



HS/AE 250 MEDITERRANEAN HISTORY AND HERITAGE, FROM HUMAN ORIGINS TO CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS

IES Abroad Barcelona

DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the history, nature and complexity of human interactions across the Mediterranean, from the dawn of humanity in Africa until the fall of the Western Roman Empire. The course will also examine the threats to this heritage posed by contemporary issues such as climate change and the growth of tourism. The course is designed around eight separate modules or themes, focusing on key issues that define the historical trajectory, such as human evolution, the Neolithic revolution, the rise of urbanism in Mesopotamia and Egypt, and the classical world represented by ancient Greece and Rome.

The intention of the course is to explore these phenomena, not only as a historical process, but as a way to understand and assess today's Western culture, economics and politics. Taking advantage of the situation of the Mediterranean region, the course aims to discuss also more intriguing issues in human history, such as what make us human, to figure out the role of women in human history, to explore the origins of urbanism, to discuss the nature of democracy and citizenship, to establish the effects of commercial and colonialist encounters, to explore curiosities of ancient daily life, and to understand why cultural heritage plays an important role in the construction of contemporary society.

As part of this exploration, the course will analyze how this Mediterranean heritage is presented to the general public through cinema, exhibitions, and displays in archaeological museums. The course also includes course-related trips to museums and archaeological sites in Barcelona so as to provide a first-hand encounter with monuments and material culture.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

INSTRUCTOR: Marga Forner

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Class participation – 10%
- Midterm Exam - 20%
- Research paper – 30%
- Group project presentation – 20%
- Final Exam – 20%

COURSE ELEMENTS

Class participation. The student should be able to:

- to actively take part in class discussion and proposed activities
- to generate his/her own thoughts on the subject discussed.



Midterm Exam

Students will be tested on material presented in the first half of the course. The exam will involve a series of multiple choice and short answer questions relating to the archaeology and history of the Mediterranean region.

Research paper

Students will conduct an individual research paper related to class themes. All assignments must be handed in on the due date. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE MARKED.

Group project presentation

Working in groups, students should be able to research new (academic) information on an unknown subject:

- to write and summarize this new information in a logical and coherent order so the research can be understandable by a non-specialist.
 - to be able to use archaeological and historical data (examples) to support this work
- to organize the research into a coherent presentation and communicate this to the class.

Final Exam

Students will be tested on material presented in the second half of the course. The exam will involve a series of multiple choice and short answer questions relating to the archaeology and history of the Mediterranean region. This exam will also include questions meant to prove that the student has understood the main issues, ideas and information of the prehistory and ancient history of the Mediterranean basin and its contemporary cultural, economic and political legacy.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures: Students gain an overview of course content and have the opportunity to become involved with the subject matter, and to clarify issues.

Course Reader: this comprises a selection of recommended readings to complement class lectures and is chosen to develop a general understanding of the subject matter. Additional readings may be added to the course to track any new or significant developments in the subject matter.

Class activities: individual exercises and group activities carried out in the classroom aimed at applying the theoretical content of the sessions

Course-related trips: These are classes on site in which the students are able to experience at first hand archaeological and historical materials.

Research/writing/presentation project guides: Reading and writing analytical skills will be provided in order to help students accomplish the course aims and objectives

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- to summarize the historical evolution of the Mediterranean region from the dawn of humanity until the fall of the Roman Empire.
- to identify the main social, economic, and political phenomena in prehistory and ancient history.
- to stimulate critical thinking about past phenomena and compare them to today's Western culture.
- to develop research skills applied to a specific topic related to the Mediterranean prehistory.
- to interweave the three above points (theory, facts and opinion) in order to build a better image of the Mediterranean prehistory and ancient history in relation to today's Europe society and culture.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad classes, including course-related trips. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. If a student misses more than three classes in any course 3 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Seven absences in any course will result in a failing grade.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments
#1	Course presentation. What do we think and know about the Mediterranean?	
#2	What is the Mediterranean? Defining the Mediterranean and its biophysical and cultural identity.	Recommended readings: Braudel (2001)
#3	What are the cultural and historical trademarks of the Mediterranean? Brief introduction to the history of the Mediterranean. Identifying and locating geographically and chronologically the Mediterranean cultures heritage across time.	Recommended readings: Braudel (2001)
#4	What was the role of the sea in creating a Mediterranean culture? . Course-related trip to the Maritime Museum of Barcelona	
#5	What were the first settlers in the Mediterranean? From Africa to the Mediterranean. The first human occupations of the Mediterranean, the presence of Neanderthals and modern humans.	Recommended readings: Mellars (2004)
#6	How was life in the Mediterranean during the Paleolithic? Hunter gatherers and cave art in the Mediterranean.	Recommended readings: Fritz et al (2016)
#7	How did the Neolithic Revolution transform the population of the Mediterranean? The evolution of hunting gathering communities to sedentary farming communities.	Recommended readings: Diamond (2002)
#8	Where is the origin of the first cities in the Mediterranean? The urbanization process, from villages to cities in the Near East. Çatal Höyük: the dawn of urban civilization.	Recommended readings: Soja (2000)
#9	Where do Mediterranean populations come from? From East to West, the Neolithic expansion. Genetic archaeology and ancient migrations.	
#10	Mediterranean Prehistory of Barcelona and Catalonia. Course-related trip to the Museum of History of Catalonia or to the Egyptian Museum	
#11	What were the first Mediterranean civilizations? Part 1. Politics, religion and water The rise and fall of the Mesopotamian civilization.	Recommended readings: Chadwick (2005)
#12	What were the first Mediterranean civilizations? Part 2. Politics, religion and water. The rise and fall of Egyptian civilization.	Recommended readings: Chadwick (2005)
#13	What caused the rise and disappearance of the Minoan palaces? Complex societies in the Eastern Mediterranean: Crete and the Minoan palaces; Talaiotic culture in the Balearic islands.	Recommended readings: Day (2018)

Session	Content	Assignments
#14	Who were the Mycenean? The Mycenaean world: between history and legend. The Tartessian communities in the south of Spain.	Recommended readings: Day (2018); Wardle (2001)
#15	What Mediterranean myths prevail in our societies and culture? The role of Mediterranean mythology in shaping past and present cultural life.	Recommended readings: Wardle (2001)
#16	Midterm Exam	
#17	How was life in Greek polis? The life, economic and social structure of Classic Greek cities, the poleis.	Recommended readings: Westgate (2007)
#18	How invented democracy? Politics in Classic Athens and the invention of democracy.	Recommended readings: Ober (2008)
#19	What is the legacy of Classical Greek? Artistic, scientific, philosophical and mathematical legacy of Ancient Greece.	
#20	What was the legacy of Alexander the Great? War in Ancient Greece and Hellenistic Period	Recommended readings:
#21	Who were the Romans? Part 1. The origins of Rome, the Republic and the rise of a Mediterranean	Recommended readings: Beard (2015); Antonio et al (2019)
#22	Who were the Romans? Part 2. The origins of Rome, the Republic and the rise of a Mediterranean	Recommended readings: Beard (2015); Antonio et al (2019)
#23	What caused the rise and fall of the Roman Empire? Roman militarism, the provinces and the fall of the Empire.	Recommended readings: Beard (2015); Antonio et al (2019)
#24	How was life in a cosmopolitan Roman city? Everyday life in Ancient Rome.	Recommended readings: Beard (2015); Antonio et al (2019)
#25	Barcino. Course-related trip to the Roman city of Barcino.	
#26	What is the future of the Mediterranean?	Recommended readings: Roqué (2018)
#27	Group presentations	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Museum of History of Catalonia or to the Egyptian Museum
- Roman city of Barcino

REQUIRED READINGS:

All readings are available on the Moodle course web site.

- Antonio, M. L. et alii (2019). Ancient Rome: A genetic crossroads of Europe and the Mediterranean. *Science*, 366 (6466), 708-714.
- Beard, M. (2015). Why ancient Rome matters to the modern world. *The Guardian*. Books section/oct/02
- Braudel, F. (2001). *Memory and the Mediterranean*. London: Vintage, 2001, pp. 3-16.
- Chadwick, R. (2005). *First Civilizations. Ancient Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt*. London: Equinox, 14-32
- Day, J. (2018). Archaeology of Crete. *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology*. Springer International Publishing AG
- Diamond, J. (2002). Evolution, consequences and future of plant and animal domestication. *Nature*, 418 (6898), 700-707.
- Fritz, C. et alii (2016). Reflections on the identities and roles of the artists in European Paleolithic societies. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 23 (4), 1307-1332
- Mellars, P. (2004). Neanderthals and the modern human colonization of Europe. *Nature*, 432 (7016), 461-465.
- Ober, J. (2008). What the ancient Greeks can tell us about democracy. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11, 67-91.
- Soja, E. (2000). Putting Cities First: remapping the origins of urbanism. Gary Bridge & Sophie Watson (Eds.) *A Companion to the City*. London: Blackwell, pp. 26-34
- Wardle, D. (2001). *Cities of Legend. The Mycenaean World*. London: Bristol Classical Press: 1-26.
- Westgate, R. (2007). The Greek house and the ideology of citizenship. *World Archaeology*, 39 (2), 229-245.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

All readings are available on the Moodle course web site.

- Belozerskaya, M. (2010). The Fist Tourist. *History Today*, 60(3), 26-32.
- Childe, V. G. (1950). The urban revolution. *The Town Planning Review*, 21(1), 3-17.
- Dumser, E. (2013). The urban topography of Rome. In P. Erdkamp (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome*, 131-150
- Friedrich, W. L. (2013). The Minoan Eruption of Santorini around 1613 BC and its consequences. *Tagungen des Landesmuseums für Vorgeschichte Halle*, 9(2013), 37-48.
- Fulford, M. (1992). Territorial expansion and the Roman Empire. *World Archaeology*, 23(3), 294-305.
- Johannsen, N. N., Larson, G., Meltzer, D. J., & Vander Linden, M. (2017). A composite window into human history. *Science*, 356 (6343), 1118-1120.
- Molleson, Th. (1994). The eloquent bones of Abu Hureyra. *Scientific American*, 271(2), 70-75.
- Olsen, D. (1991). Classical mythology. *The Classical World*, 84 (4), 295-301.
- Orsini, G. (2015). Lampedusa: From a Fishing Island in the Middle of the Mediterranean to a Tourist Destination in the Middle of Europe's External Border. *Italian Studies*, 70:4, 521-536
- Pop, D. (2013). Mythology Amalgamated. The Transformation of the Mythological and the Re-appropriation of Myths in Contemporary Cinema. *Ekphrasis. Images, Cinema, Theory, Media*, 10(2), 10-25.
- Rodà, Isabel. (2002) Barcelona. From its foundation up to the 4th century AD. In Julia Beltrán de Heredia (Ed.), *The Archaeological Remains of Plaça del Rei in Barcelona*, 17-31
- Santos Da Rosa, N., Fernández-Macías, L., Mattioli, T., & Díaz-Andreu, M. (2021). Dance scenes in levantine rock art (Spain): a critical review. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 40(4), 342-366.
- Sherratt, E. S. (1990). 'Reading the texts': archaeology and the Homeric question. *Antiquity*, 64 (245), 807-824.
- Stirling, L. (2006). Art, architecture, and archaeology in the Roman Empire. In P. Erdkamp (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome*, 75-97
- Tanner, J. (2001). Nature, culture and the body in classical Greek religious art. *World Archaeology*, 33(2), 257-276.
- Vlassopoulos, K. (2007). *Unthinking the Greek polis*. Cambridge University Press.



• Wenke, R. J. (1989). Egypt: Origins of complex societies. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 18(1), 129-155 • Zeder, M. A. (2008). Domestication and early agriculture in the Mediterranean Basin: Origins, diffusion, and impact. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 105(33), 11597-11604.