ARCHAEOLOGY OF EGYPT & THE NEAR EAST: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

ARCL0157
Course Handbook 2018-19

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INTRODUCTION
This handbook contains information about the content and administration of the course. Queries about its objectives, structure, content, assessment or organisation should be directed to the Course Co-ordinator. Further information about coursework submission and other procedures can be found in the general MA/MSC handbook and on the Student Wiki, which is accessed through the Institute of Archaeology homepage (‘Intranet’ in top left menu, and enter ID and password). It is your responsibility to read and act upon this information, which relates to originality, submission and grading of coursework; disabilities; communication; attendance; and feedback.

AIMS
- To provide students with an advanced understanding of patterns and processes in the archaeology of the Egypt and the ancient Near East
- To situate those processes within a broader comparative understanding of World Archaeology
- To familiarise students with new evidence for interconnections and cultural exchanges between Egypt, the early Middle East and other parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe
- To familiarise students with the scientific methods now used to reconstruct processes of technological, economic, and environmental change
- To explore the implications of Egypt and the Near East for the writing of global history including their relevance to contemporary social theory and cultural heritage

LEARNING OUTCOMES
- To prepare students to undertake original research in world archaeology with an informed perspective on the archaeology of Egypt and the Near East
- To enhance students’ ability in reading and debate through assessment and evaluation of alternative interpretations, and presentation of reasoned conclusions
- recognition of the linkages between data, methods and ideas
- application of the methods and theories of inter-disciplinary analysis
- skill in integrating a variety of evidence from different disciplines into overall interpretations
- proficiency in the setting out information and ideas clearly in written form
- preparation for designing and operationalising research topics in this field, including the development of meaningful links between different scales of analysis (from the microscopic to studies of artefacts, landscapes, distribution patterns, and remote sensing from space)

TEACHING METHODS
The course is taught through a two-hour weekly seminar. Content ranges from general thematic overviews to detailed presentations of specialist research, and will include extensive visual illustration of key data. All seminars have weekly readings, which provide a focus for students to contribute actively to the discussion. Students will also be given more structured opportunities to present their views both visually and orally in class.

WORKLOAD
There will be 20 hours of seminars for this course. Students are expected to undertake around 120 hours of reading for the course, plus 40 hours preparing for and producing the assessed work. This adds up to a total workload of approximately 180 hours.

ASSESSMENT
This course is assessed by means of a total of 4000 words of coursework, divided into two essays of 2000 words each. Essay topics are normally to be chosen from the titles given at the end of each seminar summary, as below. If students are unclear about the nature of an assignment, or wish to propose an alternative title, they must contact the Course Co-ordinator in advance. The essential and recommended readings lists provided below are to be used as sources for writing the essay, but students are also encouraged to incorporate additional or alternative sources from their own reading. Please note: it is essential that students use the suggested essay question titles precisely as given and consult with the Co-ordinator if they wish to suggest any changes. Please remember to include the entire and exact title at the start of your essay.

SUBMISSION DATES FOR COURSEWORK:
Essay 1 7th November, 2018 [marked assignments to be returned in class on 16th November]
Essay 2 28th November, 2018 [marked assignments to be returned in class on 7th December]

Word-length
The following should not be included in the word-count: title page, contents pages, lists of figure and tables, abstract, preface, acknowledgements, bibliography, lists of references, captions and contents of tables and figures, appendices. Penalties will be imposed if you exceed the 2000 word limit by more than 100 words (for details, see the general Masters Handbook on the IoA Student Wiki – accessed via the IoA ‘Intranet’)
TEACHING SCHEDULE
Students following this course participate as a single group in course seminars and practicals. Seminars will be held 2pm – 4pm on Fridays, in room 209 (with the sole exception of Session 6, which will continue until 5pm to allow time for object handling)

COURSE SYLLABUS

Autumn Term

1. Egypt and the Near East in world history (D. Wengrow, 5th October)
2. Neolithic transformations: worlds of the earliest farmers (D. Wengrow, 12th October)
4. Holocene environments, climate change, and human impact (A. Bevan, 26th October)
5. Origins of cities and states (D. Wengrow, 2nd November)

(No session Thursday, 9th November: Reading Week)

6. Emergence, functions, and development of writing systems (R. Sparks, 16th November)
7. Commerce, cosmology, and sacrifice: the movement of goods (D. Wengrow, 23rd November)
8. Ancient empires and imperialism: current themes and perspectives (R. Sparks, 30th November)
10. Between archaeology and art history: the transmission of images (D. Wengrow, 14th December)

READING LISTS

For essential readings information is provided below as to where in the UCL library system they are available; the location and status (whether out on loan) of all readings can accessed on the eUCLid computer catalogue system. Please note that many readings from major journals are now also available electronically via JSTOR (http://www.jstor.org/) and other internet sources, to which you will have access via your college IS account. A full list of journals available from a UCL computer terminal is provided at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Library/ejournal/ejtitle.shtml and includes titles such as American Journal of Archaeology, Cambridge Archaeological Journal, Oxford Journal of Archaeology, World Archaeology, as well as many others. You may also find the ‘Google Scholar’ search engine useful in location material from books and journals (including some not on the UCL list), to which your college IS account will often give access.

The essential readings are those required to keep up with the topics covered in the course sessions, and it is expected that students will have read these prior to the session under which they are listed. Where permitted by copyright, every effort has been made to ensure that multiple copies of individual articles and chapters identified as essential reading are in the Teaching Collection of the Institute of Archaeology (TC), Science (STC) or Main (MTC) libraries, or are kept as reserved copies behind the issue desk of the Institute library (ISSUE DESK IOA). As a last resort the Course Co-ordinator (D. Wengrow) may also be consulted. Note: readings marked EGYPTOLOGY and YATES are located in the Institute library. Readings available electronically cannot be kept in the teaching collection, and are identified as ONLINE in the reading lists below.

Recommended readings are intended to provide a starting point for students to follow up particular issues in which they are interested and to give a broader range of references for those who want to write their essay on that particular topic. Again every effort has been made to ensure that these are present within the Institute library or another UCL library, or are accessible via the online list.

MOODLE

This course makes use of UCL’s online teaching resource: ‘Moodle’. At the start of the course please log on at: http://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/, and register for: ARCLG313: ‘Archaeology of Egypt and the Near East: A Comparative Approach’. Once registered you will find online materials such as weekly reading lists and lecture summaries that are available to you throughout your course, as well as links to important forms and documents. Moodle may also be used as a channel of communication between you and the Course Coordinator.
Seminar 1. Egypt and the ancient Near East in world history

Professor David Wengrow

Essential reading:

London: Penguin. (Introduction, pp.1-28) [STC 4167, HISTORY 6 a SAI, ANTHROPOLOGY D 7 SAI,
GEOGRAPHY H 26 SAI, SSEE S Misc.XVIII SAI]


Recommended sources for coursework:

Archaeology, ‘orientalism’ and the legacy of the Enlightenment


Biblical archaeology


And for a critical point of view on current controversies in Israeli-Palestinian archaeology, explore the website: http://alt-arch.org/en/

Egyptology and Assyriology


Archaeology 13: 222-239.

The comparison of ancient civilizations

Essay question
Is the ‘ancient Near East’ still a viable concept in the writing of world history?
Seminar 2. Neolithic transformations: the world of the earliest farmers

Professor David Wengrow

Essential reading:


Recommended courses for coursework:
Comparative and theoretical perspectives
(Read for general approach rather than factual details, some of which are now out of date)


Ecologies of early farming


**Beginnings of sedentary life in the Fertile Crescent: social, economic, and cognitive aspects**


**Cattle before crops? The Egyptian Neolithic**


The spread of farming: regional views


Trade and exchange in early Neolithic societies


Art and ritual in early Neolithic societies


Voigt, M.M. (2000) Çatal Höyük in context. Ritual and early Neolithic sites in central and

**Essay question**

How do you account for the broad spectrum of social, symbolic, and technological innovations that accompanied the adoption and spread of domesticates in the Middle East?
Seminar 3. Global villages: the later prehistory of the Middle East

Professor David Wengrow

Essential reading:


Recommended sources for coursework:

Key transformations in village life (c.7000-4000 BC)

General:


Specific:


Views from the field (Turkey and Syria)

Domuztepe:


Tell Kurdu:


Kenan Tepe:


Tel Zeidan:
Consult pdfs at Oriental Institute, Chicago website, starting in numerical order with: http://oi.uchicago.edu/pdf/08-09_Zeidan.pdf


The ‘breakdown’ and reconfiguration of early farming communities in the Levant (c.7000-4000 BC)


Essay question
Approximately 4000 years lie between the origins of farming and the earliest cities: why didn’t cities arise sooner in the Middle East?

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Seminar 4.  Holocene environments, climate change, and human impact

Prof. Andrew Bevan

Essential reading:


Try also to consult:


‘Human responses and non-responses to climatic variations during the last Glacial-Interglacial transition in the eastern Mediterranean,’ Quaternary Science Reviews 2017: 1-21. [ONLINE]

Rosen, A. M. (2007) Chapter 1, Holocene Climate and Society, pp. 1-16; and Chapter 9, Civilizing Climate, pp. 172-180 in Civilizing Climate: Social Responses to Climate Change in the Ancient Near East. Altamira, Lanham, MD. [INST ARCH DBA 100 ROS; ISSUE DESK IOA ROS 5; and ONLINE – consult Moodle website]

Recommended sources for case studies and coursework:


**Essay question:**
Why do some societies appear to “collapse” in the wake of abrupt climate change, while others continue on with no archaeological indications of disturbance? Is collapse a valid concept?
Seminar 5. Origins of cities and states: a comparative perspective

Essential reading:


Recommended sources for coursework:
For regional surveys see:


World systems theory: debating the ‘Uruk expansion’ in the fourth millennium BC


Secondary innovations in farming: contexts and consequences


Agriculture 8: 11-22.


Early urbanisation in Syro-Mesopotamia: economic and cultural aspects


The Early Bronze Age Southern Levant


Social and technological change in the Early Bronze Age of Western Anatolia


Mellink, M (1986) 'The Early Bronze Age in West Anatolia: Aegean and Asiatic Correlations'. In G. Cadogan (ed.) The End of the Early Bronze Age in the Aegean. Leiden, pp. 139-152.


Şahoğlu, V. (2004) 'Interregional contacts around the Aegean during the Early Bronze Age: new evidence from the Izmir Region' Anadolu/Anatolia 27: 97-120.


Egyptian state formation: internal process and external contacts (c.4000-2500 BC)


in Iraq, pp.207-35.

Essay question:

Summarise the different paths towards state formation followed in Egypt and Mesopotamia – how would you account for these differences?
Seminar 6.  Emergence, functions, and development of writing systems

Dr Rachael Sparks

This session will comprise a 50-minute introductory lecture, addressing the archaeological evidence for the emergence and use of writing in the Near East, then a 2 hour handling session, using material from the Institute of Archaeology’s Collections to explore concepts such as the materiality of ancient texts and their intended audiences. Please note that no food or drink will be allowed in the room during this part of the session.

In preparation, students are encouraged to read selectively from the list below, focussing on their primary areas and periods of interest, and at minimum the essential readings.

**Essential reading:**

Damerow, P. (1999) 'The Origins of Writing as a Problem of Historical Epistemology'. Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Pre-Print 114. (available to download at: [http://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/Preprints/P114.PDF](http://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/Preprints/P114.PDF))


**Recommended sources for coursework:**


**Earliest writing systems**


**Egypt**


**Mesopotamia and Iran**


Routledge, pp. 51-70. [INST ARCH DBB 100 POS; IOA ISSUE DESK POS 2].
[ONLINE].
[ONLINE].

**Anatolia, Cyprus and the Levant**


**Inception of alphabetic scripts**


**Writing in its ancient context: selected studies**


ARCH TC 3772],
See the essays on literary traditions in Anatolia [Archi, pp. 2367-2378], and Mesopotamia [Michalowski, Bottéro, pp. 2279-2303]. [DBA 100 SAS; MAIN ANCIENT HISTORY QUARTOS B5 SAS].

**Literacy**

Eyre, C. and Baines, J. (1989), 'Interactions between Orality and Literacy in Ancient Egypt'. In K. Schousboe and M.T. Larsen (eds.) *Literacy and Society*, Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, pp. 91-119. [MAIN ANCIENT HISTORY A72 SCH; ANTHROPOLOGY F10 SCH].

**Methodological and theoretical approaches to ancient texts**

Essay question:
How does the development of writing systems relate to wider patterns of social change? Discuss with reference to either the invention of the earliest writing systems, or the early development of alphabetic script.
Seminar 7. Commerce, cosmology, and sacrifice: the movement of goods

Professor David Wengrow

Essential reading:


Recommended sources for coursework:
For the mechanics of ancient Near Eastern economies, see the collected articles in:

For material culture and industries, see in general:

Specific readings:


**Essay question:**

How would you characterise the relationship between craft, ritual, and trade in ancient Egypt and the Near East?
Seminar 8.  Ancient empires and imperialism: themes and perspectives

Dr. Rachael Sparks

Essential:


Recommended:

Akkadian Empire


Egyptian Empire


Hittite Empire


Cohen, Y. 2005. 'Change and Innovation in the Administration and Social Practices of Emar during the Hittite Dominion', 24
Essay question
In what ways does the archaeological record provide a distinct perspective on the development and decline of ancient empires?

Professor David Wengrow

Essential:


Recommended sources for coursework:
Comparative/Theoretical Perspectives


Ethnicity in the material, written and visual records


Body, self and aesthetics in ancient Egypt and the Near East


Essay question
How might putting the body “centre-stage” in interpretation change current perceptions of any one process or theme in the archaeology of Egypt and/or the ancient Near East?

[Examples might include the origins of farming, state formation, literacy, trade, etc.: students undertaking this essay should consult with the programme co-ordinator about their choice of focus]
Seminar 10. Between archaeology and art history: the transmission of images

Professor David Wengrow

Essential:

For a brief, standard account of the major art traditions with which we are concerned, for those new to the topic:

And see also relevant entries in:

For the relationships between image transmission, cognition, and institutional change, with relevant case studies:

For a general theoretical perspective:

General background to the study of images (economy and society):

Recommended sources for coursework:
Egypt, Iran, and Mesopotamia: early connections through images

Bronze Age connections and contrasts


**Early Mediterranean art and the East**


**Essay question**

How important are interregional connections to understanding of the development of art in ancient Egypt and the Near East?
GENERAL COURSE READING LIST

Introductory readings in the archaeology, ancient history, art and literature of the study region

AKKERMANS, P.M.M.G. and SCHWARTZ, G.M. (2003) *The Archaeology of Syria: From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies, 16,000-300 BC*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (The first generally accessible survey of this region's archaeology in English)
INST ARCH DBB 100 AKK

EGYPTOLOGY QUARTOS A 2 BAI and ISSUE DESK IOA BAI 3


INST ARCH. DBA 610 DAL

INST ARCH DBA 300 FRA

INST ARCH DBA 100 KUH

INST ARCH DBE 100 LEV

INST ARCH DBB 100 POS

INST ARCH DBA 100 Qto ROA

SASSON, J.M. ed. (2000) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson. (Four volumes with contributions on a very wide range of topics—use selectively for areas with which you are less familiar)
INST ARCH DBA 100 SAS

INST ARCH DBA 100 WEN and ISSUE DESK

Advanced and interpretive studies of broad relevance to the course

BERNAL, M. (1987) *Black Athena. The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization. Volume 1* (The first volume of Bernal's highly controversial study should be read in conjunction with the essays in Lefkowitz and Rogers: 'Black Athena Revisited’; see below) INST ARCH DBA 200 BER and ISSUE DESK IOA BER 5

EGYPTOLOGY QUARTOS A 6 DAV and ISSUE DESK IOA DAV 5

INST ARCH BD FEI and ISSUE DESK IOA FEI 3

INST ARCH DBA 200 FRA
INST ARCH GC HOU

ANC HIST P72 LEF

INST ARCH AG MES

INST ARCH DBA 100 POL

POTTS, D. ed. 2012. A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East. Oxford: Blackwell. INST ARCH DBA 100 POT [also freely available to UCL students as an EBook, via the online catalogue]


SCIENCE 4167 and HISTORY 6 a SAI

SHERRATT, A. (1997) Economy and Society in Prehistoric Europe. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. (chapters 1, 3, 6, 7, 18, 20 provide a representative discussion of Sherratt's influential work on the 'secondary products revolution', the spread of farming, urbanisation and the history of archaeological thought)
INST ARCH DA 100 SHE

INST ARCH AH SMI

INST ARCH BC 100 TRI