ARCHAEOLOGY 401
ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE NEAR EAST
Winter 2020

Instructor: Dr. Mary McDonald
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Office hours: Thursday 2:00-3:30 PM or by appointment
Lectures: TuTh 9:30-10:45 AM; ES 859.

Course description

This course is a survey of the prehistory of the Near East, starting with the earliest traces of human activity up to the Bronze Age. Geographically, the focus will be on the Levant and Greater Mesopotamia, although occasionally we will range from Egypt through Arabia to the Indus. We will examine current controversies such as the “Out of Africa” debate, and that surrounding the Middle-Upper Palaeolithic transition. For the latter part of the sequence, the emphasis will be on the beginnings of agriculture and village life, and the rise of cities and the state. Related topics to be touched upon include the history of archaeological research in the area, and the quality of evidence available for different times and places.

Course material will consist of formal lectures, a few films, and assigned readings from the accompanying list.

Course outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to

- Summarize the major chronological events that occurred in the Near East throughout Prehistory.
- Summarize debates surrounding successive migrations out of Africa, the nature of the Middle-Upper Palaeolithic transition, the beginnings of agriculture and village life, and the rise of cities and the state.
- Discuss features of the Near Eastern natural environment that may have helped shape the often precocious cultural developments occurring in the region throughout Prehistory.
- Identify (and locate on maps) major Near Eastern prehistoric sites, and recognize, from illustrations, diagnostic artifacts, features and architecture in the archaeological record.
- Outline the changes that occurred in chipped stone tools and technology throughout the prehistory of the Near East.
- Outline and critically evaluate some of the methods and techniques used by archaeologists in studying the Near Eastern prehistoric record.
- Evaluate the findings of academic articles on Near Eastern Prehistory.
- Write a research paper on some aspect of the Near Eastern prehistoric record.
Required Text:

There is no required text. Instead, you will be assigned readings each week from a list (see below). All are from journals available to you online through the university library.

Course evaluation:

- 20% First mid-term exam (Tuesday February 25)
- 30% Second mid-term exam (Thursday March 26)
- 10% Final quiz (Tuesday April 14)
- 5% Class participation
- 5% Abstract of research paper (due Tuesday March 3)
- 30% Research paper (due Tuesday March 17)

Note: there is no final exam in this course

Grading scheme (%):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>76.5-79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>66.5-69.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>60-62.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>55-59.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-54.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>49.5 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Description of Exams:

Exams are not cumulative. It is not essential to pass all components to pass the course as a whole. The use of computers in exams is not allowed.

Abstract of research paper:

A 100-word summary of your research paper in which you state your thesis or argument. Also, please provide 2 to 4 of your major references. Due Tuesday March 3, and worth 5 points.

Research paper:

A 10-12 page research paper, worth 30 points, is required. It is due on Tuesday March 17. Choose a topic that is appropriate to the course. A few possible topic areas are suggested below.

A research paper should involve on average at least one source per page of text, so at least 12 substantial sources (e.g. other than textbooks, encyclopedia articles), from scholarly journals, monographs or web sources. Also, you can use individual articles from the reading list. Use the referencing format found in American Antiquity, which you can find at www.saa.org/Publications/StyleGuide/styframe.html For a quick guide, check out the referencing format I use below in the Basic Reading List.

No plastic binders or holders, please! Number your pages and staple them together.
Also, of course, avoid plagiarism.

Suggested topic areas:
- A critical analysis of a major site that has been comprehensively published, such as ‘Ubeidiya, Tabun Cave, Boker Tachtit, Nabta Playa, Göbekli or Çatalhöyük.
- New approaches to the study of stone tools in Near Eastern Prehistory.
- Burials in the Middle Palaeolithic.
- Problems surrounding the Middle-Upper Palaeolithic transition.
- Role of environmental change in the switch to food production.
- Disease and/or dietary consequences of the Neolithic Revolution.

**Rough outline of weekly topics and readings:**

**Week 1:** Introduction. Modern climates and environments, time scales and frameworks.  
*Read:* Sherratt 1997.

**Week 2:** Stone tool classification.  
The Lower Palaeolithic.  

**Week 3:** The initial spread out of Africa (Out of Africa 1).  
The Middle Palaeolithic.  

**Week 4:** Emergence of modern human behavior.  
Out of Africa 2  
*Read:* Bower 2012; Groucutt et al. 2015; Gibbons 2017.

**Week 5:** Middle to Upper Palaeolithic transition.  
*Read:* Hershkovitz et al. 2015.

**Mid-Term Break**

**Week 6:** Upper Palaeolithic  
The Epipalaeolithic.  
1st mid-term exam: Tuesday February 25.

**Week 7:** The Natufian.  
The Neolithic: introduction.  

**Week 8:** The Neolithic: the early stages. PPNA  

**Week 9:** The Later Neolithic in the Levant: PPNB  
Week 10: The Later Neolithic (continued).
   Read: Arbuckle 2019.
   2nd mid-term exam: Thursday March 26

Week 11: The Neolithic beyond the Levant: the Taurus area, the Zagros, and elsewhere.

Week 12: Mesopotamia: moving towards complexity.
   Mesopotamia: features of the civilization.
   Read: Algaze 2001; Oates et al. 2007; Lawrence & Wilkinson 2015.

Week 13: Final quiz: Tuesday April 14.

Additional readings and sources:


A few search engines, web sites:

A good website for maps:

ArchAtlas [great visual discussions via satellite imagery & GIS, compiled by A. Sherratt & students; very good references].
http://www.archatlas.dept.shef.ac.uk/

EARTH [excellent resource for origins of agriculture & locations of early sites].

Çatalhöyük (Anatolia [Turkey]) http://catal.arch.cam.ac.uk/Catal/catal.html

Arky 401: Basic Reading list

All these items are from journals available to you online through the university library. Additional readings may be assigned from time to time.


**Academic misconduct**

The University expects Students to conduct Academic Activities with integrity and intellectual honesty and to recognize the importance of pursuing and transmitting knowledge ethically. “Academic Misconduct” includes such things as Cheating, Falsification; Plagiarism, Unauthorized Assistance and failure to comply with exam regulations or an Instructor’s expectations regarding conduct required of Students completing academic assessments. Academic Misconduct is a serious form of intellectual dishonesty with significant consequences. Students who participate in, or encourage the commission of, Academic Misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action which could include Probation, Suspension, or Expulsion from the University. For more information see the Student Academic Misconduct Policy ([https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf](https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf)).

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- As a formal accommodation as assessed by the Student Accessibility Services and only for individual private study and only at the discretion of the instructor.
- With the permission of the instructor, students without a formal accommodation may audio record lectures, provided that the student and instructor sign a release form available from departmental and faculty offices. A copy of the Release form shall be retained by the instructor and by the department in which the course is offered. Any audio recording by students is permitted only for the purposes of private study by the individual student. Students may not distribute, email or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person.
- For any other use, whether by duplication, transcription, publication, sale or transfer of recordings, written approval must be obtained from the instructor for the specific use proposed.
- Any use other than that described above (e.g. distributing, emailing or otherwise communicating these materials to any other person, constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion.
- Students are encouraged to make notes of classroom discussions, lectures, demonstrations etc.
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Academic Accommodations
It is the student’s responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies. Students requesting an Accommodation on the basis of Disability are required to register with Student Accommodation Services (SAS) by submitting a Request for Accommodation in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf). SAS will issue a Letter of Accommodation which must be presented to either designated contact person within the Department or the appropriate Instructors within 10 days of the beginning of term. Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

Copyright
All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Support and Resources:
Non-course-specific related information can be found on the Office of the Registrar’s website: https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines

Note: information here includes
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Safewalk