


Civilizations of the Ancient World
MEETING 1
Introduction and Evidence

- Civilization
- The syllabus
- Themes for the course
- Evidence

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What is this course?


 Civilizations of the Ancient World
HIS 246, cross-listed with LEH 354

Tuesdays and Thursdays
3:00 - 4:15 p.m. in Carman 209

markwilson.com/courses/AA/AA_aw/

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Who am I?

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Carman 292

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Four things today

- 1 Civilization
- 2 The syllabus
- 3 Themes for the course
- 4 Evidence

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Civilization
Civilization is an invention—you could even call it a technology

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Civilization



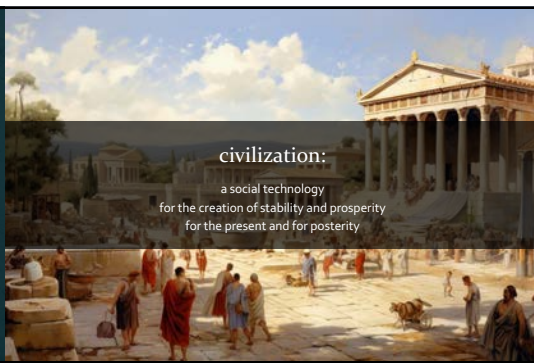
What is civilization? Why was it invented?

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Origins of civilization

- What do we need for civilization?
 - Agriculture (farming + pastoralism)
 - Not just subsistence farming but surplus production
 - Specialization of labor
 - Government
 - Religion
 - Long-distance trade
 - Metalworking
 - Writing
- What do people sacrifice in adopting civilization?
- Why did people choose civilization?

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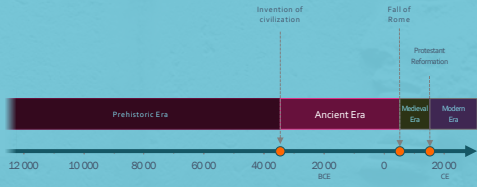


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The ancient era



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The ancient era



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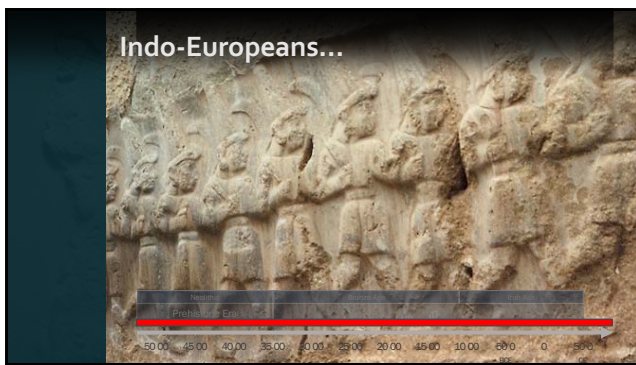
Civilization: Sumerians...



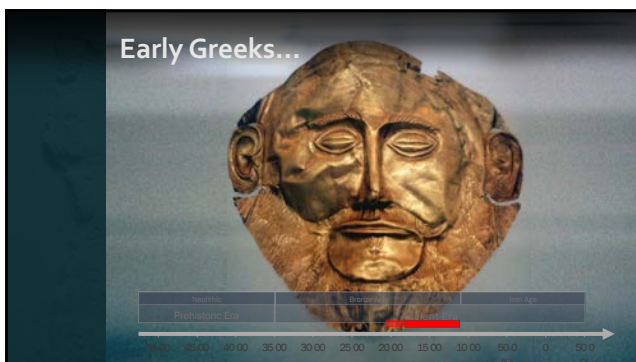
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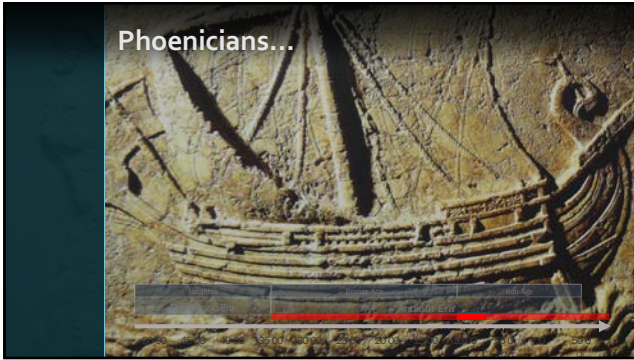
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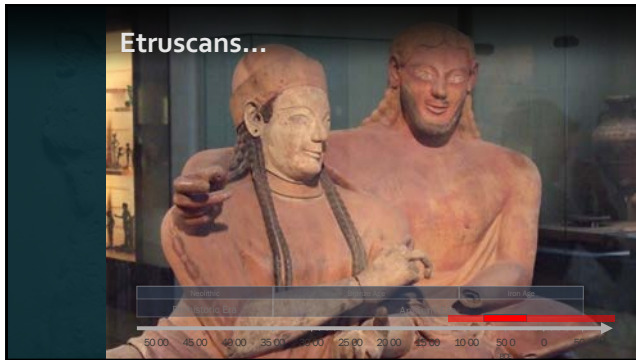
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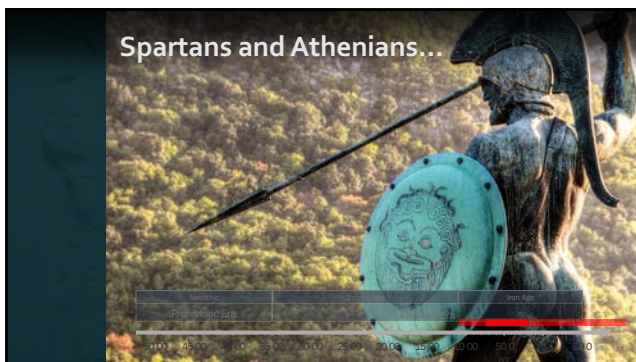
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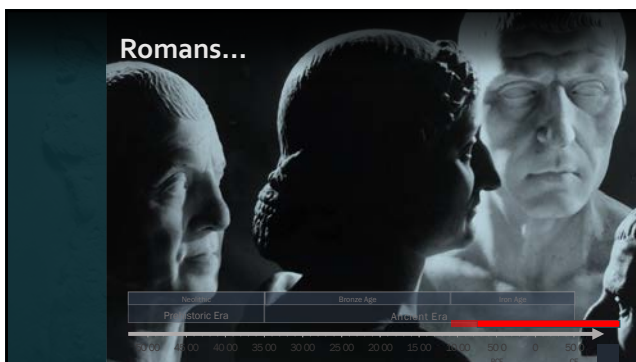
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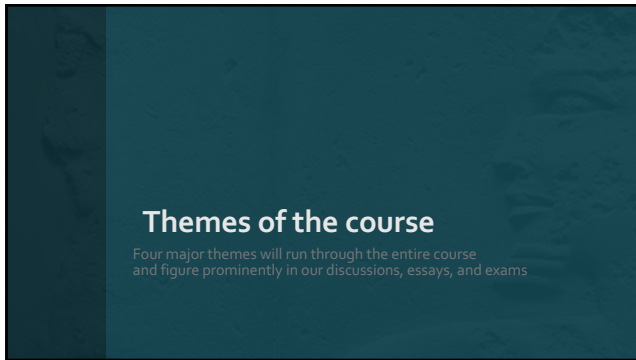
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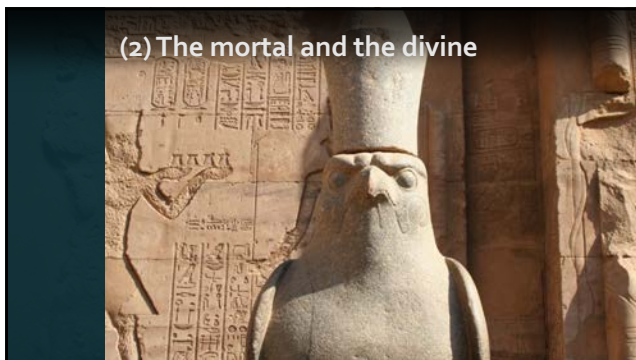
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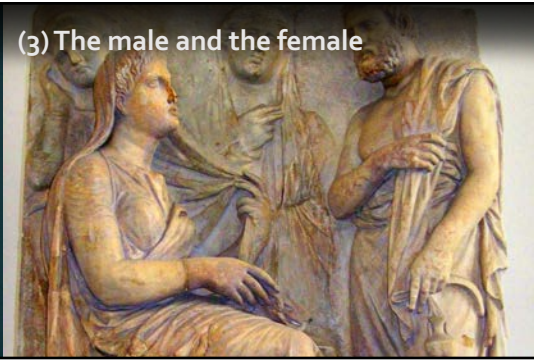


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(3) The male and the female



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(4) City and Empire

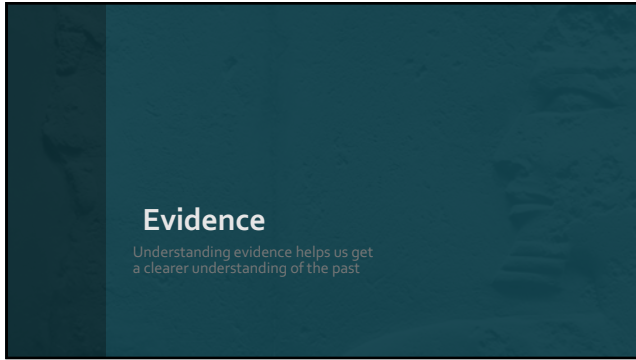


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The course website

The key resources you need for the course are on the course website

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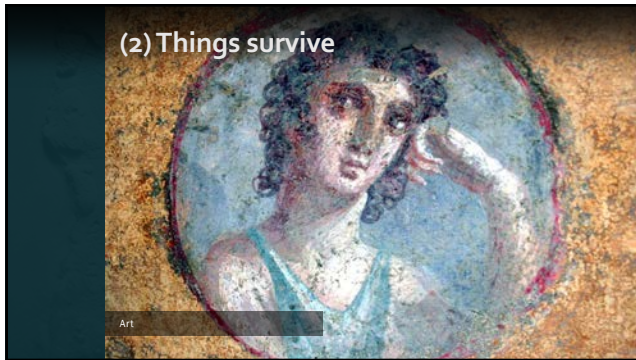
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Kinds of evidence

- **Primary source**
 - Eyewitness testimony from the place and time being studied
- **Secondary source**
 - A scholar collects and interprets primary sources on a subject
- **Tertiary source**
 - General scholarly consensus on a subject
 - Includes encyclopedias, textbooks, and almost everything on the web
 - NOT ALLOWED as a source for history papers

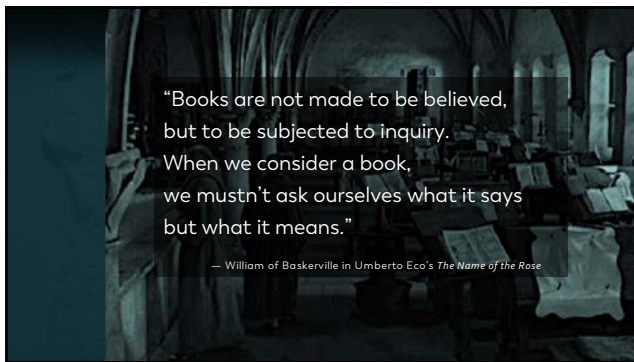
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Problems with primary sources?

- Intentional bias
- Unintentional bias
- Point of view
- Survival
- Translation

CONCLUSION:
There are no facts in history

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“Books are not made to be believed,
but to be subjected to inquiry.
When we consider a book,
we mustn’t ask ourselves what it says
but what it means.”

— William of Baskerville in Umberto Eco’s *The Name of the Rose*

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Example: Pliny the Younger, 79 CE

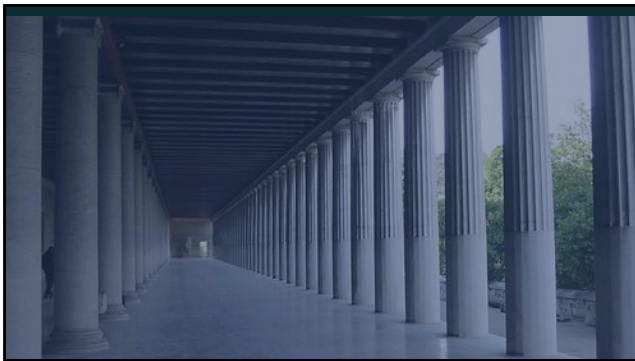


Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, 79 CE

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