ANTHRO 261:  
OLD WORLD PREHISTORY: AGRICULTURE, RELIGION, AND EMPIRE  
Fall 2015

Prof. John Whittaker  
Office: Goodnow 207   Phone: -3447  
CLASS MEETS: MWF 11:00-11:50 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 Mesolithic hunter-gatherers and 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 important or famous 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. Resign yourself to doing a lot of reading, although the books are intentionally non-technical.

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 our bronze tool project.

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 axes 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**

**Elphinstone, Margaret**  

**Milner, Nicky, Barry Taylor, Chantal Conneller, and Tim Schadla-Hall**  
2013 *Star Carr: Life in Britain after the Ice Age*. Council for British Archaeology, York.

**Hodder, Ian**  

**Parker Pearson, Mike**  

**Carter, Howard, and A.C. Mace**  

**Sandars, N.K.**  

**Connah, Graham**  

**Readings**

Most of the listed articles can be accessed on electronic reserve through PioneerWeb, where some appear under Documents and others in Library Resources when you find the course. A few will be handed out. I use a lot of books to reduce dependence on reserves, with their restrictive and exploitative copyright policies. Most books can be bought used at our bookstore or online.

**SYLLABUS**

1 **Friday 8/28**

Introduction: Archaeology--anthropology of the dead.  
READ: *Star Carr: Life in Britain After the Ice Age*, pp. 1-42,  
Start reading *Gathering Night*

Weekend - ATLATLS

2 **Monday 8/31**

Archaeological Methods, History of Archaeology.  
READ: *Star Carr* pp. 24-95.  
READ: start reading *Gathering Night* if you haven’t already
Wednesday 9/2
Venison and Swamps: Mesolithic Archaeology in Europe.
    READ: Continue Gathering Night

Friday 9/4
Plants and Animals: Evidence for Foraging and Domestication
    READ: Perkins, D. and Daly, G. 1968, A Hunters Village in Neolithic Turkey, Scientific American 219(5).

3 Monday 9/7
The Archaeological Imagination: Novels and Site Reports
    READ: By now you should have finished Gathering Night for class discussion

Wednesday 9/9
First Farmers: Theories of Agricultural Beginnings.

Friday 9/11 consider cancel if go to Cahokia Thurs or Fri
Home on the Neolithic Farm: The Neolithic in the Middle East.
    READ: Begin Hodder Leopard’s Tale Chaps 1 to 4.
Weekend: Cahokia

4 Monday 9/14
The Early Town of Catal Huyuk
    READ: Hodder Leopard’s Tale Chaps 5-8.

Wednesday 9/16
Better Homes and Gardens: Developed Neolithic.
READ: Finish Hodder *Leopard’s Tale*

**Friday 9/18**
Farmers on the Fringe: Neolithic Europe.

**5 Monday 9/21**
Early Metallurgy.
READ: Tylecote, R.F. 1986 *The Prehistory of Metallurgy in the British Isles*, Chapters 2: Copper and alloys (Optional) and 5: Methods of Fabrication.

**Wednesday 9/23**
The Context of Stonehenge: Megalithic Europe
READ: *Stonehenge* Chapters 1-4

**Friday 9/25** **Osage/Bois D’Arc Knap-in:** Whittaker gone
STONEHENGE FILM

**6 Monday 9/28**
Monuments and Landscapes
READ: *Stonehenge* Chapters 5-11

**Evening Work sessions all week, to be arranged - preparing Bronze Axes**

**Wednesday 9/30**
Modern Minds and Ancient Stones: The Meaning of Stonehenge
READ: *Stonehenge* Chapters 12-16

**Friday 10/2**
Beakers and Battle Axes: Early Bronze Age Europe.
READ: Finish Stonehenge, Chapters 17-21

**Weekend work session - Finish Axes**

**7 Monday 10/5**
Meanings of Metal
Bronze Dagger + experiments

**Wednesday 10/7**
A Distant Lurer: Later Bronze Age Europe.

**Friday 10/9**
Trading and Raiding - Early Iron Age Europe.

**Monument Building: Weekend Woodwork work session - use axes**

**8 Monday 10/12**
Discussion of bronze + woodworking experiment

**Wednesday 10/14**
Iron Age People
READ: (Online) Bodies of the Bogs, Archaeology Magazine Archive URL: [http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/bog/index.html](http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/bog/index.html) (several short articles)

**Friday 10/16 Plains Conference, NO Class**

**FALL BREAK FALL BREAK! FALL BREAK!! (Sat Oct 17-Sun 25)**

**9 Monday 10/26**
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
ASSIGN BIBLIO FOR RESEARCH PAPER
Wednesday 10/28
Coercion or Cooperation: More Theories of Rise.

Friday 10/30
Mud Walls and Bronze Swords: Early Cities in the Middle East.

DUE -- PAPER ON AXES

10 Monday 11/2
Two Thirds God and One Third Man: Sumerian Kings and Society.
(read the epic pp 61-119, skim the intro).

DUE -- BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR RESEARCH PAPER

Wednesday 11/4
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 Chapters 1-9

Friday 11/6: EXAM 1

11 Monday 11/9
Pharoahs and Floods: Egyptian beginnings.

Wednesday 11/11
Mummies, Scarabs, and "Wonderful Things": Royal Egypt.
READ: Carter and Mace *The Tomb of Tutankhamen* pages 1-85.
by JP Brown, Conservator.

**Friday 11/13**
READ: Carter and Mace *The Tomb of Tutankhamen* pages 86-end.

**12 Monday 11/16**
Ancient Engineering, Modern Science, and Enduring Nonsense: What we learn from Pyramids.

**Wednesday 11/18**
Hieroglyphics and Homes

**Friday 11/20**
Gods, Heroes, and Archaeologists: The Mediterranean Bronze Age
READ: Ceram, C.W.1951 *Gods, Graves, and Scholars* pp. 29-68.

**13 Monday 11/23**
Rice, Millet, Pigs, and Chopsticks: Agriculture and the Beginnings of Civilization in China.

**Wednesday 11/25**
Knowledge is Power: China's Civilization and Empire.

**Friday 11/27 NO Class - Thanksgiving**

**14 Monday 11/30**
Jade Emperors and Clay Armies: China continued.
READ: Kao, J. and Y. Zuosheng, 1983 On Jade Suits and Han Archaeology. *Archaeology*
36(6):30-37.

**Wednesday 12/2**  
Obscure Beginnings on the “Dark Continent”: Africa  
Hadza Film  
READ: Connah pp 1-38

**Friday 12/4:** Africa continued.  
READ: Connah pp. 39-100

**15 Monday 12/7:** Africa continued.  
READ: Connah pp. 101-179

**Wednesday 12/9**  
Archaeology and Politics  
EXPLORE current news of ISIS destruction of archaeological sites, e.g.  

**Friday 12/11**  
**DUE: RESEARCH PAPER**

FINAL AS SCHEDULED: Thursday Dec 17, 9:00