ANTHRO 261:
OLD WORLD PREHISTORY: AGRICULTURE, RELIGION, AND EMPIRE
Fall 2008

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CLASS MEETS: MWF 1:15-2:05    Goodnow 105

This course is intended to consider important problems and processes in Old World prehistory and give an overview of the major developments starting with the Neolithic beginnings of agriculture. The emphasis will be on the title themes, concerning the development of complex societies and civilization, and the use of archaeology to understand the social as well as the technological aspects of past cultures. The Old World is too large to be completely covered, and we will try to present an overall framework, while focusing on particular issues and examples in several major areas of the world. In addition, you should come out with a reasonable idea of how archaeology is done and a view of archaeology as a scientific study of past human lives through material evidence.

Requirements
I would like to maintain a seminar atmosphere, and orient the course heavily toward discussion of readings. This means it is essential that you keep up, reading the assignment before the class for which it is listed. Participation in discussion will be considered in grading.

There will be 2 exams, one during the semester and one final. Each will be worth 25% of the grade. You will write a research paper on any relevant subject, due near the end of the semester, for 25%. The remainder of your grade will be based on class participation, and a brief written evaluation of a bronze tool.

Bronze Project
This semester we will try an unusual experiment. Technological change is an important part of prehistory, and experiments are one way of understanding this. We will have a set of Bronze Age tools cast, finish them, and do some wood-working with them. This will involve some out-of-class work meetings. You will not be expected to display any unusual craft skills, just to participate and think. At the end you will write a short discussion of the experiment and your tool.
Texts
Hodder, I.
2006 The Leopard’s Tale: Revealing the Mysteries of Catalhoyuk. Thames and Hudson, London.
Pryor, Francis
Carter, Howard, and A.C. Mace
Sandars, N.K.
Chang, K.C.

Readings
Most of the listed articles can be accessed on electronic reserve through the library. The password for accessing electronic reserves for ANT 261.01 is 2quau9
Many readings can also be found on PioneerWeb under our course, under “Documents”. A few will be handed out.

SYLLABUS

1 Friday 8/29
Introduction: Archaeology--anthropology of the dead.
Weekend - atlatls

2 Monday 9/1
Archaeological Methods, History of Archaeology.

Wednesday 9/3
Venison and Swamps: The Mesolithic in Europe.
Friday 9/5
Plants and Animals: Evidence for Domestication

3 Monday 9/8
First Farmers: Theories of Agricultural Beginnings.
READ: Binford, L. 1968 Post-Pleistocene Adaptations In Prehistoric Agriculture, S. Streuver ed, pp 22-49 (Skip or skim 22-26) or in New Perspectives in Archaeology, Binford and Binford eds.

Wednesday 9/10
Home on the Neolithic Farm: The Neolithic in the Middle East.
READ: Begin Hodder Leopard’s Tale Chaps 1 to 4.

Friday 9/12
The Early Town of Catal Huyuk
READ: Hodder Leopard’s Tale Chaps 5-8.

[SATURDAY --> CAHOKIA]

4 M 9/15
Better Homes and Gardens: Developed Neolithic.
READ: Finish Hodder Leopard’s Tale

Wednesday 9/17
Farmers on the Fringe?: Neolithic Europe.
Friday 9/19
Film: Nova: Return of the Iceman  [JW at Osage Knap-in]

5 Monday 9/22
Early Metallurgy.
READ: Tylecote, R.F. 1986 The Prehistory of Metallurgy in the British Isles, Chapters 2 (Copper and alloys) and 5 (Methods of Fabrication).

Wednesday 9/24
The Context of Stonehenge: Megalithic Europe
READ: Pryor, F. Flag Fen pages 1-71 (Neolithic)

Friday 9/26
Monuments and Landscapes

Weekend work session - Bronze

6 Monday 9/29
Modern Minds and Ancient Stones: The Meaning of Stonehenge
READ: Ellegard, A. 1981 "Stone Age Science in Britain?" Current Anthropology 22(2):99-126. (skim for main points, don't worry about astronomical detail)

Wednesday 10/1
Beakers and Battle Axes: Early Bronze Age Europe.
READ: Pryor, Flag Fen pages 72-98.

Friday 10/3
Metal and Metalworking
Weekend work session - Finish Axes

7 Monday 10/6
Meanings of Metal
READ: Pryor, Flag Fen - finish (160-177).

Wednesday 10/8
A Distant Lurker: Later Bronze Age Europe.

Friday 10/10
Trading and Raiding - Early Iron Age Europe.
Monument Building: Weekend Woodwork work session - use axes

8 Monday 10/13
Discussion of bronze + woodworking experiment

Wednesday 10/15
Iron Age People

Friday 10/17
READ: (ALL 3 IN Sabloff, J. and C.C.Lamberg Karlovsky, 1974, The Rise and Fall of Civilizations):
- Childe, V.G. "The Urban Revolution" pp 6-14
- Wittfogel, K. "Developmental Aspects of Hydraulic Societies" pp15-25

FALL BREAK FALL BREAK FALL BREAK (Sat 18-Sun 26)
9 Monday 10/27
Coercion or Cooperation: More Theories of Rise.
ASSIGN BIBLIO FOR RESEARCH PAPER

Wednesday 10/29
Mud Walls and Bronze Swords: Early Cities in the Middle East.
READ: Woolley, L. 1954 (1982) Excavations At Ur, Chaps 1,2,3 (pp. 19-103).

Friday 10/31
Two Thirds God and One Third Man: Sumerian Kings and Society.
READ: The Epic of Gilgamesh, ed by N.K.Sanders. (read the epic pp 61-119, skim the intro).
DUE -- PAPER ON AXES

10 Monday 11/3
Royal Propaganda, Accounts Payable, and the Word of God: What We Learn from Early Writings.
READ: Sumerian and other texts (Xerox)
READ: The Old Testament (any edition), Genesis 1-9:18
DUE -- BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR RESEARCH PAPER

Wednesday 11/5: EXAM I

Friday 11/7
Pharoahs and Floods: Egyptian beginnings.
11 Monday 11/10
Mummies, Scarabs, and "Wonderful Things": Royal Egypt.
READ: Carter and Mace The Tomb of Tutankhamen pages 1-85.

Wednesday 11/12
READ: Carter and Mace The Tomb of Tutankhamen pages 86-end.

Friday 11/14
Ancient Engineering, Modern Science, and Enduring Nonsense: What we learn from Pyramids.

12 Monday 11/17
Heiroglyphics and Homes

Wednesday 11/19
Gods, Heroes, and Archaeologists: The Mediterranean Bronze Age
READ: Ceram, C.W.1951 Gods, Graves, and Scholars pp. 29-68.

Friday 11/21
Rice, Millet, Pigs, and Chopsticks: Agriculture and the Beginnings of Civilization in China.

13 Monday 11/24
Knowledge is Power: China's Civilization and Empire.
READ: Chang Art, Myth and Ritual.

Wednesday 11/26 Jade Emperors and Clay Armies: China continued.
Kao, J.and Y.Zuosheng, 1983 "On Jade Suits and Han
THANKSGIVING THURSDAY/FRIDAY

14 Monday 12/1
Finish China

Wednesday 12/3
Obscure Beginnings on the Dark Continent: Africa
Hadza Film

Friday 12/5: Africa continued.

15 Monday 12/8: Africa continued.

Wednesday 12/10
Archaeology and Politics

Friday 12/12
DUE: RESEARCH PAPER

(FINAL AS SCHEDULED: Thursday, Dec 18, 9:00)