

Department of Anthropology,  
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# Summer Internship 2015

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I am so glad and grateful to be offered such a precious opportunity to work in the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) in this summer. Throughout the eight weeks in July and August, I was assigned different tasks relating to archaeological archives under the archaeology unit of AMO. These experiences not only provide me a deeper understanding towards the operation of the unit, but also valuable insights of archaeology work in Hong Kong.

For the operation of AMO archeology unit, it can be simply divided into three parts: field archaeology, archaeological repository, and archaeological preservation. In the part of field archaeology, I have been to Lo So Shing in Lamma Island for an archaeological site visit and learned how and why the excavation work be conducted in Hong Kong. In the case of Lo So Shing, archaeological excavation was initiated due to the construction of buildings and the fellow workers had dug four pits in the site. Standing near the pits, I could observe colour differences for various soil layers, indicating different epochs of soil formation. Along with artifacts unearthed, the superposition of diverse cultural layers could also give evidence of human behaviours in the past, completing the historical picture.

In the part of archaeological repository, which I have worked for most of the time, I have helped handle the information of past excavations and the artifacts. The tasks include cleaning the newly excavated artifacts, measuring and recording their dimensions, and wrapping fragile items up for protection. After that, accessioning work should be done that the artifacts are put in the archive with barcoded labels stuck on the protection bags and archive lists are updated with detail information of artifacts. Apart from the above-mentioned, I have also helped digitalize the accession records of artifacts excavated long ago. Although many of the repository tasks seemed routine boring, working in AMO did not always have to be like that. I remember one time my

colleagues and I tried to piece up the fragments of a coarse pottery pot and that was really challenging because we did not even have any idea about how the complete pot would look like! When we could finally figure out some neighboring pieces by tracing the colour, pattern and thickness, we felt so thrilled and encouraged. This had become one of the unforgettable experiences during the internship.

In the part of archaeological preservation, I had visits to Wun Yiu Kiln Site in Tai Po, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre and the conservation team of Hong Kong Heritage Museum. For Wun Yiu Kiln Site, I followed an assistant curator to check if there was any damage on the protective gates of the animal-driven grinder and other features. Then, he showed us around in the exhibition hall and told us a lot about the Wun Yiu excavation, which he had participated. For Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre (HDC), since AMO has borrowed many artifacts for HDC's exhibitions, it is AMO's responsibility to check up the condition of the displayed artifacts. The visit we paid was to repair the supporting materials, such as nails and nylon lines for fastening objects. For the conservation team of Hong Kong Heritage Museum, I was allowed to see how the fellow workers there recovered the artifacts with different materials according to the functions and properties of the artifacts. All three visits were educational and I had learned much from them.

Overall, the internship experience was very fruitful that I could see and touch artifacts of different textures from Neolithic Era to colonial Hong Kong and meet with warm-hearted people, who taught me a lot of practical knowledge about archaeology, archives and conservation. It had greatly contributed to my career planning, which is always related to archaeology and heritage. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Anthropology and AMO for the precious memories and experiences!