic discipline and by extent the cultural value of studying (and preserving) the past.

Required Materials and Texts

NO TEXTBOOK! – I will not be using a textbook for reasons I will detail in class.

Class Format

Lectures: Tuesdays 7.00 – 9.00 pm – lectures are in person with lectures notes & images provided ahead of time via your A2L (Avenue to Learn) portal; *however* - the lecture will also be recorded as a podcast and posted to A2L after the class.

Tutorials: *mandatory* & in person with the Teaching Assistant (TA) to discuss assigned work (see below); **T01** and **T02:** Tuesdays 6-7pm; **T03** and **T04:** Tuesdays 9-10pm

Course Evaluation – Overview

Tutorial and exam attendance / participation are **mandatory** grades are not reweighted if missed (see below).

Tutorial participation and responses - **50%**

Mid-term exam - **25%**

Long paper proposal - **5%**

Long paper - **20%**

Course Evaluation – Details

Tutorial participation & responses – grade based on the student’s attendance of the tutorial, participation in general discussion, and submission of associated responses. Your weekly response will NOT be graded if you do not attend the tutorial (unless you have appropriate documentation, e.g., MSAF).

Mid-term exam – 75 minutes long, taken online via A2L on **Tues. 25th Oct.** 7- 8.15pm (covers Weeks 1-7 subjects).

Type of questions on exams: *Multiple choice / True or false / Fill in the blank / Definitions / Problem solving / Short answer questions.*

Long-paper proposal – a proposal for the long-paper is to be submitted to your TA via A2L before your **Week 9** tutorial. The proposal should comprise two pages, the first with a title, plus an outline of your research topic (sub-headings and contents), plus 5 appropriate sources on page 2 (we discuss in tutorial what is ‘appropriate’).

Long-paper – A final term paper, 6 pages long (1” margins, double spacing, 12 pt. Times New Roman font), is to be submitted to your TA via A2L by 4pm on **Friday 9th December**. You can choose one of these topics (others to be added):

1. *Were Neanderthals the first ‘modern humans’?*
2. *Why did people paint cave/rock walls in the Upper Palaeolithic (& how do we know)?*

3. *What does archaeology tell us about where the first peoples of America came from, how they got there, when they came, and why they migrated?*
4. *What were the natural and cultural catalysts that led to the origins of agriculture?*
5. *A research question of your choice. You must have a *question*, it is not enough to simply describe a site / a dataset / a debate. **NB** – you need to discuss this proposed topic with professor or TA before submitting it.*

Long paper topics must be approved. The paper should have a clear structure, argument, and conclusion, and should make adequate reference to academic sources. A rubric will be provided in class for how we will grade your papers.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Tues. 6th Sept.)

Part I: Introduction to the course

Part II: Introduction to archaeology

Notes: **No tutorial**

Week 2 (Tues. 13th Sept.)

Part I: Human origins: Our earliest ancestors

Part II: *Homo erectus*: Hunters, fire-starters, migrants

Notes: **Tutorial 1**: *What do archaeologists' study?*

Week 3 (Tues. 20th Sept.)

Part I: **Film** – *Decoding Neanderthals* (PBS 2013)

Part II: The Neanderthals

Notes: **Tutorial 2**: *How do we know how old something is?*

Week 4 (Tues. 27th Sept.)

Part I: Early modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) – the archaeology of us!

Part II: The first human 'art' and its meaning(s)

Notes: **Tutorial 3**: *Trowelblazers: Those who do archaeology*

Week 5 (Tues. 4th Oct.)

Part I: **Film** – *First Peoples' – Americas* (PBS 2015)

Part II: Brave new worlds: the Peopling of the Americas

Notes: **Tutorial 4**: *How do we make sense of prehistoric art?*

Week 6 (Tues. 11th Oct.)

MID-TERM RECESS (no classes)

Week 7 (Tues. 18th Oct.)

Part I: Origins of farming: the 'Neolithic revolution'!

Part II: Seeds, symbolism, and sex

Notes: **Tutorial 5: Prep for long paper proposal** (plus a response to hand in)

Week 8 (Tues. 25th Oct.)

Mid-term Exam 7.00 - 8.15pm (online via A2L)

Notes: **NO tutorial – to help you prepare for the exam**

Week 9 (Tues. 1st Nov.)

Part I: How ideas spread: The first farmers of Europe

Part II: SE Asia and the earliest Pacific islanders

Notes: **Tutorial 6: How do we talk about gender in the past?**

DEADLINE – submit Long Paper Proposal

Week 10 (Tues. 8th Nov.)

Part I: Chiefly societies

Part II: Of maize and mounds: The chiefdoms of North Americas

Notes: **Tutorial 7: What makes something valuable?**

Week 11 (Tues. 15th Nov.)

Part I: How do we explain the 'emergence of civilization'?

Part II: Mesopotamia – The world's first cities and states

Notes: **Tutorial 8: Why do people build monuments?**

Week 12 (Tues. 22nd Nov.)

Part I: Ancient Egypt – From the pyramids to Tutankhamen

Part II: **Film** – *Before the Pharaohs: The Real Scorpion King* (Nat. Geog. 2011)

Notes: **Tutorial 9: Bodies of evidence? The archaeology of death and burial**

Week 13 (Tues. 29th Nov.)

Part I: Can political systems be exported? The case of Minoan Crete

Part II: Mesoamerican civilizations: The Maya

Notes: **Tutorial 10: What is the value of archaeology & cultural heritage?**

Week 14 (Tues. 6th Dec.)

Part I: Archaeology today: Why does it matter and how to make a living from it

Part II: Archaeology at McMaster – classes, labs, and field-schools

DEADLINE – submit Long Paper via A2L by 4pm Fri. 9th Dec.

Notes: **No tutorial**

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Assignments must be submitted to your TA via A2L by the assigned date.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late long paper proposals will be given a maximum of a 50% grade, while late long papers are penalized **5%** of the mark per day including weekends and holidays with a maximum of **3 days late** after which a 0 grade will be awarded. Extensions can only be gained if the student provides an appropriate note/letter from SAS, or other university certification system (e.g., MSAF – see below). Assignments are to be submitted to your TA via A2L (details provided in your first tutorial).

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

An arrangement can be made for a missed mid-term exam to be taken at a later date if the student provides an appropriate note/letter from Faculty office, or SAS (see below).

No grade / reweighting policy - grades will *not* be reweighted, i.e., if an exam is missed, then a make-up exam must be taken, the grade is not just added to the next requirement.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) policy

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e., no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:

The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.

The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.

The 'one MSAF per term' limit is retained.

As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.

Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here:

http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation

may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Online Elements

This course includes on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.

2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make

arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".
<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work>

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

- Direct return of materials to students in class;
- Return of materials to students during office hours;
- Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
- Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.