

Transition to Food Production
Tuesday 09:30-10:20; Thursday 09:30-11:20

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***PLEASE CONTACT DR. LUBELL BY EMAIL BEFORE REGISTERING IF YOU HAVE
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT TAKING THE COURSE***

DESCRIPTION

The change from hunting and gathering to food production, marks one of the major transitions in human prehistory. The effects can be seen in the biology and behaviour of the human populations before and after the change as well as in the plants and animals they manipulated. However, not all human populations underwent this transition, and there is no universal cause identified.

We will examine the tempo and mode of change in prehistoric economic systems, examining those regions for which the data are most abundant (southwestern Asia, Europe, Mesoamerica) and looking more cursorily at regions for which the data are less well documented (sub-Saharan Africa, southeast Asia, China, Japan, north and south America). We will examine the processes by which the change appears to have taken place, as well as the biological, social and technological consequences of the change. Time permitting, we will examine situations in which food production was not adopted.

REQUIRED TEXT and READINGS

Barker, G. (2009) *The Agricultural Revolution in Prehistory: Why did Foragers become Farmers?* Oxford University Press (ISBN: 978-0199559954). This is the paperback edition (identical to the 2006 hardcover) and is available from online suppliers such for about \$65. I don't know what the cost will be at the UW Bookstore.

Other required readings will be available as photocopies (*PC*), or through internet access at <http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca> (*E*), or from books on reserve in Porter Library (*R*). Suggestions for further reading will be available electronically at <http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca> (*E*), or on Reserve in Porter (*R*).

REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

This seminar will meet twice each week. The Tuesday class will be a lecture and the Thursday class will be lecture and discussion with short (no more than 15 minute long) presentations by students on readings and topics to be drawn from a list distributed at the beginning of term, or on topics of interest to individuals that are not on that list. Each student will make two presentations (PowerPoint is encouraged), the dates to be determined after discussion at the beginning of the term. An outline (one page maximum) must be available to the class at the time of presentation, and a written version, no more than five pages, given to the instructor within one week of the class in which the presentation is given. Thirty five percent (35%) of the final grade will be based on these presentations and short reports.

A research paper on a topic approved in advance by the instructor (maximum 30 pages double-spaced text including figures and tables but exclusive of the bibliography) will count for 65% of the final grade. This paper, which must demonstrate a grasp of both data and theory, can examine the evidence from a particular region or for a particular process, or for the relationship between environmental and economic change, or a comparison of two or more regions, processes, etc. Standard in text anthropological citation and referencing as well as bibliographic format must be followed. See the instructions for authors of one of the major journals such as *American Anthropologist*, *American Antiquity*, *Current Anthropology*. Avoid footnotes! ***The paper is due by noon on Thursday 21 April 2011.*** In the absence of a Verification of Illness Form from UHS or a personal physician, ten percent (10%) will be deducted for each late day including statutory holidays.

SYLLABUS

This is still being developed, but the basics are set out here. The topics up to Reading Week will not be changed, but I may decide to spend additional time on Mesoamerica and South America as there is much new information becoming available. However, as my expertise and interests lie in the Old World, I am hesitant to place too much emphasis on materials with which I am not fully engaged. Nonetheless, I would like to hear from students intending to take the course on specific areas/topics of interest.

Week 1: Jan 4 & 6 – History of research & concepts

Week 2: Jan 11 & 13 – Southwest Asia I

Week 3: Jan 18 & 20 – Southwest Asia II

Week 4: Jan 25 & 27 – Southern Europe

Week 5: Feb 1 & 3 – Central & Western Europe

Week 6: Feb 8 & 10 – Migration or diffusion?

Week 7: Feb 15 & 17 – Processes of plant & animal domestication

Reading week – Feb 21-25

Week 8: Mar 1 & 3 – Sub-Saharan Africa

Week 9: Mar 8 & 10 – East Asia

Week 10: Mar 15 & 17 – Southeast Asia and Australasia

Week 11: Mar 22 & 24 – Mesoamerica & South America

Week 12: Mar 29 & 31 – North America

Week 13: Apr 5 – Overview and conclusion