

Faculty of Arts and Letters



ARKE2560 Historical geography and topography of Ancient Civilizations : A) Eastern Mediterranean; B) Greek and Roman World

[30h] 4 credits

This two-yearly course is taught in 2006-2007, 2008-2009,...

This course is taught in the 1st and 2nd semester

Language: French

Level: Second cycle

Aims

To help the students to be open to understand the meaning of historical geography or " geo-history ", i.e. the study of the modalities of the occupation of a territory by a human community in the past, and the evolution of this occupation; through this way, introduction : 1) to a more detailed knowledge of notions interesting for " the retrospective human geography " of the two parts of the Mediterranean basins between which the course is divided, as well as 2) to the study of various areas that have been submitted to a chorographic synthesis. 3) Use of modern prospecting and analysis methods of bygone landscapes. The students should understand the relations between human geography and historical geography and be able to define one and the other. Based on the questions about the methods, the course isn't intended to be encyclopaedic in matters of ancient geography, but should offer the students a way of analysing suitable for most of the contexts.

Main themes

The first part of the course includes an attempt to define the discipline, opposing it to different erroneous or marginal conceptions that consider it as the history of sciences, or as a simple topographic description or even political history. Through concrete examples that allow us to clarify more and more sophisticated chorographic studies, there will be some presentation of different categories of sources, highlighting their interest (study of ancient texts, usage of maps and air photographs of different types, archaeological explorations on the field and particularly palynological investigations, epigraphic campaigns, gathering of money and cartography of the discoveries, compilation of modern travel stories).

The second part tackles first the historical topography that aims to identify places, roads and toponyms of all kinds. Afterwards some examples of research planned in the sense of the synthesis will be presented, from the repertoire and the archaeological map till the chorographic synthesis ordered by era, passing by the studies about the traffic network (roads, waterways). Every part takes up 15 hours of course.

Content and teaching methods

ARKE 2560 A : Search of a definition of historical geography : explanation of the objectives, methods and sources; delimitation of the proper field of historical topography; presentation of a series of research projects ordered by growing number and complexity of facts, and of the progressive extension of the synthesis, from the simple localization of sites till the study of the ancient evolution of relations between human groups and a certain landscape, passing by treating some interregional problems of human geography (geography of roads and sales, study of harbours). The examples and applications concern the areas at the side of Eastern Mediterranean : Asia Minor, Syria-Palestine, Greek-Roman Egypt, Cyreanic and Isles. ARKE 2560 B : As an application of the principles and methods explained in the introduction during the course ARKE 2560 A, shortly presented, the treated cases concern ancient Greece and Italy and some sectors of the Western Roman world.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Oral examination through numerous copies distributed during the term, and geographic maps. The examination can take place treating the first, the second or both parts of the course, in one or two times. The assessment of the two parts is set on 20 points (however, the average of both results of the students who pass both parts).

The ARKE map library includes an extraordinary rich collection of official cartographic covers on a large scale of different neighbouring countries of the Western Mediterranean, of Greece and Italy, and a range of navigation maps; the ARKE slide library offers numerous vertical and oblique air photographs available on colour slide. The library includes a section classified by the studied areas.

Other credits in programs

ARKE22	Deuxième licence en histoire de l'art et archéologie	(4 credits)
HORI21	Première licence en langues et littératures orientales (philologie et histoire orientales)	(4 credits)
HORI22	Deuxième licence en langues et littératures orientales (philologie et histoire orientales)	(4 credits)