



AR 230: INTRODUCTION TO GREEK & ROMAN ARCHAEOLOGY

TR 9:30-10:45, FLR 152

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Office hours: by phone,
zoom, or skype –
and by appointment

Overview

The cultures of the ancient Greeks and Romans comprise a long and enormously influential chunk of human development. The Greeks developed democracy and the Romans a system of representative rule; members of both societies invented various philosophical systems as well as literary genres such as epic and lyric poetry, tragedy and comedy, biography, and the novel. In addition, members of both cultures created fascinating, awe-inspiring, and exquisite objects and buildings. One good reason to study Greek and Roman archaeology is simply to learn about these wonderful remains, whose survival from so long ago is almost miraculous.

Another reason for studying Greek and Roman archaeology is that it provides a series of time-capsule views of peoples living in a deeply material world, within complicated, class-riven societies surprisingly similar to our own. By analyzing their remains, archaeologists can investigate large questions such as: how did religious practice intersect with political life? did ethnicity matter? how was status communicated? The archaeology of ancient Greece and Rome provides material evidence for understanding life in a complex past, a past that also illuminates our own world today.

Course Objectives and Student Outcomes

This course is designed as a time journey that traverses the arc of classical antiquity. The goal is an understanding of that epoch's consolidation, flourishing, imperial transformation, and ultimate metamorphosis. We begin in Greece, in the later second millennium BCE, when the royal polities later remembered in the Homeric epics arose, and we examine the physical evidence for the profound social upheavals that brought these polities down. In their place there slowly arose the Greek democratic experiment; we examine its material accoutrements in the second section. Archaeological evidence allows us to situate and track specific changes in religious, civic, and domestic spheres, revealing the contours and arenas of classical life. In the third section we examine the ways in which democratic Greece was subsumed into Imperial Rome, leaving most peoples' lives and opportunities intact while slowly re-fashioning the relationship of the individual and the state. In the last section, we focus on the unraveling of humanity's "classical project" by studying the archaeological evidence for what may be understood in retrospect as some of the last functioning classical sanctuaries, cities, and houses. This

final section reveals how we may “read” the very same sites, aspects, and elements as testimony of endings – and also of new beginnings.

By the end of this course you will:

- ⌘ Possess foundational knowledge of key sites, monuments, and artifacts from Greek and Roman antiquity;
- ⌘ Be capable of “reading” monuments and artifacts for meaning beyond their mere presence and aesthetic features, and be able to discern the effects of public and monumental construction on individual sensibilities;
- ⌘ Possess a palpable feel for the relationship between time and a society’s rise, consolidation, and transformation;
- ⌘ Be capable of critically evaluating the reliability of information on archaeology disseminated in the popular press, including sensationalist claims.
- ⌘ Cultivate your own perspective on the connections between classical antiquity and our own lives and times.

BU Hub Learning Outcome: *Historical Consciousness*

The framing sensibility of this course is that classical antiquity was a world infused with a sense of its own past. Material remains allow us to see how its citizens stood to and deployed that sense. Students learn to identify and assess how people understood, retained, re-cast, or rebuffed earlier remains and ideas – and from that learn how we all continue to choose, and play with, specific histories for present purposes.

Written assignments will focus on specific transformative historical moments and emphasize ways to understand them via material remains. These moments are: the later second millennium, when organized polities across the Greek and Near Eastern worlds imploded; the development and eventual adoption of democratic rule in Athens from the seventh to early fifth centuries BCE; the material correlates and marketing of empire in Rome from the later first century BCE through the second century CE; and the physical evidence for the metamorphosis of classical antiquity from the fourth through sixth centuries CE.

BU Hub Toolkit: *Critical Thinking*

Archaeology presents us with hard evidence for peoples’ lived realities, what these looked like at any given moment, and how they changed over time. Lectures, discussions, readings, and assignments focus on physical evidence – its amount, comprehensiveness, plausibility, and ability to be extended or, conversely, mislead – along with the range of interpretative possibilities that it affords. On discussion days, students will work in teams to create visual reasoning trees that deploy the kind of logical reasoning that informs archaeological inquiry. These documents will provide a route from finds to ideas and interpretations, and from these intermediate steps to the framing of new questions. Query cards and reasoning trees will serve as resources for the final written essay. The larger goal is to learn how to “read” material remains as evidence, a skill relevant both to antiquity and today – because words alone have never been enough to parse people’s beliefs and behaviors.

Course Readings

There are three required books:

- ⌘ William Biers, *The Archaeology of Greece*, 2nd edition. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1996.

- ⊞ Mabel Lang, *The Athenian Citizen: Democracy in the Athenian Agora*, 2nd edition. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2004 (available on-line: http://www.agathe.gr/democracy/athenian_citizenship.html).
- ⊞ Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage, *Roman Art*, 6th edition. Prentice Hall, 2015.

All additional readings, along with the requirements, syllabus, assignments, and useful links are on the course website: <http://berlinarchaeology.wordpress.com/cas-ar230-introduction-to-greek-and-roman-archaeology/>.

Expectations, Assignments, and Grading

You are expected to be in attendance for all lectures, to complete all of the reading assignments, and to engage in discussion with attention and good will. Every class day will include time for lecture and small group discussion. On the five days dedicated to query card discussions, bring those cards to class, either digitally or in hard copy, as you will have the opportunity to extend and revise them during class time.

All assignments are posted on the class website, and can be accessed and begun at any time during the semester. Assignments are as follows:

- **Five short query cards (10% each = 50%).** Query card assignments consist of three parts: 1) read, watch, and/or engage with two or three brief news accounts that present a recent archaeological discovery; 2) provide short answers to a series of set questions; and 3) pose a follow-up question capable of being answered by further research. Answers should incorporate information from assigned readings and/or lectures. To earn full points on query cards, you must turn them in on time, demonstrate knowledge of course material, write with clarity and focus, and engage with the subject, by which I mean say something beyond mere description or parroting of what you read.

✚ *Why query cards?* To gain practice in thinking like an archaeologist. Archaeology is all about discovery – and also about fitting those discoveries into our current network of knowledge. Query cards give you practice dealing with new information and considering new ideas in a responsive, and responsible, manner. Query cards will be the basis for in-class discussions and the creation of reasoning trees.

- **Three postcard synopses (10% each = 30%).** Each set of postcard synopses should include five places, objects, buildings, etc. culled from images shown in lectures and/or in readings (you can find lecture ppts on the class web site). For each image provide a caption with the name of the place or object, its date (within a century), and location/find-spot. Write a 150-word discussion that highlights something of interest to you and explains what you think these places and object tell us and/or help us understand.

✚ *Why postcard synopses?* To create for yourself a vision of these ancient societies and cultures via their material remains. Your postcard synopses should be worthy takeaways, a compilation of objects and places that stay with you, providing a pathway into another world and time. They will also serve as a framework and springboard for your final essay.

- **One essay (20%).** An interpretive essay in which you use material evidence to consider the meaning and the end of classical antiquity. Identify four aspects, modes, and/or ideas that you regard as key constituents of classical antiquity. Identify a moment in which that aspect was maintained – or fundamentally transformed. Be sure to address each of the three arenas we covered in class, namely religious life, civic/political life, and private life. Finally, choose which of these arenas you regard as the most salient harbinger of a new beginning, and explain why.

✚ *Why this essay?* To learn how to move from material remains to ideas and interpretation, which is the ultimate goal of archaeological inquiry. This is an opportunity to dive into a big idea, wrestle with its complexity over time, consider how to identify and deploy evidence judiciously to make a point and argue a case, to practice writing with focus. Writing this essay will allow you to walk away with your own considered sense of the larger meaning of classical antiquity.

***** YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE. *****

Grading

Each query card and postcard synopsis is worth 10%, and the final essay is worth 20%. Word to the wise: I love to see improvement! I will discount earlier lower grades in favor of later higher ones.

Assignments will be graded from 1-5, with 5 being the highest grade. Points will be given as follows:

- 5 points: Excellent: clear, factually accurate in all details, thoughtfully incorporates reading, *makes a significant point that is supported by the facts presented.*
- 4 points: Good: clear, factually accurate in all details, thoughtfully incorporates reading.
- 3 points: Fair. Factual information is presented but there are also errors and/or significant omissions, ideas are general rather than focused and do not relate directly to the facts presented, writing is repetitive and/or sloppy, assigned reading is not properly used.
- 2 points: Poor: writing is repetitive, sloppy, unclear, references are absent or incorrectly used, there are errors in facts and/or the ideas to be drawn from them.
- 1 point: Writing is repetitive and generic, little useful information is offered.

Missed Classes, Late Assignments, and Penalties

If circumstances prevent you from attending class, contact me for additional reading to cover material that you have missed. Note that **you are still required to submit all assignments on their assigned due day**. You may e-mail your work directly to me or leave a hard copy in my mailbox. If you are unable to hand in your assignment on the day that it is due, you are still required to complete it! Assignments received after class time on the due dates will be docked one letter grade.

Format, Citations, and Plagiarism

Written assignments must be professionally presented. This means:

- typed and with no spelling or grammar errors (use SPELL CHECK!);
- 12 point *Times New Roman* font;
- double-spaced, with 1" side and top/bottom margins to allow room for written feedback.

You must properly cite all sources of specific information, ideas, and wording with full references, whether in footnotes or via an appended bibliography. A full reference includes the following: name of author, title of article, chapter or book, title of journal or book in which an article or chapter appears, name and location of publisher, date of publication, and page number(s).

If you directly derive information, etc. from a source but do not cite it, that constitutes plagiarism.

Plagiarism means passing off the work of others as your own, whether published (in books or on the internet) or not (e.g., the writings of fellow students). In other words, you may not copy or paste phrases or sentences verbatim from books or web sites as if you had written them yourself. Plagiarism is both illegal and unethical (not always the same thing), and is forbidden according to the provisions of the CAS

Academic Conduct Code: www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code/. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean's Office.

Electronic Device Policy

This semester everybody will need to have a laptop, netbook, tablet, or similar in class meetings for referencing materials related to class and (potentially) participating in a zoom break-out room. It is policy that during class time you only use these devices for course-related purposes so as not to impede your own learning or distract your fellow students.

In addition, please ensure that your cellular phones are turned off or silenced during class time.