

Archaeology of Complex Societies

Code: 100728
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500241 Archaeology	OT	3	0
2500241 Archaeology	OT	4	0

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Prerequisites

There are no special prerequisites.

Objectives and Contextualisation

1. Define the notion of "complexity" applied to societies studied by archaeology, and its connection with other social typologies: "High Cultures", "Civilizations", "Urban Societies", "Stratified Societies", "State Societies", "Developed Societies". Attention will be paid to the economic and political-ideological relationships involved in these societies.
2. Present the theoretical positions and the most used methodologies for the archaeological research of societies considered "Complexes", "Civilizations" or "Developed Societies".
3. Presenting and analysing some cases of prehistoric societies, object of studies from archaeology, that illustrate diverse conditions of reproduction of social life, in different geographies and historical times, to review how current knowledge has been generated.

Competences

- Archaeology
- Contextualizing and analysing historical processes.
 - Developing critical thinking and reasoning and communicating them effectively both in your own and other languages.
 - Managing the main methods, techniques and analytic tools in archaeology.
 - Providing a context for the concepts of archaeological theory and its origin and distinguishing the main epistemological and methodological debates in social sciences.
 - Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
 - Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethic relevant issues.
 - Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.

- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.

Learning Outcomes

1. Applying both knowledge and analytical skills to the resolution of problems related to their area of study.
2. Applying proper techniques and analytical tools in case studies.
3. Autonomously searching, selecting and processing information both from structured sources (databases, bibliographies, specialized magazines) and from across the network.
4. Critically assessing the sources and theoretical models.
5. Critically taking part in classroom oral debates and using the discipline's specific vocabulary.
6. Identifying the characteristic methods of Archaeology and its relationship with the historical analysis.
7. Identifying the context of the historical processes.
8. Interpreting material sources and the archaeological record.
9. Mastering the diachronic structure of the past.
10. Mastering the processes of change produced in Prehistory.
11. Preparing an oral and written discourse in the corresponding language in a proper and organized way.
12. Transmitting the results of archaeological research and clearly communicating conclusions in oral and written form to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.

Content

1. Concepts and conceptual keys.

Basic notions about "complex" social forms.

- Complexity". Division of social labor, systems theory and information theory.

- "High Cultures". Cultural historicism and historical supremacism.

- "Civilizations". Social Evolution and "Urban Revolution".

- "Stratified societies". Social hierarchies and exploitation among collectives.

- "Developed Societies". Technical Progress and Economic Growth.

2. Archeology of the economic, political and ideological dimensions of "complexity".

Concepts and categories of the different spheres of social life, with cases of study.

- Economic dimensions. Surplus and accumulation. Social division and specialization of labor.

- Hierarchical relational dimensions. Social classes, exploitation, patriarchal domination.

- Political dimensions. Centralization and power Violence and coercion. States and other political forms.

- Ideological and symbolic dimensions. Signs, communication, "art", writing. Rules and styles.

- Inter-regional relational dimensions. "World-systems" and center-periphery relations. Uneven development

Methodology

1. Lectures on the contents of the syllabus. Frequent discussion of topics in the classroom.
2. Exposition of course works on concrete cases, and debate and comments in the classroom.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Theoretical classes	45	1.8	10, 9, 7, 6, 5
Type: Supervised			
Practical classroom activities	15	0.6	2, 1, 4, 3, 11, 7, 6, 8, 5, 12

Assessment

1. A written course work, individually or in a group, about a case study. Reassessable.
2. An exhibition in class of the contents of the course work on a case study.
2. Short individual essay around a question related to the topics developed in class.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Individual essay	25	10	0.4	1, 4, 3, 11, 12
Public exhibition and debate	25	20	0.8	4, 11, 5, 12
Written thematic course work	50	60	2.4	2, 1, 4, 3, 10, 9, 11, 7, 6, 8, 5, 12

Bibliography

Basic bibliography

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