

ARTH 420/599
Roman Sculpture: Imperial Monuments and Portraiture

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Office hours: Mondays 3-4pm or by appointment

Sculpture was a significant and ubiquitous element of Roman visual culture, manifesting in both lavish public and private displays. This seminar will begin by exploring the connections between Greek sculptural style and Roman adaptation, as well as delving into some of the technical aspects of quarrying and sculpting. We will then focus our attention on the ideological and political function of sculpture in the public sphere, primarily in the Imperial period spanning 31 BCE to 300 CE. In the Imperial period, portraits of the *principes* (emperors) and the imperial family were significant conveyors of meaning that communicated both to the Roman people and modern scholars much of the “propagandistic” intent of the emperor and his programs. We will also analyze major sculptural monuments associated with these emperors, such as the Ara Pacis, the Arch of Titus, and the Column of Trajan, which taken in conjunction with imperial portraiture elucidate the programmatic nature of Roman public sculpture. Course requirements will include weekly writing assignments, several oral presentations, and an extended scholarly research paper. Attendance and participation will also significantly impact the final grade. This course fulfills all or in part the writing-intensive requirement for the Art History major.

Course Goals

- To learn the basic elements of style and technique in Roman sculpture
- To understand the variety of functions that sculptural artifacts fulfilled within Roman visual culture
- To become familiar with the scholarly approaches to sculptural topics as well as leading voices in the scholarship
- To practice essential academic skills such as research and the effective communication of ideas both in written and oral formats

Required texts

Diana E.E. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (1994).

Eve d’Ambra, *Roman Art in Context* (1993).

These texts will be supplemented by JSTOR articles and pdf readings on Blackboard (under Course Content).

Assignments and Assessment

Weekly Response Papers	35%
Reference Assignment	5%
Research Progress Checks	10%
Research Oral Presentation	15%
Research Paper (draft & final form)	25%
Attendance and Participation	10%

The grading model is as follows:

A+ (100-97) A (96-93) A- (92-90) B+ (89-87) B (86-83) B- (82-80)
C+ (79-77) C (76-73) C- (72-70) D (69-60) F (59 and below)

All GMU policies on academic honesty will be applicable in this class. If you are unfamiliar with these policies, please visit <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/> and acquaint yourself with them.

Weekly Assignments

Discussion and Reading Presentations

Everyone in the seminar must read all of the assigned material and be prepared to actively participate in a discussion of that material. If possible, read the assignments for each week in the order that they are listed: sometimes it will help to make sense of the material.

For each major reading, a Presentation Leader will be assigned. The Presentation Leader will be expected to provide an oral assessment of that reading in which she/he summarizes the more important ideas of the reading, comments on the nature of the evidence and the methodology and, if appropriate, links those ideas to concepts that we have been discussing in the seminar. The total presentation should run between 10-15 minutes. This may seem like a lot of time, but you will need to be very organized to cover the information in that span of time: consider making yourself an outline or written notes. Do not simply “wing it.” After the presentation, the presenter may also help to direct the class discussion of that reading.

The Presentation Leader should also distribute to everyone in the class a typed/printed list of their discussion points, quotations, etc.

Weekly Response Papers

Some weeks will have specific, unique assignments with instructions in the body of the syllabus. Otherwise, I will ask for a “response” to an article or book chapter. These standard response papers should follow a 3-part format: you may want to think of each section as, roughly, a paragraph.

Part 1: Articulate in your own words the major idea of the article or chapter. In some cases there may be multiple “big ideas”: if so, choose one of these. Explain what is significant about the idea (e.g. how does it alter our understanding of the sculpture, monument, historical period, etc.). If possible, express how this is different from the traditional reading of the question.

Part 2: Discuss the types of evidence used by the author. Is the evidence internal (style, iconography, typology, technique) or external (comparisons to other works, archaeological context)? Does the scholar use *primary* sources (ancient Latin or Greek literary documentation or archaeological excavation)? You do not have to repeat the full array of evidence and you do not have to account for all the evidence used: select *significant* elements to comment on.

Part 3: Critique the argument and state whether you are convinced by the scholar’s efforts. Note that a critique can be either positive or negative, but it is not simply about “liking” or “not liking” an idea. Express substantive reasons for accepting or rejecting the idea in question. Also be aware that simply asserting something does not make it true: there needs to be evidence supporting the argumentation, regarding either the scholar’s idea or your critique.

Format: 400-500 words, standard margins and font size. If you use a direct quote or need to cite a specific idea, using parenthetical expressions, e.g. (Kleiner, p. 51).

Include word count on printed, hard copies. Emailed submissions will not be accepted: you must be in class to turn the assignment in, and there will be no make up assignments. I will count the highest 7 scores for a maximum of 35% of your course grade (5% of your grade for each one counted).

Weekly Reading Quizzes

It is my preference **not** to have weekly quizzes. If, however, I find that the class is not reading the assignments with adequate attention to detail and memory, I will institute brief weekly quizzes. They will be counted in the participation category of the grades. I will not announce the beginning of quizzes.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are not the same thing: you must be in class, but that is not sufficient to receive the full percentage points in this category. You must be engaged: respond to questions, ask questions, generate discussion. Do not expect that non-work related activities on your phone or computer will go unnoticed. Certain presentations will count as part of your participation grade.

Research Presentation and Paper

There is a list of paper topics at the end of the syllabus. I suggest that you look at a number of these (most are in one or more of the textbooks) and see what seems most interesting.

Choosing a topic: at our September 8th class meeting, you will need to hand in your top **three** (3) preferences for paper topics, ranked in terms of desirability. I will do my best to accommodate everyone's preferences.

Preliminary Bibliography and Research Question: a typed, properly formatted preliminary bibliography is due in class on October 14th (This date is not an error: Monday classes meet on Tuesday Oct. 14th). This should include a minimum of five sources (8 for Graduate students in the class), not including the textbooks or articles on the syllabus. There should be no more than two web-based resources in this initial bibliography. On the whole, I strongly advise caution when consulting web-based sources for scholarly information (images are a different matter).

Wikipedia is **NOT** a scholarly source!! Make certain that you evaluate the academic integrity of your on-line sources; for the most part, .edu extensions are trustworthy, but do not take even that at face value.

It is very important from a scholarly perspective that you include primary (ancient) literary sources, even if only in translation. There are a number of translations available, including the Loeb Classical Library series available in our library and arranged, for the most part, according to author. There are also web-based translations: the Perseus site (www.perseus.tufts.edu) is one of the most reliable. Do be aware that older translations are common so a translation done in the last 20-30 years is preferable. In your final paper, you must use at least one primary source.

When doing your research, please realize that not all information is available in digital format on the web. You will need to visit the library and look for monographs (books) or edited volumes that may be useful to your argument. You may even need to use GMU's very reliable and fairly speedy interlibrary loan system. In short, I will expect to see book titles on your bibliography as well as appropriate articles.

Your Research Question is not the same as your topic. Topics are broad; Research Questions articulate what ideas you will be exploring as you research a topic. Ultimately, your Research Question will become the Thesis of your paper. Your thesis, then, is a specific argument that you will be making in the paper. For example:

Topic: Portraiture of Marcus Agrippa

Research questions: does Agrippa's portraiture imitate that of his friend/patron/colleague Augustus? If it does, what features mimic Augustus and to what purpose? If not, what message(s) does Agrippa's portraiture convey?

Paper thesis: The portraiture of Marcus Agrippa is distinctive from that of Augustus, following a more traditional Roman veristic style in order to emphasize Agrippa's role as a Roman commander with "Republican" virtues.

Presentation: the last several weeks of our meetings this semester will be devoted to oral and visual presentations of your research. You will need to provide both a PowerPoint presentation and a handout that outlines your topic and research approach as well as visual illustrations of the topic. These presentations will run approximately 15 minutes each with another 5-10 minutes for questions and discussion: I will set the order once topics have been selected. This should be both a general introduction to your subject matter and a detailed discussion of the thesis that you have developed in your paper. I will provide a handout with specific details in November.

Paper: In addition to the research report outlined above, you will need to write your research into a paper: the paper itself will be due at the beginning of exam week, specific time to be announced later. The paper must be 7-10 pages and have at least 8 bibliographical sources. No more than three of those sources should be web-based. At least one source must be an ancient source, not taken indirectly from a secondary modern source: in other words, look up the

citation in a translation of its original source. Clarity of argument, structure, grammatical and syntactical issues will all be factored into the final grade of the paper along with the quality of research. Proofreading errors will be detrimental to the grade.

Citations/References: the final paper described above is a true research paper and as such, you must demonstrate your research by using proper references and citations. Footnotes are best for the final paper. A standard footnote will include, at a minimum, the author's name and the page number where the information cited can be found in the original source. A full format of author, title, year of publication, etc. will then be provided in the paper's Bibliography for each source. Note: failure to include citations and specific page references is not acceptable and will severely reduce your final grade. To assist in getting you comfortable with footnotes/citations, there will be Reference Assignment due in the class Sept. 29th. The Reference Assignment is included at the end of the syllabus.

A handout with further details on the paper will be given out closer to the end of term.

Graduate Students:

Your weekly assignments are the same as the students enrolled at the 400 level: the expectation, however, is that your synthesis of the material in the response papers and in class discussion will be at a more refined level.

Graduate final papers must be a minimum of 12 pages and have at least 10 bibliographical sources. All of the above statements concerning the presentation, research papers and sources also apply.

Be aware that all University policies are in effect in this class, including those governing definitions and responses to plagiarism or other academic offenses. It is your responsibility to know, understand, and adhere to these policies.

Week 1, August 25th: Introduction

Greek Sculpture Review

Kleiner: 23-31

Jane Fejfer, "The Material of Roman Portraits," in *Roman Portraits in Context* (2008), 152-180 [Blackboard pdf]

Peter Rockwell, "The History of Stoneworking Technology," in *The Art of Stoneworking* (1993), 198-206 [Blackboard pdf]

Week 2, September 1st: Labor Day, no class meeting

The reading assignments for next week may take some time, so get started early. Also be prepared to submit your top three choices for research topics next week.

Week 3, September 8th: Republican Sculpture

Portraiture and Historical Reliefs

Kleiner: 31-50 (read through "Paris-Munich Reliefs" section)

Sheldon Nodelman, "How to Read a Roman Portrait," in *Roman Art in Context*, 10-26

Harriet Flower, *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture*

(Oxford, 1996): 32-43, 53 (first two paragraphs on the "*ius imaginum*") and the conclusion on 59 [excerpts are in a single file on Blackboard pdf]

Miranda Marvin, "Copying in Roman Sculpture: The Replica Series," in *Roman Art in Context*, 161-188

[Write a response paper to Marvin's article](#)

[Turn in top three preferences \(ranked 1, 2, 3\) for Research paper topic](#)

Week 4, September 15th: The Augustan Age, pt. 1

Portraiture Typology

Kleiner: 59-69 (stop at "Gemma Augustea")

Henry T. Rowell, "The Forum and Funeral *Imagines* of Augustus" in

Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome (MAAR) 1940: 131-143. [JSTOR]

Josephine Shaya, "The Public Life of Monuments: The Summi Viri of the Forum of Augustus," *American Journal of Archaeology (AJA)* 117.1 (2013): 83-110. [JSTOR]

Kirk Savage, "History, Memory, and Monuments: An Overview of Scholarly Literature on Commemoration" on [Blackboard pdf].

For your response this week, consider the following questions in regard to Savage's comments:

What is collective memory? How is it distinct from "history"?

What is the relationship between a monument and the historical narrative?

Why—broadly speaking—are monuments built and by whom?

What is the relationship between a monument and its viewer? Is this a static relationship over time?

What are the potential benefits and pitfalls of applying these ideas to ancient Roman monuments? Finally, try to apply at least two of the ideas above to the Forum of Augustus.

Week 5, September 22nd: The Augustan Age, pt. 2

Ara Pacis

Kleiner: 90-102 (stop at "Belvedere Altar")

Diane Conlin, excerpt from *The Artists of the Ara Pacis*, 57-64. [Blackboard pdf]

Diana Kleiner, "The Great Friezes of the Ara Pacis Augustae. Greek Sources, Roman Derivatives, and Augustan Social Policy," in *Roman Art in Context*, 27-52

C. Brian Rose, "'Princes' and Barbarians on the Ara Pacis," in *Roman Art in Context*. 53-74.

Paul Rehak, "Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Meaning of the Ara Pacis Augustae," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 83, No. 2. (Jun., 2001), pp. 190-208. [JSTOR]

[Write a response paper for Rehak's article.](#)

Week 6, September 29th: The Julio-Claudian Successors

Portraiture

Kleiner: 123-139 (stop at "Portraits of women...")

Vicomagistri reliefs

Kleiner: 145-148

R.R.R. Smith, "The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias," in *The Journal of Roman Studies* 77 (1987): 88-138. [JSTOR]

Marleen B. Flory, "Livia and the History of Public Honorific Statues for Women in Rome," *Transactions of the American Philological Association (TAPA)* 123 (1993): 287-308. [JSTOR]

[For your paper this week, briefly explain how the Julio-Claudian emperors attempt to use portraiture as a link to the first emperor and explain, broadly, how the portraits of emperors at the Sebasteion are at odds with that same first emperor's approach to visual propaganda in Rome.](#)

Reference Assignment is due in class

Week 8, October 6th: The Flavian Period

Portraiture

Kleiner: 171-179

Arch of Titus

Kleiner: 183-191

Cancellaria Reliefs

- Kleiner: 191-192*
 Haterii Funerary Reliefs
Kleiner: 196-199
 Eve D'Ambra, "The Cult of Virtues and the Funerary Relief of Ulpia Epigone,"
 in *Roman Art in Context*, 104-114.
 Natalie Boymel Kampen, "Social Status and Gender: The Case of the Saleswoman," in
Roman Art in Context, 115-132.
 Inez Scott Ryberg, "Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art," *MAAR* 22
 (1955). [JSTOR] This is a seminal scholarly work on Roman historical
 reliefs: review the table of contents since it may include information useful
 to your research. Read Chapter XIV 'Modes of Thought and Expression' 203-
 211.

For this week's writing assignment, define briefly but clearly the two "modes" of historical relief as defined by Ryberg and the two "styles" she cites, providing at least one example for each. Then, explain which mode and style apply to the relief panels inside the passageway of the Arch of Titus.

Week 9, Tuesday October 14th (Monday class schedule this Tuesday): *Dissemination and Damnatio memoriae*

- Jane Fejfer on the dissemination of imperial portraits, *Roman Portraits in Context*,
 418-429 [Blackboard pdf]
 Cynthia Damon's review of *The Art of Forgetting: Disgrace and Oblivion in Roman
 Political Culture* by Harriet I. Flower *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol.
 128, No. 4 (Winter, 2007), pp. 599-604 [Blackboard pdf]

Based on Damon's review of Flower's *The Art of Forgetting*, respond to the following in a one page narrative: briefly describe four chronological changes in the process of *damnatio memoriae*; why might a community outside of Rome choose not to follow a *damnatio*?; what is the case in which an emperor does not "damn" his predecessor's memory and why might this be a good choice politically?

- John Pollini, "Damnatio Memoriae in Stone: Two Portraits of Nero Recut to
 Vespasian in American Museums" in the *American Journal of
 Archaeology (AJA)* 88 (1984): 547-555 [JSTOR]
 Eric Varner, "Portraits, Plots and Politics: 'Damnatio Memoriae' and the
 Images of Imperial Women," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*
 (*MAAR*) 46 (2001): 41-93. Responsible only for pages 41-57. [JSTOR]

Turn in preliminary bibliography and research questions.

Week 10, October 20th: The Era of Trajan

- Portraiture
Kleiner: 208-212
 Arch of Trajan at Beneventum
Kleiner: 224-229
 Lee Ann Riccardi, "Uncanonical Imperial Portraits from the Eastern Roman
 Provinces: The Case of the Kanellopoulos Emperor," *Hesperia* 69 (2000):
 105- 132. [JSTOR]
 Mary T. Boatwright, "The City Gate of Plancia Magna in Perge," in *Roman Art
 in Context*, 189-207.

Write a response to Riccardi's article.

Week 11, October 27th: Celebrating Trajan's Dacian Campaigns

- Tropaeum at Adamkissi
Kleiner: 230-232
 Forum of Trajan
Kleiner: 212-220

Peter Rockwell, "Preliminary Study of the Carving Techniques on the Column of Trajan," in *Studi Miscellanei* 26 (1985): 101-111 [Blackboard]

Amanda Claridge, "Hadrian's Column of Trajan," in *Journal of Roman Archaeology (JRA)* 6 (1993): 5-22. [Blackboard pdf]

Penelope Davies, "The politics of perpetuation: Trajan's Column and the Art of Commemoration," in *AJA* 101 (1997): 41-65. [JSTOR]

Write a response paper in which you explain whose argument, Claridge or Davies', you support and why you think that argument is the more sound of the two.

Week 12, November 3rd: Hadrianic Classicism and Portraiture

Overview of Art under Hadrian

Kleiner: 137-244

Apotheosis of Sabina

Kleiner: 253-254 ("Arco di Portogallo")

Hadrianic Art in Athens

Kleiner: 259-260

Richard Gergel, "The Tel Shalem Hadrian Reconsidered," *AJA* 91 (1995): 231-251. [JSTOR]

Caroline Vout, "Antoninus, Archaeology and History," in *Journal of Roman Studies* 95 (2005): 80-96. [JSTOR]

Write a response to Gergel's article

Week 13, November 10th

Column Base of Antoninus Pius

Kleiner: 285-288

The Great Antonine Altar at Ephesus

Kleiner: 309-312

Student Research Presentations

Week 14, November 17th

Student Research Presentations

Week 15, November 24th

Draft of first 4-5 pages of your paper are due (with footnotes and up to date bibliography) by midnight. Submit material by email.

Week 16, December 1st

Student Research Presentations

If necessary, we will use the period designated as the class exam slot to finish up presentations, etc.

Paper due date will be provided in November.

Research Topics

Antonine portraiture: Antoninus Pius or Faustina the Elder

Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius

Relief panels of Marcus Aurelius

Portraiture of Commodus

Column of Marcus Aurelius

Portraiture of Septimius Severus

Portraiture of Julia Domna
Portraiture of Caracalla
Relief sculpture of the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum (Rome)
Relief sculpture of the Severan Arch at Leptis Magna (modern Libya)
Third Century Imperial Portraiture (perhaps Gallienus; consult with me on details)
Tetrarchic portraiture
Portraiture of Constantine
Sculpture on the Arch of Constantine
Obelisk Base of Theodosius in Constantinople (Istanbul)

Reference Assignment, Due in class Sept. 29th

Types of footnote

Citation: this type is the most common and includes the basic data on where to find the information used by the author. These are important to scholars since they create a “chain of evidence” that can be used to evaluate the validity of an argument and useful in further research by the reader.

Content: this type fleshes out an idea that is alluded to but not fully developed in the text. This can be very useful for a number of reasons. Foremost, it allows an author to expand on a single thought without derailing the linear sequence of his/her argument. Furthermore, it allows the author to forestall objections by explaining or expanding an idea—again without disturbing a clear progression of argument in the body of the article. Content footnotes will often have a reference citation included; any footnote that has extensive discursive text can be considered a content footnote.

1. Find two content footnotes from our readings and explain what role they play in their article(s).

Mining Footnotes for Research Material

2. As you are reading articles or books during the seminar, you should be using them as sources for your own research, not only for what they say in the body but also the trail of evidence they provide in the footnotes/bibliography.

For each of the following topics, imagine that you are assigned to write a paper; find references in the footnotes of the articles read up to this point in the seminar that you would want to explore if you were writing on the given topics listed below. You must draw from at least three different articles. These sources can be articles or books.

Provide the full reference (from the article’s bibliography) and the author, article title and footnote number that the reference is drawn from. Note which category each reference falls into. Be sure to format all titles correctly; standard format has article/chapter titles in quotation marks while book and journal titles are italicized.

- a). Find two sources touching on any aspect of Roman religion
- b). Find two sources on any aspect of Roman history
- c). Find four primary sources (ancient texts) that are used as supporting evidence
- d). Find two sources that you should explore for your own research topic this semester (these will likely be supportive or background sources but some may directly involve your research topic). These should be distinct from the material described in a-c.

If a title of a book or article does not obviously relate to the subject, please annotate that entry to explain why you have included it under that heading.