



## Art and Animate Matter: Visual Culture in the Classic Maya World

ARTHI 186O: SEMINAR IN LATIN AMERICAN ART

Course Syllabus

University of California, Santa Barbara

Spring, 2021

(last revised on 3/24/21)

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### COURSE INFORMATION

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<b>Instructor:</b>	Mary Clarke Ph.D.	<b>Email:</b>	<i>maryclarke@ucsb.edu</i>
<b>Classroom:</b>	TBA	<b>Class Time:</b>	Wed 2:00 – 4:50pm
<b>Office:</b>	TBA	<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tue 9am–12pm

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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From AD 250 until 850 the Maya of the Yucatan peninsula developed one of the world's great civilizations, with a sophisticated writing system, urban dwellings, and courtly society. Over the last few decades, the decipherment of Maya script has advanced considerably, presenting access to past mentalities that inform us of their ideas and relationships with the material world. In this seminar, we will explore these lines of evidence alongside art historical frameworks. Offering a powerful complement and counterpoint to archaeological data, we will integrate cultural logics, resource relationships, and embodied or layered meanings into interpretations of Classic Maya visual culture.

**A note about seminars:** this course format is designed for Art History majors to hone their descriptive and analytic skills in writing and in speaking. Seminars are different from lecture courses in that *everyone* is expected to come prepared to discuss the readings for the week. Professor Clarke will start the class with images and historical information to facilitate discussion, but the bulk of the class will be devoted to discussing the issues, asking

questions, and thinking critically about the texts we have read. This is a class format that requires responsible participation. Please remember that the whole class is affected if you are late or unprepared.

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## POLICIES

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Academic Misconduct Code – This will be followed in the event that academic misconduct occurs. Students should refer to the CAS policy on misconduct (see [UCSB policy](#)).

Absences – Extenuating circumstances, such as serious illness, family emergencies, or religious observance, will be excused absences (see [UCSB policy](#)). That said, I will be recording all lectures, which will allow us to be flexible throughout the term.

In the Classroom – As a courtesy to the instructor and your fellow students, be on time to class and refrain from engaging in distracting behavior. Lectures will be held in person and remotely at the same time. If you're attending class in person, you'll have the option to login to the Zoom classroom to view the slides up close, utilize the chat/poll functions, and stay connected to your peers. To prevent audio feedback, I'll instruct those of us attending in person to turn off our computer audio systems.

Names and Pronouns – Everyone has the right to go by the name and to use the pronouns (e.g. she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/their) that they prefer. You may introduce yourself using whatever name you wish to use. Please be sure to adjust your Zoom profile so that it includes these identifiers.

Accommodations – If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Disabled Student Program (DSP) at (805) 893-2668 (<https://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/>) to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests.

Equity – If there is anything that challenges your success in this class (e.g., full-time job, health, care-taking responsibilities, etc.), please let me know so that we can make arrangements to support you.

Communication – Please check your email regularly for course announcements.

Textbooks and Readings – Required readings are listed below and will be made available on Gauchospace.

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## EVALUATION SCHEME

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30% Participation – Your participation will be assessed by your engagement in our class discussions of assigned readings, which includes demonstrating your preparedness in

having read the assigned content. You will also serve as a discussion facilitator twice throughout the term. During these opportunities, you will have read even more closely than in other weeks, taking extensive notes and formulating discussion questions. Your role on is not to summarize all the readings, rather it is to foster a substantive, critical, yet respectful discussion among your peers.

20% Spotlight Presentations – You will contribute two 5–7 minute-long presentations that focus on a specific cultural product, artistic tradition, or feature of the Classic Maya built environment. As we will be discussing broad topics during our class meetings, these presentations will be opportunities for you to narrow your focus and investigate specific works that interest and intrigue you. These presentations will also help you develop your short-form as well as digital communication skills. Concerning the latter, these assignments will be submitted as pre-recorded videos and presented in class throughout the quarter. The aim for these videos is for you to extend the descriptive and analytical skill employed in your writing to include an engagement in visual communication. Additionally, the pre-recorded nature of the assignment will help you with time limits and also offer you an opportunity to observe, evaluate, and hone your own presentation style.

50% Final Paper – This is a research paper of approx. 11–14 pgs, double spaced, 12pt font, 1” margins (suggested paper topics are listed in a separate document). Submissions will include a few stages:

5% *Precis* – ca. 1 page *precis* proposing your paper topic. This topic needs to be approved by Professor Clarke.

10% Annotated Bibliography – Annotated bibliography listing a minimum of 15 sources. Annotations must include two paragraphs (approx. 200–250 words each): one that summarizes each work and another explaining how you will use/respond to/incorporate the work in your paper.

10% First Draft – A complete draft that demonstrates your best effort should be submitted for extensive comments.

20% Final Draft – This final version should reflect the revisions discussed following your rough draft.

5% Final: Presentation of Research – These will be presented in class in a conference style format.

#### GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS

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<b>A</b>	100–94	<b>B+</b>	89–87	<b>B-</b>	82–80
<b>A-</b>	93–90	<b>B</b>	86–83	<b>C+</b>	79–77

C 76-73  
C- 72-70

D+ 69-67  
D 66-63

D- 62-60  
F 59-0

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COURSE SCHEDULE

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WEEK 1, 3/31

**Introduction**

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WEEK 2, 4/7

**Art and Animate Matter**

Harrison-Buck, Eleanor

2020 *Maya Relations with the Material World*. In *The Maya World*, pp. 424-442, edited by Traci Arden and Scott Hudson. Routledge Press: NY.

Houston, Stephen

2014 *The Life Within: Classic Maya and the Matter of Permanence*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.

\* Chapter 1, "A World that Matters," pp. 1-30.

Schele, Linda, and Mary Miller

1986 *The Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art*. Kimbell Art Museum: Fort Worth, TX.

\* "Introduction," pp. 6-41.

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WEEK 3, 4/14

**Mesoamerican Cosmogony**

Chinchilla Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2017 *Art and Myth of the Ancient Maya*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.

\* Chapters 1-3, "Image and Text," "Pictorial and Textual Sources," and "Mesoamerican Cosmogony," pp. 8-81.

**Due:** Precis – Should introduce your paper topic and succinctly summarize the main points/ideas you intend to explore.

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WEEK 4, 4/21

**Materiality & Sacred Ecology**

Houston, Stephen

- 2014 *The Life Within: Classic Maya and the Matter of Permanence*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.  
\* Chapter 3, "The Life Within," pp.75–125

Robin, Cynthia

- 2015 *Of Earth and Stone: The Materiality of Maya Farmers' Everyday Lives at Chan, Belize*.  
*Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association*, 26(1):40–52.

McAnany, Patricia

- 2010 *Ancestral Maya Economies*. Cambridge University Press.  
\* Chapter 3, "Feeding a Hungry Landscape," pp. 60–98

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WEEK 5, 4/28

**Early Monumentality**

Stuart, David

- 2010 *Shining Stones: Observations on the Ritual Meaning of Early Maya Stelae*. In *The Place of Stone Monuments: Context, Use, and Meaning in Mesoamerica's Preclassic Tradition*, pp. 283–298, edited by Julia Guernsey, John E. Clark, and Barbara Arroyo. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections: Washington, D.C.

Tokovinine, Alexandre

- 2013 *Place and Identity in Classic Maya Narratives*. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections: Washington, D.C.  
\* Chapter 3, "Classic Maya Landscape Categories," pp. 19–56.

McAnany, Patricia

- 2010 *Ancestral Maya Economies*. Cambridge University Press.  
\* Chapter 5, "Ritual Works: Monumental Architecture and Generative Schemes of Power," pp. 141–157.

**Due: Annotated Bibliography – 15 sources minimum.**

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WEEK 6, 5/5

**The Classic Maya World**

Jackson, Sarah E.

- 2009 *Imagining Courtly Communities: An Exploration of Classic Maya Experiences of Status and Identity through Painted Ceramic Vessels*. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 20(1): 71–85.

McAnany, Patricia

2010 *Ancestral Maya Economies*. Cambridge University Press.

\* Chapter 6, "Naturalized Authority of the Royal Court," pp. 158–198.

Astor-Aguilera, Miguel

2020 Maya Rites, Rituals, and Ceremonies. In *The Maya World*, pp. 648–668, edited by Traci Arden and Scott Hudson. Routledge Press: NY.

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WEEK 7, 5/12

**Formal & Informal Inscriptions**

Hutson, Scott

2011 The Art of Becoming: The Graffiti of Tikal, Guatemala. *Latin American Antiquity* 22(4):403–426.

Rossi, Franco D., William A. Saturno, and Heather Hurst

2015 Maya Codex Book Production and the Politics of Expertise: Archaeology of a Classic Period Household at Xultun, Guatemala. *American Anthropologist*, 117(1):116–132.

Houston, Stephen

1994 Literacy among the Pre-Columbian Maya: A Comparative Perspective. In *Writing without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, pp. 27–49, edited by Elizabeth H. Boone and Walter D. Mignolo. Duke University Press: Durham, N.C.

Jackson, Sarah

2020 Hieroglyphic Texting: Ideologies and Practices of Classic Maya Written Evidence. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 30(4):611–628.

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WEEK 8, 5/19

**Bodies and Beings**

Carter, Nicholas, Stephen Houston, and Franco Rossi

2020 *The Adorned Body: Mapping Maya Dress*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

\* Everyone will select a different chapter.

Houston, Stephen, David Stuart, and Karl Taube

2006 *The Memory in Bones: Body, Being, and Experience among the Classic Maya*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

\* Chapter 1, "The Classic Maya Body," pp. 11–56.

Jackson, Sarah

2019 Facing Objects: An Investigation of Non-Human Personhood in Classic Maya Contexts. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 30: 31–44.

**Due:** First draft of your research paper.

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WEEK 9, 5/26

**Visual Media & their Makers**

Houston, Stephen

2016 Crafting Credit: Authorship among Classic Maya Painters and Sculptors. In *Making Value, Making Meaning: Techné in the Pre-Columbian World*, pp. 391–431, edited by Cathy L. Costin, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection: Washington, D.C.

Inomata, Takeshi

2007 Knowledge and Belief in Artistic Production by Classic Maya elites. *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association*, 17(1):129–141.

McAnany, Patricia

2010 *Ancestral Maya Economies*. Cambridge University Press.  
\* Chapter 7, “Social Identity and the Daily Practice of Artisanal Production,” pp. 199–252.

Herring, Adam

2005 *Art and Writing in the Maya Cities, AD 600–800: A Poetics of Line*. Cambridge University Press.  
\* Selections

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WEEK 10, 6/2

**Maintaining, Breaking, and Unmaking**

Stuart, David

1996 Kings of Stone: A Consideration of Stelae in Ancient Maya Ritual and Representation. *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 29/30: 148–171.

O’Neil, Megan

2010 The Material Evidence of Ancient Maya Sculpture. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 9(3): 316–328.

Just, Bryan

2005 Modifications of Ancient Maya Sculpture. *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 48:68–82.

Halperin, Christina

2017 How Animistic Entities make History: Maya Materialities and Spiritualities over the Longue Dureé, In *Relational Engagements of the Indigenous Americas: Alterity, Ontology, and Shifting Paradigms*, pp. 87–108, edited by Melissa R. Baltus and Sarah E. Baires. Lexington Books: Lanham, MA.

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WEEK 11, 6/9

**Final Presentations**

**Due:** Final Papers are due & will be presented in class.

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*Please note: This syllabus is merely a guide and is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class or via email and posted on Blackboard, but it is your responsibility to read your email, listen to announcements in class, and check your Blackboard account regularly — meaning several times a week and always before you begin any assignments or readings for a given week.*



## AR/AH 251: Classic Maya Civilization

Course Syllabus  
Boston University  
Fall, 2021

### COURSE INFORMATION

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<b>Instructor:</b>	Prof. Mary Clarke	<b>Email:</b>	meclarke@bu.edu
<b>Classroom:</b>	CAS 201	<b>Class Time:</b>	M/W/F 1:25 – 2:15pm
<b>Office:</b>	STO 354A	<b>Office Hours:</b>	Thurs. 12–3pm

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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Classic Maya civilization thrived in the mountainous highlands and jungle lowlands of Mesoamerica for thousands of years. Today, millions of people continue to speak Mayan languages and renew Maya culture in southern Mexico and parts of Central America. In this class, we will take an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to the study of the ancestral history of living Maya peoples. We will learn about important features including Maya art and architecture; ancient urban life and its social, religious, and political institutions; new discourses surrounding gender and geopolitics; and the densely populated world of non-human persons. However, we will do so while also questioning our sources of information. Our conversations relating to the ancestral past of living descendants will include scholarship by and conversations with indigenous Maya scholars. The aim of this approach is to illustrate a path forward in the study of archaeology and art history that is inclusive and collaborative.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

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There are no prerequisites for this course, but AR 201 and AR 250 provide broader introductions to the Precolumbian Americas and Mesoamerica, respectively. The course is worth 4 credits and fulfils the Historical Consciousness and Social Inquiry I outcomes of BU Hub, as well as the Humanities distribution of CAS.

- Students will evaluate historical interpretations and make historical arguments regarding the sequence of Maya civilization over centuries, from the earliest communities designated archaeologically as culturally Maya, through the Classic period apogee of the most literate society in the Precolumbian Americas, to the early colonial period and the transformation of Maya society up to present.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to interpret primary source material of Precolumbian Maya society including a basic understanding of the writing and calendar systems; the political and religious contexts for Maya art and imagery; and conflicting visions regarding Maya history recorded in early colonial texts by Spaniards and Maya peoples (Yucatec, Quiche') themselves.
- Students will demonstrate their knowledge of Maya religion, political organization, and socio-economic forces and how these changed over time during the last two millennia or more. This includes the rise, spread, and decline of the institution of divine kingship; Precolumbian cosmology and its transformation in the context of the syncretic colonial period; and major changes in social organization engendered by urbanization, collapse, reconfiguration, and resilience.

### POLICIES

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CAS Academic Misconduct Code – This will be followed in the event that academic misconduct occurs. Students should refer to the CAS policy on misconduct (<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>).

Absences – Extenuating circumstances, such as serious illness, family emergencies, or religious observance, will be excused absences (see BU policy: <https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/absence-for-religious-reasons/>). That said, I will be recording all lectures and sections, which will allow us to be flexible throughout the term.

In the Classroom – As a courtesy to the instructor and your fellow students, be on time to class and refrain from engaging in distracting behavior. Lectures will be held in person and remotely at the same time. If you're attending class in person, you'll have the option to login to the Zoom classroom to view the slides up close, utilize the chat/poll functions, and stay connected to your peers. To prevent audio feedback, I'll instruct those of us attending in person to turn off our computer audio systems. We'll go over more of this in class, but I'll also direct you to blackboard where I've made a content folder on Zoom etiquette.

Names and Pronouns – Everyone has the right to go by the name and to use the pronouns (e.g. she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/their) that they prefer. You may introduce yourself using whatever name you wish to use. It would also be good for you all to edit or adjust your Zoom profile so that it reflects these identifiers (see links to instructions within the etiquette folder on blackboard).

Accommodations – If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at (617) 353-3658 (<http://www.bu.edu/disability/>) to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests.

Equity – If there is anything that challenges your success in this class (e.g., full-time job, health, care-taking responsibilities, etc.), please let me know so that we can make arrangements to support you.

Communication – Please check your email regularly for course announcements.

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## EXPECTATIONS

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*What you can expect from me:*

- 1) Transparency in the way I intend to assess your performance in this course.
- 2) Empathy, respect, and fairness in my treatment of all students.
- 3) An open ear to your ideas, thoughts, complaints, and solutions regarding instruction, course content, and your assessment.
- 4) Confidentiality in personnel matters and individual conversations; transparency and consistency in decision making, and prompt sharing of information as soon as practicable.
- 5) A commitment to justice, equality/equity, and inclusivity in our curriculum, at our university, and in our profession.

*What I expect from you:*

- 1) Patience and tolerance: these are exceptional times for the university and our society. Please bear with us all as we navigate these situations as best as we are able.
- 2) Respect and professionalism: there are new modes of conduct that we're all learning to integrate into our daily lives, be it social distancing, wearing face masks, or hybrid learning/teaching formats. I ask that you respect these codes of conduct for the safety of our community while also maintaining a level of professionalism in your decorum.

- 3) Honesty and critique: if I make a decision with which you disagree, please share your concerns with me. I will be integrating an equity assessment into this course so that we may grow and confront any biases within our teaching and course content.
- 4) Academic integrity: I am interested in your thoughts and unique perspectives on the world. Please lead with your view when approaching your work in this course.

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### EVALUATION SCHEME

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Course assessments are designed to draw you into course material, allow you to construct your own understandings, and foster the development of research, higher-order thinking, and communication skills. Over the course of the term, you produce collaborate on projects characterizing archaeological and/or ethnohistoric research on a topic and specific Classic Maya culture of interest to you. This will be completed in a digital format, and you will present your collaborative outcomes to the class at the end of the term. In this course, you will also prepare reading response papers in preparation for critical class discussions of readings, thereby facilitating long-term retention of knowledge and the development of communication skills.

I review performance for the term when assigning grades and reserve the right to raise a final grade when on-time completion of assignments and an upward trend through the term make it clear that extra effort has been invested, or when poor performance on a single assignment is out of line with overall performance. Because of this, I do not entertain arguments over the grading of individual assignments aimed at moving a grade up marginally.

20% Participation: Attendance in class is mandatory. You should come to class prepared and ready to actively contribute to class discussions and activities. This is a discussion-based seminar course; the quality of the class experience depends in part on the active participation of the class learning community. You should expect to actively pose questions, make comments, and respond to other students during every single class period. I understand that life happens, people get sick, and unanticipated problems occur, so you may miss class twice without a drop in your grade. Additional absences will be reflected in your participation grade.

40% Weekly Reading Responses: In lieu of midterm or final exams, I've elected to set weekly response questions that draw upon the set readings for the given week. You'll note that the weeks are organized by theme, but the readings often approach that theme from different perspectives. My aim is for you to evaluate these perspectives, consider their point of view and stake in the heritage or argument being discussed. For these responses then, I'd like to see you engage in the conversation, drawing upon the readings and class discussions to make informed statements about Maya archaeology. In general, these responses will be short, roughly 250–300 or one paragraph, and will be submitted through blackboard.

40% Final Video Project: The final assignment for the course will be completed in pairs or groups of three, where the output will be a video or similar digital medium. Here you will select a topic of interest (I will provide a list for you to choose from, such as gender, economy, beings, etc.) and then be paired with others that have made a similar choice. From here, you'll select material remains (objects, artifacts, etc.) or sites from which this theme can be studied. When evaluating your theme, you and your partners will engage in diverse perspectives, be they art historical, archaeological, indigenous, in order to present an inclusive view of the subject you're looking to understand and present to the class.

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### GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS

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<b>A</b> 100–94	<b>B</b> 86–83	<b>C</b> 76–73
<b>A-</b> 93–90	<b>B-</b> 82–80	<b>C-</b> 72–70
<b>B+</b> 89–87	<b>C+</b> 79–77	<b>D+</b> 69–67

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 REQUIRED TEXTS
 

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Hutson, Scott R., and Traci Arden (eds.)  
 2020 *The Maya World*. Routledge Press, London.

Additional readings on Blackboard. Please note that you must also bring these additional readings to class, either in printed or digital form (only if your digital medium allows you to annotate your copy).

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 COURSE SCHEDULE
 

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## WEEK 1 – Introduction

9/3 *Review Syllabus*

## WEEK 2 – Discovering &amp; Inventing the Maya

9/6 *No Class, Labor Day*

9/8 Lecture

9/10 Discussion/Conversation

*Week's Readings:*

Schele, Linda, and Mary Miller

1986 *The Blood of Kings: Dynasty and Ritual in Maya Art*. Kimbell Art Museum: Fort Worth, TX.  
 \* "Introduction," pp. 6–41.

Montijo, Victor

1993 In the Name of the Pot, the Sun, the Broken Spear, the Rock the Stick, the Idol, Ad Infinitum & Ad Nauseum: An Expose of Anglo Anthropologists Obsessions with the Invention of Mayan Gods. *Wicazo Sa Review* 9(1):12–16.

## WEEK 3 – Who are the Maya? Who are We?

9/13 Lecture

9/15 Discussion/Convesation

9/17 Object/Artifact Studies & Designs for Collaboration

*Week's Readings:*

Cojtí Ren, Iyaxel Ixkan Anastasia

2010 The Experience of a Mayan Student. In *Being and Becoming Indigenous Archaeologists*, edited by G. Nicholas, pp. 84–92. Routledge Press.

Woodfill, Brent, and Lucia Henderson

In Prep "Peopling" the Americas: Animate Landscapes and New World Archaeology.

McAnany, Patricia

2020 Imagining a Maya Archaeology that is Anthropological and Attuned to Indigenous Cultural Heritage. *Heritage*, 3(2):318–330.

## WEEK 4 – Ontologies &amp; Relational Beings

9/20 Lecture

9/22 Discussion/Conversation

9/24 Popol Wuj

*Week's Readings:*

Astor-Aguilera, Miguel

2020 Maya Rites, Rituals, and Ceremonies. In *The Maya World*, pp. 648–668, edited by Traci Arden and Scott Hudson. Routledge Press: NY.

Houston, Stephen

2014 *The Life Within: Classic Maya and the Matter of Permanence*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.  
\* Chapter 3, “The Life Within,” pp.75–125

Hamann, Byron

2002 The Social Life of Pre-Sunrise Things: Indigenous Mesoamerican Archaeology. *Current Anthropology* 43(1):351–382.

WEEK 5 – Origins of the Maya

9/27 Lecture

9/29 Discussion/Conversation

10/1 Object/Artifact Studies

*Week's Readings:*

Lohse, John

2020 Archaic Maya Matters. In *The Maya World*, edited by T. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 11–28, Routledge Press.

Inomata, Takeshi

2021 “Early Formal Ceremonial Complexes in the Olmec and Maya Areas,” Talk presented at the 2021 Mesoamerica Meetings at the University of Texas, Austin (<1hr).  
\*Link and access info on blackboard.

McAnany, Patricia

2010 *Ancestral Maya Economies*. Cambridge University Press.  
\* Chapter 3, “Feeding a Hungry Landscape,” pp. 60–98

Chinchilla Mazariegos, Oswaldo

2017 *Art and Myth of the Ancient Maya*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.  
\* Chapter 3, “Mesoamerican Cosmogony,” pp. 53–81.

WEEK 6 – Landscape & Ecologies

10/4 Lecture

10/6 Discussion/Conversation

10/8 Structure & Site Plan Analysis

*Week's Readings:*

Lucero, Lisa

2018 A Cosmology of Conservation in the Ancient Maya World. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 74(3):327–359.

Ford, Anabel

2020 The Maya Forest: A Domesticated Landscape. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 519–539. Routledge Press.

Moyes, Holly

2020 Ritual Cave Use Among the Ancient Maya. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 287–306. Routledge Press.

Boileau, Arianne, Nicolas Delsol, and Kitty F. Emery

2020 Human-animal Relations in the Maya World. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 164–182. Routledge Press.

#### WEEK 7 – Cities & Urbanism

10/11 *No Class, Indigenous Peoples Day*

10/13 Lecture

10/15 Discussion

#### *Week's Readings:*

Canuto, M.A., Estrada-Belli, F., Garrison, T.G., Houston, S.D., Acuña, M.J., Kováč, M., Marken, D., Nondédéo, P., Auld-Thomas, L., Castanet, C. and Chatelain, D.

2018 Ancient Lowland Maya Complexity as Revealed by Airborne Laser Scanning of Northern Guatemala. *Science* 361(6409).

Lamb, Celine

2020 Ancient Maya Rurality: Old Assumptions, Current Research, and New Directions. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 307–327. Routledge Press.

Halperin, C.T.

2014 Ruins in Pre-Columbian Maya Urban Landscapes. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 24(3):321–344.

Fash, Barbara

2009 Watery Places and urban Foundations Depicted in Maya Art and Architecture. In *The Art of Urbanism: How Mesoamerican Kingdoms Represented Themselves in Architecture and Imagery*, edited by W.L. Fash and L. López Luján, pp. 230–259. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Washington DC.

Taube, K.A.

2013 The Classic Maya Temple: Centrality, Cosmology, and Sacred Geography in Ancient Mesoamerica. *Heaven on Earth: Temples, Ritual and Cosmic Symbolism in the Ancient World*, pp.89-125.

#### WEEK 8 – Classic Period Geopolitics

10/18 Lecture

10/20 Discussion/Conversation

**10/22 Museum Visit: Peabody Museum at Harvard**

#### *Week's Readings:*

Navarro-Farr, O.C., Kelly, M.K., Rich, M. and Pérez Robles, G.

2020 Expanding the Canon: Lady K'abel the Ix Kaloomte' and the Political Narratives of Classic Maya Queens. *Feminist Anthropology*, 1(1):38–55.

Martin, Simon

- 2020 *Ancient Maya Politics: A Political Anthropology of the Classic Period 150–900 CE*. Cambridge University Press.  
\* Chapter 12: Classic Maya Networks (pp. 303–319)  
\* Chapter 13: Defining Classic Maya Political Culture (pp. 320–355)

Stuart, David

- 1996 Kings of Stone: A Consideration of Stelae in Ancient Maya Ritual and Representation. *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 29/30: 148–171.

McCurdy, L.

- 2019 Peopling Monuments: Virtual Energetics and Labor Impact Analysis of Monumental Construction at Xunantunich, Belize. In *Architectural Energetics in Archaeology*, edited by L. McCurdy and E. Abrams, pp. 205–234. Routledge Press.

WEEK 9 – Maya Calendrics & Epigraphy

10/25 Lecture

10/27 Workshop: Calendrics & Epigraphy

**10/29 Museum Visit: Museum of Fine Art, Boston**

*Week's Readings:*

Saturno, W., Rossi, F.D., Stuart, D. and Hurst, H.

- 2017 A Maya Curia Regis: Evidence for a Hierarchical Specialist Order at Xultun, Guatemala. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 28(2):423–440.

Matsumoto, Mallory, and Nicholas Carter

- 2020 Recent Developments in Maya Epigraphic Research. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 599–623. Routledge Press.

Stuart, David

- 2020 Maya Time. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 624–647. Routledge Press.

Watson, M.C.

- 2014 Listening in the Pakal Controversy: A Matter of Care in Ancient Maya Studies. *Social Studies of Science* 44(6):930–954.

WEEK 10 – Craft & Exchange

11/1 Lecture

11/3 Discussion

11/5 Object/Artifact Studies

*Week's Readings:*

Inomata, Takeshi

- 2007 Knowledge and Belief in Artistic Production by Classic Maya Elites. *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association*, 17(1):129–141.

King, Eleanor

- 2020 Maya Commerce. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 443–458. Routledge Press.

Hruby, Z.X.

2007 Ritualized Chipped-Stone Production at Piedras Negras, Guatemala. *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association* 17(1):68–87.

Halperin, C.T.

2019 Profane Illuminations: Classic Maya Molded Figurines in Comparative Context. *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 71(1):25–39.

DUE THIS WEEK: Complete Storyboard

WEEK 11 – Identity, Bodies, & Personhood

11/8 Lecture

11/10 Discussion

11/12 Assemblage Study

*Week's Readings:*

Arden, Traci

2020 Gender and Sexuality. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 147–163. Routledge Press.

Gonlin, Nancy

2020 Household Archaeology of the Classic Period Lowland Maya. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 389–406. Routledge Press.

Houston, Stephen, David Stuart, and Karl Taube

2006 *The Memory in Bones: Body, Being, and Experience among the Classic Maya*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

\* Chapter 1, “The Classic Maya Body,” pp. 11–56.

Scherer, Andrew K.

2015 *Mortuary Landscapes of the Classic Maya: Rituals of Body and Soul*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

\* Chapter 3, “Ritual, Liminality, and the Mortuary Space,” pp. 105–170.

WEEK 12 – Conflict & Change

11/15 Lecture

11/17 Lecture

11/19 Discussion

*Week's Readings:*

Miller, Mary, and Claudia Brittenham

2013 *The Spectacle of the Late Maya Court: Reflections of the Murals of Bonampak*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

\* Chapter 5, “Art and Politics,” pp. 147–174.

Ringle, William M.

2020 The Northern Maya Tollans. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 752–772. Routledge Press.

Scherer, Andrew K, and Charles Golden



2014 War in the West: History, Landscape, and Classic Maya Conflict. In *Embattled Bodies, Embattled Places: War in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica and the Andes*, edited by A.K. Scherer and J.W. Verano, pp. 57–92. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Washington, DC.

Hansen, Richard

2011 Relativism, Revisionism, Aboriginalism, and Emic/Etic Truth: The Case Study of *Apocalypso*. In *The Ethics of Anthropology and Amerindian Research: Reporting on Environmental Degradation and Warfare*, edited by R.J. Chacon and R.G. Mendoza, pp. 147–190. Springer Science & Business Media.

*DUE THIS WEEK: Full Scripts*

WEEK 13 – Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 14 – Collapse? Continuity?

11/29 Lecture: Terminal Classic to Postclassic period

12/1 Lecture: Popular portrayals of “Collapse”

12/3 Discussions

*Week’s Readings:*

Yaeger, Jason

2020 Collapse, Transformation, Reorganization: The Terminal Classic Transition in the Maya World. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 777–793. Routledge Press.

McAnany, Patricia, and Tomás Gallereta Negrón

2010 Bellicose Rulers and Climatological Peril? Retrofitting Twenty-First-Century Woes on Eight-Century Maya Society. In *Questioning Collapse: Human Resilience, Ecological Vulnerability, and the Aftermath of Empire*, pp. 142–175. Cambridge University Press.

Palka, Joel

2020 Lacandon Maya Culture: Continuity and Change. In *The Maya World*, edited by S. Hutson and T. Arden, pp. 850–868. Routledge Press.

Matsumoto, M.E.

2015 The Stela of Iximche' in the Context of Language Revitalization and Hieroglyphic Retrieval among Mayan Communities in Guatemala. *Estudios de cultura maya* 45:225–258.

*DUE THIS WEEK: Final Scripts*

WEEK 15 – Student Presentations

12/6 Presentations

12/8 Presentations

12/10 Presentations

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**Please note:** *This syllabus is merely a guide and is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class or via email and posted on Blackboard, but it is your responsibility to read your email, listen to announcements in class, and check your Blackboard account regularly—meaning several times a week and always before you begin any assignments or readings for a given week.*

## AR 101: Introduction to Archaeology

Course Syllabus  
Boston University  
Spring, 2021

*(last revised on 09/14/21)*

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### COURSE INFORMATION

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#### *Lectures:*

Tue. & Thurs. 9:30–10:45am  
College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Room B18

#### *Sections:*

B1 TUE, 11:15am Alex  
B2 THU, 11:15am Gabriel  
B3 MON, 9:05am Daniela  
B4 MON, 10:10am Daniela  
B5 TUE, 3:35pm Gabriel  
B6 FRI, 10:10am Alex  
Stone Science Building  
(STO) Room 253

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Dr. Mary Clarke

*Email:* meclarke@bu.edu  
*Office:* CAS, Room 354A  
*Office Hours:* Thurs. 12–2pm  
*Schedule Appts:* [LINK](#)

Alexander Dorr

*Email:* adorr@bu.edu  
*Office:* CAS, Room 350  
*Office Hours:* Mon. 1pm–3pm

Daniela Hernandez Sarinana

*Email:* danihs@bu.edu  
*Office:* CAS, Room 350  
*Office Hours:* Tue. 11am–1pm

Gabriel Vicencio Castellanos

*Email:* gabrielv@bu.edu  
*Office:* CAS, Room 350  
*Office Hours:* Fri. 11am–1pm

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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As social scientists that study the human past, archaeologists rely on field and laboratory methods for locating, dating, and understanding the material remains of past human activities. We ask questions such as: Where did we come from? How did cultures adapt to and elaborate on their surroundings? Why do complex societies rise and fall? What lessons does the past have for us in the present? This course

provides an introduction to archaeological methods, theories, and topics of debate that allow archaeologists to evaluate these questions and integrate the answers into contemporary society. The semester builds from the “nuts and bolts” methods that archaeologists rely on in field and laboratory settings, to the important research topics and theories archaeologists engage in as they endeavor to explain social change.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

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At the conclusion of this course, you will have developed a foundational understanding of archaeological practice and reasoning. You will be able to evaluate the logic behind and merits of different interpretations of what occurred in the human past. Through classroom lectures and discussions during sections, you will gain an appreciation of the deep histories and cultural diversity of different parts of the globe, and better your understanding of how people create and inhabit an ever-changing material world.

The course fulfills **three** learning outcomes of BU Hub in the following ways:

### *Social Inquiry I*

Students will identify and apply major concepts used in social science approaches to explain individual and collective human behavior in the past, including the early formation and workings of social groups such as households and families; political, economic, and religious institutions and networks; and the role of the individual in these.

### *Historical Consciousness*

Students will understand different forms of historical narrative, will evaluate interpretations, and will construct historical arguments based on archaeological evidence.

Students will demonstrate an ability to interpret primary source material from the archaeological record (such as early texts, artifacts, and architecture) and situate the material in its historical and cultural context.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of past religious traditions, forms of political organization, or socio-economic forces, and how these have changed over time.

### *Research and Information Literacy*

Students will be able to develop research questions for archaeological topics and locate, evaluate, and apply a range of archaeological sources to answer them.

Students will demonstrate overall understanding of the research process through a series of scaffolded projects in discussion section and will demonstrate their knowledge in a short research paper on either an object, work of architecture, or archaeological context.

**Required Textbooks and Readings** – We have two textbooks in this course. First, we’ll be using *Archaeology Essentials: Theories, Methods, and Practice* by Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn (2018), 4<sup>th</sup> edition (although I will also list assigned readings for the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in case that version is more accessible to you). The second is *Death by Theory: A Tale of Mystery and Archaeological Theory* by Adrian Praetzelis (2011). You can buy a copy of both through Boston University’s Barnes & Noble store or online. Please email Prof. Clarke if purchasing either textbook is an obstacle to your success in this class so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. There will also be non-textbook readings, podcasts, and videos, all of which will be posted on the course website on BU Learn (Blackboard):

<https://learn.bu.edu/>

## POLICIES

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Make-up Exams – Traditionally, none are given except in the case of a documented illness, emergency, or previously discussed circumstances (see the section on Equity below). However, current circumstances allow for greater flexibility, so please do be in touch with your Teaching Fellow or the Professor.

CAS Academic Misconduct Code – This will be followed in the event that academic misconduct occurs. Students should refer to the CAS policy on misconduct (<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>).

Absences – Participation and attendance will be assessed based on your engagement in sections but will not be counted for lectures. The structures of this evaluation will be clearly presented to students during the first section meeting. However, your exams will be based primary on material covered in lectures as opposed to that appearing in your supplementary readings. Those that are unable to attend a lecture for one reason or another may ask for a note taker or pre-schedule for a recorded lecture with the Professor. Any prolonged absences or extenuating circumstances should be discussed with Prof. Clarke.

In the Classroom – As a courtesy to the instructor and your fellow students, be on time to class and refrain from engaging in distracting behavior.

Names and Pronouns – Everyone has the right to go by the name and pronouns (e.g. she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/their) that they prefer. You may introduce yourself using whatever name you wish to use.

Accommodations – If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at (617) 353-3658 (<http://www.bu.edu/disability/>) to coordinate any accommodation requests. I am typically notified by ODS but would be happy to meet with you directly as well to ensure that the structure of your assessment will lead to your success in this course. Those of you that are non-native speakers, first generation college students, or non-traditional students (e.g., caregivers, full-time workers, etc.), please do set aside time to meet with me so that we may discuss strategies that ensure your to success.

Communication – Please check your email regularly for course announcements.

## EXPECTATIONS

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What you can expect from your instructors:

- 1) Transparency in the way we intend to assess your performance in this course
- 2) Empathy, respect, and fairness in our treatment of all students
- 3) An open ear to your ideas, thoughts, complaints, and solutions regarding instruction, course content, and your assessment.
- 4) Confidentiality in personnel matters and individual conversations; transparency and consistency in decision making, and prompt sharing of information as soon as practicable
- 5) A commitment to justice, equality/equity, and inclusivity in our curriculum, at our university, and in our profession

What we expect from you:

- 1) Patience and tolerance: these are exceptional times for the university and our society. Please bear with us as we navigate these situations as best as we are able.
- 2) Respect and professionalism: there are new modes of conduct that we're all learning to integrate into our daily lives, be it social distancing, wearing face masks, or hybrid learning/teaching

formats. We ask that you respect these codes of conduct for the safety of our community while also maintaining a level of professionalism in your decorum.

- 3) Honesty and critique: if we make a decision with which you disagree, please share your concerns with us. We will be integrating an equity assessment into this course so that we may grow and confront any biases within our teaching and course content.
- 4) Academic integrity: we are interested in your thoughts and unique perspectives on the world. Please lead with your view when approaching your work in this course.

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#### EVALUATION SCHEME

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10% Participation and Attendance – Attendance at all sessions is compulsory (without exceptional circumstances). Marks will be assigned in accordance with the level of participation and engagement with reading materials as well as with the completion of in-class exercises.

25% Sections – Sections are an important component of this course. This grade is comprised of attendance and participation as well as weekly lab reports and short paper responses. It is in these sections that you will fulfill the research and information literacy component of this course. Sections offer you an opportunity to apply the methods we discuss in class while working with archaeological datasets in order to think through and solve both the scientific and humanistic problems faced by archaeologists.

20% Midterm Exam #1 – Covering material from the first unit: Archaeological Methods, this exam will include multiple choice, matching, short answer questions, and short response questions. It will be given as a take home and open note exam; however, the structure of assessment will emphasize evaluation, discussion, and critique over recollection and pure memorization. You will have five days to complete and submit your exam.

20% Midterm Exam #2 – Covering material from the second unit: Archaeology at Work, this exam will include multiple choice, matching, short answer questions, short response question, and one essay question. It will be given as a take home and open note exam; however, the structure of questions will emphasize evaluation, discussion, and critique over recollection and pure memorization. You will have five days to complete and submit your exam.

25% Cumulative Final Exam – Covering material from all units in this class (a 30% / 30% / 40% distribution), this exam will include multiple choice, matching, short answer questions, and two essay questions. It will be given as a take home and open note exam; however, the structure of questions will emphasize evaluation, discussion, and critique over recollection and pure memorization. You will have approximately one week to complete and submit your exam.

2–6% Extra Credit – In addition to extra credit questions on your exams, you also have the opportunity to complete a total of three extra assignments, each worth 2% of your total grade. These options ask that you engage with archaeology and related topics outside of the classroom, and then produce an engaging short essay, podcast, or video outcome (See blackboard for examples). Notably, these may be completed and submitted at any point in the semester.

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#### GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS

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<b>A</b>	100–94	<b>B-</b>	82–80	<b>D+</b>	69–67
<b>A-</b>	93–90	<b>C+</b>	79–77	<b>D</b>	66–63
<b>B+</b>	89–87	<b>C</b>	76–73	<b>D-</b>	62–60
<b>B</b>	86–83	<b>C-</b>	72–70	<b>F</b>	59–0

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

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### UNIT 1: ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODS

- 9/2, Thurs.     **Introduction**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 1, pp. 10–37
- 9/7, Tues.       **Artifacts & Artifacts**  
- *Readings*: Death by Theory, Chapters 1 & 2; Arch Essen, Chapter 2 (*all pages*)
- 9/9, Thurs.     **Space Archaeology: Tools & Methods of Remote-Sensing**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 3, pp. 62–90
- 9/14, Tues.     **Archaeological Survey & Excavation**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 3, pp. 62–90 (*review*) and pp. 91–106
- 9/16, Thurs.   **Relative & Absolute Dating**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 4 (*all pages*)
- 9/21, Tues.     **Past & Present**
- 9/23, Thurs.   **Theorizing Archaeology: 1800’s–1960’s**  
- *Readings*: Death by Theory, Chapters 3–5; Arch Essen, Chapter 10, pp. 276–285; Arch Essen, Chapter 1 (*review*)
- 9/28, Tues.     **Bones & Stones**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 7, pp. 208–217; Death by Theory, Chapter 6
- 9/30, Thurs.   **Plants & Animals**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 6 (*all pages*)
- 9/31–10/4       **UNIT 1: Take Home EXAM**
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### UNIT 2: ARCHAEOLOGY AT WORK

- 10/5, Tues.     **The Human Condition**  
- *Reading*: Arch Essen, Chapter 8
- 10/7, Thurs.   **Subsistence & the Environment**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 6 (*review*)
- 10/12, Tues.    **NO CLASS (Monday for Tuesday)**
- 10/14, Thurs.   **Social Organization & Complexity**  
- *Readings*: Carballo, D.M., 2013. Cultural and Evolutionary Dynamics of Cooperation in Archaeological Perspective. *Cooperation and Collective Action: Archaeological Perspectives*, pp.3-33 (\*\**just read until page 22*).
- 10/19, Tues.    **Households & Daily Life**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 7, pp. 215–231
- 10/21, Thurs.   **Deciphering Text & Image**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 5, pp. 162–165; Arch Essen, Chapter 9, pp. 260–267  
- *Listen*: “Stringing Together an Ancient Empire’s Stories” [LINK](#)
- 10/26, Tues.    **Religion & Religious Ritual**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 9, pp. 267–272

- 10/28, Thurs **Tombs, Pyramids, & Mortuary Archaeology**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, pp. 153–162, 260–267; Arch Essen, Chapter 8 (*all pages*)
- 11/2, Tues. **Rise & Fall of Societies**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, pp. 284–288
- 11/4, Thurs. **Theorizing Archaeology: 1960’s–present**  
- *Readings*: Death by Theory, Chapters 7–10; Arch Essen, Chapter 10, pp. 288–296
- 11/5–11/8 **UNIT 2: Take Home EXAM**

*UNIT 3: ARCHAEOLOGY & TODAY*

- 11/9, Tues. **Past in the Present**  
- *Readings*: Arch Essen, Chapter 11 (all pages)
- 11/11, Thurs. **Decolonizing Archaeology**  
- *Readings*: Bruchac, M., (2014) “Decolonization in Archaeological Theory”
- 11/16, Tues. **Indigenous Archaeologies**  
- *Case Study*: Aboriginal Myth/History & the Kennewick Man/Ancient One
- 11/18, Thurs. **“This Belongs in a Museum”**  
- *Case Study*: Benin Bronzes
- 11/23, Tues. **NO CLASS**
- 11/25, Thurs. **Thanksgiving Recess**
- 11/30, Tues. **Ancient City & Backdrop for Modern Conflict**  
- *Case Study*: The Impact of ISIS on Syria, Iraq, & Mali
- 12/2, Thurs. **Antiracist Archaeology**  
- *Case Study*: Asian American Diaspora
- 12/7, Tues. **Queer Archaeologies**  
- *Case Study*: NPS LGBTQ+ Theme Study
- 12/9, Thurs. **No Class – Optional Review**
- 12/10–12/15 **Cumulative Take Home Final**

SECTION SCHEDULE

- 8/30–9/3 *No Sections*
- 9/6–9/10 *No Sections*
- 9/13–9/17 **Garbology**
- 9/20–9/24 **Research Design**
- 9/27–10/1 **Developing Chronologies**
- 10/4–10/8 **Environmental Analysis**
- 10/11–10/15 *No Sections – Grading Week*
- 10/18–10/22 **Bones & Stones**

10/25–10/29	<b>Mortuary Archaeology</b>
11/1–11/5	<b>Symbolism &amp; Writing</b>
11/8–11/12	<i>No Sections – Grading Week</i>
11/15–11/19	<b>Repatriation</b>
11/22–11/26	<i>No Sections – Holiday Week</i>
11/29–12/3	<b>Cultural Heritage</b>
12/6–12/10	<i>No Sections – Paper Grading Week</i>

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