



AR338/738 MARE NOSTRUM: MATERIAL CULTURE AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY AFTER ALEXANDER

W 8:00-10:45

STO Room 253

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Office and office hours: STO 341
T 11-12:30, W 11-12:30

OVERVIEW

We are not the first to live in a global culture. The very word *cosmopolitan*, meaning ‘citizen of the world’ was coined by the Greek philosopher Diogenes in the fourth century BCE to convey the profoundly mingled cultural universe in which people around the Mediterranean lived. In this course we study the cultures of this region from the era of Alexander the Great through the Roman emperors, with a focus on the material correlates of identity as they played out at all levels of society. We focus on cultural capital in antiquity: what it comprised, how it changed, and most importantly how people used it in order to assert who they were and how they mattered.

WEBPAGE

All information on this syllabus can be found at <https://berlinarchaeology.wordpress.com/ar-338738-mare-nostrum-material-culture-and-individual-identity-after-alexander/>

REQUIRED BOOKS

Susan E. Alcock (ed.), *The Early Roman Empire in the East*, Oxbow Monograph 95. Oxbow Books, Oxford: 1997. Reprint 2010.

Paul J. Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries in the Seleucid Empire*. Belknap/Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA, 2018.

J. J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge University Press: New York, 1986.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS to know about, have at hand, dip into & consult

David Abulafia, ed. *The Mediterranean in History*. Getty Publications: Los Angeles, 2003.

Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East*. Getty Publications: Los Angeles, 2003.

Erich S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 1986.

Erich S. Gruen, ed. *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Getty Publications: Los Angeles, 2011.

David Kennedy, *Settlement and Soldiers in the Roman Near East*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. (See the very convenient review by Alexandra Ratzlaff in *PEQ* 150 (2018), pp. 176-178. Kennedy's book is a collection of previously published articles; Ratzlaff's review goes through them one by one, with their original publication references)

Paul J. Kosmin, *The Land of the Elephant Kings: Space, Territory, and Ideology in the Seleucid Empire*. Belknap/Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA, 2014.

Amélie Kuhrt and Susan Sherwin-White, eds. *Hellenism in the East. The Interaction of Greek and non-Greek civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 1987.

Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East 31 BC – AD 337*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA, 1993.

Arnoldo Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom. The Limits of Hellenization*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1975.

Susan Sherwin-White and Amélie Kuhrt, *From Samarkhand to Sardis. A New Approach to the Seleucid empire*. Duckworth: London, 1993.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are seven assignments, of different types and scales. Below are brief descriptions and due dates; for complete descriptions and instructions go here: <https://berlinarchaeology.wordpress.com/ar-338738-mare-nostrum-material-culture-and-individual-identity-after-alexander/ar-338-738-assignments/>

Assignment 1 (due Sept. 11th). Spotlight: Alexandria. Read one article and write a 3-paragraph synopsis (max. 500 words). Make sure to include the author's starting point, conclusion, and the essential evidence (documentary and/or types of finds, number/amount, context/find-spots, etc.). Prepare a 3-slide .ppt in which you summarize your article. Use the following format:

- Slide 1: one or more images to illustrate the starting point;
- Slide 2: a representative sample of the key material evidence
- Slide 3: one or more images to illustrate the conclusion.

Assignment 2 (due Sept. 17th & 18th). City Quilts. This assignment is both an individual and a group project. The goal is to create a composite picture of a single place via the multiplicity of types of remains as well as what we do *not* have. The idea of a place is best conveyed in the form of a patchwork quilt, one that allows individual items their own space and also allows them to fit within a larger whole. We will make two quilts, one for Sardis and its environs and another for Babylonia (i.e., southern Mesopotamia), including the three closely-situated cities of Babylon, Seleucia-on-the-Tigris, and Uruk. Each person will be assigned one place. In advance you will go through the assigned reading, record thoughts and ideas, whether by taking notes, writing an outline, etc, and select six images and/or quotes. You will put your six selections into a .ppt along with an explanatory caption and send your .ppt to me by **NOON on Tuesday, Sept. 17th**. In class you will discuss, construct, and present your quilt.

Assignments 3a & 3b (due Sept. 25th). Material testimonies of hybridity. Read one article and write a 3-paragraph synopsis (max. 500 words). Make sure to include the author's starting point, conclusion, and the essential evidence (documentary and/or types of finds, number/amount, context/find-spots, etc.).

Prepare a 3-slide .ppt in which you summarize your article. Use the following format:

- Slide 1: one or more images to illustrate the starting point;
- Slide 2: a representative sample of the key material evidence
- Slide 3: one or more images to illustrate the conclusion.

Read Eftychia Stavrianopoulou, "Hellenistic World(s) and the Elusive Concept of 'Greekness'." Identity four talking points. These can be quotes you love, ideas you didn't understand, springboards to further questions or ideas, big take-aways, etc. Write these out on four 3 x 5 cards and bring to class.

Assignment 4 (due Oct. 9th/Oct. 16th/Oct. 23rd). An essay for the [The Tel Anafa Digital Portal](http://telanafa.org) (<http://telanafa.org>). Write up to three brief paragraphs (max. word count 450) in which you describe, explain, and/or interpret one object from or aspect of Tel Anafa. You may focus on space, material, technique of manufacture, probable/possible use(s), archaeological context, conservation, typology, connections, modern-day interests (e.g., to individual collectors or museums) or the lack of them, ability to evoke a past, or any other aspect you deem worthy.

Assignment 5 (due Oct. 30th). Encounters: Easterners confront Rome. Select a single category of remains and/or a specific site that conveys one or more aspects of colonial encounter from a native vantage point. Read at least three articles about it. Write a two-page double-spaced essay in which you present the overall category, summarize the types of remains that illuminate it, and offer an assessment of what you think it means. Create a 5-slide .ppt in which you present your findings, using the following format:

- Slide 1: the lay of the land before the arrival of the Romans
- Slides 2-4: a representative sample of the key material evidence
- Slide 5: an assessment & characterization. Exactly what is Roman? What do you mean by that?

Assignment 6 (due Nov. 13th). Read Paul J. Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries in the Seleucid Empire*. Belknap/Harvard University Press: Cambridge MA, 2018. Identity four talking points. These can be quotes you love, ideas you didn't understand, springboards to further questions or ideas, big take-aways, etc. Write these out on four 3 x 5 cards and bring to class.

Assignment 7: Client Kingdoms. Choose one client kingdom: Commagene, Judea, or Nabatea. Select one angle or aspect, along with an array of objects and/or sites that can illustrate that angle. Prepare an 8-slide .ppt presentation in which you present your findings. Write an 8-page double-spaced paper in which you explain those findings and what light they shed on some aspect of life in that kingdom.

- Commagene: Presentation and preliminary paper draft **due Nov. 20th**
- Judea: Presentation and preliminary paper draft due **Dec. 4th**
- Nabatea: Presentation and preliminary paper draft due **Dec. 11th**

Final papers due Dec. 16th.

Class attendance is mandatory. *Unavoidable but reasonable absences should be explained in advance in writing.* More than one unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your final grade by one full letter grade (e.g., B to C).

GRADING

- Short reports & presentations (Assignments 1, 3a, & 5): 10% each 30%
- City quilt (Assignment 2) 20%
- Four talking points (Assignments 3b & 6): 5% each 10%
- Anafa Digital Portal Essay (Assignment 4) 20%
- Client Kingdom presentation & paper (Assignment 7) 20%

LATE WORK

The grades of assignments submitted late will be reduced by one full grade (e.g., B+ to C+). The grades of assignments submitted more than one week late will be reduced by two full grades.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ETHICS

Plagiarism is the use of the work of others as your own, whether published (in books or on the internet) or not (e.g., the writings of fellow students). It is both illegal and unethical (not always the same thing). This means that you can not simply copy or paste phrases or sentences verbatim from books or web sites as if you had written them yourself. In your papers YOU MUST PROVIDE FULL REFERENCES for all information derived from books and on-line sources. You are expected to know and understand the provisions of the BU Academic Conduct Code <http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean's Office.