



AHIS3241

Dialogue of Cultures in the Ancient World

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

School of Humanities

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Javier Alvarez-Mon javier.alvarez-mon@mq.edu.au
Credit points 10
Prerequisites 130cp at 1000 level or above or (20cp in AHIS or AHST units at 2000 level)
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description This unit offers an advanced study of cultural dialogue between ancient societies, by examining the material and literary records of the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds, including Egypt. Western cultural stereotypes and prejudices are investigated, as well as notions of cultural identity, assimilation, rejection, and superiority. Problems to be addressed may concern, among many, cultural borrowing, funerary traditions, gift-giving, tribute, plundering, arts and coinage, trade, and dress.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- ULO1:** Apply notions of cultural identity, acculturation, assimilation, rejection, and superiority amongst peoples and cultures of the ancient world.
- ULO2:** Understand and critically evaluate methodological approaches to the study of cultural dialogue in antiquity.
- ULO3:** Acquire skills necessary for the analysis and interpretation of social and political identity in the ancient world.
- ULO4:** Conduct independent research, synthesize acquired knowledge, and effectively plan, organize and prioritize work.
- ULO5:** Communicate effectively with teaching staff and peers.

General Assessment Information

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Long Research Essay</u>	50%	No	02/06/2025
<u>Short Essay (Literature Review)</u>	30%	No	28/04/2025
<u>Online Quiz</u>	20%	No	24/03/2025

Long Research Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 65 hours

Due: **02/06/2025**

Weighting: **50%**

Essay requiring independent research; Length: 3,500 words

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply notions of cultural identity, acculturation, assimilation, rejection, and superiority amongst peoples and cultures of the ancient world.
- Understand and critically evaluate methodological approaches to the study of cultural dialogue in antiquity.
- Acquire skills necessary for the analysis and interpretation of social and political identity in the ancient world.
- Conduct independent research, synthesize acquired knowledge, and effectively plan, organize and prioritize work.

Short Essay (Literature Review)

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **28/04/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

Essay requiring independent research; Length: 1,000 words;

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply notions of cultural identity, acculturation, assimilation, rejection, and superiority amongst peoples and cultures of the ancient world.
- Understand and critically evaluate methodological approaches to the study of cultural dialogue in antiquity.
- Acquire skills necessary for the analysis and interpretation of social and political identity in the ancient world.
- Conduct independent research, synthesize acquired knowledge, and effectively plan, organize and prioritize work.

Online Quiz

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 11 hours

Due: **24/03/2025**

Weighting: **20%**

Answer a series of questions on the Lectures and Required Weekly Readings from Weeks 1 to 4. Complete the Quiz using the iLearn quiz tool

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply notions of cultural identity, acculturation, assimilation, rejection, and superiority amongst peoples and cultures of the ancient world.
- Understand and critically evaluate methodological approaches to the study of cultural dialogue in antiquity.
- Acquire skills necessary for the analysis and interpretation of social and political identity in the ancient world.

- Conduct independent research, synthesize acquired knowledge, and effectively plan, organize and prioritize work.
- Communicate effectively with teaching staff and peers.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

UNIT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

This unit will be taught following a **flipped classroom model**, in which students first gain exposure to new material outside of class via reading and watching recorded lectures, and then the tutorial time is used to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge.

The unit is comprised of two key elements:

1. **Three hours of instruction:** 1-2 hours of pre-recorded lectures and 1 hour tutorial delivered either on campus or asynchronously online (for Online-Flexible and OUA students); and
2. Individual **study** and **preparation**.

Note:

- Students are expected to **attend all tutorials** (or complete all tutorial activities online each week), unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Pre-recorded lectures will be available on the iLearn site before the week they are due. Students are expected to have watched the videos and completed the required lecture and tutorial readings before attending their scheduled tutorial.

Unit Schedule

UNIT SCHEDULE

Week	Lecture topic	Readings
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Week 1	<p>Welcome to Dialogue of Civilizations</p> <p>Class Introduction: On Dialogue and Culture</p>	<p>Readings for next week</p> <p>Forero (2006) <i>Leaving the Wild, and Rather Liking the Change</i></p> <p>Diamond (1997) <i>To Farm or not To Farm (or the worst mistake in History?)</i>.</p> <p>Watch: "First Contact"</p>
Week 2	<p>Welcome to Civilization: Human's Worst Mistake?</p> <p>Lecture: To Farm or not to Farm, the Gobekli Tepe Enigma.</p>	<p>Forero (2006) <i>Leaving the Wild, and Rather Liking the Change</i></p> <p>Diamond (1997) <i>To Farm or not To Farm (or the worst mistake in History?)</i>.</p> <p>Watch: "First Contact"</p>
Week 3	<p>On Ethnicity: Uruk the World's First Empire</p> <p>Lecture case study: Uruk, the First World Empire: 3300 BC</p>	<p>Bahrani (2006) <i>Ethnicity in Antiquity</i></p> <p>Emberling and Yoffee (1999) <i>Thinking Ethnicity</i>.</p>
Week 4	<p>When Humans Were Gods, To Be or not to Be Divine Lecture case study: The Gilgamesh Epic</p>	<p>Kline (2016) <i>The Oldest Story</i></p> <p>Moran (1995) <i>The Gilgamesh Epic: A Masterpiece</i></p> <p>Brisch (2008) <i>Divinie kingship</i></p>
Week 5	<p>Sexuality and Gender in the Ancient Near East</p> <p>Lecture case study: Gender in the ANE</p>	<p>Bahrani (2001) <i>Women, sex and gender in Mesopotamia</i>, pp. 1-27</p> <p>Peled (2010) <i>Eunuchs</i></p> <p>Suter (2007) <i>High Priestess</i></p>
Week 6	<p>Trade and Economic Wealth, Birth of Capitalism? Lecture case study: From Assur to Kanesh: Assyrian donkey caravans</p>	<p>Veenhof (2007) <i>Assur the city</i></p>
Week 7	<p>Sheep or Grain? On Tribes and Pastoralists Lecture case study: Pastoralism and the kingdom of Mari</p>	<p>Szutchman (2009): <i>Nomads, Tribes and the State</i></p> <p>Cohen (2007): <i>Barley as Key Symbol</i></p>
Recess and Mid-term		
Week 8		

Week 9	Working Class, Tomb Robbers and Diplomats Lecture case study: Egyptian tomb robbers and Diplomacy	Da Silva (2016) <i>Women and diplomacy</i> Head (2011) <i>Food and Protocol</i> Singer (2017) <i>The Messengers</i> Watch "The Egyptian" (1954); available > https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FQesPn9hvl
Week 10	On Luxury and Consumption: When Enough is not Enough? Lecture: the Assyrians and their empire	Readings for next week Álvarez-Mon (2009) <i>Assurbanipal's Feast</i> Parpola (2004) <i>National and Ethnic Identity</i> Watch: The Ulai River Battle Assyria vs Elam: The battle of Til Tuba (video) Khan Academy
Week 11	Barbarians at the Gates: Clash of Civilizations Lecture case study: The Ethnogenesis of Persia and Greece.	Basu et al. (2007) <i>The 300</i> Briant (2002) <i>Greeks and Persian Decadence</i> Fredriksen (2005) <i>Beautiful People</i>
Week 12	Remembering and Forgetting: Fragmentation and the End of History? Lecture: Class Summary: Evaluating Case Studies	What can we learn from the past? What is Big History? You're Dead To Me - The Ancient Babylonians - BBC Sounds
Week 13	No Class/ Final Exam	

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies \(https://students.mq.edu.au/su\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/su)

[pport/study/policies](#)). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](#) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2025.02 of the [Handbook](#)