

Course Type: DSC (Discipline Specific Core)

Course Title: Ancient Societies

Course Objective:

The course aims towards enabling students to have a broad understanding of various Ancient Civilizations with special focus on complexities in State Formation, society, economy, religion and culture. An overview of the ecological impact on their emergence, craft and trade, emerging cultural patterns, art and architecture and religion will be discussed related to the Indian, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek and Chinese Civilizations. Students will get to familiarize themselves with fundamental concepts like ‘Bronze Age’, ‘Civilization’, ‘Culture’, ‘Urban Revolution’, and ‘State’. Various craft technology especially metal technology and debates around it will also be introduced to them. The course strives to generate interest in students to learn about metal technology and its contribution to the emergence and growth of Ancient Civilizations.

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define and explain concepts like Urban Revolution, Bronze Age and Civilization.
- Discuss the debate around metal technology.
- Describe ecological and other reasons for emergence of the various civilizations.
- Understand social complexities of different civilizations.
- Explain trends in the economy of these civilizations.
- Gain an understanding of cultural patterns and religious developments.

Course Content:

UNIT I: Defining Civilization, Sources and Historiography, Urban Revolution and Bronze Age, Debating Metal Technology

UNIT II: Bronze Age Civilizations- India / China (Shang Dynasty)

UNIT III: Bronze Age Civilizations- Mesopotamia (Sumerian and Akkadian Period)/Egypt (Old Kingdom) Ecological Context, Kingship and State, Social Pattern and Economy. Art, Religion and Culture

UNIT IV: Bronze Age Civilizations- Minoan/ Mycenaean, Ecological Context, Kingship and State, Social Pattern and Economy Art, Religion and Culture

Essential Readings and Unit wise Teaching outcome:

Unit I: This Unit will help students understand the concept of Civilization. The important milestones in the growth and spread of civilizations viz. urban revolution, Bronze Age and advent of metal technology will also be dealt with. (Teaching period: 2 Weeks approx.)

- Childe, G. (1950). “The Urban Revolution, “The Town Planning Review, Vol. 21, No. 1, April 1950, pp. 3-17.

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- Redman, C.L. (1978). *The Rise of Civilisations. From Early Farmers to Urban Society in the Ancient Near East*. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, Chapter 2, 6, 7, pp. 16-49; 188-213; 214-243.
- Scarre, Christopher and Brian M. Fagan. (2008). *Ancient Civilizations* (3rd edn.), New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall, pp. 3-12, and pp. 26-47.
- Whitehouse, R. (1977). *The First Civilizations*. Oxford: Phaidon, Chapters 1 and 9, pp 7-15 and 177-199.
- Childe, V.G. 1930. *The Bronze Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Childe, V. Gordon. 1957. 'The Bronze Age'. *Past and Present*. 12 (November): 2-15

UNIT II: This unit will deal with the idea of civilizations and the evolution of complex societies associated with the Bronze Age Civilizations in India / China during the Shang Dynasty. As such it will delve into factors leading to the use of metallurgy, its function in socio-religious complex and political structures thereof. (Teaching period: 4 Weeks approx.):

India:

- Allchin, B., and R. Allchin. (1997). *Origins of a Civilization: The Prehistory and Early Archaeology of South Asia*. New Delhi: Viking. (Chapters 6,7,8,9 & 10, pp. 113- 222).
- Chakrabarti, D.K. (1999). *India: An Archaeological History*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. (Chapters V and VI. pp.151-261).
- Ratnagar, Shereen. (2001). *Understanding Harappa: Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley*. Delhi: Tulika, Pp. 6-42, 103-115, 122-152.
- Ratnagar, Shereen. *Approaches to the Study of Ancient Technology*.
- Ratnagar, Shereen. (2007). *Makers and Shapers: Early Indian Technology in the Home, Village and Urban Workshop*, Delhi, pp. 156, 196, 218 n. 12.
- Singh, Upinder. (2008). *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Delhi: Pearson Longman. (Chapter 4, pp. 132- 181.) (Available in Hindi).
- Thaplyal, K. K. and Sankata Prasad Shukla. (2003). *Sindhu Sabhyata (तं संधु सभ्यता)*. Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sansthan. (In Hindi) PP. 25-107, 157- 226, 262-276, 292- 315, 354-363.
- China
- Chang, K.C. (1987). *Shang Civilization*. New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, pp. 263-288.
- Feng, Li. (2013). *Early China*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-111.
- Keightly, D.N. (1999). "The Shang. China's First Historical Dynasty" in Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessey. (Ed.). *The Cambridge History of Ancient China. From the origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Thorp, R. L. (2006). *China in the Early Bronze Age. Shang Civilization*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

UNIT III:(Teaching period: 4 Weeks)

Mesopotamia is considered to be the cradle of civilization and this unit will trace the evolution of complex societies, especially in relation to civilizational trait markers such as religion, urbanization, social stratification ranging from early farming in Zagros to mature urbanization in Southern Mesopotamia. The unit will also deal with Egypt that presented another model of civilizational development with the Pharaonic model of kingship, development of writing, distinct geography and monumental art and architecture.

- Nissen, H.J. (2003). *The Early History of the Ancient Near East, 9000-2000 B.C.* Oxford and Victoria: Blackwell.
- Redman, C.L. (1978). *The Rise of Civilisations. From Early Farmers to Urban Society in the Ancient near East.* San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, Chapters 8, pp. 244-322.
- Roux, Georges (1992). *Ancient Iraq*, UK: Penguin, Chapters 1, 5, 6, 8, 9; pp. 1-16; pp. 66-103; 122-160.
- Whitehouse, R. (1977). *The First Civilizations*, Oxford: Phaidon, Chapters 3, 4, 5, pp. 33-115.
- Trigger, Bruce G. 2003. *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- फारूकी, A. (2015). प्राचीन और मध्यकालीन सामाजिक संरचनाएँ और संस्कृत तर्कों, तिल्ली: मानक प्रकाशन (Ch. 4)
- Egypt:
- Hawkes, J. (1973). "Egypt: the beginnings and the Old Kingdom" in *The First Great Civilisations: Life in Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley and Egypt*, New York: Knopf/RandomHouse.
- Trigger, B.G., B.J. Kemp, D. O'Connor and A.B. Lloyd. (1983). *Ancient Egypt A Social History.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1 & 2, pp. 1-43.
- Silverman, D. P. (Ed.). (2003). *Ancient Egypt.* New York: Oxford University Press (Ed.) pp. 10 - 27.
- Warden, L. A. 2014. *Pottery and Economy in the Old Kingdom.* Leiden: Brill.
- Teeter, Emily. 2011. *Religion and Ritual in Ancient Egypt.* New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wolinski, Arelene. 1987. 'Egyptian Masks: The Priest and His Role', *Archaeology*, 40 (1): 22.
- Morenz, S. 1960. *Egyptian Religion.* (A. E. Keep, trans.) New York: Cornell University Press.
- फारूकी, A. (2015). प्राचीन और मध्यकालीन सामाजिक संरचनाएँ और संस्कृत तर्कों, तिल्ली: मानक प्रकाशन (Ch. 5).

UNIT IV: This unit will deal with another model of Bronze Age Civilizations in the Greek archipelago that has been termed Minoan/ Mycenaean within their Ecological Context. It will look at the manner in which Kingship was intertwined with the evolution of State, Social Patterns and Economy. Further it will delve into Art, Religion and Culture especially in context of Greek mythology and pantheon. (Teaching Period: 4 Weeks)

- M. I. Finley, The Ancient Greeks, 1963.
- M. I. Finley, Early Greece: The Bronze and Archaic Ages, 1970.
- Sarah Pomeroy, Goddesses, whores, wives and Slaves, 1995 reprint, pp.16-31
- Bridenthal and Koonz (Ed). Becoming Visible: Women in European History, 1977, pp.36-59.
- Renfrew, Colin. (1999). The Emergence of Civilisation. The Cyclades and the Aegean in the Third Millennium B.C. London: Methuen, 1972.
- Bintliff, John L. "Settlement and Territory." In Companion Encyclopedia of Archaeology. Edited by Graeme Barker, Vol. 1. London: Routledge, 1999, pp. 505–545.
- फारूकी, A. (2015). प्राचीन और मध्यकालीन सामाजिक संरचनाएँ और संस्कृति तराई, तिल्ली: मानक प्रकाशन (Ch. 6).
- Suggested Readings:
- Burns, Edward McNall, and Philip Lee Ralph. (1982). World Civilizations: Their History and Their Culture. Norton, New York.
- Fagan, Brian M. People of the Earth. (1977). Little, Brown.
- Farooqui, Amar. (2001). Early Social Formation, New Delhi.
- UNESCO Series: History of Mankind, Vols. I – III / or New ed. History of Humanity.
- Cambridge History of Africa, Vol I. CUP, Cambridge, 1975.
- Childe, Vere Gordon. (1946). What happened in history. Baltimore, MD. (Available in Hindi also).
- Roux, Georges. (1992). Ancient Iraq. Penguin.
- Childe, Vere Gordon. (1951). Social Evolution. London: Watts.
- Curtin, P. D. 1984. Cross-Cultural Trade in World History. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- Frankfort, Henri. 1978. Kingship and God: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the integration of Society and Nature. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Bogucki, P. & Pam J. Crabtree, (2004). Ancient Europe (8000 B.C -A.D. 1000). An Encyclopedia of the Barbarian World, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

Video Recommendations:

- How Ancient Chinese Bronzes were created: <https://www.youtube.com/watch>
- Oracle Bone, Shang Dynasty: <https://www.youtube.com/watch>
- <https://egyankosh.ac.in/handle/>

Teaching Learning Process:

The Teaching Learning Process shall emphasise the interconnectedness of themes within the different rubrics to build a holistic view of the time period/region under study. Classroom teaching, classroom discussions, and student presentations in class and/or in tutorials will be followed. Thematic presentations, individual/group, or civilization specific can be done. Since this paper traces the history of civilizations, supporting audio-visual aids like documentaries, maps and power point presentations shall be used widely. Students shall also be encouraged to participate in talks/seminar

presentations by specialists in the field. Since this paper engages with the Bronze Age civilizations, much focus will also be on debates around technological specialisation and its contribution to the social growth. Attention shall be given to background introductory lectures and discussions.

Assessment Methods:

Continuous assessment process shall be adapted to measure their grasp on debates and discussions covered in the class. Two written assignments along with one presentation can be used for final grading of the students. Students will be assessed on their ability to engage with a sizeable corpus of readings assigned to the theme for written submissions, i.e. being able to explain important historical trends and tracing historiography reflected in the assigned readings.

Internal Assessment: 25 Marks

Written Exam: 75 Marks
Total: 100 Marks

Key Words: Civilization, historiography, sources, urban revolution, technology, bronze age, kingship, religion, culture, ecological