

ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

ANT310: Complex Societies Heather M.-L. Miller
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**Read these instructions before you begin.
Read them after you begin.
Read them before you turn the paper in!
Many students lose marks because they do not follow directions.**

Your major assignment for this course will be to write a 5-6 page essay based on a theme from one of your assigned readings. This is not a full-fledged research paper, but a concise, directed essay. You will choose a section from your readings about a topic that interests you, and extend your information about this topic through finding and reading a journal article (or two). You will summarize both the in-class and external readings, and then concisely discuss the authors' and your own views about the topic covered. In other words, you will write two summaries plus an academic 'argument'. (See Essay Format section below for more information.)

Two stages of work will be submitted for this assignment. ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST BE TYPED, double-spaced, and 12 point font with 1 inch margins. The maximum length for the final essay is 6 pages.

Topic

You will write a researched essay on a theme from one of the chapters assigned for this course. Begin by looking through all of the readings -- you might want to write on a topic we will not cover till the end of the course. Chose a topic that interests you! Thoroughly read any chapter that you may want to use, and take notes on sections dealing with topics that interest you. Outline the material dealing with the topic you choose. Make up a list of keywords relating to the topic to help you in the next stage of library research. If there is a particular topic on ancient states that you wish to research that is NOT covered by any assigned readings, please come to my office hours as soon as possible to discuss possible alternative arrangements.

Research

Refer to the lectures presented by the UTM Librarian.

Using the resources available within your text and through the University of Toronto Library system, locate at least one article published in a scholarly journal (a refereed publication) or in an edited volume that extends your knowledge of your topic. It should NOT be by the same author as your assigned reading.

You may use a chapter or two from a single-authored book, but this should be cleared with me first.

You are encouraged to use electronic journals, but do not limit yourself to this source. You may NOT use a website as a major source, although you may find that a search of websites will help you with background material, or provide lists of possible published bibliographic sources (particularly academic websites).

Remember that I will be marking you on your choice of research materials, so please check with me if you are unsure of the suitability of an article.

You may choose to extend your knowledge about your topic in one of two ways.

(1) You may look for an article on the same topic (e.g., trade as an aspect of state formation, or environmental disaster as a contribution to the collapse of a state, or the role of religion in an ancient state), but for a state not discussed by your text's author (Trigger).

(2) Or you may look for an article on the same topic for one of the same states (e.g., the palace economy in Uruk Mesopotamia), but from a different perspective, perhaps disagreeing with your first author.

Consider your own interests, and try to think of multiple options for topics -- you may not find an appropriate article for your first choice.

You may use two or three other minor sources, such as introductory textbooks, encyclopedias or atlases, especially if you need a map, definition, or illustration. Use archaeological sources for definitions of archaeological terms, such as the texts used in class or a basic archaeology textbook. Do not use general dictionaries or encyclopedias -- although the use of an archaeological or anthropological encyclopedia or atlas is fine. Wikipedia is NOT acceptable. Check the library for such sources, which should be used as supplemental sources, not your main outside article.

This assignment is NOT intended to result in a full-scale research paper; be sure to keep this in mind. Limit yourself to one or two major source(s) in addition to the assigned reading. Please come to my office hours if you have any questions or hesitations. SHORT questions may be sent by email, but I may ask you to come to my office hours to discuss your question, so don't wait until the last minute.

Assignments & Deadlines

You are strongly encouraged to have your choice of outside article approved by Dr. Miller BEFORE the Thesis & Outline is due.

ESSAY THESIS & OUTLINE -- DUE IN CLASS Tuesday Feb. 26

This assignment is intended to make certain that you have thought out your entire paper BEFORE you begin writing it. That is the purpose of the Outline. The Thesis Statement is intended to clarify (for you as well as me) exactly what topic you are focused upon for this short paper. The more precise your thesis statement, the better your essay will be, if your outline faithfully follows and supports this thesis statement.

(1) Finding a Topic & Outside Articles. First, select two or three possible topics. Then search for possible outside articles in the references given in your texts and using the Library search resources. You might also try looking up your state or topic in an archaeological encyclopedia or atlas for additional information and sources. Be sure to have one good outside article before making your choice of topic; check the article with me ahead of time if you have any questions. Once you have a topic, you are ready to begin.

(2) Thesis Statement. Now write a short, one-paragraph explanation of what your paper will be about. Summarize the thesis you will address in two or three sentences. Be sure to include the name of the state(s), region(s) of the world, and approximate time period(s), as well as the essentials of the thesis you wish to investigate.

So what is a Thesis? Your thesis (topic) statement expresses succinctly and specifically what you intend to accomplish in your paper or what interesting insight you will support with your evidence. It is the main point of your essay, the one thing you want your reader to understand and remember. It DOES NOT include vague generalizations such as "to learn more about...", "to gain a greater understanding of...", etc. In the final essay, the thesis statement should be located in your essay introduction, and should be referred to in the body of the essay, and re-stated in the conclusion (see "Final Essay" section below for more information). For this assignment, you should just turn in the thesis statement itself.

Here is a clearly stated thesis for a paper on the role of religion in the Indus Civilization: "I will show that a shared religion or philosophy focusing on communal unity is the best explanation for the cultural uniformity of the Indus Civilization across its large region and long time depth."

And a thesis for an essay on the importance of population density in the rise of Mesoamerican states: "The debates presented in this essay between Blanton, Feinman, and associates, working in the Valley of Oaxaca, and Sanders and associates, working in the Valley of Mexico, are centred on whether a rise in

population density was essential to the development of Mesoamerican states. I present both sides of the debate and my own conclusions as to which argument is more convincing."

Note that the thesis statement can be more than one sentence! It is best to have a single sentence thesis, but do not try to present a long complex statement in one sentence, if two are needed.

(3) Outline. Next, provide an outline of what you plan to write in your final essay.

Be sure to follow the instructions below under Organization of Essay for your outline. In other words, don't turn in just an outline of the topic, or a summary of the articles - you will lose substantial marks for this. Your outline should be hierarchically arranged, with each section labelled as to its function and content. Any section that is subdivided should have at least two sub-parts. You may use words and phrases instead of complete sentences, but the information to be covered in each section of the outline must be clear! This outline should allow me to follow the basic structure and argument of your essay. If you do not know how to write an outline, be sure to get outside help on this ahead of time!

(4) List of References. Your list of references should be included as the last section of this assignment, using the format given below (References Cited) and in the American Antiquity Style Guide (<http://www.saa.org/Publications/Styleguide/styframe.html>). **You will lose 2%** (out of a possible 10) if the references are not in the proper format.

Your list of References must include the following:

(a) the section of the course readings you will use for this paper; be sure to give exact page numbers; and
(b) the outside article or edited book reference you will use. If you have not previously had your outside article approved, I suggest that you list several articles so I can recommend which one might be best for your essay.

****You MUST also submit a photocopy** of the abstract for your primary outside article(s), or **lose 2%** (out of a possible 10). If the article does not have an abstract, submit a photocopy of the introduction AND conclusion. (It is NOT necessary to submit this information for additional sources or for the assigned course material.)

You may also list any additional references (encyclopedia entries, websites, etc.) that you will use for supporting material (definitions, dates, etc.)

*****Be sure to give the full citations for the source(s), using the American Antiquity format required for the final essay (see below). 2 marks will be deducted if you do not use this format -- no exceptions!**

(5) Other Requirements. You must type this assignment, paying attention to spelling, grammar and clarity of writing for the topic paragraph. The outline portion can be in point form, but it should be checked for spelling.

The Thesis Statement and Outline will be worth a total of 10% of your grade. This assignment will allow me to give you feedback on your essay topic and structure, before you turn in the final essay, and to prevent any of you from starting down the wrong track. It is to your advantage to submit a well thought out, well-researched thesis statement & outline.

FINAL ESSAY -- DUE IN CLASS Tuesday, April 1

See below ("Writing Your Essay") for the exact format and content of the essay, citations, and references. This final essay is worth 30% of your total grade. I will be grading on style (spelling, grammar, clarity of expression) as well as content, so give yourself time to review your essay after your first draft.

I will accept your complete paper in class on April 1 ONLY. You may not bring it by my office later without penalty, and you may NOT email it under any circumstances. Of course you may give it to me earlier, and I urge you to do so, for **no late papers** will be accepted without penalty except with a doctor's excuse, etc. (See "Late Assignments" on the main Syllabus.)

WRITING YOUR ESSAY

Organization of the Essay

The essay must be written in the following way, or significant marks will be deducted.

- (1) Write a short summary of the topic you will discuss in the essay. It should be no more than a few sentences. This thesis statement should be located in your essay introduction, and should be referred to in the body of the essay, and re-stated in the conclusion.
- (2) Write a summary in more detail of the treatment of your topic in the assigned reading. Establish why it is interesting and/or significant.
- (3) Write a summary in more detail of the treatment of your topic in your outside article.
- (4) Explicitly discuss the two perspectives on your topic--the one in the assigned article and the one from the outside article(s). The exact questions you address will depend on your topic. Some possibilities: Does your outside article explain in greater detail or present an alternative interpretation? Why do two authors disagree? What might make them agree? Do you see similarities in the development of states in different regions? Do you see contrasts, and are these attributable to environment, culture, time, contact, or some other variable? Try to define whatever questions you plan to address BEFORE you begin writing!
- (5) Write a summary/conclusion. This should simply reiterate your main points and restate the topic. The conclusion is NOT the place to introduce new information, facts, perspectives, sources, etc. -- if you think of things now, insert them in the proper place above. This closing statement should not be a broad generalization or sweeping statement, but a precise summary of your main topic and conclusion.

Re-read this first draft to be sure that it will be clear to anyone who has not read the texts or articles. Ask your roommate or your family to read it. In other words, do not "write for the instructor", but expect that your reader will need basic explanations and information – your student editor will also edit you for this. This essay must convince me that you read the material cited.

Be sure to:

- Carefully describe specific examples from your reading and research.
- Include definitions of any archaeological or anthropological terms you use (and you will need to use several). See above under "Research" for acceptable sources for definitions.
- As you write, insert citations and accumulate a References Cited list, in the format specified below.

Writing Style

Now that you have a draft of your paper, you can focus on writing style.

- Correct your grammar.
- Untangle complex sentences -- break them into two sentences, or remove unnecessary phrases.
- Avoid use of the passive tense as much as possible. If this is difficult for you, get advance help.
- It is now perfectly acceptable in archaeology to use "I" in published papers, and it helps me to understand which are your own ideas, and which are from your reading.
- Be careful to identify ideas from others (see Citations), so you don't commit plagiarism.
- Introduce your own ideas, where appropriate.
- Identify the topic sentences of your paragraphs in the body of your paper and see that they match the summary of your main points, both in the introduction and conclusion.
- Be sure to check for consistency in your introduction and concluding statements. Write smooth transitional sentences and paragraphs.

- Write a title that is descriptive of the paper's main topic, and include your name, the date, and the course. These should be at the top of page 1 -- I prefer that you do not have a separate title page, to conserve paper.
- Don't forget to spell-check and number your pages!

Please carefully review the logical flow of your ideas, from your introduction, through the body of the paper, to the conclusion. This is often the main difference between an excellent (A) paper and a good (B) paper. You will be marked on writing style, grammar and spelling as well as content.

NOTE: Final Essays must be double-spaced, 12 point font with 1 inch margins, maximum 6 pages

Citations

Be sure to say where your information comes from. You must cite your source whether or not you directly quote the words of that source. In academic writing, anything that is not general knowledge, but rather comes from your reading (in this course or outside of it), and everything/idea that is distinctively the work of a particular person gets a citation.

The citation is placed in the text immediately after the material used. This is the case whether an actual quote is given, or whether you are just giving credit to an author for information or an idea. The citation should include the author and date, and in many cases, a page number. You always need the page number if you are using a quote or specific data. You can use just the author and date if you are referring to a general idea that occurs throughout the work.

The citation is part of the sentence, so the punctuation comes after, like this (Smith 2001:370). Or you can move the author's name to the front and just enclose date and page in parentheses. For the Style Guide we will use, always put the date & page immediately after the author's name. **Do not use a comma.** For example: Smith (2001:370) provides new data about the origins of agriculture in Ontario.

If you actually quote material from a source, be sure to use quotation marks. Quotes longer than two lines must be block indented and single spaced, and in that case no quotation marks are used.

Use quotes sparingly, limiting their use to particularly apt statements that are ideal for the point you wish to make. For the most part, you should be paraphrasing the materials you read; that is, you should re-state the points in your own words. This involves more than just changing a few words or omitting portions of a sentence. Such changes are tantamount to plagiarism -- see the guide to plagiarism at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>. However, even well-paraphrased material should be cited, as indicated above. Here's an example of a quote:

"Digging these tombs would have required massive co-ordinated labor, and since many of the individuals buried in the tombs are elites bedecked with exotic ornaments and surrounded by fineware ceramics and figurines, it seems clear that these were built to house elites who were capable of amassing and controlling a large labor pool" (Peregrine 2003:230-231).

And a paraphrase: These tombs were likely built for elites who controlled a large labour pool, as a great deal of labour would have been needed to dig the tombs, and to supply the exotic ornaments and fineware ceramics and figurines found in them (Peregrine 2003:230-231).

I still cite Peregrine, even though I don't quote him directly, because this was not my own conclusion -- I got this idea from reading his textbook. I provide the page numbers so that it will be easy for the reader to find this reference, if desired. Note that when I directly quote Peregrine, I leave the American spelling (labor), but when I paraphrase, I use the Canadian spelling (labour). Also note that quotes that are 2 lines or longer are indented, while paraphrases are not.

References Cited

It is very important to provide the necessary information so that other people can find the sources of your information. This usually includes the authors, dates, titles, publishers, and places of publication. For this paper, I only want you to provide a list of References Cited; that is, only the references you actually cite in your paper, not all of the materials you may have found or consulted.

Many conventions exist for the way references are formatted, and most publishers specify the model they want. In North American archaeology, the format developed by the journal *American Antiquity* is frequently used. I provide some examples below, and you can look at the *American Antiquity* Style Guide (<http://www.saa.org/Publications/Styleguide/styframe.html>) for more details. If you have trouble with particular sources and don't know what to do with them, ASK ME!

References Cited

Kamp, Kathryn

1998 *Life in the Pueblo: Understanding the Past Through Archaeology*. Waveland Press, Inc., Prospect Heights, Illinois.

Thomas, David Hurst

1999 *Archaeology. Down to Earth*. Second Edition. Harcourt Brace & Company, Orlando, Florida.

Smith, Robin

1998 Citing Sources in Anthropology Papers. *Journal of Academic Skills* 27(4):20-29.

Miller, Heather M.-L.

1997 Pottery Firing Structures (Kilns) of the Indus Civilization During the Third Millennium B.C. In *Prehistory & History of Ceramic Kilns*, edited by Prudence Rice and W. David Kingery, pp. 41-71. Ceramics & Civilization Series, Volume VII. American Ceramic Society, Inc., Columbus, Ohio.

Tamakoshi, Laura Zimmer

1997 Fieldwork: The Anthropologist in the Field. Electronic document, <http://www.truman.edu/academics/ss/faculty/tamakoshil/index.html>, accessed March 8.

(Ask the instructor or a librarian for help with the citation of web sites.)

Checklist: I will look for the following strengths in your essay (note that these are NOT of equal weight in marking!):

- _____ Topic is clearly defined
- _____ Incorporates a relevant article published in a scholarly archaeology or anthropology journal
- _____ Reflects a thoughtful & complete reading of articles
- _____ Discussion/analysis uses archaeological concepts and insights
- _____ Includes definitions of terms and examples in support of major points
- _____ Work of others is cited appropriately in text
- _____ Carefully organized and written, spell-checked, and edited; pages numbered
- _____ Conclusion restates main points and reiterates topic or thesis
- _____ Interesting, convincing, worthwhile, insightful, and/or moving
- _____ References Cited contains complete information in *American Antiquity* form

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