The Art and Archaeology of Ancient Nubia Syllabus

Instructor: Brian Smith
Email: bes@uchicago.edu

Quarter: Autumn
Start – end date: September 26 – November 14
Session day/time: Monday, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm
Course Code and Section: HUAS93217, 22A1

Modality: Remote learning

Course Overview
We will examine the development of the art and architecture of the cultures of ancient Nubia, as well as discuss concepts of race and ethnicity in the ancient Nile Valley, particularly Nubia as distinct from Egypt. This class will reveal one of the most dynamic and innovative civilizations of the ancient world and will highlight its relationship with Egypt and how both civilizations influenced each other. It will cover the period from the earliest inhabitants of the Nile Valley (Paleolithic through the Neolithic, the domestication of plants and animals) and will continue through the fluorescence of Nubian culture until the advent of Christianity.

The two required reading texts will be downloaded into the “Files” section of the course on the Canvas platform in preparation for class discussions. Reading assignments are for discussion the following week.

Required texts
Larry Ross. Nubia and Egypt 100,000 B.C.E.TO 400 C.E. From Prehistory to the Meroitic Period.
Uros Matic. Ethnic Identities in the Land of the Pharaohs

Course readings

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction, Timeline/Historical Overview. “Green Africa” Geology,</td>
<td>Ross: Chapters 1 and 2</td>
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<td>Geography, and the Gift of the Nile</td>
<td>Matic: Introduction and Sections 1 and 2</td>
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| Week 2| Domestication of the Natural World: Animal Husbandry and the Beginning of Agriculture. “Dry Africa”: Climate Change in Ancient Africa | Ross: Chapters 1 and 2  
Video for discussion: de Souza  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gCNP7qIDw |
| Week 3| Pottery and Perspectives: Pre-Dynastic Nubia: Nubian A-C Groups  
| Week 4| “A King Shall Rise from the South” Nubia in the Egyptian Middle Kingdom Theories of Ethnicities and Social Identities. Kerma and the Urbanization of Nubia | Ross: Chapters 3 and 4  
Matic: Section 3 |
| Week 5| Nubia as Equal and Rival. Caught in the Middle The Hyksos and the Birth of the New Kingdom. The Fall of Nubia under the Egyptian New Kingdom. | Ross: Chapter 5  
Matic: Section 4 |
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Matic: Sections 3  
Video for discussion: Solange Ashby. The Goddess Isis and the Kingdom of Meroe [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97cM5UB-WRA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97cM5UB-WRA) |
| Week 8  | Meroë and Philae. Milk, Cows, and the Essence of Divine Motherhood The Last Words of Ancient Nubia Christianity. A New Narrative on the Nubian Nile | No reading assigned                                                                |

**Accessing remote courses**

Remote courses are taught through our Canvas platform. Approximately two weeks before your class begins, we will add you to your canvas site using the email address you provided at the time of registration. An invitation will then be sent to that email. Click the “Get Started” button in the email to begin the Canvas login process. For step-by-step instructions, please visit [https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts](https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts). Once you’ve created your Canvas account, you can access any Graham School canvas course for which you are registered at: [https://canvas.uchicago.edu](https://canvas.uchicago.edu).

**Accessibility information**

Student Disability Services (SDS) works to provide resources, support and accommodations for all students with disabilities and works to remove physical and attitudinal barriers, which may prevent their full participation in the University community. Students that would like to request accommodations should contact SDS in advance of the first class session at 773.702.6000 or disabilities@uchicago.edu.

**UChicago CARES Statement:**

The University and its faculty are committed to creating a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all students. At the University, all faculty, staff, graduate student instructors, and teaching assistants are considered “Individuals with Reporting Responsibilities” and are required to let the University’s Title IX
Coordinator know about any disclosures they receive from students about experiences of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual harassment). This includes disclosures of experiences that happened before their time at the University. This is to ensure that all students who have experienced sexual misconduct receive support, options, and information about their rights and resources. Students are not obligated to respond to this outreach, and this will not generate a report to law enforcement.

For more information, please see this handout for students as well as the University’s Policy on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct and Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment. You can also reach out directly for services and support from the Office for Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Support by emailing titleix@uchicago.edu.

If you, or another student you know, wishes to speak to a confidential resource who does not have this reporting responsibility, please contact the Sexual Assault Dean on Call through the UChicago Safe App or at 773.834-HELP.

Questions? Contact Zoë Eisenman at zme1@uchicago.edu.