

ARTH 322:
ANCIENT ROMAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE
Professor Christopher Gregg

Office: 373A, Robinson B
Office Hour: Mondays 12:00-1:00 or by appointment

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Course Description:

This course will examine material from the founding of the Roman Republic to the end of the Roman Empire. We will begin by reviewing the dual heritage of Roman art as it evolved from both Etruscan and Greek traditions. The class will then proceed chronologically, paying particular attention to the use of art as a political and propagandistic tool in Roman society. Because of the politicized nature of Roman art, an outline of Roman history and culture will be presented in tandem with the visual material and will be essential to understanding the function of the art. This class will focus on the architectural and sculptural monuments of the City of Rome, but monuments, painting, mosaics and luxury materials from all over the Roman world will also be brought into class discussion. Students can expect at least three exams, heavily oriented towards visual materials and synthesis of ideas presented in class. A writing assignment in the form of a critique of scholarly writing will also be required of all students enrolled in the class.

Objectives:

- To place Roman art and architecture in the broader spectrum of Mediterranean art
- To appreciate the complex political and social dynamics that influenced Roman art
- To recognize a variety of stylistic components in architecture, sculpture and painting
- To realize the impact of Roman art on post Classical Europe and America
- To gain an art historical vocabulary and improve visual memory

These course goals are specifically designed for this course and fall under the broader headings of the Learning Outcomes for the Arts (<http://masoncore.gmu.edu/arts-2/>)

Texts: Students should buy the following book or have it available to keep up with the reading assignments.

Roman Art : Romulus to Constantine (6th Edition)

Authors: Andrew Ramage and Nancy Ramage
(Paperback and Digital format available)

(There are earlier editions available but the images, texts, and page numbers will be different. If you choose to use an earlier edition, you are still responsible for the material in the most recent edition.)

Grade Percentages:

First Exam	Monday, October 2nd	25%
Second Exam:	Monday, November 4th	30%
Final Exam:	Consult Registrar's Bulletin	30%
Article review	Consult syllabus*	15%

*Article reviews are due as hard copy submissions in class on the due date; they will not be accepted late.

Grading Scale:

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)

Exams

Exams will include visual analysis material. This means that slides viewed in class and images from the textbooks will comprise a significant portion of each test. When preparing for class and studying for exams, treat the visual components of each assignment with the necessary

attention. The format of the exams may include image identifications, short answer and essay questions involving subjects, styles, and techniques. The scholarly articles discussed in the Written Assignment section below will also be represented on the exams. A review guide will be uploaded to Blackboard one week prior to each exam. Neither notes nor textbooks will be allowed for the exams themselves. You will need an exam book, preferably the large format Blue or Green book.

Note-taking

Although the readings in your textbook are critical for the course, class lectures will distill the essential information in the text and include material not found in the textbook: it is from the class lecture that exams will be constructed. You must take thorough notes in order to be prepared for the exams. If there are terms on a slide, include the term, its definition and application in your notes. This is a class based on close reading of images, which means attention to details: most people are not able to retain all of the specific details without studying copious notes taken during lecture. Do not assume that showing up to class and simply “listening” will be sufficient to prepare you for exams.

Written Assignment

Four articles from major scholarly journals or books are listed at the end of the syllabus (two are available through JSTOR, two on our Blackboard page under Course Content). Each has its own due date which is noted at in the assignment and in the schedule. Please read each one for the assigned class even if you are not writing on it. Each exam will contain at least one question based on the articles, so it is in your best interest to read the articles.

You must write on one (1) of these four: each article has its own due date (see assignment/ syllabus), and reviews on that article will not be accepted after its specific due date. Each assignment should be between 800-900 words (absolutely no longer than 950). The purpose of your paper is to review the major scholarly ideas presented in the article as practice for your critical analysis skills. It is important to understand the mechanics of scholarship (evidence, organization, etc.) and realize that not all ideas—even if they are published—have the same weight since evidence and argumentation skills vary from author to author/idea to idea. Writing a *brief* critique is also a useful way to practice conveying ideas concisely but lucidly. See the guidelines set out at the end of the syllabus for reviewing the article and let me know if you have questions about the process.

Early in the semester, you will be asked to sign up for the article you want to review. There will be a limited number of slots for each article, so take a look at them and consider your order of preference, realizing that you may not get your top choice(s). I have included a *Topic* line with each to give you a sense of the types of ideas covered in each article so that you can make a more informed decision.

Schedule for the Semester: Assignments should be read for the date indicated, *carefully* and *completely before class*. My lectures will assume that you are familiar with the assigned material and will often cover additional topics: on exams, you will be responsible for information from the text as well as lecture

Important Notes

- **Attendance at exams is MANDATORY: no make-up exams will be offered without a doctor’s excuse or other official documentation. If you miss an exam, you must contact me within 24 hours to schedule the re-take with valid documentation. Make up exams must be taken within ten academic days unless cleared with me in advance.**

- I encourage questions and open discussion in class. Please, however, refrain from “quiet” talking to one another during lectures. It is distracting both to your classmates and to me. If you persist in talking during lectures, I will ask you to leave the classroom.
- Do not wear earbuds or other headphones during lecture.
- Please turn off cell phones when class begins. Texting during class will be treated the same as talking during lectures.
- Use of electronic devices (including cell phones) during exams will be treated as an honor code violation. At the very least, you will receive a “0” on the exam.
- Arrive on time for class. Coming in late is disruptive for everyone. If you have a class prior to ours which causes a problem with arriving on time, please discuss it with me.
- Discuss any special academic needs with me at the start of the term. Do not wait until after the first exam or later! I will not complete ODS forms that are emailed to me. You will need to bring hard copies of the forms to me well in advance of exam dates if you are using the ODS testing center. It is your responsibility to deal with this paperwork in a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in having to take the exam with the rest of the class.
- Since the material in this course is based on the art and literature of other cultures, some topics of violence, gender, and sexuality may be outside of individual comfort zones, but we will deal with these subjects in an academic and intellectual manner.
- All reading assignments should be completed before class each day. The lengths of these assignments vary so keep pace with the syllabus.
- No extra credit assignments are offered in the course.
- The schedule and pace of the course may be adjusted as necessary. If the need arises, a revised syllabus will be announced and uploaded to Blackboard. It is your responsibility to keep up with the most recent version of the syllabus

Please realize that these policies are designed to create the most positive academic environment possible. As long as you are respectful towards these policies, your performance in the class, your classmates, and myself, you will undoubtedly receive that same consideration.

Finally, 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.

**Note on reading assignments: I will not always follow the sequence found in the Ramage textbook. Ideally, you should read the entire chapter at the start of a topic (e.g. all of Chapter 2 for the first day of our discussion of the Republic). I have, however, broken the readings down into smaller sections if you do not have time to read the whole chapter in one sitting. If you read the sections, simply be aware that we may cover material in class that is not in that day’s reading.*

August

Week 1

Monday 26 Introduction to the study of Roman Art

Ramage: pp. 10-33. Pay particular attention to the political history chart (10-11) and historical sections since they will provide our basic structure for discussing Roman art.

Watch the University of Virginia’s *Rome Reborn* video (version 2.2) at <http://vimeo.com/32038695>

Wednesday 28 The Dual Heritage of Roman Art: Greek Art Overview

Blackboard reading from *The Art of Greece and Rome*, excerpts pp. 4-27; 60-63

September

Week 2

M 2 **Labor Day; University closed, no classes**

W 4 **The Dual Heritage of Roman Art: Etruscan Art**

Ramage: Chapter 1, pp. 35-67

Week 3

M 9 **Architecture of the Roman Republic**

Ramage: Chapter 2, pp. 69-87

W 11 **Painting and Mosaics of the Roman Republic**

Ramage: Chapter 2, pp. 98-109

Week 4

M 16 **Sculpture of the Roman Republic**

Ramage: Chapter 2, pp. 87-98

W 18 **Rome at the End of the Republic and the Beginning of Empire**

Review reading from Ramage, Chapter 2

Week 5

M 23 **Art of the Principate: Augustus, Rome's first Emperor, pt. 1**

Ramage, Chapter 3, pp. 111-126 (stop at "Reliefs/Ara Pacis")

[Article 1 \(P. Rehak\)](#) Review due in class

W 25 **Art of the Principate: Augustus, Rome's first Emperor, pt. 2**

Ramage, Chapter 3: pp. 127-143

Week 6

M 30 **Augustus and His Julio-Claudian Successors**

Ramage, Chapter 4: pp. 145-163 (stop at "Nero's Golden House")

October

W 2 **Exam 1 [from the start of the semester through Augustus lecture 2]**

Week 7

M 7 **Julio-Claudian Successors**

Review reading from previous class on Julio-Claudians

W 9 **Architectural Revolution under Nero**

Review Chapter 4, "Architecture" pp. 163-167

[Article 2 \(N. Weiss\)](#) Review due in class

Week 8

M 14 **Columbus Day/Fall Break; University closed, no classes**

Tuesday, Oct. 15th Monday classes meet. Our class will meet.

Art of the Flavian Dynasty

Ramage, Chapter 5: pp. 169-181

W 16 Art of the Flavian Dynasty
Ramage, Chapter 5: pp. 181-188

Week 9

M 21 The Cities of Vesuvius: Pompeii and Herculaneum
Ramage, Chapter 5, pp. 189-205

W 23 Art under the Emperors Nerva and Trajan
Ramage, Chapter 6, pp: 207-219

Week 10

M 28 Art under the Emperors Trajan and Hadrian, pt. 1
Ramage, Chapter 6, pp 219-227
Ramage, Chapter 7, pp. 248-255
[Article 3 \(A. Claridge\) Review due in class](#)

W 30 Art under the Emperor Hadrian, pt 2
Ramage, Chapter 7, pp. 235-247

Week 11

November

M 4 Exam 2

W 6 Art of the Antonine Emperors
Ramage, Chapter 8, pp. 257-281

Week 12

M 11 Art of the Severan Dynasty
Ramage, Chapter 9, pp. 283-296

W 13 Art of the Severan Dynasty
Ramage, Chapter 9, pp. 302-309
[Article 4 \(D. Favro\) Review due in class](#)

Week 13

M 18 Ostia: Rome's Imperial Port City

All assignments in the Ostia section are keyed to www.ostia-antica.org. For the history, go the website and click "Introduction to Ostia" under *Getting Started*. Read sections 1-5. Watch the 2.5 minute video entitled "Ostia antica e porto di Traiano" on the homepage of the website (despite the Italian title, there is no dialogue—just an excellent series of digital reconstructions).

Also read:

- House of Diana (I.III Caseggiato di Diana)
- Garden Apartments (III.IX Case a giardino)
- Thermopolium (I.II.5 Caseggiato del Termopolio)
- Piazza of the Corporations (II.VII Piazzalle delle Corporazione)
- Caserma of the Vigiles (II.V Caserma dei Vigili)
- Synagogue (IV.XVII Synagoga)

To locate the assigned structures: on the homepage look under *The Archaeological Remains*, and click on “Topographical Dictionary”. Under the *Contents* (left-hand side of the new page, “Text Menu”) you will need to select the region (*Regio*) and then find the block (*Insula*) specified on the syllabus and follow the link (labeled with the Italian name) to the building. *Regio/insula* addresses are given in notation with region first and insula second, e.g. The Baths of Neptune are at II.IV

On the www.ostia-antica.org homepage, under *Archaeological Remains*, click on “Portus” and read about the Claudian and Trajanic Harbors. Also look under “Plans and 3-D models” at the “3D Model of Portus”.

W 20 The Third Century Crises: The Soldier Emperors and the Tetrarchy
Ramage, Chapters 10 and 11: pp. 311-341

Week 14

M 25 To Be Announced

W 27 Thanksgiving: University closed. No classes

Week 15

December

M 2 Art in the Age of Constantine
Ramage, Chapter 12, pp. 343-365

W 4 Exam 3

NOTE: if our schedule has to be adjusted over the course of the semester, the third exam may be held during the exam period. Do not make travel arrangements for the end of the semester that might prevent your presence during the exam period date until I have announced our final exam date.

Reading Days: 8-10

Exam period for Fall 2019: December 11-18

Consult the GMU exam schedule for potential date and time of this exam.

<https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2019/final-exams/>

No early exams will be given and remember that inclement weather during the term can change the end of semester schedule, so make your travel plans accordingly.

Article Review Guidelines

Basics:

800-900 words (include word count; exceeding 950 words will earn a grade penalty)

Margins: 1.5 inches (left), 1 inch (top, bottom, right)

Double spaced

Follow all standard English rules of grammar and syntax

Proofread: errors will negatively impact your grade.

You should read any material in the textbook directly related to each article before reading the article. The textbook (and possibly lecture material) will act as a base-line for your critique of the scholarly ideas presented in the articles.

Below is a suggested organization for your review. You do not have to follow this sequence exactly, but you must cover all of the elements listed below.

Section 1: What is the primary argument (thesis) of the article? Is it a new idea? Modification of an existing idea? What is the “standard” view as presented in text, lecture or the article? How—specifically—does this article seek to change or modify the traditionally held view?

Section 2: What is the methodology used in the article? Is there new evidence or a re-interpretation of existing evidence? Is the evidence *primary* (ancient literary text, material from the archaeological or art historical record) or *secondary* (based on interpretations and theoretical data)? Does the author use textual sources to support his/her idea? Describe **three** pieces of evidence or lines of argumentation used by the author to make the case. Be as specific as you can given the constraints of the word count.

Section 3: Do you accept the author’s proposal? Explain why or why not. Be specific in your critique (remember that the term “critique” is not inherently negative, so you can write a positive critique): is the evidence sufficient for the new reading? Is the article well organized? Does it pass the essential test: common sense? Finally, do you think that this is a significant contribution to the scholarship on this topic: why or why not?

You must write on **one** (no more) of the following articles:

1. Paul Rehak, “Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Meaning of the Ara Pacis Augustae,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 83, No. 2. (June, 2001).
Topics: Augustan Altar of Peace; sculpture; political ideology; religion
Due date: Monday, September 23rd
2. Naomi Weiss, “Visual Language of Nero’s Harbor Sestertii,” *Memoires of the American Academy in Rome*, vol. 58 (2013).
Topics: Neronian/Julio-Claudian buildings; coins; trade; iconography
Due date: Wednesday, October 9th
3. Amanda Claridge, “Hadrian’s Column of Trajan,” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 6 (1993).
[Pdf file available under Course Content on Blackboard]
Topics: Column of Trajan; Hadrianic design; funerary architecture; funerary ritual
Due date: Monday, October 28th
4. Diane Favro, “Construction Traffic in Rome: Building the Arch of Septimius Severus,” in *Rome, Ostia and Pompeii: Movement and Space*. Oxford, 2011. [Pdf file available under Course Content on Blackboard]
Topics: Arch of Septimius Severus; building techniques; logistics of construction and supply; urban studies
Due date: Wednesday, November 13th

Note that reviews will not be accepted after their specific due date. Since this assignment will count 15% of your final course grade, you should give it the necessary time and attention. Failure to follow instructions and/or make deadlines will adversely affect your overall grade in the class.