

Archaeology of State Origins

Code: 100727
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2500241 Archaeology	OT	3	2
2500241 Archaeology	OT	4	2

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: Yes

Teachers

Rafael Mico Perez

Prerequisites

No prerequisites.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The most relevant proposals regarding the State as a historical phenomenon in itself and, also, as a category of social analysis will be presented and debated.

The contents of the course are structured in two parts:

1. Theories of the State in Western philosophical thought. The concept of "State" will be reviewed over time, in order to expose and critically evaluate the most influential philosophical models within the framework of the tradition of Western thought. In parallel, its respective influence on archaeological discipline will be emphasized.
2. Archeology of the State. The key issue of State formation will be approached from the archaeological and, secondarily, anthropological research. From this perspective, the conditions and mechanisms that triggered the formation of the State in different times and regions of the world will be analyzed.

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 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. Critically assessing the sources and theoretical models.
4. Identifying main and supporting ideas and expressing them with linguistic correctness.
5. Identifying the context of the historical processes.
6. Interpreting material sources and the archaeological record.
7. Knowing the main archaeological debates on Prehistory.
8. Mastering the diachronic structure of the past.
9. Mastering the processes of change produced in Prehistory.
10. Using the specific interpretational and technical vocabulary of the discipline.

Content

Part I: Theories of the State in the Western philosophical thought.

1. Politics and government in Classical world: Plato and Aristotle.
2. The Christian thought: Augustin of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas.
3. Machiavelli and the modern theory of the State: power technologies.
4. The modern concept of 'State': Hobbes and radical individualism; Locke and the liberal 'emergency'; Rousseau, assembly and social contract.
5. Hegel and the rational definition of the State.
6. Evolutionism, Civilization and State: Morgan.
7. The Marxist theory of the State: Marx, Engels and Lenin.
8. The Anarchist critique against the State: Bakunin.
9. The State at present: ¿Towards a Global State?

Part II: Archeology of the State.

1. Archaeology and the research on Civilization and State formation.
2. V. G. Childe and the "Urban Revolution".
3. Processual archaeology and anthropological neoevolutionism: research on "complex societies".
4. Historical Materialism and the archaeology of the State.
5. Case studies issued from prehistoric archaeology: theory, method and social trajectories.

Methodology

The subject consists of theoretical and seminary classes.

-In the theoretical classes the central contents of the syllabus will be taught, linking the different theoretical proposals from political thought with the central archaeological problem around the formation and development of classist societies with state political organization. The treatment of the topics will be accompanied by the critical exposure of case studies corresponding to different times and regions of the world.

-The seminars will discuss the most relevant theoretical and methodological aspects related to the subject contents.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	50	2	7, 9, 8, 5
Type: Supervised			
Seminars	10	0.4	2, 1, 3, 4, 6, 10

Assessment

- A text commentary, related to the subjects included in Part II.

- Two short essays on the main ideas presented and discussed during the course.

Resit: new submission of assignments after having corrected previous failures or shortages.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Short essays	70	60	2.4	1, 3, 9, 8, 4, 6, 10
Text comments	30	30	1.2	2, 1, 3, 7, 5, 4, 6, 10

Bibliography

References (general)

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Software

No specialised software is required