ANTH5730   Archaeology of Hong Kong (2019-20)

Teacher: Dr Mick Atha     Office: NAH 411 Humanities Building, New Asia College.  
Email: mick.atha@yahoo.com

Teaching Assistant: Nie Youping
Email: TBA

Lecture time: Tuesday 1:30-3:15 pm, Room NAH 11
Tutorial time: Tuesday 3:30-4:15 pm, Room NAH401

Course description

One could be forgiven for thinking that little of archaeological interest survives in Hong Kong’s built-up and densely populated environment. But that could not be further from the truth. Contrary to the politically-motivated myth of ‘a barren rock’ as portrayed by the British in the 19th century, Hong Kong actually has a rich archaeological heritage spanning at least 6000 years of human history. Who were the earliest inhabitants, where were they from, and what brought them to Hong Kong? This course reviews major archaeological discoveries in Hong Kong from the 1920s to the present, examines cultural developments from the Neolithic to the Qing Dynasty, and discusses the material culture, economies, social structures and (as far as is possible) the belief systems of Hong Kong’s ancient peoples.

The course will also compare and contrast the evidence for prehistoric and historical cultural developments in Hong Kong with those occurring in South China and the wider Southeast Asian region. The significance of Hong Kong archaeology in the contexts of prehistoric and historical South China and Southeast Asia will also be evaluated. In addition, there will be an exploration of the tensions and potentials existing in Hong Kong between its development-driven economy and rich archaeological resource, as played out in the field of impact assessment archaeology. Finally, the notion of ‘public archaeology’ will be used to highlight how archaeological remains are ‘packaged’ and presented as heritage properties in contemporary Hong Kong, and as a means of situating our studies in their ‘real world’ context where the contrasting needs and aspirations of a diverse range of stakeholders must be addressed.

Topics of this course include the following:

- A bridge between two landmasses – the significance of Hong Kong archaeology.
- The landscape and natural resources of Hong Kong
- History of Hong Kong archaeology
- The early inhabitants of Hong Kong
- Why there was no state in Bronze Age Hong Kong?
- Peoples and their way of life in Hong Kong from Han dynasty to the colonial era.
- Cultural dynamics between Hong Kong, South China and Southeast Asia
- Balancing the needs of development and heritage conservation: ‘impact assessment’ archaeology
- Public archaeology in Hong Kong
Learning outcomes

After taking this course, students should:

- Understand the trajectory of pre/historical cultural development in Hong Kong and have a good grasp of the key changes through time and their associated research issues;
- Have a critical awareness of debates surrounding cultural exchanges and human diaspora between Hong Kong and adjacent areas;
- Fully understand how material remains and associated archaeological data have been used to reconstruct past socio-economic lifeways in Hong Kong;
- Have enhanced their capacity for multi-disciplinary, critical, and independent thinking.

Learning activities

Two 45-minute lectures and one 45-minute tutorial per week for one semester, plus a field trip to an archaeological site/ landscape (tentative timing: Sunday 3rd of November, destination TBA).

Grade Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria for 1) the course and 2) for coursework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A     | 1) Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.  
       | 2) The work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way. The argument is logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. Concrete evidence is presented to support statements and claims made. |
| A-    | 1) Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.  
       | 2) The work synthesizes course materials and key ideas in an original way, but there are areas for improvement. |
| B-range | 1) Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.  
       | 2) The work demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence. |
| C-range | 1) Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. |
2) The work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged. The argument and the writing is not clear, and/or there is no evidence presented to support statements and claims made.

D-range
1) Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
2) The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are major problems with clarity of argument and writing.

F
1) Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.
2) The work has failed to respond to the assignment prompt.

Course assessment

(1) Participation: (10%)
Contribution to the class by doing the reading, preparing notes, asking questions and joining in / leading discussions in tutorials.

(2) Mid-term take-home exam: (30%)
Exam paper available to download from Blackboard 7pm Tuesday 15th October – completed papers with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to Dept. Office by 5pm Friday 25th October.

(3) Fieldtrip Report: (10%)
Assignment instructions available before the field trip on Sunday 3rd November, completed reports due in by 5pm Friday 8th November.

(4) Final take-home paper (c. 4500-5500 words): (50%)
Essay questions available on Blackboard 7pm Tuesday 12th November – completed papers with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to Dept. Office by 5pm Friday 6th December.

Submissions & academic honesty

As required by the university, students must submit a soft copy of their computer-generated text assignments to Veriguide at a specified URL. The system will issue a receipt containing a declaration of honesty statement. Students should sign the receipt, print a hard copy of their assignment, and submit the hard copy and the receipt to teachers for grading. The university says that assignments without the receipt will NOT be graded.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on academic honesty, and adopts a policy of zero tolerance on cheating in examinations and plagiarism. Any such offence will lead to disciplinary action including possibly termination of studies at the University. Students should know how to properly use source material and how to avoid plagiarism. Students should read the detailed guidelines and examples for the acknowledgement of sources in the University’s website at
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/, which also gives details of how to submit papers through Veriguide.

Medium of instruction: English

Lecture topics and reading materials

NB: Please ensure that you read texts or websites marked thus **; and as many of the others if you have time.

Lecture 1 (Week 1; 4th September): Introduction: course structure, objectives and methodology.

Readings:


Lecture 2 (Week 2; 11th September): A brief history of Hong Kong archaeology.

Readings:


**AMO. 2007a. ‘Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Research in Hong Kong’, Kaogu 6: 3-9 (香港古物古蹟辦事處 2007 香港近年的考古發現與研究。《考古》2007年第6期，3-9頁)

**Meacham, W. 2009a. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (Pages 10-65: sounds a lot but it is mostly pictures)

Lecture 3 (Week 3; 17th September): Hong Kong’s palaeoenvironment: a landscape full of resources?

Readings:
Lecture 4 (Week 4; 24th September): Neolithic Hong Kong.

Readings:


Antiquities & Monuments Office Web Site (regarding the Middle Neolithic period, Late Neolithic Period and the list of sites of archaeological interest in HK):


**Meacham, W. 2009a. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (Pages 81-109; see also map at front of book for site locations)

Shang, Z. 2000. 再論香港新石器時代文化的分期與斷代 (Further Discussion on Hong Kong’s Neolithic Culture), pp.33-46.

**NB: No Class Week 5 (1st October) National Day holiday**

**Lecture 5 (Week 6: 8th October): Neolithic: wider contexts & connections.**

Readings:


**Higham, C. 1996. The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia. Hong Kong: Cambridge University Press. (Pages 73-89)**


**Lecture 6 (Week 7: 15th October): Bronze Age Hong Kong.**

Readings:

(香港古物古蹟辦事處 2007 香港近年的考古發現與研究。《考古》2007 年第 6 期，3-9 頁)

**AMO. 2007b. Excavation on the ancient site at Sha Po San Tsuen, Lamma Island, Hong Kong, *Kaogu*
6: 10-29.
(香港古物古蹟辦事處 2007 香港南丫島沙埔新村遺址發掘簡報。《考古》2007 年第 6 期，10-29 頁)

AMO Web Site (regarding the Bronze Period):

*Collected Essays on the Culture of the Ancient Yue People in South China*: 40-55. Hong Kong: Urban
Council. (see also map of major sites on pages 16 & 17).

**Meacham, W. 2009a. *The Archaeology of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
(Pages 110-129 and map of site locations in front of book)

**Mid-term take-home exam**

**Lecture 7** (Week 8: 22nd October): *Bronze Age: wider contexts & connections*

Readings:

**Allard, F. 2004. Lingnan and Chu during the First Millennium B.C.: A Reassessment of the Core-
Periphery Model, in S. Müller, T. O. Höllman, and P Gui (eds.) *Guangdong: Archaeology and Early Texts*:
1-21. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag

**Higham, C. 1996. *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia*. Hong Kong: Cambridge University Press. (Pages
90-107)

*Collected Essays on the Culture of the Ancient Yue People in South China*: 140-147. Hong Kong: Urban
Council, the Shenzhen Museum & the Anthropological Museum, Zhongshan University.

**Meacham, W. 2009a. *The Archaeology of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
(Pages 139-142)

**Meacham, W. 2009b. *Rock carvings in Hong Kong*. Published by the author. (Especially pages 102-
121)

Yeung & W.L. Li (eds.) *Conference on Archaeology in Southeast Asia*: 524-525. Hong Kong: the
University Museum and Art Gallery, HKU.

**Lecture 8** (Week 9; 29th October): *Neolithic-Bronze Age Subsistence Strategies*
Readings:

Chan, W. 1978. Identification and analysis of excavated fish remains, in W. Meacham (ed.) Sham Wan, Lamma Island: an archaeological site study: 248-258. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Archaeological Society


(呂烈丹 2007 香港史前的自然資源和經濟形態。《考古》2007 年第 6 期，36-45 頁)

Morton, B. 1978. Shells from the archaeological site at Sham Wan, in W. Meacham (ed.) Sham Wan, Lamma Island: an archaeological site study: 259-271. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Archaeological Society

Ng, S. W. H. 1998. The Spatial Pattern of Prehistoric Sites around Estuary of Pearl River. Journal of the Hong Kong Archaeological Society (JHKAS) 14: 41-60

(吳偉鴻 1998 珠江口史前遺址分佈規律。《香港考古學會會刊》1993-1997 年第 14 期，41-60 頁)

**Rogers, P.R. 1995. Subsistence continuity in the prehistory of south coastal China, in C.T. Yeung & W.L. Li (eds.) Conference on Archaeology in Southeast Asia: 467-478. Hong Kong: the University Museum and Art Gallery, HKU.

Rogers, P.R., Leininger, N.W., Mirchandani, S., van den Bergh, J. & Widdowson, E.A., 1995. Tung Wan Tsai: A Bronze Age and Han period coastal site. AMO Occasional Paper No.3, Hong Kong: AMO.


(http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0063148)

Field Trip (tentative date: Sunday 3rd November, destination TBA)

Lecture 9 (Week 10; 5th November): Qin-Tang dynasties.

Readings


Kong and Macau. Hong Kong: Museum of History, pp.176-217. NB: Read all if you have time but especially pp.176-188 and pp.213-217.


Cameron, H. and Williams, B.V. 1983. Sham Wan Tsuen, Chek Lap Kok (a Tang dynasty industrial site), JHKAS 10: 10-54.


**Meacham, W. 2009a. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (130-156)


Lecture 10 (Week 11: 12th November): Song-Qing dynasties.

Readings

AMO Pamphlet 2008 ‘Wun Yiu Site and Fan Sin Temple’:  

AMO Web Site (Remnants of the South Gate of Kowloon Walled City):  


Lam, P. 1988. Late 15th to Early 16th Century Blue and White Porcelain from Penny’s Bay, JHKAS (12): 146-163

Meacham, W. 2009a. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (Pages 157-178)

**Lecture 11 (Week 12: 19th November): Archaeological Heritage Management in Hong Kong.**

**Readings:**


**Antiquities Ordinance (Chapter 53)


Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO): Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA)


**Sun, K. 2011. ‘The unclaimed baggage: who owns HK’s archaeological heritage?’ Huaxia Kaogu (Cathaysian Archaeology) 2011-1: 139-145**

**Lecture 12 (Week 13: 26th November): Public Archaeology in Hong Kong (1st 45 minutes); Review and Discussion (2nd 45 minutes).**

**Readings:**


**Websites:**


Tutorial topics:


Lecture 2 (Week 2 – 10th September): General Class Discussion: ‘What are the positive and negative aspects of Hong Kong’s history of archaeological work?’

Lecture 3 (Week 3: 17th September): General Class Discussion: ‘Hong Kong’s palaeoenvironment: a landscape full of resources or a major constraint on early human activity?’

Lecture 4 (Week 4: 24th September): Selected Reading: AMO (1999): ‘What does the Ma Wan site really tell us about Late Neolithic society?’

NB: No Class Week 5 (1st October) National Day holiday

Lecture 5 (Week 6: 8th October): Selected Reading: Tsang, C.H. (2005): ‘Does the HK-PRD Neolithic support or challenge the idea of a diaspora of Austronesian-speaking peoples from China, via Taiwan, the Philippines, and out into the Pacific?’

Lecture 6 (Week 7: 15th October): Selected Reading: AMO (2007b) ‘Why is the Sha Po New Village plateau such an interesting Bronze Age site?’

Lecture 7 (Week 8: 22nd October): General Class Discussion: ‘Was Bronze Age HK a chiefdom-level society?’

Lecture 8 (Week 9: 29th October): Selected Reading: Yang et al. (2013): ‘Why does Xincun, Taishan provide such an important contrast with Sha Ha, Sai Kung – how to interpret the evidence?’

Field Trip (tentative date: Sunday 3rd November, destination TBA)

Lecture 9 (Week 10; 5th November): Selected Reading: Atha (2014): ‘What is so unusual about the San Tau cemetery site and its investigation?’

Lecture 10 (Week 11: 12th November): Selected Reading: ERM (2017): ‘How should we assess the present and future significance of the Kowloon Bay (To Kwa Wan) area in terms of the local and wider Southern Song-Yuan period?’

Lecture 11 (Week 12; 19th November): General Class Discussion: ‘How can we improve Hong Kong’s management of its archaeological heritage?’

Lecture 12 (Week 13: 26th November): No tutorial due to final take-home paper