

Archaeology and Ancient Civilizations (116.207B)
Syllabus—Spring 2013

Room 06-106
Wednesdays 10:00-13:00

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Office Hours: Wed, Thur 9:00-10:00
Appointments welcome

This course will offer you a comparative introduction to world civilizations beginning with the evolutionary foundations of human society. We will discuss the methods that archaeologists use to reconstruct the human past and discuss the evidence for our ancestral roots in a global context. We will examine models of social complexity culminating with discussions of some of the marquis prehistoric civilizations.

There will be facts and places for you to memorize for this class, but I am primarily interested in your ability to critically evaluate the mechanisms of syncretic change in human societies. I want you to gain a familiarity with world cultures and you will also gain insight into Korean social development from these perspectives.

There is one textbook for the class:

Chazan, Michael
2011 *World Prehistory and Archaeology*. Pearson Publishers.

I will assist you in getting the reading material you need for this class. I reserve the option to assign supplemental readings for each week as necessary. There will be weekly quizzes on the readings, two exams and one 3-4 page “thought essay” in which you will be expected to compose an essay based on a class field trip to the National Museum of Korea.

Grading: Weekly quizzes (35%), Thought essay (10%); Midterm exam (25%); Final exam (30%)

Thought Essay: On April 3, we will take a class field trip to the National Museum of Korea. I will provide you with a list of questions that you should take notes on when we are in the museum. You will then be expected to write a 3-4 page (double space, 12 point font) essay that incorporates the class themes as they apply to social developments on the Korean peninsula. The essay will be broad and the general topic will be what the nature of the evidence is for the evolution of social and political complexity from the Neolithic (Chulman/Mumun Periods) through the Bronze Age and historic Joseon Dynasty.

Weekly quizzes: Each week, I will hand out a quiz, which will have 4 or 5 questions totaling 5 points. I will grade the quizzes and return them by the following week. There will be a total of 12 quizzes (you will not have a quiz on the days of exams) and you will be allowed to drop your lowest quiz score. If you miss a class period due to illness, you can drop that quiz. There will be no makeup quizzes.

Exams: There will be two in-class exams. You will not pass the exams unless you are in class and taking good notes and complete all of the assigned readings (I strongly recommend that you take notes on the readings as well). The first portion of the exam will be in a multiple choice and short answer format and will require you to have memorized facts about the readings and class discussions. When you have answered these questions, you will turn it in to me at the front of the class, and you will collect the

essay question portion of the exam. For this portion of the exam, I will allow you to use as many **handwritten** notes that you can fit onto **two pages** of A4 paper (front and back). You will not be allowed to use a computer, mobile phone, personal data device or any printed material whatsoever. ***I will walk around the class periodically to ensure that you do not abuse this rule. Extra material, if found, will be confiscated, and your examination will be graded as a 0.*** Because you are allowed to have notes, I will expect that you will give me a well-thought out essay.

Class outline:

Class 1 (March 6): Class Introduction.

- DISCUSSION: Brief introduction to world prehistory and topics pertaining to the class
- We will review the syllabus and ensure that everyone has access to the reading material for the class.
- Read for March 13: Chazan Chapters 1 and 2

Class 2 (March 13): Archaeological methods and the history of the discipline

- DISCUSSION: Limitations of understanding the past and the emergence of archaeological sciences
- Read for March 20: Chazan Chapter 3, 4, and 5

Class 3 (March 20): Humanity's earliest ancestors

- DISCUSSION: Hominid evolution, tool production and hominid dispersal across Africa and beyond
- Read for March 27: Chazan Chapter 6 and Appenzeller (2012) Eastern odyssey. *Nature* 485:24-26.

Class 4 (March 27): Colonization of the planet

- DISCUSSION: Bottlenecks and dispersions
- Read for April 3: Rhee and Choi (1992) Emergence of complex society in prehistoric Korea. *Journal of World Prehistory* 6:51-95 AND Jones (2013) The ritual animal. *Nature* 493: 470-472.

Class 5 (April 3): ***Class field trip to the National Museum of Korea.***

- No quiz, but you will need to read the essay to answer questions from your thought essay.
- DISCUSSION: Museum tour and discussion points will be provided to you as a handout.
- Read for April 10: Chazan Chapter 7

Class 6 (April 10): First sprouts of urbanism (Mesopotamia)

- **Thought essay due!** Email it to Prof. Wright before 10:00 am on April 10.
- DISCUSSION: Human adaptations during climate change
- Read for April 17: Chazan Chapter 8

Class 7 (April 17): Crops before cities (Mesoamerica)

- DISCUSSION: Political complexity with low populations
- NO READING—Study for the midterm exam!

Class 8 (April 24): MIDTERM EXAM

- Read for May 1: Chazan Chapter 9 and Bellwood (2001) Early agriculturalist population diasporas? Farming, languages and genes. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30:181-207.

Class 9 (May 1): Neolithic transitions

- DISCUSSION: Advanced storage and subsistence diversification
- Read for May 8: Chazan Chapter 10 and watch the following movie:
<http://www.archaeologychannel.org/video-guide/video-guide-menu/video-guide-summary/137-uncovering-ancient-st-louis>

Class 10 (May 8): Non-state social complexity

- DISCUSSION: Chiefdoms and social stratification
- Read for May 15: Chazan Chapters 11 and 12

Class 11 (May 15): Early states of Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean

- DISCUSSION: Early states: Parallels and divergences
- Read for May 22: Chazan Chapter 13

Class 12 (May 22): Empires of Mesoamerica

- DISCUSSION: Gods in the heavens and lords on earth
- Read for May 29: Chazan Chapter 14

Class 13 (May 29): Empires of the Andes

- DISCUSSION: Redistribution in the potato economy
- NO READING—Watch a video that pertains to an ancient civilization in order to present a 5-minute summary of it to the class answering the following questions:
 - Which ancient civilization was discussed in the video you watched? What is the location and dates that it occurred?
 - How did the video you watch relate to the themes we have discussed in this class?
 - Pick another civilization from a different part of the world and tell the class how the civilization from your video was similar or differed from it.
 - You can pick your video from one of the following sources:
 - http://archaeology.about.com/od/videos/Archaeology_Videos.htm
 - <http://www.archaeologychannel.org/video-guide/video-guide-menu/video-guide-list>
 - <http://archaeosoup.com/>
 - <http://www.pasthorizons.tv/>
 - <http://cnx.org/content/m19527/latest/>

Class 14 (June 5): Review

- DISCUSSION: Present your 5-minute summary of the video you watched. Be sure to relate your discussion to the questions asked! (This counts as a quiz)
- Class summary and review for the final exam
- NO READING—Study for final exam

Class 15 (June 12): FINAL EXAM