

MEDIEVAL CEMETERY FUNERARY EXCAVATION DYING ON THE EUROPEAN FRONTIER: LOST CHURCHES PROJECT



TRANSYLVANIA, ROMANIA
JUNE 2 - JUNE 29 / JUNE 30 - JULY 27, 2019



As the 15th century ends, the battle for Europe begins! The southeastern European frontier collapses in front of the Ottoman Turks. The heroes (and their legend) that held back the East have died: Vlad Dracula the Impaler, prince of Wallachia in 1476; Holy Stephan the Great, prince of Moldavia in 1504; Skanderberg (Iskender Bey), lord of Albania in 1468. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the united European defeat at the great Battle of Mohacs in 1526 opened the way for the Ottoman expansion into Europe.

DURATION: 4 week sessions

Field Program Fee (non-credit): US\$2495 per session

IT INCLUDES: field program participation fee, most gear, museum clearance; housing in double/triple occupancy rooms in a newly renovated hotel; breakfast and dinner, Monday-Friday

ACADEMIC CREDITS (6 cr.) available through WCU (session 1) and USF (session 2)

As Europe redefines itself in the wake of the Ottoman invasion, the Transylvania frontier still holds fast against the Eastern invaders. However, during the 17th century, a series of churches in the region around Odorheiu Secuiesc cease to be used. In the aftermath of the crisis that shook the foundation of European identity, these churches disappear from collective memory.

The aim of this project is to explore how major political events physically impacted local populations. We are interested in the evolution of the population throughout the Middle Ages in the region, the changes in church architecture and burial patterns, and the variations of burial ritual during social, political and economic stress. The further study of the human remains in our osteology laboratory will provide a more detailed view of the human aspects of these transitions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.archaeotek-archaeology.org
CONTACT US: archaeology@archaeotek.org



MEDIEVAL CEMETERY FUNERARY EXCAVATION Lost Churches Project

June 2 – July 27, 2019

Session 1: June 2 – June 29, 2019 / Session 2: June 30 – July 27, 2019

Valeni (Odorheiu Secuiesc), Transylvania, Romania

PROJECT DIRECTOR (INSTRUCTOR):
Dr. Katie Zejdlik, PhD
Assistant Professor
Western Carolina University (USA)
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SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR:
Dr. Andre Gonciar, PhD
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ARCHAEOLOGY DIRECTOR
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Expert Archaeologist
Haaz Reszo Muzeum (RO)

Project Web Site:

<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/medieval-cemetery-funerary-excavation>

Project Application Form:

<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/application-bioarchaeology>

Academic Credits:

- **Session 1:** 6 undergraduate credits available through Western Carolina University - **Not Mandatory (additional WCU credit tuition applies)**: for more information, contact Dr. Katie Zejdlik-Passalacqua at kzejdlik@email.wcu.edu. WCU registration deadline: January 15, 2019.
- **Session 2:** 6 graduate/undergraduate credits available through University of South Florida - **Not Mandatory (additional USF credit tuition applies)** - USF Program Brochure – Credit Application Page:
<https://educationabroad.global.usf.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgramAngular&id=23628>



I. Project Introduction:

As the 15th century ends, the battle for Europe begins! The southeastern European frontier collapses in front of the Ottoman Turks. The heroes (and their legend) that held back the East have died: Vlad Dracula the Impaler, prince of Wallachia in 1476; Holy Stephan the Great, prince of Moldavia in 1504; Skanderberg (Iskender Bey), lord of Albania in 1468. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the united European defeat at the great Battle of Mohacs in 1526 opened the way for the Ottoman expansion into Europe. By 1529, Suleiman the Magnificent has conquered southeastern Europe, the Kingdom of Hungary collapsed and the Ottoman troops were battering the walls of Vienna. The Ottoman expansions was finally checked in 1683, when the arrival of King Jan III Sobieski of Poland's heavy cavalry charge under the walls of besieged Vienna broke the Ottoman army and won a crucial victory.

However, Transylvania was never successfully invaded by the Turkish armies. The Saxon fortresses and the Szekely armies held the Ottomans at bay. With the collapse of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1526, its Transylvanian territories became a political battlefield between European, Russian, and the Ottoman backed princes until the Principality of Transylvania was born as an autonomous political entity in 1570. In 1600, Michael the Brave, with the support of the Transylvanian Szekely armies, beat the Ottoman and their supporters and realized the first union of the three Romania principalities into one kingdom.

As Europe redefines itself in the wake of the Ottoman invasion, the Carpathian frontier still holds fast against the Southern invaders. As Transylvanian suzerainty has passed from the Hungarian Kingdom, to the Ottomans, to the Habsburgs from the 15-17th century, the local populations lived under constant social, political, economic and religious stress. Since the Neolithic, Transylvania has been at the crossroads of European identity. During the late Middle Ages, this region goes not only through major political changes, but also through a spirituality crisis, under the pressure of Islam from the East and Protestantism from the West.

The Carpathians frontier held, but at what price?

II. Historical and Archaeological Background:

During the 17th century, a series of stone, fortified churches in the region around Odorheiu Secuiesc cease to be used. According to our archeological evidence, most of these churches existed as far back as the 12th century. In the aftermath of the crisis that shook the foundation of European identity, these churches disappear from collective memory. At the same time, the use of these temples changes in a fundamental way during the last decades of their use. The church at Teleac/Telekfalva revealed that it



was almost exclusively used to inter children, mostly preterm: the funerary ensemble showed one adult, 69 juveniles out of which 48 were of preterm or fetal age. Our 2013 excavation at the lost churches of Bradesti/Fenyed and Lueta has yielded a series of surprises, ranging from a highly complex ossuary, to a “Romeo and Juliette” grave, to a series of twins. The material culture associated with the various graves was exceptionally well preserved, allowing a very interesting glimpse into 15-17th century rural life and mortuary aesthetics. Our on-going excavation and current project of the lost church of Valeni/Patakfalva has shown that it was built on top of a pre-Christian tumulus that contained at least 3 individuals and a horse!!!

III. Project Goals:

The aim of this project is to continue to explore how major political events physically impacted local populations. We are interested in the evolution of the population throughout the Middle Ages in the region, the changes in the very local type of church architecture and burial patterns through time, and the variations on the Christian burial ritual during social, political and economic stress. At the same time, we will explore the way local communities "lived" the transition from Catholicism to Protestantism.

The results of our 2013-2018 laboratory analysis of the human remains from the interior of the “lost churches” we excavated have shown a very interesting demographic profile and pathologies. During our 2019 field season, we will continue the extraordinarily well preserved “lost church” of Valeni, sister church of Teleac. We will focus on the interior and immediate exterior of our „lost church”. One important question to address is how and why the burrial of deceased children varied so much in the region, in the hopes that we can elucidate the extraordinary high concentrations – both in space and time – of preterm and/or fetal remains.

At the same time we will investigate the building phases of this ecclesiastic building and its relationship to the deceased. The unexpected discovery, during our 2014 season of a pre-Christian / migration period burial complex, comprising several individuals and a horse, adds another level of perception to the evolution of the landscape. Another suprise was the discovery in 2017, of a stone build, very well preserved ossuary, for which more than the third of the sacristy was sacrificed. Its detailed excavation of analysis forms the basis of our Osteology Excavation and Commingled Remains Osteology Laboratory Research Workshop (<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/commingled-remains>).

These results could also shed light on the relation between this church and its community, from the first moments of its existence. Through a more thorough study of the cemetery and its occupants, we will also explore the different processes that led to the penetration of Protestantism in the village and then its subsequent return to Catholicism and/or its final disappearance. The further study of the human



remains in our Adult Osteology Laboratory Research Workshop (<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/adult-osteology-laboratory>) as well as our Juvenile Osteology Laboratory Research Workshop (<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/juvenile-osteology-laboratory>) will provide a more detailed view of the human aspects of these transitions.

IV. Objectives:

- Determining the architectural building phases of the central cemetery church and their chronology
- Mapping the different phases of the cemetery inhumations and their relationship to broader social, political, religious, military and economic events
- Proper retrieval of the human remains for further anthropological analysis
- Establishment of late medieval funerary behavior and its evolution
- Identification of idiosyncratic ritual changes and their relationship to historical stresses
- Local and regional patterns of interaction, mobility and association among various groups of individual
- Ethnic historical evolution of the local and regional landscape

V. Specialized Skills Taught:

Lectures will be offered to our volunteers, ranging from local history and archaeology to material culture typologies and architecture, to various subjects related to mortuary archaeology. Students will be taught the proper use of various field tools. Explanations will be provided for every step of the excavation, on stratigraphy, field finds and archaeological complexes. We expect our participants to be intellectually involved in the archaeological process and thus interacting with the research staff.

Skill sets taught during the project:

- **Excavation:** proper use of excavation tools, strategic excavation of human bone material and associated grave goods, mapping, drawing, soil description, feature and site notation, interpretation, and removal of skeletal remains
- **Laboratory:** osteological processing and basic analysis



VI. Research Team:

1. Scientific Director (Instructor): Dr. Katie Zejdlik (Western Carolina University)
2. Field Director: Dr. Zsolt Nyaradi (Expert Archaeologist – Haaz Rezso Museum of History and Ethnography, Odorheiu Secuiesc, Harghita County, Central Transylvania, Romania)
3. Program Director: Dr. Andre Gonciar (Director, ArchaeoTek / BioArch Canada)

For more information on the staff, please visit: <http://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/staff>

VII. Additional Weekend Field Trips:

Public transportation within Eastern Europe does not allow usually to optimize travel and sightseeing for visitors with limited time available. Furthermore, except for the main tourist attractions, getting to various sites can be very challenging due to the complete lack of public transportation to and from those sites. As a result, we are organizing transportation for several day/weekend trips to allow our participants to contextualize their work within the historical and cultural framework of Transylvania:

- Szekely Land Day Trip (mandatory - free): visit of the Lost Churches sites, including our active site of Patakfalva (Valeni), the Jesus Chapel (the oldest medieval monument around Odorheiu Secuiesc), and the ethnographic museum in Cristuru Secuiesc.
- Medieval Saxon Heritage Day Trip (optional – additional \$100): visit of some beautiful Saxon fortified churches (Cata, Homorod, Viscri) and the Rupea Fortress
- Brasov Weekend Trip (optional – additional \$60): visit of Brasov. From there, students can, if interested, arrange to explore Bram Stoker's Bran Castle, Rasnov Fortress, and the amazing Peles Castle, the summer residence of the Romanian kings



APPENDIX 1
TENTATIVE SYLLABUS
Bioarchaeological Investigation
Summer 2019



Odorheiu Secuiesc, Transylvania, Romania
Medieval Cemetery Funerary Excavation
Lost Church of Valeni Project

Field Session 1: June 2 – June 29, 2019
Field Session 2: June 30 – July 27, 2019

Project Web Page:

<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/medieval-cemetery-funerary-excavation>

Logistics Web Page:

<https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/funerary-excavation-logistics>

Project Director (Bioarchaeology) - Instructor:

Dr. Katie Zejdlik (Passalacqua)
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Program Director:

Dr. Andre Gonciar
Email: archaeology@archaeotek.org

Field Director (Archaeology):

Dr. Zsolt Nyaradi

Course Materials

Equipment: Trowel: 4 inch pointed trowel

Recommended:

https://www.amazon.com/MARSHALLTOWN-Premier-Line-46-114S/dp/B003A83GK0/ref=pd_sim_469_5?ie=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=YP5JWQMBSCBM1RNR39E2

Textbook (optional): 2005. The Human Bone Manual. Tim L. White and Pieter A. Folkens. ISBN: 0120884674

Other assigned readings for the course - short articles and website content - will be posted on Blackboard and in a shared Dropbox folder. Supplementary reading materials may be assigned as the course progresses. Occasional videos will also be used to supplement the lectures and course material.

Physical fitness requirement: Students will be working outside, 40 hours a week, in temperatures ranging from 65- 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Work consists of walking uneven terrain, climbing ladders, moving buckets filled with dirt, and extensive trowel use. Most of the workday will be spent in a kneeling or sitting position carefully excavating human remains. Students will be expected to be involved in all field and classroom activities. In the event that a student declines to participate or does not participate in group activities, their grade in the course may suffer or they may be returned home at their own additional expense without a refund of expenses previously paid.

I. Rationale/Purpose

This project is the excavation of an abandoned medieval church in the Transylvanian village of Valeni (Patakfalva). We are exploring how centuries of religious and political upheaval have influenced demographics and health of the individuals interred within the church walls and associated cemetery. This field school project is part of a broader investigation of the abandonment of medieval churches in the area and provides significant

opportunities for students to get involved in international bioarchaeology, multi-institution networking and collaboration, and addressing biological, archaeological, and cultural questions. Over the course of several weeks, students will acquire skills in broad and small scale excavation, drawing, mapping, and note taking; thereby, developing the strategic skill necessary to acquire jobs working for both archaeological and forensic organizations around the world. Evenings and rain days will be used to design and complete projects using excavated materials. Students will have the opportunity to present their research at the local symposium in Romania, as well as other major conferences if they so choose. The entities involved are interested in extensive research and publication, allowing for many directions of continued investigation and student involvement and research. All excavation and analysis are conducted with support of - and in collaboration with - Archaeotek personnel, the Muzeul Haáz Rezső in Odorheiu Secuiesc, Romania, and the villagers of Valeni (Patakfalva). The high impact practices achieved in this course are Diversity/Global Learning, Community-Based Learning, and Research Projects. These practices will enhance student learning by exposing students to human cultural and biological diversity, allowing students to engage with the local community through the science of bioarchaeology and public outreach, and allowing students to generate research.

II. Course Aims

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Properly excavate human remains
- Perform basic osteological analysis
- Generate maps of human remains and their surrounding depositional context
- Safely remove human remains and prepare them for curation
- Complete burial paperwork
- Combine information from a variety of contexts for burial interpretation
- Design a project, execute it, and present it at the workshop's capstone colloquium

III. Course Objectives

- Demonstrate the ability to interpret and use numerical, written, oral, and visual data
- Demonstrate the ability to read with comprehension, and to write and speak clearly, coherently, and effectively as well as to adapt modes of communication appropriate to an audience
- Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze arguments
- Demonstrate an understanding of:
 - Past human experiences and ability to relate them to the present
 - Different contemporary cultures and their interrelationships
 - Issues involving social institutions, interpersonal and group dynamics, human development and behavior, and cultural diversity
 - Scientific concepts and methods as well as contemporary issues in science and technology
 - Cultural heritage through its expressions of wisdom, literature and art and their roles in the process of self and social understanding.
- Demonstrate an excitement for, and love of, learning

IV. Expectations of Students/Course Policies

Attendance:

Students are expected to participate daily in all field and lab activities. Completion of the excavation project is dependent on the crew and absences will be reflected strongly in the course grade.

Timely Submissions

All assignments must be turned in by the end of the course. Un-submitted work will result in either a failing grade or an incomplete for the course. Neither is an advisable option so students must manage their time efficiently.

Civility and Ground Rules:

The Western Carolina University Community Creed states: "I will respect the rights and well-being of others." Each student may possess different ideas, as well as different ways of communicating those ideas. Because of these differences, respect and civility are integral to maintaining the quality of the academic environment and free inquiry. (<http://www.wcu.edu/student-life/policies-affecting-students/statement-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities.asp>)

V. Academic Integrity Policy and Reporting Process:

I HAVE A ZERO TOLERANCE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY. The first time you choose to cheat, fabricate, plagiarize, or facilitate an activity that violates academic integrity you will be given one chance to redo the assignment/task without detriment. The second time you choose to violate these standards you will be given no credit for the assignment, no opportunity to redo it, and you will be expelled from the project. If you are unsure of what constitutes fabrication or plagiarism, ask.

General:

This policy addresses academic integrity violations of undergraduate and graduate students. Graduate students should read inside the parenthesis below to identify the appropriate entities in charge of that step of the process.

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators strive to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of this policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community. While academic in scope, any violation of this policy is by nature, a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

Instructors have the right to determine the appropriate academic and field sanctions for violations of the Academic Integrity Policy within their courses up to, and including, a final grade of "F" in the course in which the violation occurs and expulsion from the site/project without compensation.

Definitions:

1. Cheating – Using, or attempting to use, unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Fabrication – Creating and/or falsifying information or citation in any academic exercise.
3. Plagiarism – Representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise.
4. Facilitation – Helping or attempting to help someone to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in any academic exercise (e.g. allowing another person to copy information during an examination).

VI. Grading Procedures:

Grades will be based on a 700 point system with +/- grades calculated as follows:

Percentage earned	Grade	Semester points	Interpretation
97-100+%	A+	4.0	Excellent
92-96%	A	4.0	Excellent
90-91%	A-	3.67	
87-89%	B+	3.33	
82-86%	B	3	Good
80-81%	B-	2.67	
77-79%	C+	2.33	
72-76%	C	2	Fair
70-71%	C-	1.67	
67-69%	D+	1.33	
62-66%	D	1	Poor
60-61%	D-	0.67	
59 ↓	F	0	

Grade	Interpretation
I	Incomplete
IP	In-Progress
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
W	Withdrawl
AU	Audit
NC	No Credit

The grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and F indicate gradations in quality from Excellent to Failure. Please note that a C- grade is less than satisfactory and may not meet particular program and/or course requirements. Students familiarize themselves with the class attendance, withdrawal, and drop-add policies and procedures.

VII. Grading Criteria**Attitude/ Morale/ Professionalism (35%)**

Attitude is very important when working on an archaeological crew. Excavation is both fun and challenging. Furthermore, working outside presents a series of variables that are new to many students. Willingness to participate as a member of the team, work on improving, and staying positive are imperative for succeeding on this project.

Archaeological Excavation Methods (15%)

Evaluation of the excavation methods will be based on the student’s attention to instruction and improvement over time. It is expected that all students will start with little-to-no knowledge of human skeletal excavation techniques. Daily excavation work allows for the practice and refinement of these skills. The first two weeks are meant to move slow as students gets used to the tools, the archaeological

matrix, and the gentle but directed ‘feel’ of excavation. By the end of the session, a successful student will demonstrate an increase in excavation speed, cleaner burial excavation, and an independent understanding of the steps required to excavate human remains.

Human Osteology (15%)

Knowledge of human osteology is important for excavation of human remains. Training in human osteology is not required for this excavation; however, students without previous training will be expected to utilize the resources provided to help them learn the bones. A successful student will show some level of improvement in their osteological knowledge by the end of the session. This can include going from no knowledge to identifying whole bones or having intermediate knowledge and identifying bone fragments or sub-adult remains.

Project (35%)

Students will design a project based on their interests in the Patakfalva site and the resources available. They will then complete the project during their time in Romania and present it at the International Colloquium held on the last Friday of the session. These students are expected to prepare a more extensive project and will work in groups.

The Patakfalva excavation is part of a larger research agenda regarding Medieval Churches in Transylvania. Therefore, all projects will also be reviewed by our colleagues: Andre Gonciar, Dr. Jonathon Bethard, and Zsolt Nyárádi. This provides students with a more typical professional experience than they received in standard classroom instruction.

IX. Tentative Course Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1							
Morning	Orientation	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Wash remains	Local Tour (mandatory)	Churches Tour (optional)
Day	Orientation	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Project time		
Evening	Free	Lecture	Project time	Lecture	Free	Free	Free
Week 2							
Morning	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Wash remains	Brasov Trip (optional)	
Day	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Project time		
Evening	Project time	Lecture	Project time	Lecture	Free		
Week 3							
Morning	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Wash remains	Free	Free
Day	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Project time	Free	Free
Evening	Project time	Lecture	Project time	Lecture	Free	Free	Free
Week 4							
Morning	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Colloquium	Everyone must be checked out of the pension by 10am Saturday morning	
Day	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork	Fieldwork			
Evening	Project time	Project time	Career Panel	Project time	Leave		

Notes

1. Schedule is subject to change based on weather and resources. Rain days will be lab days. Lectures, workshops, and project time will be announced that day.
2. All free time can be used for project time including before and after meals or evening lectures. Access to the lab space will be negotiated based on project and student needs.

3. There are optional weekend tours provided by our collaborator ArchaeoTek. These are for an additional cost outside of the course fees.
4. Breakfast is served from 7am- 8am and is not mandatory. Dinner is served at 7:30 sharp and is mandatory. If you cannot attend dinner, you must notify an instructor ahead of time. Dinner is served and your absence will be noticed.

Syllabus Updates:

This syllabus, with its course schedule, is based on the most recent information about the course content and schedule planned for this course. Its content is subject to revision as needed to adapt to new knowledge or unanticipated events. Updates will remain focused on achieving the course objectives and students will receive notification of such changes. Students will be notified of changes and are responsible for attending to such changes or modifications as distributed by the instructor.

Please read carefully the “Rules and Regulations” of the project that was part of your acceptance package. All participants are expected to abide by them.



APPENDIX 2 TENTATIVE LECTURE SERIES

Tentative Evening Lecture Series

*PDFs of readings not available online will be provided

Cultural history of Transylvania and the Szekely people

The lost churches are located in the Transylvanian region of Romania. This area has a complicated and unique history that affects current understanding of the people students daily interact with as well as interpretation of context of the human and material remains students will encounter during the course. This lecture provides information about the history of the Transylvanian region including an overview of the many, many cultural groups that have moved through or occupied this area. It will focus on the how the Szekely people interacted with these various groups and how they still maintain their presence on the landscape. The lecture ends with a discussion of the Ceaușescu's dictatorial rule of Romania and a brief Hungarian language lesson.

Read:

Gündisch (1998) *Transylvania and the Transylvania Saxons*.

http://sibiweb.de/geschi/history_of_transylvania_and_the_transylvanian_saxons.php

The Székelys in Transylvania

<http://mek.oszk.hu/03400/03407/html/71.html>

Watch:

"Ceaușescu: Behind the Myth"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvlfRKBIGok>

Interacting with the dead: A global and temporal tour

The variety of mortuary treatment humans have applied to their dead is only limited by the number of deceased individuals. While there are overarching institutions such as religion and politics that heavily influence burial practices, the detail of mortuary treatment is often specific to the deceased individual and to the mourners. Michael Parker Pearson (1999) coined the oft-used phrase, "the dead do not bury themselves." It is often found that the wills and desires of the deceased are trumped by the agendas of the living be those agendas personal, political, religious, medical, or economic. This lecture examines the range of mortuary treatments around the world through time highlighting the endless ways human interact with their dead and the reasons behind those interactions. It also discusses how mortuary treatment affects the preservation of human remains.

Read:

Cannon, Aubrey. 1989. "The Historical Dimension in Mortuary Expressions of Status and

Sentiment". *Current Anthropology* 30(4):437-458.

Naji, Stephan. 2005. "Death and Remembrance in Medieval France: A Case Study from the Augustinian Monastery of Saint-Jean-des-Vignes, Soissons". In *Interacting with the Dead: Perspectives on Mortuary Archaeology for the New Millennium*, Gordon F.M, Rakita, Jane E. Buikstra, Lane A. Beck, and Sloan R. Williams, eds. Pp171-189. Gainesville: University of Florida Press.

Watch:

"Kelly Swazey: Life that doesn't end with death"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCRC5_0kfiw

Bioarchaeological Interpretation

Analysis and interpretation of human remains is a complicated endeavor. This lecture builds off of the previous lecture where students learn about a variety of mortuary treatments to more deeply investigate the theoretical perspectives researchers use to understand the person or people whose remains they are studying. Using the Aztalan site in southeast Wisconsin, we will examine how a single assemblage of human skeletal remains has resulted in numerous, plausible interpretations of the life and death of these individuals.

Read:

Zejdlik, Katie. 2015. "Opportunity Knocks: Nonritual Use of Human Bone at the Aztalan Site, Jefferson County, Wisconsin". In *Transforming the Dead: Culturally Modified Bone in the Prehistoric Midwest*, Eve A. Hargrave, Shirley J. Schermer, Kristin M. Hedman, and Robin M. Lillie, eds. Pp 141-151. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Watch:

Blood of the Gods- Ritual Sacrifice at Cahokia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCTAbUDV4to>

In Wisconsin, Evidence of Human Sacrifice:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-16f6DgIQPo>

Careers and Education Roundtable: Participation in the Lost Churches Project provides students with access to professionals who have experience in multiple aspects of skeletal analysis including bioarchaeology, anatomy, forensic anthropology, and paleoanthropology. All students participating in the Medieval Funerary Excavation, Adult Osteology Workshop, and Juvenile Osteology Workshop are invited to this roundtable where the program instructors answer any and all questions students have about careers and education associated with different osteological interests.



General Bibliography:

- Bass, W.M. 1995. *Human Osteology: A Laboratory and Field Manual*. 4th Ed. Missouri Archaeological Society Inc., 361pp.
- Demjén, A., A. Sófalvi, & Zs. Nyárádi. 2008. Cercetarea bisericilor medievale în scaunul Odorhei (jud. Harghita). *Arheologia Medievală* 7:79-97.
- Duday, H., 2009. *The Archaeology of the Dead: Lectures in Archaeoethanatology*. Oxbow Books, Oxbow.
- Mays, S. 1998. *The Archaeology of Human Bones*. Routledge, New York, 242pp.
- Parker Pearson, Mike, 1999. *Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Texas A&M University Press, College Station.
- White, T.D. 2000. *Human Osteology*. Academic Press, New York.