

First Farmer to First Cities

ANTH 184W
Spring 2008

Dr. Susan Johnston
OM 305

Textbooks: Pollock, Susan. 1999. Ancient Mesopotamia. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-0521575683

Bard, Kathryn. 2007. An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN 978-1405111485

Cunliffe, Barry (ed.). 2001. The Oxford Illustrated History of Prehistoric Europe. Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0192854414

Recommended:

Bellwood, Peter. 2004. First Farmers. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN 978-0631205661

Reading:

January	16	Introduction
	18	Concepts of civilization Childe, Flannery, Tringham, Scarre & Fagan (Ch. 1)*
	23	Describing social and political organization Scarre & Fagan (Ch. 2), Fried, Earle (Ch. 1), Yoffee, Crumley*
	25	Exploring food production Bellwood Ch. 1, Ch. 2 (pp. 12-25)
	30	The shift to food production Bellwood Ch.2 (pp. 25-43)
February	1	Food production in the Near East Bellwood Ch. 3
	6	Food production in Egypt and Europe Bellwood Ch. 4 (pp. 67-84), Ch. 5 (pp. 97-103), Cunliffe Ch. 4 Bard Ch. 4 (pp. 80-88)

FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE

	8	Mesopotamia: geography and settlement Pollock Ch. 2, 3
	13	Mesopotamia: early economic systems Pollock Ch. 4

- 15 Mesopotamia: later economic systems
Pollock Ch. 5
- 20 Mesopotamia: writing
Pollock Ch. 6
- 22 Mesopotamia: religion and ideology
Pollock Ch. 7, 8

SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE

- 27 Egypt: geography and environment
Bard Ch. 3
- 29 Egypt: beginnings of the state
Bard Ch. 2, 5

March

- 5 Egypt: the Old Kingdom
Bard Ch. 6
- 7 Egypt: the Middle Kingdom
Bard Ch. 7
- 12 Egypt: the New Kingdom
Bard Ch. 8

THIRD SHORT PAPER DUE

- 14 Temperate Europe: later Neolithic
Cunliffe Ch. 5

19, 21 **SPRING BREAK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

- 26 Temperate Europe: the earlier Bronze Age
Cunliffe Ch. 7
- 28 Temperate Europe: the later Bronze Age
Cunliffe Ch. 9

April

- 2 Temperate Europe: the Iron Age
Cunliffe Ch. 10
- 4 Temperate Europe: the barbarians versus Rome
Cunliffe Ch. 12
- 9 Presentations

11	Presentations
16	Presentations
18	Presentations
23	Presentations
25	Presentations
30	The comparison: What did we learn?

*Additional readings are available as xeroxes in the Anthropology Department and on reserve in Gelman library. The article by Crumley is NOT in the library, but is available on Blackboard as a pdf and in xeroxed form in the Anthropology Department.

References, additional readings:

Childe, V. Gordon. 1974 (1950). The urban revolution. In, *The Rise and Fall of Civilizations*. Jeremy Sabloff and C.C. Lamberg-Karlovsky (eds.)

Crumley, Carole. 1995. Heterarchy and the analysis of complex societies. In, *Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Societies*. Robert M. Ehrenreich, Carole L. Crumley, and Janet E. Levy (eds.)

Earle, Timothy. 1997. *How Chiefs Come to Power*.

Flannery, Kent V. 1994. Childe the evolutionist: A perspective from Nuclear America. In, *The Archaeology of V. Gordon Childe*. David R. Harris (ed.)

Fried, M.H. 1974 (1960). On the evolution of social stratification and the state. In, *The Rise and Fall of Civilizations*. Jeremy Sabloff and C.C. Lamberg-Karlovsky (eds.)

Scarre, Christopher and Brian M. Fagan. 2007. *Ancient Civilizations*.

Tringham, Ruth. 1974. The concept of “civilization” in European archaeology. In, *The Rise and Fall of Civilizations*. Jeremy Sabloff and C.C. Lamberg-Karlovsky (eds.)

Yoffee, Norman. 1993. Too many chiefs? In, *Archaeological Theory: Who Sets the Agenda?* Norman Yoffee and Andrew Sherratt (eds.)

Course Requirements:

This syllabus represents the basic framework of this class. However, **I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE IT IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY**. This would only happen if we get behind, or want to pursue a topic for more time than I have allowed for that topic. You will get plenty of warning if I do have to change the syllabus.

All of the reading listed in this syllabus is required. You are also responsible for anything which happens in class. It will make this class both more interesting and more useful for you if you will **PLEASE DO THE READING**. That will make it easier for you to enter discussions, which will be numerous in this class.

You must do all assignments in order to pass the course. This is a WID class, which means it is writing-heavy. There are a total of 4 papers for the class, three short ones building on class reading and discussion and a final paper on a topic of your choice (but following the guidelines on the attached sheet) which you will also present in class. The final paper will then have to be revised based on class comments (mine and other students) and turned in during the finals period. The attached sheet describes the papers in more detail. The three short papers are each worth 15%, the presentation is worth 20%, and the final paper is worth 35% of your total grade.

My office is 204 in Building X (2112 G St.), and my extension is 4-4395. You can also reach me by e-mail at sjohnsto@gwu.edu. I will be available in my office on Wednesday (1:00-3:00) and Friday 11:00-12:00, if you need to see me. If you can't make those hours, let me know and we can set up an alternative time.

Paper Assignments

The main theme of this course is the archaeological study of three complex societies in the Old World. Traditionally in this subject, there has been an emphasis on “civilization” and the “state”, where they emerged first, and how we go about recognizing them archaeologically. However, it is apparent (at least to me) that 1) the character of these are not as obvious as many archaeologists seem to think, and 2) there are lots of other forms of complex organization that an emphasis on the “state” causes us to misinterpret or miss altogether. One way to think about this is to compare places where the state did clearly emerge with others whose political organization is not so clear-cut. This course will look at Mesopotamia and Egypt as the archetypal Old World early civilizations, and at Temperate Europe as an example of a different kind of political organization. We will be considering the similarities and differences between these areas in terms of archaeological evidence for social and political organization. The various paper assignments ask you to write about this topic from a variety of aspects.

Paper 1: Based on the articles you have read so far, choose any theoretical position (the idea of civilization, the origins of agriculture, the idea of a checklist, etc.) and write a review. What did the author(s) say, what is the evidence for the position taken, was it convincing? Think of this as a book review, but based on an article rather than a book. For guidance, look at the book review section of any archaeological or anthropological journal (e.g. *American Antiquity*, *American Anthropologist*, *Antiquity*). The paper should be 3-5 pages long. **DUE FEB. 6 IN CLASS**

Paper 2: Using any aspect of what you have learned about Mesopotamia, write a children's article. Explain the topic you've chosen in words that an elementary school child could understand. Use short sentences and easily understandable words, but keep it archaeologically sound! For guidance, look at publications like Kids Discover, National Geographic Kids, or DIG Magazine. The paper should be 2-3 pages long. **DUE FEB. 22 IN CLASS**

Paper 3: Pick any site from ancient Egypt (whether we've talked about it or not) and write a newspaper article about it as though it is a new discovery. Describe what was found there and why it is worth noting in a newspaper. Newspapers use short, declarative sentences and relatively straightforward language. But again, keep the archaeological facts straight. Look at any newspaper (The Washington Post if you want that home town feel) for guidance. The paper should be 2-3 pages long. **DUE MAR. 12 IN CLASS**

Final Paper: Choose any aspect of prehistoric European culture—burials, monumental architecture, urbanism, writing, political ideology, etc—and compare it with **the same aspect** in either Mesopotamia or Egypt. What are the similarities, what are the differences and how is either relevant to assessing social and political organization. You can use the textbooks for the course as reference material if you like, but you will also have to do some outside research. Please think carefully about internet resources. While I would encourage you to use this resource if you wish, **PLEASE DO NOT USE A WEB SITE AS PRIMARY REFERENCE MATERIAL UNLESS YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY SURE IT IS A LEGITIMATE WEBSITE.** There is a lot of, well, crap about archaeology on the web, and it's important that you not use such, well, crap, as sources of standard information. So be aware of what you are using, and if you are unsure, send me the URL and I'll let you know.

The paper should be 8-10 pages long, double-spaced, so that should give you some idea about how much research will be needed. And please remember that I've been using computers since before most of you were born-- I know all about large type faces and large margins. Do give me some credit for intelligence. A reasonable font size and margins should be used.

You will then give a summary of your paper in class, which should be accompanied by visual aids of some kind (e.g. Powerpoint, overheads, etc.). The idea here is partly to provide everyone else with information to have a final discussion about the comparison of Europe with Mesopotamia and Egypt. The presentation should be 10 minutes long (and I will hold you to that amount of time!). A draft of your paper is due in class when you give the presentation. I will read the draft, and will also invite comments from your classmates. On the basis of that feedback, you will then turn in a revised final paper. **This will be due any time before the final exam date as scheduled by the university.**

You should clear your topic with me sometime before you present it. That is in order to prevent too much repetition—no one wants to hear 15 versions of Celtic temples compared to Egyptian temples. So if you have a topic that you are deeply devoted to, then I suggest you tell me about it early, so you can lock it in.

The final paper will be 8-10 pages long.. **YOU MAY ONLY SUBMIT PAPERS BY E-MAIL IF YOU HAVE MADE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH ME TO DO SO.** I am not a printing service. Last minute submissions by e-mail without such arrangements will not be accepted.