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ANTHRO/ARKEO 2430
FALL SEMESTER 2012
MWF 10:10-11:00AM

TA: SAMANTHA SANFT
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THE RISE AND FALL OF "CIVILIZATION"

The emergence of what has come to be called "civilization" marks a profound transformation in human culture, society, politics, economy, and psychology. The first civilizations have been variously described as the point of origin for artistic achievement and the genesis of social struggle, a victory over the state of nature and the source of human neurosis, the genealogical root of social inequality and the foundation for the rule of law. In this course we will examine the rise and fall of "civilizations" from an archaeological point of view, examining key examples of ancient civilizations as we interrogate the rise and fall of the concept of civilization itself.

Our primary focus will be a comparative archaeological examination of five pivotal case studies of early civilization: Mesopotamia (Sumer), Egypt, China, and the Maya lowlands. Alongside our explorations of these early civilizations, we will investigate what civilization traditionally entails. We will explore traditional archaeological topics such as kingship, the origins of cities, and the role of coercion in the formation of early polities. But we will also explore topics critical to our sense of civilization yet less familiar to archaeological reflection, including music, sex, and visual media. The course will examine the spread of "civilization", including the development of so-called "secondary states", early empires, and the first world systems. We will conclude the class with an examination of the concept of civilization itself, its historical roots and its current prominence in geopolitical thinking and policy making. The goal of the class is to provide students with an understanding of the nature of the world's first civilizations and the potency of their contemporary legacy.

We will incorporate into our examination two semester long exercises. The first is a study of contemporary representations of civilization, which we will undertake through the medium of the computer game *Civilization*. This exercise is a constructive one which poses the question: of what components do we imagine a civilization to be built? The second exercise is a deconstructive, archaeological one which examines contemporary US "civilization" through the lens of single site—the Cornell campus. What does this unusual site tell us about contemporary "civilization" and how can we better understand the concept of "civilization" through "ruins" like these?

Course Requirements

Two Preliminary Exams (15% each x 2 = 30%)
Cornell Ruins Dossier (5% each x 6 = 30%)
Civilization Analysis (5%)
Final Exam (30%)
Class Participation (5%)

Course Texts

All students are expected to complete the readings assigned for each class period. The required books for the class are:

Scarre, C. and B. Fagan. 2008. *Ancient Civilizations*. 3rd Edition. Upper Saddle River NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Coetzee, J. M. 2010. *Waiting for the Barbarians*. New York: Penguin Books.

In addition, a large number of readings are drawn from the following text that is available in the Cornell store as an optional text and on the Blackboard site.

Carver, M. *Archaeological Investigation*. New York: Routledge.

Equipment

Archaeology generally utilizes a range of tools from shovels and picks to microscopes and X-Ray tubes. While you won't need any of these, you will need access to the following.

Computer and a Google account (we will be using the Google Custom Maps service to develop your dossiers for the Cornell Ruins project)

Digital Camera (phone cameras are fine; a camera will also be available for borrowing)

If you have any concerns about equipment, please see the instructor.

University Policies

Instruction in this class is guided by Cornell University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired student; plagiarism; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students should make themselves familiar with these regulations and should feel free to bring any concerns or questions to the attention of the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities: Please give me your Student Disability Services (SDS) accommodation letter early in the semester so that I have adequate time to arrange your approved academic modifications. Meeting with me in my office hours will help ensure confidentiality. If you need an immediate accommodation for equal access, please speak with me after class or send an email message to me and/or SDS at sds_cu@cornell.edu. If the need arises for additional accommodations during the semester, please contact SDS.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

WEEK 1

8/22 THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION

8/24 THE DISCOVERY OF "CIVILIZATION"

Reading: Scarre and Fagan, ch. 1.

WEEK 2

8/27 CIVILIZATION, BARBARITY, AND MODERNITY

Reading: Rousseau 1754 "Discourse on the Origins of Inequality" pt. 1.

Guizot 1842 "General History of Civilization in Modern Europe" lecture 1.

8/29 PRECOCIOUS CIVILIZATIONS: ÇATALHÖYÜK AND TRIPOLYE

Reading: Hodder 2006 "Prologue" and "The Town" from *The Leopard's Tale*.

8/31 THE CORNELL RUINS 1: TOUR OF THE SITE

Reading: Carver, chs. 1-2.

Project: Dossier part 1 distributed in class (reconnaissance map).

WEEK 3

9/3 NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)

9/5 THE ORIGINS OF "CIVILIZATION"

Reading: Scarre and Fagan, ch. 2.

9/7 DISCUSSION SESSION

WEEK 4

9/10 ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

Reading: Scarre and Fagan, ch. 3.

9/12 URBANISM, BUREAUCRACY, AND WRITING

Reading: Wengrow 2010 *What Makes Civilization?* ch. 5.

9/14 THE CORNELL RUINS 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Reading: Carver Ch. 4-5.

Assignment: Dossier Part 1 due.

Project: Dossier Part 2 distributed in class (archaeological survey).

WEEK 5

9/17 ANCIENT EGYPT

Reading: Scarre and Fagan, ch. 4.

9/19 KINGSHIP AND AUTHORITY

Reading: Wengrow 2010 *What Makes Civilization?* ch. 8.

9/21 REVIEW SESSION

WEEK 6

9/24 EXAM 1

9/26 *CIVILIZATION, ROUND 1: FOUNDING*

Reading: Wright 2005 "The Polycentricity of the Archaic Civilizations".

9/28 *THE CORNELL RUINS 3: EXCAVATION AND DATING*

Reading: Carver, ch. 6 and 11.

Assignment: Dossier Part 2 due (survey).

Note: Dossier Part 3 distributed in class (seriation project).

WEEK 7

10/1 ANCIENT CHINA

Reading: Scarre and Fagan, ch. 6.

10/3 CIVILIZATIONS AND THEIR BARBARIANS

Reading: Di Cosmo 2002 *Ancient China and Its Enemies*, Ch. 4.

10/5 CIVILIZATION, A 20TH CENTURY VIEW

Reading: Elias 2000 [1939] *The Civilizing Process*, pp. 365-379.

Screening: "By the Skin of Our Teeth" from *Civilization* (dir. Attenborough, 1969).

WEEK 8

10/8 NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)

10/10 *THE CORNELL RUINS 4: ARTIFACT INTERPRETATION*

Reading: Daly 1972 *The Civilization of Llhuros*, pp. 4-14.

Assignment: Dossier Part 3 due (photo seriation).

Project: Dossier Part 4 distributed in class (interpretation of a Llhuroscan artifact).

10/12 *CIVILIZATION, ROUND 2: CITY AND STATE*

Reading: Yoffee 1997 "The Obvious and the Chimerical".

WEEK 9

10/15 ANCIENT MAYA

Reading: Scarre and Fagan, ch. 15.

10/17 TIME AND CIVILIZATION

Reading: Schele and Friedel 1990 *A Forest of Kings*, pp 64-96.

10/19 DISCUSSION SESSION

WEEK 10

10/22 THE SPREAD OF CIVILIZATION: THE EXAMPLE OF THE CAUCASUS

Reading: Smith 2012 "The Caucasus and the Near East".

Assignment: Dossier Part 4 due (artifact interpretation).

10/24 EMPIRES AND CIVILIZATION: THE LATE BRONZE AGE NEAR EAST

Reading: Scarre and Fagan ch. 7.

10/26 *CIVILIZATION, ROUND 3: EMPIRE*

Reading: Scarre and Fagan ch. 8.

Reading: Friedman 1998 “*Civilization and its Discontents*”

Project: Provide a 1 page review *Civilization*.

WEEK 11

10/29 VIOLENCE AND CIVILIZATION

Reading: Bowden 2009 *The Empire of Civilization*, pp. 129-158.

Assignment: *Civilization* review due.

10/31 SEX AND CIVILIZATION

Reading: Freud 1989 [1930] *Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 37-74.

11/2 REVIEW SESSION

WEEK 12

11/5 EXAM 2

11/7 THE AESTHETICS OF CIVILIZATION

Listening: Beethoven Symphony No. 6, I. Allegro.

Reading: Coetzee 1980 *Waiting for the Barbarian*, pp. 1-74.

11/9 THE CORNELL RUINS 5: NATURE AND SUBSISTENCE

Reading: Carver, ch. 9.

Project Dossier Part 5 distributed in class (subsistence).

WEEK 13

11/12 THE AESTHETICS OF BARBARISM?

Listening: The Sex Pistols “God Save the Queen”.

Reading: Coetzee 1980 *Waiting for the Barbarian*, pp. 75-152.

11/14 THE COLLAPSE OF CIVILIZATION

Reading: Diamond 2005 *Collapse*, pp. 157-177.

McAnany and Negrón 2009 “Bellicose Rulers and Climatological Peril?”.

11/16 THE CORNELL RUINS 6: MEMORY AND CIVILIZATION

Reading: Khatchadourian 2008 “Unforgettable Landscapes”.

Assignment: Dossier Part 5 due (subsistence).

Project Dossier Part 6 distributed in class (memory).

Note: Class convenes in the Anthropology Collections, McGraw 150.

WEEK 14

11/19 CIVILIZATION, A 21ST CENTURY VIEW

Screening: *The Crisis of Civilization* (dir. Puckett, 2011).

11/21 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING)

11/23 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING)

WEEK 15

11/26 THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS?

Reading: Huntington 1993 "The Clash of Civilizations?".
Ajami 1993 "The Summoning"

11/28 THE END OF CIVILIZATION?

Reading: Armstrong 2009 *In Search of Civilization*, pp. 3-9, 21-33, 39-43, 62-67, 134-142.

11/30 DISCUSSION

Assignment: Dossier Part 6 due (memory).

FINAL

12/10 9AM FINAL EXAM