**History of the Ancient Near East**

## Prof. Mauro Giorgieri

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

The objective of this course is to provide the student with a basic knowledge of the general, political, social and cultural history of the Near East (with a special focus on Mesopotamia, the Syrian-Palestinian region and Anatolia) in the Pre-Classical era (4th-1st millennium B.C.). At the end of the course it is expected from students the knowledge of the main study methodologies and the chronological development of the history of the Ancient Near East, on the basis of topics studied in class and the manual part. Applying the above mentioned knowledge, students will be able to critically address the historical-cultural issues of Near East area between the 4th and the first millennium BC.

***COURSE CONTENT***

1. *General Part*: the rediscovery of the ancient Near Eastern civilisations and the origins of the Near Eastern archaeology. The sources, the methods, the problems inherent in historical reconstruction; definition of the chronology; periodisation; general historical overview. Peoples, languages, and writing of the ancient Near East. The cuneiform script: its functioning and the history of deciphering; the other scripts; the advent of alphabetic scripts.

2. *Key phases in the history of the Ancient Near East:* The “Neolithic Revolution”. The proto-historic phases: the “Urban Revolution”; the first urbanisation and the origin of the state; organisation of urban society; the functioning of the administration; the birth of writing. The Early Bronze Age in Mesopotamia and Syria: the Proto-Dynastic period, Ebla, Akkad, Ur III. The Middle Bronze Age: the Amorites; nomad-sedentary interaction; war and alliances. The Late Bronze Age: the el Amama era and the Great Kingdoms (Egypt, Mittani, Hatti, the Middle-Assyrian kingdom, Cassite Babylonia). The Iron Age: national states and Great Empires (Assyria and Babilonia).

***READING LIST***

For the exam, students must study the handbook of F. Giusfredi, *Il Vicino Oriente antico. Breve storia dalle origini alla caduta di Babilonia*, Roma, Carocci, 2020, with the help of the notes taken during classes and the power-point presentations.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Classroom lectures with teaching materials (photocopies, power-point).

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam consists in an oral test aimed at verifying, in 3-4 questions, the knowledge of the student about the main issues and the chronological development of the Ancient Near East history, on the basis of the topics covered in class and on the manual. The final grade, expressed in thirtieths, will take into account of the accuracy of the answers (up to 70%), as well as the ability of the student to present the topics in a coherent and precise way, using an appropriate lexicon (up to 30%).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Being it an introductory course, there are no prerequisites in terms of course content. However, it is desirable an interest for the history and the culture of ancient world by students.

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.