

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Spring 2011

Discipline: Anthropology

Course Title: Contemporary Archaeological Research and Exploration

Upper Division or Lower Division: Lower division

Faculty Name: Alexander J. Martín

COURSE DESCRIPTION

During the first half of the twentieth century archaeological exploration was mostly concerned with the ‘discovery’ of the world’s most impressive prehistoric monuments, tombs, and palaces. While this fascination with the “grandiose” ruins of the past provided us with plenty of useful information about past societies, it left some of the biggest questions surrounding the development of human society unanswered, including what truly separates us from our hominid ancestors? Why did humans developed art? How did we learn to domesticate plants? Why did cities, States, and Empires arise? Today, contemporary archaeologist have largely moved away from the exploration of ancient monuments as they attempt to tackle theses bigger issues, often requiring the design of astute research strategies to provide answers to these questions. This course explores some of the most significant contemporary archaeological projects currently underway throughout the world. It provides an opportunity to understand how researchers working in different places along the globe provide answers to important questions regarding human behavior and development. For example, the nature of our relation to non-human ancestors is explored using the tools left behind by European Neanderthals, the neolithic revolution is examined by investigating the excavations of Natufian Villages in the Near East. The transition to sedentism is explored using archaeological examples from Japan’s switch to agriculture, the development of states and empires are examined using archaeological examples from the Indus valley and Chinese civilizations, etc. The course will be further aided by being able to visit first hand several of the examples covered in class, including the seventh century ruins of *Mahabalipuram*, India.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students should gain from this course:

1. A broad understanding of the sequence of human cultural and social development from our early hominid ancestors to the most recent prehistoric empires.
2. An understanding of the principal motivating factors and research interests behind contemporary archaeological exploration.
3. An understanding of the scientific and empirical methods archeologists use when interpreting the past.
4. The ability to evaluate archaeological evidence and the interpretations of archaeologists.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Robert J. Wenke

TITLE: Patterns in Prehistory: humankind's first three million years

PUBLISHER: Oxford University press

ISBN #: ISBN-10: 019516928X ISBN-13: 978-0195169287

DATE/EDITION: 2006/5th edition

COST: 79.95

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Session	Date	Topic
1		<u>Introduction to Archaeology</u> Reading: -Wenke Ch. 2
2		<u>The Technology of our Earliest Ancestors:</u> Australopithecines and Oldowan Technology. Homo Erectus and the Acheulian Debate. Reading: -Wenke Ch. 4
3		<u>Neanderthals and the Meaning of Mousterian Variation</u> No readings
4		<u>The Upper Paleolithic and the Human Revolution:</u> Humans from Neanderthals or Humans vs. Neanderthals? The Meaning of Cave Art No readings
5		<u>Populating the Americas:</u> How did Humans Arrived to the Continent? Reading: -Wenke Ch. 5
6		<u>U.P. the Mesolithic Transition:</u> -Where are the Mastodons and what do we Eat Now? Reading: -Wobst 1977

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Test 1

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The Neolithic Revolution and Transition to Agriculture:

-Proposed Models (Europe, the Middle East, and Japan)

Reading:

-Wenke Ch. 6

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The Neolithic Revolution and Transition to Agriculture (cont.):

-Proposed Models (South East Asia, Egypt, And the Americas)

Reading:

-Voytek and Tringham 1985

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Actual Archaeological Evidence for the Agricultural Revolution

-Middle East: The Natufian Example (PPNA to PPNB)

-Problems with the Population Pressure Hypothesis

Readings:

-Zvelebil 1986

-Aikens et al. 1986

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The Effects of the Neolithic Revolution on Human Society

-Monumental Architecture

-Ancestor Veneration

-Property Rights

Reading:

-Wenke Ch. 7

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The Origins of Complex Societies in Egypt

Reading:

-Wenke Ch. 9

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The Origins of Complex Societies in the Indus Valley

Reading:

-Wenke Ch. 10

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The Origins of Complex Societies in China

Reading:

-Wenke Ch. 11

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Taxation and the Institutionalization of Power (Mesoamerica)

-Agriculture in Mesoamerica

-Tribute extraction

-The Institutionalization of Power

Readings:
-Steponaitis 1981

16 **Test 2**

17 The Development of Cities and of Urban Living (Mesoamerica cont.)

- The First American Metropolis: Teotihuacán
- Implications of City Life
- First Glimpses of the Instability of Complexity and Collapse

Reading:
-Wenke Ch. 13

18 The Origins of The State (Hawaii)

- Formation of the State, The Hawaiian Example
- Zipf's Law

Reading:
-Flannery 1999

19 The Development of Complex Societies in the Near East

- The Origin of Bureaucracy and State Power
- The State, Control of Production, and its Effect on Gender Roles

Reading:
-Wright and Johnson 1975
-Wenke Ch. 8

20 Social Complexity without Domestication? (South America)

- The Origin of Social Complexity in South America
- The Maritime Foundations of Andean Civilization

Reading:
-Wenke Ch. 14

21 Empires and their Expansive Agendas (The Incas)

- The Incas and their Empire
- The Effects of Imperial Domination (Better or Worse?)

Reading:
-Costin and Earle 1989

22 Political Strategies of Social Control (North America)

- The Mississippian Example
- The Iconography of Control
- Achieved versus Ascribed Status

-Social Diagramation
Reading:
-Wenke Ch. 15

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Final Exam

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS (*Twenty percent of the contact hours for each course is provided by field work.*)

Students will also visit one archaeological city as part of a Faculty-Directed Practica (FDP), the seven-century ruins of *Mahabalipuram*, just outside of Chennai, India. After the visit, they will be required to submit a brief (two to three pages) essay that highlights the types of information that these archaeological ruins provide us with regarding 7th century life in the Indus Valley. Students will be required to make explicit reference to concepts learned in class.

METHODS OF EVALUATION (Non-cumulative)

- 1) Exam 1.....**25%** (50 pts)
- 2) Exam 2.....**25%** (50 pts)
- 3) Final Exam.....**35%** (70 pts.)
- 4) Short essay on FDP.....**15%** (30 pts.)

Exams

Three exams will be given during the course of the semester that will test you on information provided in readings and lectures. Each exam will be a series of short essay questions. Each exam will consist of only the information covered in that section (i.e., no cumulative final).

Grades will be assigned according to the percentage of total points scored on the three exams. 97% and above = A+, 93-96% = A, 90-92% = A-, 87-89% = B+, 83-86% = B, 80- 82% = B-, 77-79% = C+, 73-76% = C, 70-72% = C-, 67-69% = D+, 63-66% = D, 60-62% = D-, 59% and below = F.

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

AUTHOR: Aikens, M., K. Ames and D. Sanger

ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Affluent collectors at the edges of Eurasia and North America: some comparisons and observations on the evolution of society among north-temperate coastal hunter-gatherers

JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Prehistoric Hunter-Gatherers in Japan* edited by T. Akazawa and C. Aikens, University of Tokyo
VOLUME:
DATE: 1986
PAGES: 3-26.

AUTHOR: Flannery, K. V.
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Process and Agency in Early State Formation
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*
VOLUME: 9(1)
DATE: 1999
PAGES: 3-21

AUTHOR: Costin, C. and T. K. Earle
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Status Distinction and Legitimation of Power as Reflected in Changing Patterns of Consumption in Late Prehispanic Peru
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *American Antiquity*
VOLUME: 54
DATE: 1989
PAGES: 691-714

AUTHOR: Steponaitis, V.
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Settlement Hierarchies and Political Complexity in Nonmarket Societies: The Formative Period of the Valley of Mexico
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *American Anthropologist*
VOLUME: 83(2)
DATE: 1981
PAGES: 320-363

AUTHOR: Voytek, B. and R. Tringham
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Rethinking the Mesolithic: The case of South-East Europe
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *The Mesolithic in Europe*, edited by C. Bonsall and J. Donald, Edinburgh
VOLUME:
DATE: 1985
PAGES: 492-499

AUTHOR: Wobst, H. M.
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: *Stylistic behavior and information exchange*
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: University of Michigan, Museum of Anthropology Anthropological Paper 61
VOLUME: 61
DATE: 1977

PAGES: 317-342

AUTHOR: Wright, H. and G. Johnson

ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Population, Exchange, and Early State Formation in SW Iran

JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *American Anthropologist*

VOLUME: 77

DATE: 1975

PAGES: 267-289

AUTHOR: Zvelebil, Marek

ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Mesolithic Societies and the Transition to Farming: Problems of Time, Scale, and Organization

JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Hunters in Transition: Mesolithic Societies of Temperate Eurasia and their Transition to Farming*, edited by M. Zvelebil, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

VOLUME:

DATE: 1986

PAGES: 167-188

LIST OF CLASS READINGS FOR SYLLABUS

Aikens, M., K. Ames and D. Sanger

1986 Affluent collectors at the edges of Eurasia and North America: some comparisons and observations on the evolution of society among north-temperate coastal hunter-gatherers. In *Prehistoric Hunter-Gatherers in Japan*, edited by T. Akazawa and C. Aikens, pp. 3-26. University of Tokyo.

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1999 Process and Agency in Early State Formation. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 9(1):3-21.

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- Wright, H. and G. Johnson
1975 Population, Exchange, and Early State Formation in SW Iran. *American Anthropologist* 77:267-289.
- Zvelebil, M.
1986 Mesolithic Societies and the Transition to Farming: Problems of Time, Scale, and Organization. . In *Hunters in Transition: Mesolithic Societies of Temperate Eurasia and their Transition to Farming*, edited by M. Zvelebil, pp. 167-188. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.