

History and Civilisation of the Ancient Near East

Code: 104193
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2503702 Ancient Studies	FB	1	1

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: Yes
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Prerequisites

None

Objectives and Contextualisation

The aim of the subject is to study the history of the Ancient Near East, from the appearance of the first cities to the Hellenistic world. The study, beyond addressing the political development of the different states of the region, will also analyze social, economic and cultural history of the Ancient Near East.

Competences

- Apply the main methods, techniques and instruments of historical analysis.
- Demonstrate the basic skills needed to participate in an archaeological excavation and be able to interpret its findings.
- 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 ethical relevant issues.
- 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.
- Understand and interpret the evolution of ancient societies in the Mediterranean from Egyptian civilisation to the disbanding of Western imperial Rome through analysis of the political, historical, social, economic and linguistic factors.

Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the political, social and economic reality of the peoples of the Near East in antiquity.
2. Identify and assess the different stages in the historical evolution of the civilisations of the ancient Near East and their main cultural achievements.
3. Identifying the specific methods of history and their relationship with the analysis of particular facts.
4. Interpret ancient societies from an analysis of the surviving material vestiges of these.
5. Interpret material sources and the archaeological register.
6. Interpret textual and iconographic documents as sources for learning about the political, socioeconomic and cultural history of the ancient Near East.

7. Organise and plan the search for historical and archaeological information.
8. Organising and planning the search of historical information.

Content

Theme 1: Introduction to Ancient Near Eastern Studies

History and historiography of the Ancient Near East. Periodization and chronology. Geography

Theme 2: Origin of the State

Natufian Culture. Process of Neolitization. Rise of the first states

Theme 3: Invention of writing in the Ancient Near East

Origin of the cuneiform writing. The cuneiform system. The alphabet and other writing systems.

Theme 4: Third millennium BCE

Sumer and Akkad. Political and religious aspects. Social and economic aspects.

Theme 5: Second millennium BCE (I)

The Amorite dynasties. Political and literary aspects. Social and economic aspects. Near East and Egypt: Hyksos.

Theme 6: Second millennium BCE (II)

The club of the great powers. Political, diplomatic and military aspects. Social and economic aspects.

Theme 7: Second millennium BCE (III)

The Canaanite world. The cultural and religious background of the Bible. Social and economic aspects.

Theme 8: The Sea Peoples

The crisis of 1200 in the Ancient Near East. Disappearance of the Mycenaean world and the Hittite Empire. The fall of Ugarit and the restructuring of the Canaanite world.

Theme 9: First millennium BCE (I)

The great empires: Assyria and Babylon. Political and military aspects. Social and economic aspects.

Theme 10: First millennium BCE (II)

Persian world, Alexander and the East, Hellenistic world. Political and economic aspects. Cultural aspects.

Theme 11: The religion of the Ancient Near East

Cosmogonies. Pantheon. Mesopotamian myths: the Enuma Elis. The doctrine of royalty. Temples and rituals.

Theme 12: Gender and identity in the Near East

Assyriology and gender studies

Masculinities and Feminities: gender roles

Birth, childhood, adult life, old age and death

Sexuality

Theme 13: Art, architecture and urbanism in the Ancient Near East

Art. Architecture and urbanism. Cities and Fortresses. Communication systems.

Theme 14: "Sciences" and techniques in the Ancient Near East

Medicine. Astronomy and computation of time. Numbering and mathematics. Geography and cartography.

Methodology

The teaching methodology will consist of the combination of lectures, presentation of reviews and papers, reading of specialized bibliography, classroom practices and resolution of exercises.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	90	3.6	1, 3, 2, 5, 4
Type: Supervised			
Classroom practices, resolution of exercises	30	1.2	1, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4, 8, 7
Type: Autonomous			
reviews, readings	30	1.2	1, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4, 8, 7

Assessment

The evaluation of the subject will consist of three activities.

(1) Exam (50%)

(2) Commentary on primary sources (25%): two options will be offered, one of which will be chosen: a) text + iconographic or archaeological source of the third millennium BCE, b) text + iconographic or archaeological source of the second or first millennium BCE

(3) Bibliographic comment (25%). You should choose a reading of the three that will be offered in class, and write an essay on it.

In order to make an average between the three activities it will be necessary to have obtained a minimum qualification of 4 in the exam.

Re-evaluation

In order to participate in the re-evaluation, it will be necessary to have presented at least two of the three programmed evaluation activities.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Essay on primary sources	25%	0	0	1, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4

Exam	50%	0	0	1, 3, 2, 7
Reading of a paper	25%	0	0	1, 3, 2, 6, 5, 4, 8, 7

Bibliography

Bibliography

Klengel, Horst, 1992: *Syria, 3000 to 300 BC*. Berlin.

Kuhrt, Amelie, 2000: *El Oriente Próximo en la Antigüedad* (2 vols.). Barcelona.

Liverani, Mario, 1995: *Antiguo Oriente*. Barcelona.

Liverani, Mario, 2003: *Relaciones internacionales en el Próximo Oriente antiguo, 1600-1100 a.C.* Barcelona.

Liverani, Mario, 2005: *Más allá de la Biblia*. Barcelona.

Margueron, Jean Claude, 1995: *Los mesopotámicos*. Madrid.

Oppenheim, A. Leo, 2003: *Antigua Mesopotamia*. Madrid.

Postgate, Nicolas, 1999: *La Mesopotamia arcaica*. Madrid.

Radner, Karen / Robson, Eleanor (eds.), 2011: *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*. Oxford.

Sanmartín, Joaquín / Serrano, José Miguel, 1998: *Historia Antigua del Próximo Oriente: Mesopotamia y Egipto*. Madrid.

Van de Mieroop, Marc, 2015: *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC*. (3rd edition). Malden.