

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY
Master of Arts Comprehensive Examination in Archaeology

MASHA REFKA

Date: January 22nd, 2001

Time: 5 hours

Please, answer any TWO of the subjects below:

1

**WRITE A COMPREHENSIVE ESSAY ABOUT THE
PRACTICE AND COMPLEXITIES OF PRESENTING THE PAST**

Spreading the lessons gained from archaeological endeavour to the wider public is a complex matter, raising fundamental questions about the nature of archaeological enquiry.

"The hugely curious, hungry minds of children, with their enviable capacity for invention, and for creating their own worlds, are frequently presented with interpretations of the past which—through schoolbooks, museum displays and site visits—often deliver up the past as just one more nail in the coffin of the dead, remote irrelevancy or, alternatively, as just one more building block in the evidence of the past which is recognizable and self-justifying in the interests of the identity of a particular group or people."
(Ucko P. 1994. *The Presented Past*: p.xxiii).

Despite the problems involved education about the past is an essential aspect of human growth and endeavour. How, in your view, can the acontextual nature of western-based museum collecting and display be transformed to allow for 'alternative explanations and the remodelling of many antiquated 'sacred cows'.

2

ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN STATES

In Antiquity, the Levant witnessed a cyclical pattern of urban growth and collapse accompanied by the rise and fall of political entities. This recurring pattern has been explained by various theories based on textual and recent archaeological evidence.

Taking the cultural collapse at the end of either the Early or the Late Bronze Age as an example, explain the causes of this recurring pattern.

Choose a Bronze or Iron Age kingdom in the Levant and discuss the various phases of its birth, rise and fall. Refer explicitly to both the textual and archaeological evidence on which your reconstruction is based.

3

**HOW DOES THE STUDY OF COINAGE CONTRIBUTE
TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROMAN ECONOMY?**

- What role did coins play in the economy?
- How well do the models for coin circulation fit the archaeological and historical evidence?