

ANTH 238: ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE OF MEXICO

Spring 2020

Dr. Laura Heath-Stout

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Class: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2–3:15pm, Rayzor 123

Office Hours: Thursdays 2–5pm and by appointment, Sewall 127

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In 1519, Hernán Cortés, 500 hundred Spaniards, and eight horses arrived on the Gulf Coast and set out to conquer the Aztec Triple Alliance Empire, the capital of which fell in 1521. Since then, over the past five centuries, the pre-contact indigenous histories of what is now Mexico have been interpreted and reinterpreted by scholars, activists, governments, museums, and Mexican and Chicana communities. Archaeological sites have become draws for tourists, while also being seen as sacred sites by modern indigenous communities and as places to be preserved and researched by scholars. Artifacts like the Aztec Calendar Stone have become nationalist symbols, and have been misappropriated by pop cultural depictions of history. Activists like César Chávez and Gloria Anzaldúa have used indigenous imagery to build power and pride in Chicana communities in the United States. In this course, we will explore these and other cases of the use and interpretation of Mexico's archaeological heritage in the present and the recent past.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and changing social and political contexts of archaeological heritage in Mexico
- Understand contested arenas involving the representation of indigenous Mexican peoples and cultures
- Discuss critically, in written and verbal form and for a variety of audiences, current issues concerning the roles of Mexican archaeological heritage in modern Mexico and the United States

COURSE READINGS

Most course readings will be pdfs posted on the course Canvas page. We will also read these books, which you can buy or access at the Fondren Library reserves desk:

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 2012 (1987). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. 25th Anniversary/Fourth Edition. San Francisco: Aunt Lute.
- Bueno, Christina. 2016. *The Pursuit of Ruins: Archaeology, History, and the Making of Modern Mexico*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Hughes, Jennifer Scheper. 2010. *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix: Lived Religion and Local Faith from the Conquest to the Present*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Taylor, Sarah R. 2018. *On Being Maya and Getting By: Heritage Politics and Community Development in Yucatán*. Louisville, CO: University Press of Colorado.

COURSE POLICIES

We all learn in different ways. Please feel free to manage your classroom experience in the way that is best for you. You may make audio recordings of lectures or discussions, take pictures of the board, sit or stand wherever you like in the classroom, bring in food or beverages, leave the classroom when necessary, etc. Students who want transcripts for audio/visual material should let me know as soon as possible so that I can make them. If there is something I can do to create a more comfortable learning environment for you, please never hesitate to ask, even if you're not registered with Disability Services.

If you choose to use a computer or tablet in class, be sure to stay on task: screens showing unrelated apps or websites will be more distracting to your classmates than they are to you.

In this class, 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 and should write your preferred name on all assignments. Students may call me Laura, Dr. Heath-Stout, or Professor Heath-Stout and I use the pronouns she, her, and hers.

If you have a disability, you are encouraged to register with the Disability Resource Center (Allen Center, Room 111; Website: <https://drc.rice.edu/>; Phone: 713-348-5841; Email: adarice@rice.edu) to receive official accommodations for all your courses.

If you miss class, check in with a classmate AND look at the course website to see what you missed, and follow up with me in office hours or by email with any questions.

I welcome your email communication. Please allow 48 hours for a response, and note that I do not check my email after 5pm the day before an assignment is due. Please check your email regularly for course announcements.

Cases of academic misconduct or plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the Rice Honor System (<http://honor.rice.edu/>)

The Center for Academic and Professional Communication (<https://pwc.rice.edu/center-academic-and-professional-communication>) offers writing tutoring and a variety of workshops and events.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Exercises (25% [<2% each])

Throughout the semester, you will have various short exercises. These include both preparatory assignments for your object biography research project and small assignments like brainstorming questions for visiting scholars. Exercises will be collected but not graded: you receive credit for completing them. You should both submit them through Canvas before class and bring them to class (printed or on a computer or tablet).

Response Papers (25% [5% each])

Over the course of the semester, you will write five short response papers, focusing on five different reading assignments. Each paper is due on the date that the reading is assigned. You may choose to write these whenever you prefer during the semester, but I urge you not to leave them all until late in the semester. Each response paper should be approximately 2 pages long (double-spaced, 1 in. margins, 12 pt. font), and should both summarize the main points of the reading as well as your reactions to it and points of agreement or disagreement. Response papers must be submitted through Canvas by the beginning of class on the date that the reading is assigned.

Object Biography Project (50% [paper: 30%, poster: 20%])

Your major research project will take the form of an object biography. Object biographies follow the entire life-cycle of an artifact, from when the raw materials to make it are procured by a crafter, through all of its uses, to its meanings in the present. Sometimes there are parts of this biography that cannot be determined for the particular object, so object biographies often expand to explore similar objects, or the social contexts in which they could have been made or used. We will explore several examples of object biographies in January.

You should choose a prehispanic artifact from Mexico that is currently in a museum and research and present its biography. You will write an academic research paper (10–12 pages plus bibliography, 1 in. margins, 12 pt. font), the final version of which is due on April 1 at 2pm (submitted via Canvas). Then, you will create a poster for an educated public audience, which you will present to members of the Rice community in a poster session during finals week (posters should be submitted via Canvas and printed).

Throughout this project, you will have a small group of classmates who will help you workshop and develop your project. Most Wednesdays, you will have an exercise due that will be relevant to this project, and you will have time to check in with your group and give comments on each others' work. It is essential that you bring your completed exercises to class, whether printed out or on a computer or tablet.

Relevant Dates:

- 1/22: Due: Exercise 1: Three Possible Objects to Research
- 1/29: Due: Exercise 2: Detailed Description of an Object
- 2/5: Due: Exercise 3: Possible Research Questions and Sources
- 2/12: Due: Exercise 5: Annotated Bibliography Part 1
- 2/19: Due: Exercise 7: Annotated Bibliography Part 2
- 2/26: Due: Exercise 8: Research Paper Outline and Timeline
- 3/4: Due: Exercise 9: Partial Research Paper Draft
- 3/11: Due: Exercise 10: Complete Research Paper Draft
- 3/22: Dr. Heath-Stout will provide comments on the research paper drafts.
- 3/25: small group check-in about revision process
- 4/1: Due: Final Research Paper

- 4/1: CAPC Poster Workshop in class
- 4/8: Due: Exercise 11: Three Possible Poster Designs
- 4/15: Due: Exercise 12: Poster Draft 1
- 4/20: Due: Exercise 13: Poster Draft 2
- To be scheduled during finals: Poster Session

Attendance and Participation

Final course grades may be adjusted up or down by 1/3 of a letter grade based on attendance and class participation.

SCHEDULE

Monday, January 13: **Introduction to the Course and to Mexican Archaeology**

Reading: syllabus

Wednesday, January 15: **Stakeholders and Ethics**

Reading: excerpt of *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas* by Cornelius Holtorf
 “The Promise and Perils of an Ethic of Stewardship” by Alison Wylie

Monday, January 20: NO CLASS FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

Wednesday, January 22: **Introduction to Object Biographies**

Reading: “Object Biographies” by Eugene Halton
 “The Cultural Biography of Objects” by Chris Gosden and Yvonne Marshall
 one example object biography (assigned in class 1/15)

Due: Exercise 1: Three Possible Objects to Research

Monday, January 27: ***Biography of a Mexican Crucifix***

Reading: *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix* by Jennifer Scheper Hughes, p. vii–130

Wednesday, January 29: ***Biography of a Mexican Crucifix, cont.***

Reading: *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix* by Jennifer Scheper Hughes, p. 131–244

Due: Exercise 2: Detailed Description of an Object

Monday, February 3: **Archaeologists and Indigenous Communities**

Reading: “The Practice of Archaeology in Mexico” section of the *SAA Archaeological Record*, edited by Nelly Robles García
 “Through Wary Eyes” by Joe Watkins

Wednesday, February 5: **Heritage and Nationalism**

Reading: *The Pursuit of Ruins* by Christina Bueno, p. 1–112

Due: Exercise 3: Possible Research Questions and Sources

Monday, February 10: **Heritage and Nationalism, cont.**

Reading: *The Pursuit of Ruins* by Christina Bueno, p. 113–214

Wednesday, February 12: **Community Archaeology**

Visitor: Dr. David Carballo (by Skype, 2–2:30pm)

Reading: “Urban Life on Teotihuacan’s Periphery” by David Carballo
“Building Community Ties Using Archaeology in Tlajinga, Teotihuacan” by Daniela Hernández Sariñana et al.
“The Micropolitics of Public Archaeology” by Anna Cohen and Rodrigo Solinis-Casparius

Due: Exercise 4: Questions for David Carballo
Exercise 5: Annotated Bibliography Part 1

Monday, February 17: **Heritage and Nationalism, cont.**

Reading: “Arqueología Patria” by Nancy Peniche May
“History and Patriotism in the National Museum of Mexico” by Luis Gerardo Morales-Moreno

Wednesday, February 19: **Community Archaeology, cont.**

Visitors: Kasey Diserens Morgan and Dr. Tiffany Cain

Reading: “The Community Heritage Project in Tihosuco, Quintana Roo, Mexico” by Richard Leventhal et al.
“Heritage Activism in Quintana Roo, Mexico” by Tiffany Cain and Kasey Diserens Morgan

Due: Exercise 6: Questions for Tiffany Cain and Kasey Diserens Morgan
Exercise 7: Annotated Bibliography Part 2

Monday, February 24: **Tourism in the Yucatán Peninsula**

Reading: “Tourism and Archaeology: An Introduction” by Cameron Walker and Neil Carr
“From Crystal Skulls to the Caste War” by Kirby Farah and Kenneth Seligson

Wednesday, February 26: **Tourism in the Yucatán Peninsula, cont.**

Reading: “Archaeology Meccas of Tourism” by Quetzil Castañeda and Jennifer Mathews

“Sun, Sand, and... Sacred Pyramids” by Carmen Muñoz-Fernández
Due: Exercise 8: Research Paper Outline and Timeline

Monday, March 2: **Ek Balam**

Reading: *On Being Maya and Getting By* by Sarah R. Taylor, p. 3–78

Wednesday, March 4: **Ek Balam, cont.**

Reading: *On Being Maya and Getting By* by Sarah R. Taylor, p. 79–132

Due: Exercise 9: Partial Research Paper Draft

Monday, March 9: **Ek Balam, cont.**

Reading: "Archaeological Conservation at Ek' Balam" by Alejandra Alonso Olvera
"The Conservation of Maya Cultural Heritage" by Shoshaunna Parks et al.

Wednesday, March 11: **Who Owns Archaeological Sites?**

Reading: "Artifactual Surface and the Limits of Inclusion" by Fernando Armstrong-Fumero
"Configuring and Commoditizing the Archaeological Landscape" by Marcie Venter and Sarah Lyon

Due: Exercise 10: Complete Research Paper Draft

Monday, March 16 and Wednesday, March 18: NO CLASS FOR SPRING BREAK

Monday, March 23: **Looting and the Art Market**

Reading: "Moral Arguments on Subsistence Digging" by Julie Hollowell
"From a Cave Near Tehuacán" by Martin Berger
"Ancient Zapotec Material Culture and the Antiquities Market" by Adam Sellen

Wednesday, March 25: **Exoticizing and Othering Indigenous Peoples**

Reading: "Death in the Hands of Strangers" by Cecilia Klein
"The Luxurious Ambivalence of Exoticism" by Deborah Root

Monday, March 30: **Fake Artifacts and Pseudoscience**

Reading: "Black Olmecs and White Egyptians" by David Anderson
excerpt of *Faking Ancient Mesoamerica* by Nancy Kelker and Karen Bruhns

Wednesday, April 1: **From Papers to Posters**

Visitor: CAPC Workshop: "Poster Presentations: Design and Delivery"
Due: Research Paper

Monday, April 6: **Chicanx Communities and Mexican Archaeological Heritage**

Reading: *Borderlands/La Frontera* by Gloria Anzaldúa, front matter and ch. 1–4

Wednesday, April 8: **Chicanx Communities and Mexican Archaeological Heritage, cont.**

Visitor: Keitlyn Alcantara
Reading: *Borderlands/La Frontera* by Gloria Anzaldúa, ch. 5–7
Due: Exercise 11: Questions for Keitlyn Alcantara
Exercise 12: Three Possible Poster Designs

Monday, April 13: **Chicanx Communities and Mexican Archaeological Heritage, cont.**

Reading: "Return to Aztlán" by Guillermo Lux and Maurilio Vigil
"From East L.A." by Paloma Martínez-Cruz

“The Iconography of Chicano Self-Determination” by Shifra Goldman

Wednesday, April 15: **Immigrant Communities and Mexican Archaeological Heritage**

Reading: “Reclaiming Tangible Heritage” by Deanna Barenboim

“Es nuestra tradición” by Marijke Stoll

Due: Exercise 13: Poster Draft 1

Monday, April 20: **The Archaeology of Migration/Practice Poster Session**

Reading: “AE Interviews Jason de León” by Deniz Daser

“There is No Mistaking that She is Dead” by Jason de León

Due: Exercise 14: Poster Draft 2

Wednesday, April 22: NO CLASS FOR DR. HEATH-STOUT’S CONFERENCE TRAVEL

To Be Scheduled During Finals: **Poster Session**