PROBLEMS IN SOUTH AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY:
NEW RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATIONS

Archaeological research is escalating in South America. In conjunction with new proxy-records of past environmental conditions generated by many disciplines it is now possible to assess human adaptations and cultural change in a dynamic evolutionary framework. This vibrant framework challenges traditional views of indigenous development. It opens fresh problems and new avenues of investigation that are the focus of the revolving scholarly topics addressed by this seminar.

As introductory background, seminar participants must read the following prior to the first class meeting:

M. Moseley & M. Heckemberger
2005 “From Village to Empire in South America.” In The Human Past, C. Scarre ed.
Thames & Hudson, pp. 640-678.

This introduction identifies new, dynamic problems in the continent are both multifaceted and multiregional. Therefore, they must be addressed region by region, and topic by topic resulting in an annual rotating seminar focus on what is new in future research directions.

The initial region to be addressed is the arid Central Andean Cordillera. The topical focus will be upon “Lo Andino” or supposedly distinct and unique Andean adaptations in present, historic, and past time frames.

The Theoretical and Methodological Issue: is there something fundamentally different about human evolution in the high Cordillera and adjacent arid coast that sets these indigenous societies apart from populations in less extreme environments.

If so does “Lo Andino” defy modeling in terms of band, tribe, chiefdom, state formulae of anthropological evolutionary schemes?

Core seminar readings will draw from both the extensive “General Background” and “Andean Archaeology” bibliographies posted at http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/moseley/.
As background for the Andes, seminar participants must read the following prior to the first class meeting:

M. Moseley

Format:

The seminar will meet weekly and the Professor will be available for individual discussion by appointment or during regular office hours.

Critically exploring cutting-edge issues in South American archaeology will require judicious reading and thought summarized in a two-page synopsis per week.

Add to this a one-page outline of questions and issues to be brought up for discussion because your oral participation is essential in this exploration of a wide-open topics.

Written Work:

1) Weekly Assignments: Outlined above

2) Final Paper: 18-20 pages of original research with at least 18 – 20 directly bibliographic references. The paper topic is to be one of relevance and undertaken with mutual consent with the professor.

Summary of final paper presentation for the seminar.

Grading:

Weekly 2 pp digest of readings & 1 page of issues for discussion = 35%; weekly discussion participation + 15%; final class paper presentation = 10%; final paper = 40%.