

ARTH 420/599: POMPEII, THE LIVING CITY

PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER GREGG

Thursdays, 4:30-7:10 Art and Design (AB) 1005

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This seminar will focus on the Roman city of Pompeii by exploring the art historical and architectural remains. Buried in the volcanic residue from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, Pompeii provides an astounding level of preservation for fresco, sculpture, and luxury artistic forms in addition to a range of structures varying from private residences to public civic buildings. From the material culture, we will attempt to reconstruct life in this small Roman town and to extrapolate outward into the broader context of Roman Imperial culture. We will also discuss the changing perception of Pompeii in modern scholarship, including recent reconsiderations of the city, its chronology and its significance. The course will be reading and writing intensive: there will be weekly writing assignments as well as a research paper. The course, in part or in whole, fulfills the Writing Intensive requirement for the Art History program.

Text Books (required):

Joanne Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (Thames and Hudson, 2010).

Alison Cooley and M.G.L. Cooley, *Pompeii: A Sourcebook* (Routledge, 2004).

Alison Cooley, *Pompeii: A Duckworth Archaeological History* (Duckworth, 2004).

Optional but strongly encouraged:

John Dobbins and Pedar Foss, eds. *World of Pompeii* (Routledge, 2007).

Useful websites (links available under "Information" heading on Blackboard page):

Official website of the Italian superintendency for the archaeological site of Pompeii:

www.pompeisites.org

Current news and information on Pompeii and related research:

[Bloggingpompeii.blogspot.com](http://bloggingpompeii.blogspot.com)

Course Objectives:

To acquire an in-depth knowledge of the history, architecture and society of ancient Pompeii as well as its impact on modern artistic sensibilities

To place Pompeii in the larger spectrum of Classical Art, both Greek and Roman

To integrate archaeological, art historical, and primary literary material into a single, coherent intellectual narrative

To practice essential writing, research, and analytical skills in an academic environment

Graded Requirements:

Attendance, Preparation, Participation	15%
Weekly Synthesis Papers	45%
Paper Thesis/Bibliography	5%
Research Presentation	15%
Research Paper	20%

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)

Course Structure:

Readings: Everyone should read all of the assignments—both “Core” and “Synthesis/Discussion”—before the class meetings. In order for you to be engaged in the material and prepared for a seminar style discussion, you must have read the material thoughtfully. I also suggest taking a few notes from each reading or writing down questions/concerns that you have about the material. Remember that participation is a substantial portion of your grade in the seminar: you cannot properly participate if you have not read the material. Articles, unless otherwise specified, can be found in the JSTOR database.

Core Readings: these provide the basic details for our discussion and are fundamental to understanding the history, society, architecture and art of Pompeii.

Synthesis and Discussion: these go into greater detail about one specific aspect or area of that day’s discussion or, alternately, place Pompeii in a larger context.

Synthesis Papers: Each class meeting (unless otherwise specified), you will turn in a 400-500 word, typed paper (always include word count). The paper will be based on all of the readings for that day, concentrating on but not limited to material from the *Synthesis and Discussion* assignments. The goal of the Synthesis paper is NOT to produce a summary: in this brief format, you should address one particular idea, problem or even quotation by drawing together ideas from several of the readings assigned for that day. Do not try to summarize each reading, but rather synthesize the readings into what you consider to be the “big ideas,” connections or contradictory opinions expressed in the readings. In short, the paper should be a response to the question *what have I learned once you put all of these readings together*. You do not have to refer to every reading, but you should bring in at least two or three in each of your responses. You may want to start with a quote from one of the readings or text from Cooley’s *Source book* and analyze it in relation to all the readings; alternately, you may want to choose one point touched on by each of the readings and compare the authors’ ideas on that point; other times, you may want to offer critiques on the methodology or effectiveness of the readings. There is no one single approach or format. Be thoughtful and creative. As a seminar, this class is intended to make you think independently and form your own scholarly opinions: use these papers to express your thoughts in relationship to our readings. Papers are due in class: late submissions will not be accepted.

There are 11 of these due over the course of the semester: the top nine (9) grades worth up to 5% each will be added together at the end of the semester for each student, with the lowest two dropped, to determine 45% of your grade in the course.

Discussion Leaders: Each member of the class will be responsible for an oral presentation on an article under the “Synthesis and Discussion” readings. Undergraduates will present one article while graduate students will present either one or two readings. For the article that you are presenting, you need to be prepared to provide a concise summary of the article: do not try to repeat everything, rather boil it down to the most significant features. The summary should run 5-10 minutes. This will be followed by class discussion, lead jointly by the presenter and myself. The presenter should come prepared with four or five points that will act as springboards for discussion: a quote, a connection with another reading/idea, a problem of methodology, etc.

Research 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 January 2nd 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 Thesis: a typed, properly formatted preliminary bibliography is due in class on March 8th. This should include a minimum of four sources (6 for graduate students in the class), not including the textbooks for the class. 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) sources, even if only in translation. For this seminar, your textbook, *Pompeii: A Sourcebook*, will be invaluable for primary sources. There are also a number of translations of ancient texts available, including the Loeb Classical Library series available in 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.

The thesis may be more than one sentence: it should articulate the problem that you are working on in the paper. This is not a topic sentence which simply states the area of material being investigated. A thesis should introduce the reader to your particular approach to the material. For instance:

Topic sentence: In this paper, I will examine the architecture of the Eumachia Building.

Thesis: In this paper, I will argue that the architectural form of the Eumachia Building, complemented by its sculptural details, is an attempt to introduce influence from the capital city of Rome into this small town by borrowing motifs and symbols from imperial buildings such as the Forum of Augustus.

Paper: The paper itself will be around exam week, specific time to be announced later. The paper must be 7-10 pages (10-15 for graduate students) and have at least 7 bibliographical sources. No more than three of those sources should be web-based. At least one reference must be an ancient source, quotation, graffito or inscription. At least a part of your paper should link its topic to material discussed in the seminar. 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. Further details on the paper will be given out as the semester progresses.

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:

A seminar requires your attendance and your verbal participation at **every** meeting. Medical or other legitimately documented absences will be excused. All others will negatively affect your Participation grade (15% of your grade). Anyone missing more than three classes will receive a failing grade for the class.

Weekly Schedule:

Note that the weekly schedule is subject to change based on the pace of the class and other factors, so the syllabus may be updated at various times during the term.

January

26th Introduction and Orientation to Pompeii and its Environs

Berry pp. 6-15 (pay particular attention to the maps and plans)

Cooley, *Pompeii*, map p. 12, pp. 18-49

Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Introduction and Chapter 3 (Intro, C 1, 6-15, 17)

[*Bring Sourcebook to class](#)

Meyer Reinhold, "American Visitors to Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Paestum in the Nineteenth Century" in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Special Issue: Paestum and Classical Culture: Past and Present (Spring, 1985), pp. 115-128 (unless specified, journal articles are available through JSTOR).

"Neglected ruins of Pompeii declared a 'disgrace to Italy,'" *The Guardian* (link available on Blackboard under Course Content)

[No synthesis paper is due for our first class meeting.](#)

February

2nd Our Evolving Understanding of Pompeii's Chronology

Core Reading: Berry pp. 120-133

Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 6 (Intro, F 1-20, 45, 62, 88, 90, 100)

Cooley, *Pompeii*, Chapter 8 [\[moved here from original version of the syllabus\]](#)

Synthesis and Discussion:

John Dobbins, "The Forum and its dependencies," in *World of Pompeii* (text or Blackboard pdf)

G. Rolandi, A. Paone, M. Di Lascio, G. Stefani, "The 79 AD eruption of Somma: The relationship between the date of the eruption and the southeast tephra dispersion," *The Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research*. [\[pdf on Blackboard\]](#)

Focus on the results of the study and the incorporation of the scientific data with more traditional archaeological and literary sources.

[First synthesis paper is due this day, for these readings.](#)

9th Urban Development of Pompeii

Top three topics for research paper due in class

Core Reading: Berry pp. 64-85.

Roger Ling, "A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City," *Greece and Rome* 37 (1990): 204-214.

Synthesis and Discussion:

Poehler, Eric E. 2006. The circulation of traffic in Pompeii's Regio VI. *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19:53-74. [\[pdf Blackboard\]](#)

Focus on the introduction, discussion and conclusions sections (the methodology section is a bit dense, but look over it to get a sense of his approach).

Jeremy Hartnett, "*Si quis sic siderit*: Streetside Benches and Urban Society in Pompeii,"

in *American Journal of Archaeology* 112 (2008): 91-119.

16th Entertainment Venues

Core Reading: Berry pp. 134-149; 106-111; 230-233

Synthesis and Discussion:

Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 4 (Intro, D 1-20, 27, 34-38, 45-50, 58-62, 66-69, 98-102)

Ray Laurence, "Moral Zoning" pdf from *Pompeii: Space and Society* (Blackboard)

John DeFelice, "Inns and taverns," in *World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)

23rd The Baths and Water Supply

Core Reading: Berry pp. 150-153

Trevor Hodge, "In *Vitruvium Pompeianum*: Urban Water Distribution Reappraised," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 100, No. 2 (Apr., 1996), pp. 261-276

Synthesis and Discussion:

Garrett G. Fagan, "The Genesis of the Roman Public Bath: Recent Approaches and Future Directions," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 105, No. 3 (Jul., 2001), pp. 403-426 (*Focus on the Pompeian and Campanian material*)

Roy Bowen Ward, "Women in Roman Baths" *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 85, No. 2 (Apr., 1992), pp. 125-147

March

1st Religion in Pompeii

Core Reading: Berry pp. 186-206

Synthesis and Discussion:

Keith Hopkins, "World Full of Gods (Time Travel in Pagan Pompeii, The Roman Context of Christianity)" from *World Full of Gods: The Strange Triumph of Christianity* (2001) [pdf Blackboard].

Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 5 (Intro, E 1-8, 15-20, 38-39, 51-57, 68-81)

For this weekly writing assignment, comment on Hopkin's methodology/approach: consider questions of tone, effectiveness, use of the source material, accuracy, etc.

8th Commerce in Pompeii

Core Reading: Berry 216-229

Cooley, *Sourcebook* Chapter 8 (Intro, H 5-11, 15, 18-23, 31-34)

Synthesis and Discussion:

Robert I. Curtis, "A Personalized Floor Mosaic from Pompeii," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (Oct., 1984), pp. 557-566

Walter O. Moeller, "The Male Weavers at Pompeii," *Technology and Culture*,

Vol. 10, No. 4 (Oct., 1969), pp. 561-566
Wilhelmina F. Jashemski, "The Garden of Hercules at Pompeii" (Il.viii.6): The Discovery of a Commercial Flower Garden," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (Oct., 1979), pp. 403-411

16th NO CLASS: Spring Break

22nd Houses

Core Reading: Berry pp. 154-161

Synthesis and Discussion:

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, excerpts from *Pompeii: Houses and Society* (pdf Blackboard)
Rebecca Benefiel, "Dialogues of Ancient Graffiti in the House of Maius Castricius in Pompeii," *American Journal of Archaeology* 114 (2010): 59-89.

29th Houses

Core Reading: Berry pp. 162-185

Synthesis and Discussion

Volker Michael Strocka, "Domestic Decoration: Painting and the "Four Styles," in *World of Pompeii*, pp. 302-322.
Rick Jones and Damian Robinson, "Water, wealth, and social status at Pompeii: The House of the Vestals in the First Century," *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005): 695-710.
Ruth Westgate, "*Pavimenta atque emblemata vermiculata*: Regional Styles in Hellenistic Mosaic and the First Mosaics at Pompeii, *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 104, No. 2 (Apr., 2000), pp. 255-275

April

5th Identity at Pompeii

Core Reading: Berry pp. 88-91; 102-105; 112-119
Cooley, *Pompeii*, pp. 50-64
Sourcebook, F 89 (M. Holconius Rufus) and H 51

Synthesis and Discussion:

Michele George, "The lives of slaves," in *The World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)
Katherine Welch, "Pompeian men and women in portrait sculpture," in *The World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)
Mary Beard, "Pompeii skeletons reveal secrets of Roman family life," BBC News (link on Blackboard)

12th Tombs at Pompeii

Core Reading: Berry pp. 92-101
Sarah Cormack, "The tombs at Pompeii," in *World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)

Synthesis and Discussion:

Cooley, *Sourcebook* Chapter 7 (Intro, G 4-12, 15, 24, 27, 30, 48-58, 66-69)
Wilhelmina F. Jashemski, "Tomb Gardens at Pompeii," *The Classical Journal*,
Vol. 66, No. 2 (Dec., 1970 - Jan., 1971), pp. 97-115.

19th **Student Research Presentations**
 Cooley, *Pompeii*, Chapter 6

26th **Student Research Presentations**
 Cooley, *Pompeii*, Chapter 7

May
3rd **Student Research Presentations**
Note: If necessary, we will have a required class meeting during our exam period in order to complete student research presentations.

Paper Topics:

Decorative Silverware from Pompeii/Herculaneum
Glassware from Pompeii or Herculaneum
Gardens, garden decoration, fountains at Pompeii or Herculaneum
Bakeries in Pompeii
Dining and food in Pompeii
Lararia at Pompeii
The Wax Tablets of Iucundus
House of the Ship *Europa*
House of Loreius Tiburtinus/Octavius Quartio (different names, same house)
House of the Vettii (particularly the interpretation of its wall-paintings)
House of Menander
Praedia of Julia Felix
Topic on religion at Pompeii (you come up with a thesis and have it approved by me)
E.g. Isis in the area of Campania/Pompeii or the Capitulum Problem (*when* is it a Capitulum and how do we know)

Herculaneum:
Theater
"Basilica"
House of *Opus craticium*
House of the Samnite
House of Neptune and Amphitrite
Suburban Baths
Commercial activity at Herculaneum

Stabiae Villas
The Villa Regina at Oplontis
The Villa "of Poppea" at Oplontis
The Villa of the Papyri

If there is another topic, not listed here, that you are interested in pursuing, please discuss it with me. All topics, however, must be approved, so do not change at the last minute without consulting me.