

## Agrarian Archaeology in the Middle Ages

Code: 100331  
ECTS Credits: 6

**2025/2026**

Degree	Type	Year
History	OT	4

### Contact

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### Teachers

Helena Kirchner Granell

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### Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

### Prerequisites

Ability to read texts in Catalan and in Spanish. Skills in cartographic or drawing software.

### Objectives and Contextualisation

To understand the current state of research in archaeological studies of medieval and early modern landscapes; to become familiar with the specific methodologies used in the study of preindustrial rural spaces; to connect archaeological investigations with major historiographical debates concerning the medieval and early modern peasantry; and to identify the general characteristics of medieval agricultural systems through archaeological and textual evidence.

### Competences

- Applying specific methods and techniques from other social sciences.
- Producing innovative and competitive proposals in research and professional activity.
- Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
- 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 ethical relevant issues.

- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Applying both knowledge and capacity for analysis to the resolution of problems related to the field of study.
2. Applying implementing protocols of fieldwork and sample collection.
3. Applying the appropriate techniques and analytical tools to the case studies.
4. Autonomously searching, selecting and processing information both from structured sources (databases, bibliographies, specialized magazines) and from across the network. Expertly making use of the possibilities of Internet.
5. Establishing research protocols for original research projects.
6. Interpreting the results coming from the archaeological fieldwork placing them into their historical context.
7. Mastering the specific techniques and instrumental resources of the archaeological excavations and surveys.
8. Mastering the techniques and instrumental resources of the analysis of the archaeological laboratory.
9. Recognising and implementing the following teamwork skills: commitment to teamwork, habit of cooperation, ability to participate in the problem solving processes.
10. Recognising the importance of controlling the quality of the work results and their presentation.
11. Reflecting on their own work and the immediate environment's in order to continuously improve it.
12. Submitting works in accordance with both individual and small group demands and personal styles.
13. Transmitting the results of archaeological research and clearly communicating conclusions in oral and written form to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
14. Using computing tools, both basics (word processor or databases, for example) and specialised software needed in the professional practice of archaeology.
15. Using the specific technical and interpretational vocabulary of the discipline.

## Content

### Theory

1. Introduction: Why an archaeology of medieval and early modern landscapes?
2. The transition from Antiquity: landscape in early medieval Europe
3. Changes introduced by feudalism in the organization and management of the landscape
4. A new landscape model: the society of al-Andalus and the Islamic world
5. The impact of feudal conquests on late medieval landscapes
6. Landscape transformations in the early modern period in Europe and the Americas

### Classroom Practice

- Exercises using GIS technology
- Completion of a project using written documentation, bibliography, cartography, and aerial photography

### Fieldwork

- Participation in a field activity and submission of the corresponding report

## Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Theory: lectures. Practical exercises on case-studies	40.5	1.62	3, 2, 1, 5, 6, 10, 15
Type: Supervised			
Tutorial seasons	25	1	3, 8, 7, 5, 12, 9, 10, 11, 15
Type: Autonomous			
Work by students: assisting to the lectures; reading, research and analysis of information, assignments; reports on practical exercises	75	3	3, 1, 4, 12, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 14

#### 1. Guided activities:

- Lectures delivered by the teaching staff.
- Critical reading of texts and interpretation of maps, photographs, graphs, tables, and archaeological documents.

#### 2. Supervised activities:

- Advisory tutorials for the preparation of assignments (oral and written) and for the study of theoretical and practical content.

#### 3. Autonomous activities:

- Individual study.
- Completion of the assignments required for assessment.

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.

## Assessment

### Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
A practical exercise (PAUL)	30%	5	0.2	3, 2, 1, 4, 8, 7, 5, 6, 12, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15
A written test (theory)	50%	1.5	0.06	3, 1, 6, 13, 15
Report fieldwork	20%	3	0.12	3, 2, 4, 8, 7, 12, 11, 13, 15, 14

1. Theory: A written test divided into two partial exams → 50% of the final grade (25% each exam)

2. PAUL: A practical exercise → 30% of the final grade
3. PCAM: A report on the fieldwork → 20% of the final grade

The minimum final grade required to pass the course is 5, calculated as the weighted average of all assessment activities. Only grades equal to or higher than 5 in the theory exams and equal to or higher than 3.5 in the practical components will be considered for the final average. Any lower grade will require the student to retake the corresponding assessment. Assessment tasks or tests graded below 3 are not eligible for recovery, and the course will be automatically failed.

Students who do not complete all scheduled exams or fail to participate in mandatory assessment activities accounting for at least 60% of the final grade will receive the grade "Not Assessable" and will not be allowed to sit the resit exam.

Fieldwork cannot be retaken.

If any irregularity is detected that could significantly alter the grade of an assessment activity, the score for that activity will be 0, regardless of any disciplinary action that may follow. In cases of multiple irregularities within the same course, the final grade will be 0.

This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken

At the time of each assessment activity, students will be informed about the procedure and the date for reviewing grades.

This course does not include a single-assessment option.

## Bibliography

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Kirchner, Helena (2020). "Arqueología del campesinado en época alto medieval. Reflexiones y propuestas". *Imago Temporis Medium Aevum*, 14, p.462-497.

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Quirós, J.A. ed. (2016) *Social complexity in Early Medieval rural communities. The North-Western Iberia*. Archaeopress, Oxford.

Torró, Josep, Enric Guinot, eds (2012). *Hidráulica agraria y sociedad feudal. Prácticas, técnicas, espacios*. PUV, València.

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Vigil, Alfonso et al. (2013). "Horrea, barns and silos. Storage and incomes in Early Medieval Europe. Bilbao". *Documentos de Arqueología Medieval*, 5.

## Software

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## Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(PCAM) Field practices	11	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(PCAM) Field practices	12	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed