# Civilisations of the ancient and medieval world

## Prof. Gabriele Archetti

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with the tools for understanding the fundamental points of ancient and medieval history, with particular regard to the development of the great Mediterranean civilizations and the intersection of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Attention will be paid to the concept of history, its sources, the historical method, the developments of historiography and the didactic problems in primary school.

The aims of the course are to: a) provide awareness of historical work methods, focusing attention on the subject-specific lexicon, sources and problems of historiographic interpretation; b) develop a critical approach to the study of the discipline, focusing on causal links and long-term relationships between the present world and socio-political, economic-productive and religious-cultural developments of societies between antiquity and the Middle Ages; c) understand the meaning of historical knowledge with reference to current events and repercussions in the educational field; d) turn the contents studied in the lectures into didactic contents.

At the end of the course, students will have to be able to:

1) tell historical facts contextualising them in space and time using an appropriate language and causal and logical connections;

2) develop educational paths on some important issues of the ancient and medieval world, also with an interdisciplinary approach;

3) show their ability to carry out educational interventions, also through their awareness of historical-cultural dynamics, starting from historical knowledge;

4) prove that they have acquired analytical and synthetic skills in their approach to historiographical issues and their connection with current events.

***COURSE CONTENT***

From prehistory to history: themes, sources, problems, periodisation, writing supports, archives and libraries. The great civilisations and the elements of their development in the Mediterranean context between the African continent, the Near East, Asia and Europe, with particular regard to: Egypt and the Near East, Cretan and Mycenaean societies, the Greek cities, Rome and Byzantium, the spread of Christianity, basic ecclesiastical structures, the Barbarian world and Lombard civilization, Mohammed and the birth of Islam and the sacred Roman empire and Carolingian system, reform of the Church, Communal Age and the end of the Middle Ages. Historical geography, the migrations and movements of peoples in the Eurasian continent, nutrition and daily life, education in the ancient and medieval world, the recovery of ancient elements in the Middle Ages and historical teaching in primary school.

***READING LIST***

For the general part, students will study their lecture notes, integrated by documents and in-depth materials made available on the Balckboard platform in the lecturer's personal web page; these materials will be supplemented with the following volumes:

C. Bearzot, A. Barzanò, *Istituzioni di storia antica. Dalla preistoria all’espansione araba*, Edizioni Studium, Rome, 2018), pp. 15-118, 133-263.

A. Cortonesi, *Il medioevo. Profilo di un millennio*, Carocci, Roma, 2014 (Manuali universitari, 64), pp. 13-140.

In addition, for the part of thematic study between archeology and history, students have to bring the volume: *I Longobardi in Lombardia*, a cura di G. Archetti, Edizioni Studium, Roma, 2022 (Centro studi longobardi. Biblioteca storica 2).

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures in the classroom, supplemented by the opportunity to participate in meetings, seminars and conferences organised in close synergy with the course topics; students may also take part in educational trips to visit city monuments or territories that are particularly significant to the topics covered (for instance palazzo imperiale di via Brisa, teatro romano, colonne e basilica di San Lorenzo, basilica di Sant’Ambrogio, castello Sforzesco, ecc.). Any material available to students will be optimised through the Blackboard platform to which they are required to register.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment methods consist of an oral exam, where students must show their acquisition of concepts relating to historical knowledge and the main turning points of ancient and medieval civilisations; in addition to the general contents, students will have to prove to master the key topics connected to the single-subject analyses indicated in the syllabus. The final mark, on a 30-point scale, will be based on accuracy of students’ answers, their command of the language and ability to support statements and analyses, also with a critical approach, showing maturity and awareness of the long-term developments of historic and historiographical issues.

The exam can be divided into two parts, during the break between the first and second semester. Students will agree with the lecturer on the contents, times and reading list, and will enrol in the interim test via the Blackboard platform.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending this course as it is introductory.

The course contents may however be provided by a good high school manual.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.