

South American Archaeology Seminar: UCL - London

Written by Dr. Bill Sillar

Friday, 01 March 2013 16:12 -

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SOUTH AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR: UCL - LONDON

The next South American Archaeology Seminar will be held at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL on: 18th May 2013

The program and abstracts are below

All Welcome (while space allows) but please email Bill Sillar (b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk) to reserve a place. You will be asked to make a contribution of £7.50 towards the cost of coffee, tea, lunch & administration on the day.

10.00 am Coffee/ Registration

10.30 Melissa Goodman Elgar (Washington State University)

Public architecture and social change in early villages: A geoarchaeologist's consideration of the Bolivian Formative

11.10 Christine A. Hastorf (University of California, Berkeley)

Cultural exchange, choice and selection in chile use on the coast of Peru

11.50 Marisa Lazzari (Exeter University), Lucas Pereyra Domingorena.

A social landscape without a centre: the circulation of artefacts, materials and skills in ancient NW Argentina

LUNCH

1.30 Erell Hubert (University of Cambridge)

Moche colonial identity in the Santa valley, north coast of Peru

2.10 Peter Eeckhout (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)

Architectural and Political Dynamics at Pachacamac

TEA

3.30 Tiago Hermenegildo (University of Cambridge), Heiko Prümers, Eduardo Góes Neves, Vera Guapindaia and Tamsin O'Connell

A Stable Isotopes Approach to Resource Management and Dietary Patterns in the South American Tropical Lowlands

4.10 Jennifer Watling (Exeter University), Jose Iriarte, Denise Schaan, Francis Mayle, Alceu Ranzi

Investigations into the environmental impact of the pre-Columbian geoglyph builders of western Amazonia

Venue: 6th Floor Seminar Room, The Institute of Archaeology, UCL, 34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY

Co. Sponsored by: The Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London & Beta Analytical Ltd.

We usually go for a drink at the bar of the nearby Tavistock Hotel after the seminar.

Our next meeting will be on: Saturday 7th December 2013, to give a talk at that or a future seminar please contact Bill Sillar: b.sillar@ucl.ac.uk

ABSTRACTS

Melissa Goodman Elgar (Washington State University)

Public architecture and social change in early villages: A geoarchaeologist's consideration of the Bolivian Formative

In this paper I use tools from geoarchaeology to consider the how sedentary agriculturalists formalised their villages with public architecture. My focus is the Taraco Peninsula on the south side of the Titicaca basin over the period 1000 B.C.E. to C.E. 500. Geochemistry, thin section microscopy and bulk sediment analyses provide clues into construction practices including what properties people selected in their materials, how materials were combined into manufactured materials, and how these materials were integrated into their architectural designs. The complexity and tempo of these activities sheds light on how people created foci for group activities within their communities.

Christine A. Hastorf (University of California, Berkeley)

Cultural exchange, choice and selection in chile use on the coast of Peru

Recent work on early /Capsicum/ seeds from Huaca Prieta and Paredones from the north coast of Peru displays an intriguing history of exchange and identity, displayed through the variety of chile seeds. Recent excavations at these sites by Tom Dillehay and Duccio Bonavia have uncovered a series of archaeobotanical specimens that Katherine Chiou and I have been studying this past year. The seed data reflect an intriguing history of values, identity and selection, from the Initial period up to the historic period.

Marisa Lazzari (University of Exeter), Lucas Pereyra Domingorena (CONICET and Museo Etnográfico 'Juan B. Ambrosetti', Universidad de Buenos Aires)

A social landscape without a centre: the circulation of artefacts, materials and skills in north western Argentina during the first millennium AD.

The investigation of ancient practices of circulation and exchange has long been a key area of research in the south-central Andes. Drawing on archaeological, petrographic and geochemical

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analysis of pottery and stone tools, this presentation will present new evidence and introduce a framework to investigate the complexities and nuances of pre-Hispanic socioeconomic interaction. The presentation will focus on sites and materials from the southern Calchaquí valleys of north western Argentina (NWA) during the first millennium AD, a time when sedentary communities became increasingly linked across the landscape through the use and exchange of a variety of resources.

While much remains to be known in the study area for the period in question, these results allow for a confident discussion of some of the key assumptions that underlie the study of pre-Hispanic interaction in NW Argentina, where it has been long accepted that certain areas had a more prominent nodal role in regional networks. Focusing on often assumed 'marginal' areas, the presentation will discuss the diverse paths followed by artefacts, raw materials and techniques of manufactures arguing that these practices reveal a more fluid and less bounded social world than it has been previously considered.

Erell Hubert (University of Cambridge)

Moche colonial identity in the Santa valley, north coast of Peru

Among debates about Moche socio-political organisation along the north coast of Peru, results from excavations by the Université de Montréal argue in favour of a progressive colonisation of the Santa valley involving, during its last phase, a massive arrival of population from the Moche valley and the displacement of the local population towards the middle and upper valley (Chapdelaine 2009). Within this context, I aim to understand how social identities of Moche colonists are influenced by the nature and intensity of relations between the central Moche site of Huacas de Moche in the Moche valley and Moche colonies in the Santa valley.

As highly symbolic artefacts shared relatively evenly among the whole population, miniature anthropomorphic figures, mainly figurines but also musical instruments and pendants, seem to have played a particularly important role in the redefinition of identities in the Santa valley. I selected a sample of these figurative artefacts from Huacas de Moche and compared it to the miniature figures found at three Moche sites in the Santa valley: El Castillo, Guadalupito and Hacienda San José. This comparison confirmed persistent contact between both valleys over centuries but also revealed the development of regional preferences. In the Santa valley, a preference for well-made large figurines and for certain stylistic elements point towards the involvement of miniature figures in creating and maintaining a cohesive group identity among colonists.

Peter Eeckhout (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)
Architectural and Political Dynamics at Pachacamac

There has been a growing interest in Late Prehispanic Peruvian Central Coast monumental architecture during the last two decades. The site of Pachacamac, identified through ethnohistorical sources as the capital of a local or regional polity known as Ychsma, has been at the forefront of these investigations

I propose to discuss the multi-componential nature of the site, and the way in which the different components interacted to ensure the smooth running of the settlement.

Using a range of new mapping and survey data, as well as excavation and absolute dating of a series of buildings, I propose to reconcile some contrasting views expressed by scholars about the chronology of the Second Precinct, which contains most of the site's monumental architecture. This reappraisal will include an analysis of intra-site organisation and the links between the different buildings, notably the so-called Pyramids with Ramps.

The new picture which emerges from this research will allow an assessment of the proposed segmented state model for the Ychsma, as well as feeding wider debates about the definition of Andean urbanism and the relevance of the ceremonial and pilgrimage centre paradigm.

Jennifer Watling (Exeter University), Jose Iriarte, Denise Schaan, Francis Mayle, Alceu Ranzi
Investigations into the environmental impact of the pre-Columbian geoglyph builders of western Amazonia

The discovery of hundreds of geometrically-patterned earthworks in the Brazilian Amazon has further challenged notions of Amazonia as a "pristine" wilderness and demonstrated the presence of sizeable populations in the terra firme who had shared ideologies which endured for millennia. This paper presents methodologies and preliminary findings of the first palaeoenvironmental investigations being conducted in the region that aim to discern the nature and extent of landscape alterations associated with the geoglyph builders in Acre state, Brazil.

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Tiago Hermenegildo (McDonald Institute, University of Cambridge), Heiko Prümers (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Bonn, Germany), Eduardo Góes Neves (Universidade de São Paulo), Vera Guapindaia (Museu Paraense Emílio Göeldi, Belém, Brasil) and Tamsin O'Connell (McDonald Institute, University of Cambridge)

A Stable Isotopes Approach to Resource Management and Dietary Patterns in the South American Tropical Lowlands

To this very day, when it comes to the South American lowlands, the use of archaeological sciences techniques has been quite sparse. Publications using stable isotope techniques in the region are particularly rare and only a handful of articles have been published so far. This work is the result of a PhD project that focuses on developing the first exploratory, large scale dietary reconstruction study using carbon and nitrogen stable isotopes from archaeological bone collagen samples, both faunal and human, from four sites in three different regions of the Amazon – from the mouth of the Amazon River in Brazil all the way to the Llanos the Moxos in Bolivia. The results also help in identifying and quantifying possible evidences of resource management and/or domestication of both plant and animal resources that happened in these sites since around 2000 B.P. The data and interpretations presented are a small piece of contribution to the better understanding of the dietary choices and mobility patterns of the people that inhabited the South American tropical forests and helps to bring new light into a very important topic of South American and tropical archaeology.