When Saddam came to power in 1979 he plastered 20 foot high portraits of himself in the streets of Baghdad and compared himself to kings like Nebuchadrezzar who ruled over Babylon thousands of years ago and built massive monuments glorifying themselves and their gods. We’ll see how the conflict over Palestine/Israel has roots that go back to struggles for independence in a world dominated by superpowers like Babylon and Egypt. We’ll look at the political, social, religious and economic underpinnings that allowed these great civilizations to flourish, along with the institutions and values that made up the fabric of daily life, and above all relationships and conflicts between the various cultures and their contribution to the rise of western civilization in Greece.

INSTRUCTOR: Stuart Tyson Smith
Office & Contact: 1016 HSSB, 893-7887, stsmith@anth.ucsb.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 10-11, Thursday 2:30-3:30.

TIME & PLACE: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11-12:15, Psych 1802.

COURSE GOALS
1. Investigate the rise and development of civilization in the Middle East, including both its great accomplishments and ferocious conflicts, from the beginnings of settled life 12,000 years ago to the Roman conquest in 30 BC.
2. Examine what archaeology tells us about the cultural setting from which the Bible emerged. What is myth and what is history? How was the Biblical narrative shaped by its times?
3. Assess the impact of the Middle East on the rise of Western civilization.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course will have a midterm counting for 1/4 of the grade, a comprehensive final exam counting for 1/2 of the grade, and a short project paper counting for 1/4 of the grade. The midterm will consist of a map section (20%), short description identifications (40%), and essay questions (40%). The final will consist of an image section (20%), short description identifications (40%), and essay questions (40%). For each section there will be some choice of what to answer (e.g., identify 10 of 15 place names listed, one of two essay questions, etc.). Exam questions will be drawn from both the readings and lectures. The Final Exam will focus on the second half of class, but will include a comprehensive essay question. Study questions and lists for the identification and map sections will be handed out before each exam. Make up exams can be scheduled if it is not possible to attend on an exam day. This should be arranged before the exam is given, otherwise a penalty may be assessed (a valid excuse such as illness or a family emergency will never be penalized). In the 10 page (double spaced, not larger than 12 pt. font) project, students will interpret an archaeological data set from the Near East. This project will be discussed in detail during the second half of the course in class and in handouts.

Readings will be assigned from the following (see Course Schedule for specific assignments):


ANTHRO 118TS COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Δ Introduction.
Δ Middle Eastern Archaeology, Biblical Archaeology.

WEEK 2

Δ Beer busts & Big Men (or Women): the Agricultural “Revolution” in Syria-Palestine and the beginnings of settled life at Jericho, Jarmo, Çatal Hüyük and Ain Ghazal.
Δ Film: Noah’s Flood in Context: Legend or History?
  Readings: Currid, pp. 49-65; 89-109.
WEEK 3
△ The Road to “Civilization” – The Urban Revolution: The Halafian, Ubaid and Uruk Cultures, the Egyptian Predynastic and Nubian A-Group.
Readings: Roaf, pp. 48-68.
Readings: Roaf, pp. 68-95.

WEEK 4
△ They came from Ur: Early Bronze Age Syro-Palestine and Biblical Tradition - Creation, Floods and Patriarchs. The city states of Ugarit, Byblos, and Ebla.
△ An Eye for an Eye. Sargon, Hammurapi and the unification of Mesopotamia, the early Assyrians and their trading colonies in Anatolia.
Readings: Roaf, pp. 96-130; Arnold & Beyer, pp. 72-117; 150-155, 222-226.

WEEK 5
△ Crossroads of Civilization: Trade and interaction in Middle Bronze Age Syro-Palestine, The Amorites/Hyksos.
Project Begins.
△ Imperial Babylon: The Kassites and Mesopotamian Civilization.
Readings: Roaf, pp. 139-42; 155-159.

WEEK 6
△ Age of Empires: Pharaoh, the Syrian Mitanni and Turkish Hittites.
Readings: Roaf, pp. 131-139, 142-147.
△ Mid-Term Exam (covers all material through Week 5).

WEEK 7
△ Sailing the Great Green: Trade and interaction in Late Bronze Age Syro-Palestine in an International Age.
Project Phase II
△ Pillar of Fire: The Bible as history, myth or reality? The Exodus and the conquest of Canaan. The invasion of the Sea Peoples, the fall of the Hittites and the Kassites, Egypt stems the tide.

WEEK 8
△ Humping across the Desert – Camels and Empires in the Iron Age: Desert trade and the Assyrian domination of Babylonia and Nubian domination of Egypt.
Project Phase III
△ Iron Man Competitions: The fall of Assyria and the rise of the Neo-Babylonians and Persians.
WEEK 9

∆ By the Waters of Babylon: The Archaeology of Syro-Palestine in the Iron Age, the Babylonian Captivity and its influence on the historicity of the Bible.

∆ East meets West: The historicity of Homer and influence of the early Greeks by Egypt and the Near East in the Late Bronze and Iron Ages.
Reading: Roaf, pp. 222-223.
Papers due Friday, June 30

WEEK 10

∆ The Conquest of Alexander the Great, the Romans, and the Hellenization of the Near East.
Reading: Roaf, pp. 214-15; Currid, pp. 111-119.

∆ Black Athena? Egypt, the Near East and the origins of Western Civilization.

FINAL EXAM, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, NOON-3 PM.