ANTH2720 The Archaeology of Hong Kong (2026/27)

Teacher: Dr. Sharon Wong Wai-yee

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Lecture: Tuesday 10:30am-12:15pm Humanities Building 114

Tutorial: Tuesday 1:30-2:15pm T.C. Cheng Bldg 206

Course Outline

Contrary to the politically-motivated myth of "a barren rock" as portrayed by the British in the 19th century, Hong Kong has a rich archaeological heritage spanning at least 6000 years of human history, which is also essential for understanding the cultural relicts in the Greater Bay Area in a wider context. Who were the earliest inhabitants, where were they from, and what brought them to Hong Kong and other areas in the Pearl River Delta, one of the remotest corners of East Asia continent? This course introduces major archaeological discoveries in Hong Kong dating from the Neolithic to the colonial period and reviews the daily lives and social structures of Hong Kong's ancient inhabitants

This course will also compare and contrast evidence for prehistoric and historical cultural developments in Hong Kong with those occurring in the Pearl River Delta and the wider South China 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 resources, as played out in the field of impact assessment and public archaeology.

Major contents of this course

1. A bridge between two landmasses – the significance of Hong Kong archaeology.
2. The early inhabitants of Hong Kong
3. Peoples and their way of life in Hong Kong from the Bronze age through the historical period.
4. Cultural dynamics between Hong Kong, Pearl River Delta (the Great Bay area), and Southeast Asia.
5. Public archaeology and archaeological heritage management issues 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
2-hour lectures and 1-hour tutorial per week for one semester, and archaeological field trip in Hong Kong

Medium of instruction
Cantonese

Use of AI Tools by Students in Learning Activities and Assessments
Approach 1 – Prohibit all use of AI tools

Students are not allowed to use any AI tools in any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards students' final grade of the course or used for evaluating students' attainment of the desired learning outcomes. Students are expected to produce their own work independently without any collaboration or use of AI tools.

Submissions & academic honesty

As required by the university, from Sept. 2008, 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, and submit the soft copy and the receipt to blackboard to teachers for grading. The university says that assignments without the receipt will NOT be graded. Please check the website "Honesty in Academic Work" at: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/ for more information on plagiarism and on how to submit papers through VeriGuide

Grade descriptors are as follows for the assessment of this course:

Grade Overall course

A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.

A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.

B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on

some learning outcomes which compensate for less satisfactory performance on

others, resulting in overall substantial performance.

C Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a

few weaknesses.

D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes

F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to

meet specified assessment requirements.

Course assessment:

(1) Participation and discussion in the tutorials (20%)

(2) Mid-term take-home paper: (30%)

Mid-term completed papers with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to blackboard (Due date 30th October, Friday, 5pm)

(3) Final paper (50%)

Student will be required to write not more than 2000 words individual paper on a study of selected topic(s) from lecture(s) (Due date 10th December, Thursday, 5pm)

Lecture topics and reading materials

NB: Required readings are essential for the lectures and tutorials and further readings provide useful additional information or alternative perspectives. Students are expected to finish all the weekly readings before the lecture and tutorial.

Lecture Topics

Week 1 (8th Sep.)

Introduction: An overview of Hong Kong archaeology and ancient landscape of the Pearl River Delta and natural resources

Required readings:

Dudgeon, D. & Corlett, R. 1994. Hills and Streams: An Ecology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp.16-23.

Planning Department. 2002. Landscape Value Mapping of Hong Kong, Final Report, Hong Kong: Planning Department of the Hong Kong Government (section 6.4: Overview of the landscape character of Hong Kong)

https://www.pland.gov.hk/studies/landscape/landscape_final/ch6.htm

Recommended readings:

Stokes, E. 1995. Hong Kong's Wild Places: An Environmental Exploration. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press. (Introduction pp.xi-xiii)

李岩, 張强祿. 2022. 考古百年視野下的嶺南文明化進程. 《文博學刊》2002(2):4-16.

Week 2 (15th Sep.)

A brief history of Hong Kong archaeology.

Required readings:

Bard, S. 1995. Archaeology in Hong Kong: a review of achievement, in Yeung, Chun-tong and Li Wai-ling (eds.) Conference on Archaeology in Southeast Asia. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Museum and Art Gallery, pp.383-396.

Antiquities and Monuments Office. 2007. 'Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Studies in Hong Kong', *Kaogu* 6: 3-9

Recommended reading:

Meacham, W. 2009. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp.10-65.

Week 3 (22nd Sep.)

The "Neolithic" Revolution in southern China and earliest settlers in the Pearl River Delta

Required readings:

Meacham, W. 2009. *The Archaeology of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 69-85.

Lu, T. L.-D. 2005. The Origin and Dispersal of Agriculture and Human Diaspora in East Asia, in L. Sagart, R. Blench & A. Sanchez-Mazas (eds.) *The peopling of East Asia: putting together archaeology, linguistics and genetics*. London: Routledge, pp.51-62.

Recommended reading:

Hung, Hsiao-chun, and Chi Zhang. 2019. The Origins, Expansion and Decline of Early Hunter-Gatherers Along the South China Coast. In *Prehistoric Maritime Cultures and Seafaring in East Asia*, edited by Wu Cunming and Barry Vladimir Rolett. New York: Routledge, pp. 53-79.

Week 4 (29th Sep.)

The early lithic "industrial society" in Hong Kong

Required readings:

Meacham, W. 2009. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 86-94.

呂烈丹. 2007. 香港史前的自然資源和經濟形態. 《考古》 2007 (6):36-45.

Recommended readings:

秦維廉. 1978. 《南丫島深灣 : 考古遺址調查報告》. 香港: 香港考古學會.

商志(香覃), 吳偉鴻. 1997. 香港新石器時代文化的分期與斷代. 《考古》 1997 (6):11-19.

Week 5 (6th Oct.)

The earliest agriculturalists in the Pearl River Delta: late Neolithic

Required readings:

Atha, Mick, and 葉可詩. 2018. 《南丫沙埔拼圖: 考古調查與景觀重建》. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 41-65.

商志香覃, and 吳偉鴻. 2010. 《香港考古學叙研》. 北京:文物出版社, 101-107, 141-146.

Recommended readings:

香港古物古迹辦事處. 1997. 香港涌浪新石器時代遺址發掘簡報. 《考古》 (6):35-53.

趙輝. 1999. 珠江三角洲地區幾何印紋陶的出現和文化的發展.《中國考古學的跨世紀反思》（上册），許倬雲 、 張忠培編. 香港: 商務印書館.

Week 6 (13th Oct.)

Bronze Age : the ripple effects of the influence from the Central Plains stoneware, protoporcelain, and hundred-Yue (Viet) communities in south-east coastal regions

Required readings:

Meacham, W. 2009. *The Archaeology of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp.110-129.

Atha, Mick, and 葉可詩. 2018. 《南丫沙埔拼圖: 考古調查與景觀重建》. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 66-90.

Recommended readings:

Ciarla, Roberto. 2022. The Origins of the Bronze Age in Mainland Southeast Asia. In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Southeast Asia*, edited by C. F. W. Higham and N. C. Kim. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

中國社會科學院考古研究所, 香港古物古迹辦事處. 1999. 香港馬灣島東灣仔北史前遺址發掘簡報. 《考古》(6):1-17.

Week 7 (20th Oct.)

Warring-States and Qin-Han : Being Huaxia and social complexity: Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum and early wave of migration

Required readings:

Meacham, W. 2009. *The Archaeology of Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 130-148.

香港歷史博物館編. 2005. 《李鄭屋漢墓》. 香港: 香港歷史博物館.

Recommended readings:

白雲翔. 1997. 香港李鄭屋漢墓的發現及其意義. 《考古》 1997 (6):27-34.

Demandt, Michele. 2019. Reaching "the Southern Wilderness": Expansion and the Formation of the Lingnan Transportation Network during the Qin and Han Dynasties. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 63:157-194.

Week 8 (27th Oct.)

Issues about Jin to Tang archaeology of Hong Kong

Required readings:

Atha, Mick, and 葉可詩. 2018. 《南丫沙埔拼圖: 考古調查與景觀重建》. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 91-141.

李浪林. 2008. 香港沿海沙堤與煮鹽爐遺存的發現和研究. 《燕京學報》, 第 24 期, 頁 239-282.

Recommended reading:

Meacham, W., ed. 1994. *Archaeological Investigations on Chek Lap Kok Island*. Journal Monograph IV (Hong Kong Archaeological Society).

****Mid-Term Take Home Paper:** completed reports with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to Blackboard **by 5pm Friday, 30th Oct**.

Week 9 (3rd Nov.) No class. Students prepare and read readings.

Week 10 (10th Nov.)

Song to Qing trading and economic patterns in archaeology of Hong Kong

Required readings:

吳震霖, 劉文鎖, 王冠宇. 2021. 香港九龍聖山遺址宋元時期的考古發現. 《東亞東南亞制瓷工藝技術的發展與交流-第 21 屆 IPPA 大會專題論壇論文集》, 南昌: 江西美术出版社.

黃慧怡. 2007. 香港出土宋元瓷器的初步研究. 《考古》 2007 (6):46-58.

Recommended reading:

Meacham, W. 2009. The Archaeology of Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp.157-178.

Week 11 (17th Nov.)

Underwater archaeology and maritime heritage management in Hong Kong

Required readings:

Jeffery, B., Li, M. L., Wong, P. P., Ho, L. W., Chan, T. S., Chow, G. S., & Chan, R. K. 2013. Recording and Documenting the Underwater Cultural Heritage of Hong Kong, Stage 1: a community maritime archaeology project. *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 42(2), 412–419.

Hong Kong Underwater Heritage Group. 2015. *Treasures of the Deep: Surveying and Documenting the Underwater Heritage of Hong Kong.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong Maritime Museum.

黃慧怡 2025.《海路相連：泰國古瓷器生產與中國陶瓷的關係》，《紫禁城》，第 370 期，頁 88-103 。

Recommended reading:

UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001. https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-protection-underwater-cultural-heritage?hub=412

Week 12 (24th Nov.)

Colonial and Postcolonial Archaeology in Hong Kong

Required readings:

Lu, T. 2009. Heritage Conservation in Post-Colonial Hong Kong, *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 15 (2-3): 258-272.

HO Wing Sze, Lucy. 2020. Constructing the cultures of hybridity in the City of Victoria (1843-1946): Studying the archaeological artifacts excavated from Former Mountain Lodge, Central School Site (PMQ) and Central Police Station Compound (Tai Kwun) in Hong Kong. *Hong Kong Anthropologist*, 10:1-54.

Week 13 (1st Dec.)

Issue about Archaeological Heritage Management and Public Archaeology of Hong Kong

Required readings:

Merriman, N. 2004. 'Introduction'. In N. Merriman (ed.) *Public Archaeology*. Routledge: London (pp.1-17).

Sun, K. 2007. On Contract Archaeology in Hong Kong, Huaxia Kaogu 2007-4: 42-46.

Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance: Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment https://www.epd.gov.hk/eia/register/report/eiareport/eia_2452016/SKTSTW%20EIA_HTML/EIA%20HTML/chapter%2010%20CHIA.htm

Recommended reading:

Sun, K. 2011. 'The unclaimed baggage: who owns HK's archaeological heritage?' Huaxia Kaogu 2011-1: 139-145.

** **Final paper:** completed papers with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to Blackboard by 5pm Thursday 10th December.

Tutorial topics

Week 1 No tutorial. Students prepare and read readings

Week 2 Discussion: Introduction for the history and the excavation methods in Hong Kong

Week 3 Discussion: The "Neolithic" Revolution and earliest settlers in South China

Week 4 No tutorial. Students prepare and read readings.

Week 5 Discussion: Hands-on ceramics making and discussion of the early lithic industry in Hong Kong

Week 6 No tutorial. Students prepare and read readings.

Week 7 Tutorial Presentation (1) and Discussion: Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum and early wave of migration

Week 8-9 No tutorial. Students prepare and read readings.

Week 10 Tutorial Presentation (2) and Discussion: Song to Qing trading and economic patterns in archaeology of Hong Kong

Week 11 Tutorial Presentation (3) and Discussion: Underwater archaeology and maritime heritage management in Hong Kong

Week 12 Tutorial Presentation (4) and Discussion: The colonial and post-colonial archaeology of Hong Kong

Week 13 Tutorial Presentation (5) and Discussion: Issue about Archaeological Heritage Management and Public Archaeology of Hong Kong