

Course title: **Ancient Society**

Course No.: **M11401/ P11201**

Programme of Study: MA/ MPhil, Centre for Historical Studies

Credits: 4 for MA, 2 for MPhil

Course instructor: **Prof. R. Mahalakshmi**

The Centre for Historical Studies offers four core courses that students admitted to all three streams – Ancient, Medieval and Modern - have to credit over three semesters. *Ancient Society* is the first of these and is offered in the first semester. It is also occasionally recommended for MPhil students who have not done their MA in CHS.

The course will introduce students to a variety of social formations in the ancient world. The focus will be on concepts such as the band, tribe, chiefdom, state, urbanism and empire, questions of the significance of technology as well as on forms of exchange, and attempts to engender investigations into early societies. The shifts that have occurred within the disciplinary fields of history, anthropology and archaeology will be discussed with a view to understanding the shifts in terminology and analysis of different developments in the ancient world. The canvas of the course is very vast, and the focus is liable to change periodically.

There are four broad themes that will be covered in the course. The first two themes relate to the prehistoric period, the third to the protohistoric, and the fourth and fifth to the early historic periods. The first theme will look at categories such as ‘stone age’, ‘hunter and gatherer’ and ‘savagery’, and also discuss the different contexts and methodologies employed to understand these. The second will interrogate the understanding of the ‘Neolithic Revolution’, and the different studies particularly in the West Asian context that have helped us bring a more complex understanding of the earliest food-producing societies.

The third theme focuses on the rise of the earliest state societies, the growth of complex political economic structures and the evolution of specific social institutions. Studies on Mesopotamia and Harappa will be taken up for discussion here. The fourth and fifth themes relate to the Mediterranean region in particular, although the South Asian context will also be discussed. The significance of iron technology in catalyzing change, the growth of states and empires, the nature of economic production, and the social structures that distinguish these societies will be focused upon.

There are two classes scheduled per week, over the semester. There will be special lectures, film

screenings and reading groups that will be arranged periodically. Assignments will include one tutorial and a mid-term test (topic and schedule available on the notice board, and on the *Ancient Society* facebook page). Instructions on the tutorial word limit and style are available on the CHS website. In addition, all students have to periodically submit short written assignments on readings prescribed for the course, which are available on JStor, and listed on the facebook page.

An examination will be conducted at the end of the semester. It is mandatory for students to take both internal assessments within the stipulated time period, to be allowed to sit for the exam.

Readings:

1. *A People's History of India*, New Delhi, Tulika, relevant volumes.
2. Aristotle, *The Athenian Constitution*, classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/athenian_const.1.1.html
3. Barnard, Alan (ed.), *Hunter-Gatherers in History, Archaeology and Anthropology*, Berg, Oxford, 2004.
4. Bernal, Martin, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, vols. 1 and 2, Rutgers University Press, 1991.
5. Cartledge, Paul (ed), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Ancient Greece*, Cambridge, 1998.
6. Childe, Gordon, *Man Makes Himself*, Spokesman, Northwestern University, 2003 (1936).
7. Childe, Gordon, *What Happened in History*, Puffin, 1985 (1942).
8. Clark, Grahame, *World Prehistory: A New Outline*, Revised Edition, Cambridge, 1977. (available in the textbook section)
9. Fitzhugh, Ben and Junko Habu (ed.), *Beyond Foraging and Collecting: Evolutionary Change in Hunter-Gatherer Settlement Systems*, Plenum Publishers, New York, 2002.
10. Gilchrist, Roberta, *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999.
11. Goody, Jack, *Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976.
12. Guthrie, R. Dale, *The Nature of Paleolithic Art*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005 (available at Shubho Photostat/CAS library)
13. Ingold, Tim, D. Riches, J. Woodburn (eds), *Hunters and Gatherers. Vol. I, History, Evolution and Social Change*, London, 1988. (available in the textbook section)
14. Ingold, Tim, David Riches and James Woodburn (ed.), *Hunters and Gatherers, Volume II, Property, Power and Ideology*, Berg, Oxford, 1988.
15. Joyce, Rosemary, *Ancient Bodies, Ancient Lives: Sex, Gender and Archaeology*, London, Thames and Hudson (SA).

16. Kelly, Christopher, *The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006.
17. Leacock, Eleanor and Richard B. Lee (eds), *Politics and History in Band Societies*, Cambridge, 1982.
18. Mauss, Marcel, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, 1925, http://goodmachine.org/PDF/mauss_gift.pdf
19. Maynes, Mary Jo, Ann Walther, Birgitte Soland and Ulrike Strasser (eds), *Gender, Kinship, Power: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary History*, London, Routledge, 1996.
20. Mithen, Steven, *After the Ice: A Global Human History, 20,000-5,000 BC*, Phoenix, London, 2003.
21. Morgan, Lewis Henry, *Ancient Society*, 1877, available on www.marxists.org/reference/archive/morgan-lewis/ancient-society/index.htm
22. Morris, Jan, (ed), *Classical Greece: Ancient Histories and Modern Archaeologies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994.
23. Nemat-Nejat, Rhea, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Peabody, Massachusetts, Hendricks Publishers, 2008.
24. Pollock, Susan, *Ancient Mesopotamia: The Eden That Never Was*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
25. Sahlins, Marshall, *Stone Age Economics*, Hawthorne, New York, 1972.
26. Ratnagar, Shireen, *The Other Indians: Essays on Pastoralists and Prehistoric Tribal People*, Three Essays Collective, Delhi, 2004.
27. Reiter, Rayna R. (ed.), *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, Aakar, Delhi, 2011 (1975).
28. Ryan, Alan, *On Politics: A History of Political Thought from Herodotus to the Present*, Allen Lane, London, 2012.

Articles (from JStor):

1. Barstow, Anne, 'The Uses of Archeology for Women's History: James Mellaart's Work on the Neolithic Goddess at Çatal Hüyük', *Feminist Studies*, 4: 3, 1978, pp. 7-18.
2. Binford, Lewis R., 'Willow Smoke and Dogs' Tails: Hunter-Gatherer Settlement Systems and Archaeological Site Formation', *American Antiquity*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Jan., 1980), pp. 4-20.
3. Binford, Lewis R., 'Smudge Pits and Hide Smoking: The Use of Analogy in Archaeological Reasoning', *American Antiquity*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Jan., 1967), pp. 1-12.
4. Clark, Sharri R., 'Material Matters: Representation and Materiality of the Harappan Body', *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 2009, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 231-261.

5. Munson, Patrick J., 'Comments on Binford's "Smudge Pits and Hide Smoking: The Use of Analogy in Archaeological Reasoning"', *American Antiquity*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Jan., 1969), pp. 83-85.
6. Dikshit, K.N., and Manjil Hazarika, 'The Neolithic Cultures of Northeast India and Adjoining Regions: A Comparative Study', *Journal of Indian Ocean Archaeology*, No. 7 & 8, 2011-12, pp. 98-148.
7. Edens, Christopher, 'Dynamics of trade in the ancient Mesopotamian "world-system"', *American Anthropologist*, 1992, 94:118-39.
8. Fuentes, O., et al., 'An Approach to Palaeolithic Networks: The Question of Symbolic Territories and their Interpretation through Magdalenian Art', *Quaternary International*, xxx, 2017, pp. 1-15, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quaint.2017.12.017>
9. Gullapalli, Praveena, 'Early Metal in South India: Copper and Iron in Megalithic Contexts', *Journal of World Prehistory*, 22:4, pp. 439-59.
10. Hanfmann, George M. A., and Jane C. Waldbaum, 'Kybebe and Artemis: Two Anatolian Goddesses at Sardis', *Archaeology*, Vol. 22, No. 4, An issue devoted to ancient Anatolia (October 1969), pp. 264-269.
11. Hodder, Ian, 'Çatalhöyük in the Context of the Middle Eastern Neolithic', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 36 (2007), pp. 105-120.
12. Hodder, Ian, 'Socialization and Feasting at Çatalhöyük: A Response to Adams', *American Antiquity*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (Jan., 2005), pp. 189-191.
13. Hodder, Ian, and Craig Cessford, 'Daily Practice and Social Memory at Çatalhöyük', *American Antiquity*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (Jan., 2004), pp. 17-40.
14. Johansen, Peter G., 'Landscape, Monumental Architecture, and Ritual: A Reconsideration of the South Indian Ashmounds', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, 23, 204, pp. 309-330.
15. Knight, Chris, 'The Wives of the Sun and Moon', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Mar., 1997), pp.133-153.
16. Knight, Chris, 'Levi-Strauss and the Dragon: Mythologies Reconsidered in the Light of an Australian Aboriginal Myth', *Man*, New Series, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Mar., 1983), pp. 21-50.
17. Lawler, Andrew, 'The Indus Script: Write or Wrong?', *Science*, 2004, Vo. 306, No. 5704, pp. 2026-2029.
18. Lerner, Gerda, 'The Origin of Prostitution in Ancient Mesopotamia', *Signs*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Winter, 1986), pp. 236-254.
19. Lerner, Gerda, 'Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1/2 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 5-14.

20. Noble, Gordon, 'Harnessing the Waves: Monuments and Ceremonial Complexes in Orkney and Beyond', *Journal of Maritime Archaeology*, January 2006, Volume 1, Issue 1, pp. 100-117. (Available on Springer Link.)
21. Ortner, Sherry B., 'The Virgin and the State', *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Oct., 1978), pp. 19-35.
22. Ouzman, Sven, 'Seeing Is Deceiving: Rock Art and the Non-Visual', *World Archaeology*, Vol. 33, No. 2, Archaeology and Aesthetics (Oct., 2001), pp. 237-256.
23. Priyanka, Benille, 'New Iconographic Evidence for the Religious Nature of Indus Seals and Inscriptions', *East and West*, 2003, 53:1/4, pp. 31-66.
24. Pomeroy, Sarah B., 'The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens by Eva Keuls', Review, *The Classical World*, Vol. 79, No. 6 (Jul. - Aug., 1986), p. 420.
25. Ratnagar, Shireen, 'The Bronze Age: Unique Instance of a PreIndustrial World System?', *Current Anthropology*, 42:3, 2001, pp. 351-79.
26. Richards, Stella, 'Goddess of the Sun, God of the Moon', Review, *The San Francisco Jung Institute Library Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (August 2005), pp. 74-91.
27. Ross, June, and Iain Davidson, 'Rock Art and Ritual: An Archaeological Analysis of Rock Art in Arid Central Australia', *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Advances in the Study of Pleistocene Imagery and Symbol Use [Part I] (Dec., 2006), pp. 305-341.
28. Rountree, Kathryn, 'Archaeologists and Goddess Feminists at Çatalhöyük: An Experiment in Multivocality', *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Fall, 2007), pp. 7-26.
29. Sauvet, Georges, Robert Layton, Tilman Lenssen-Erz, Paul Taçon & André Włodarczyk, 'Thinking with Animals in Upper Palaeolithic Rock Art', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 19:3, 2009, pp. 1-18.
30. Trautmann, Thomas R., 'The Whole History of Kinship Terminology in Three Chapters: Before Morgan, Morgan and After Morgan', *Anthropological Theory*, 1:2, pp. 268-287.
31. Trigger, Bruce G., 'Settlement Archaeology. Its Goals and Promise' *American Antiquity*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Apr., 1967), pp. 149-160.
32. Turpin, Solveig A., 'Rock Art and Hunter-Gatherer Archaeology: A Case Study from SW Texas and Northern Mexico', *Journal of Field Archaeology*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Autumn, 1990), pp. 263-281.
33. Watkins, Trevor, 'The Beginning of the Neolithic: Searching for Meaning in Material Culture Change', *Paléorient*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (1992), pp. 63-75.
34. Yoffee, Norman, 'Political Economy in Early Mesopotamian States', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1995, 8:161-205.

35. Ziffer, Irit, 'The First Adam, Androgyny, and the 'Ain Ghazal Two-headed Busts in Context', *Israel Exploration Journal*, 57: 2, 2007, pp. 129-152.