



Universidad
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

Life and Death in Ancient Egypt

Asignatura transversal
Universidad de Alcalá

Curso Académico 2022/2023
Transversal – Cuatrimestre 1º

COURSE HANDOUT

Name of the course:	LIFE AND DEATH IN ANCIENT EGYPT (Vida y muerte en el antiguo Egipto)
Code:	100275
Programs:	All programs of the University of Alcalá
Department and Section:	Historia y Filosofía / Historia Antigua
Type of course:	Transversal
ECTS credits:	6 credits
Semester:	First Semester
Instructors:	Antonio J. Morales (antonioj.morales@uah.es) Carlos Gracia Zamacona (carlos.gracia@uah.es) Beatriz Noria Serrano (beatriz.noria@edu.uah.es)
Tutorial hours:	It will be announced at the beginning of the semester
Language:	English
Since all activities will be conducted in English, students are expected to have an adequate level, at least B2.1 level in the language within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).	

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The discipline of Egyptology generates great interest among both general audience and students in Humanities, History, Anthropology, Archaeology, Art, and Philology in particular. Despite the existence of countless publications and essays about ancient Egypt and the archaeological and scientific findings related to this ancient culture, at present time there are numerous aspects of the history, archaeology, society and culture of the pharaonic civilisation that are poorly understood and interpreted with an inappropriate lack of scientific rigour.

In this course, students get to deepen into the culture and society of ancient Egypt, examining aspects of their lives as well as his funerary domain. The course will examine how was the life in the Nile valley and the surrounding deserts, how ancient Egyptians spoke, wrote, and produced monuments and compositions, what kinds of ideologies, approaches, and beliefs had, and how they understood death, resurrection, and afterlife. In addition, students will examine the work of Egyptologists, archaeologists, and scientists in the understanding of ancient Egyptian monuments, findings, and ideas.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

General competences:

1. Comprehensive reading as well as analytical and summarizing capacity with texts dealing with historical, archaeological, and philological aspects in History, Anthropology, and Humanities.
2. Being informed of the major historical, cultural, and social aspects of the ancient Egyptian civilization.
3. Understanding the involvement and application of new approaches, techniques, and technologies in the study of the Past.
4. Analytical, critical deep reading of historical, archaeological, and philological studies about ancient Egypt.

Specific competences:

1. To be able to interpret a variety of historical texts from ancient Egypt from which cultural, religious, and social aspects can be inferred.
2. Identification of ancient Egyptian sites, materials, and sources, which can be selected for particular investigations or studies regarding pharaonic Egypt.
3. Examination of the current and most advanced approaches and interpretations in Egyptology, with emphasis on new scientific and technological approaches from engaging sciences into Archaeology.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

The contexts of our course *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt* will be distributed along the 15 weeks of classes in the semester. Each week (2 classes per week), instructors will provide materials in theoretical classes and will incorporate some practicings into the course. The following materials constitute the contents of our 15 weeks of class:

Bloques de contenido	Hours
Lesson 1: Life and death in ancient Egypt. The study of Egyptology. Geographical and cultural aspects of the country.	Week 1 - 3 hours
Lesson 2: Chronology and periods of pharaonic civilization. Modern subdivisions, historical sources, and absolute chronology.	Week 2 - 3 hours
Lesson 3: Introduction to ancient Egyptian religion and thought I: ancient religious concepts: cult, myth, ritual, piety, magic.	Week 3 - 3 hours
Lesson 4: Introduction to ancient Egyptian religion and thought II: the realm of the gods, myth and worship, the one and the many (Akhenaten and his "monotheism").	Week 4 - 3 hours
Lesson 5: The divine institution of kingship. Approaches to the study and understanding of the divinity of pharaoh.	Week 5 - 3 hours

Lesson 6: Temples and priesthood: the creation of the world, local gods and cults, shrines, sanctuaries, and temples.	Week 6 – 3 hours
Lesson 7: Ancient Egyptian society and culture: social groups, administration, economy.	Week 7 – 3 hours
Lesson 8: The realm of the dead I: death, initiation, and resurrection. Private mortuary monuments and beliefs	Week 8 – 3 hours
Lesson 9: The meaning and process of mummification. Social and physical death. Reconstitution. Embalmers and priests.	Week 9 – 3 hours
Lesson 10: The realm of the dead II: royal burials and beliefs, the myth of Osiris, royal tomb architecture and decoration.	Week 10 – 3 hours
Lesson 11: Ancient Egyptian literature: wisdom, tales, and instructions. Letters and documents. Historical texts.	Week 11 – 3 hours
Lesson 12: Introduction to ancient Egyptian language and writing. Hieroglyphs, hieratic and other systems.	Week 12 – 3 hours
Lesson 13: Texts for the afterlife: ritual spells, liturgies, and guides. Tomb inscriptions, decoration, and functions.	Week 13 – 3 hours
Lesson 14: Ancient Egyptian material culture: ceramics, amulets, paintings, sculpture, reliefs, and other objects.	Week 14 – 3 hours
Lesson 15: The mechanics of magic and arcana. Magic and religion. Magical practices. Mysteries, initiation, and necromancy.	Week 15 – 3 hours

4. METHODOLOGIES AND CLASS ACTIVITIES

4.1. Student workload

Number of hours for the seasons: 50 h	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theoretical: 30 h - Practicing: 15 h - Tutorials: 2 h - Preparation for activities/reviews: 3 h
Working hours for the student: 100 h	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study and class preparation: 70 h - Composition of work: 20 h - Preparation of other exercises: 10 h
Total amount of hours:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 150 h

4.2. Learning activities

Theoretical classes	Following basic contents provided in class by the instructor through lectures and powerpoints, with special emphasis on the bibliographical resources
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	and class discussions.
Practices	Development of the main skills of the student in the analysis, interpretation, and work with primary resources such as texts, iconography, architecture, and material culture from ancient Egypt.
Tutorials	Discussion of the progress, evaluation, and doubts.
Personal work	Preparation and submission of a critical brief paper on a publication, a research paper at the end of the course, and the submission of particular activities during the semester.

4.3. Resources and materials

The essential materials and resources for this course are textual and visual. On the one hand, students are requested to use the bibliographical resources for the course and the study of the presented materials, especially in relation to historical, literary, and cultural textual compositions and artistic iconographic and architectural materials. All these materials are available through the instructor presentations (only in class, not uploaded to the platform) and the bibliographical suggestions, which can be mainly found at the UAH library as well as in digital form online. In addition, the course will provide materials, announcements, and suggestions in the digital platform –Aula Virtual & Blackboard Collaborate– where students will be able to access more materials for the course.

5. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assessment criteria

Students attending this course must follow the attendance scheme of **Evaluación Continua**, which allows attendance and participation in class, as well as assessment, evaluation, tutorials, and submissions. According to the UAH regulations, however, students in exceptional situations might want to attend this course following the attendance scheme of **Evaluación Final**, which allows the student not having to attend the lectures but to access the platform and the instructors for tutorials, submissions, and assessment. Students can apply for Evaluación Final through the Office of the Dean of History and Philosophy (“Decanato”).

Students attending the course through the traditional attendance scheme of **Evaluación Continua**, will have to take into consideration the following activities for their assessment at the end of the course:

- Submission of research paper. Students will have to submit in digital form (pdf) a research paper of a topic selected from a series of options offered by the instructor. This paper will be submitted on the date of our semester final test (which, for this course, is the paper itself). The research paper must comply with

the major characteristics of a research individual piece of work, with a hypothesis, innovative ideas, and a major body of references and bibliography.

- Submission of a critical summary. Students will submit by the middle of the semester a summary of a scientific article provided by the instructor. The submission date for this critical summary will be announced in the first weeks of class.
- Active participation. Students must attend classes and participate as much as possible in any debates, discussions, and time for questions and doubts.

Students who received permission from the Office of the Dean of History and Philosophy to attend this course in the attendance scheme of **Evaluación Final**, must take into consideration the following activities for their assessment at the end of the course:

- Submission of research paper. Students will have to submit in digital form (pdf) a research paper of a topic selected from a series of options offered by the instructor. This paper will be submitted on the date of our semester final test (which, for this course, is the paper itself). The research paper must comply with the major characteristics of a research individual piece of work, with a hypothesis, innovative ideas, and a major body of references and bibliography.
- Submission of a critical summary. Students will submit a summary of a scientific article provided by the instructor. The submission date will also be on the date of our semester final test (which, for this course, is the paper itself).
- Course activities. Students in the Evaluación Final scheme do not need to attend the weekly classes, but they will have to submit on the date of our semester final test (which, for this course, is the paper itself) any minor activities requested to the rest of students in class during the semester.

Any student in Evaluación Continua o Evaluación Final who failed in the submission and positive assessment of his/her work, will be able to complete or improve his/her work in the **Convocatoria Extraordinaria**, which will allow the student to a) present again the research paper and critical summary of a scientific publication, and b) to submit any other activities the student should submit or repeat. All submissions for the Convocatoria Extraordinaria must be issued by the official date for our course established by the Office of the Dean of History and Philosophy.

Grading criteria

Students following this course through the **Evaluación Continua** scheme, will be evaluated and assessed according to the following distribution:

- Research paper: 40%
- Critical summary: 30%
- Other activities in the course: 20%
- Attendance: 10%

Those who follow the **Evaluación Final** scheme, will receive their assessment on the basis of the following distribution:

- Research paper: 40%
- Critical summary: 35%
- Other activities in the course: 25%

The evaluation and assessment for the students attending the **Convocatoria Extraordinaria** will be the same as for the Evaluación Final students.

Observations

The final assessment of a student is related –in the Evaluación Continua scheme– to the attendance of a minimum of 80% of the classes, the submission of the research paper and critical summary, as well as the submission of the particular minor activities developed during the semester. Please, take into consideration that there will be no extensions in the submission of the research paper and critical summary compositions.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BAINES, J. and J. MÁLEK, *A Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Checkmark Books, 2000).
- DUNAND, F. and CH. ZIVIE-COCHE, *Gods and Men in Egypt. 3000 BCE to 395 CE* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- VAN DE MIEROOP, M., *A History of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).
- QUIRKE, Q., *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (London: British Museum Press, 1992)
- SHAFFER, B.E. (ed.), *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).
- SHAW, I. (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).
- SILVERMAN, D.P. *Ancient Egypt* (London: Duncan Baird, 2003).
- WILKINSON, R.W. *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames&Hudson, 2003).

7. ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

In the *exceptional case of pandemic crisis*, instructors will transfer the course and lectures –on the basis of the government and university regulations– to the digital platform of Aula Virtual. All materials, lectures, and tutorials as well as submissions will be processed through the platform.

In addition, due to the *Archaeological Expedition of the UAH to Egypt*, it is possible that the instructors might have to spend some weeks in Egypt, which would have an impact on the development of the classes and would require the reorganization of some of the classes, always in agreement with the criteria and possibilities of the students, who will decide together with the instructor(s).