

ARTH 324: Hellenistic Art
From Alexander to Cleopatra and the Caesars
Professor Christopher A. Gregg

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Office Hours: Horizon Hall 3204, Wednesdays 12:15-1:00 pm or by appointment in-person or online

This course will explore the final phase of Greek art, that of the Hellenistic period (ca. 331-31 BCE). After the military campaigns of Alexander the Great of Macedon, Greek culture was spread throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East by his successors. Hellenic civilization was profoundly changed by interactions with other cultures, changes marked by a sense of increased diversity and the importance of individualism. These deep societal changes also had a strong impact on art produced in the fourth century BCE and beyond. The resulting Hellenistic period of Greek art has been described as theatrical, intellectual, and emotionally vibrant: works of sculpture and painting seek to draw the viewer into a dramatically charged moment and evoke the sympathies and passions of the observer. Architecture of the period relies on scale and ornament to overwhelm the senses. From the beginnings of Hellenistic style under Alexander, to Cleopatra's Greco-Egyptian home in Alexandria, and beyond to lavish works created in this style under the Caesars of Rome, this course will examine the development of Hellenistic style, the major artists of the period, the variety of monuments and sculptural types that it produced as well as the interplay between Hellenistic culture and the art itself. We will focus on sculpture, painting, and architecture, but also examine metalwork, mosaics, and other media that embody the style of the Hellenistic Age.

Important information on teaching modality:

As of January 20th 2022, this course was still listed as a face-to-face (f2f) in-person class. Unless the GMU administration changes that, we will meet in the classroom for most of our lectures. However, there will be at least two days in the semester where lectures are delivered as recorded videos on Blackboard with the following class day as a discussion period on that material (an arrangement called a 'Flipped Classroom'). I will also employ lecture videos periodically throughout the semester to supplement our class time. If there are any changes to our class modality, I will let you know as soon as I receive the information. If I am unable to teach at any point, I will let you know how we will reorganize our schedule. Since the semester may be somewhat fluid, it is critical that you check your GMU email daily and read any updates that the university or I send out to you.

Course Goals

- To examine in detail the elements of artistic and architectural style during the Hellenistic period.
- To survey the wide-ranging forms of archaeological and art historical material preserved from this period.
- To gain a greater understanding of the diverse social and political environments of the Hellenistic period.
- To explore the links between society and artistic production.
- To practice analytical skills in reading and clarity in writing.
- To expand your visual and verbal vocabulary for archaeology and art history.

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

Required Texts

J.J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge University Press): 2005 or later reprints.

R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (Thames and Hudson): 1991.

These textbooks should be available through the GMU Bookstore or you can order them from your preferred online source. You will need them both early in the semester.

Digital readings can be found on our Blackboard page in the appropriate Weekly Module (note: not all weeks have additional readings or lecture videos, so not every week will have a Module associated with it).

Graded Requirements

Exam 1	Mon. Feb. 28 th	20%
Exam 2	Wed. Apr. 6 th	25%
Exam 3	Wed. May 4 th *	30%
Article Review	See daily schedule for dates	15%
Engagement Assignments	Scheduled in the moment	5%

*See last page of syllabus for details about the third (final) exam.

Exams

Exams will include slide identifications, architectural diagrams, terms, dates, and essays. Material will come from textbook, lecture, and digital readings.

The exams for this class will be conducted through Blackboard rather than in the classroom. On exam days, you will not come to class but rather take the test on a computer of your choice. The testing period, however, will be the normal class meeting time (1:30-2:45) plus 10 extra minutes.

I will provide a study guide one week in advance of each exam date. The study guide will include two essay question choices. You should write out **full versions of a response to each essay option** in advance of the testing period; during the test, you will upload your response to the essay that I specify on the exam (you will not be given a choice, so you must be ready for either option).

Attempting to wait and write the essay during the exam will result in either too brief/vague an essay or insufficient time for the rest of the exam questions. You should have both options written out fully; re-read, edit and revise your essay responses as a part of your exam preparation before the test begins so that they are ready to submit at the start of the exam period. Once uploaded, you can proceed to the short answer and objective questions of the exam with plenty of time to complete them.

The essay will count for approximately 40% of each exam, so you need to take these essay questions seriously as they will dramatically affect your grade in the class.

Note-taking:

Although the readings in your textbooks are critical for the course, class lectures will bring the material together, and it is from the class lecture that substantial portions of each exam will be drawn. 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 and that 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.

Important: I do not have notes for this class, so I will not be able to supply notes if you have an absence. I encourage everyone to make two or three friends early on in this class who will be willing to share notes in the event of an emergency. However, do not expect anyone to simply give you their notes if you are missing class for reasons that are not legitimate. Taking good notes is both a skill and a lot of work; everyone should be able to do it and no one should do someone else’s work in the class on a regular basis.

Video Lectures

During the semester, in addition to—and sometimes instead of—an in-class lecture, I will assign lecture videos for you to watch by a certain date. The lecture videos will be available on our class Blackboard page in the Weekly Module matching their place in the syllabus. We will discuss critical aspects of the material

from these pre-recorded lectures in class; all of the material in the lecture videos will be potential exam material.

You should watch these lecture videos for the assigned date (see schedule below) and take notes from them just as you would in the classroom. Make note of any questions that you have from the videos so that we can clarify any issues during class.

Article Review

Three articles from scholarly journals are listed at the end of the syllabus (the articles themselves are in the 'Article Review Module' on our Blackboard page). Each has its own due date which is also noted in the daily assignment 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.

You must write a review of one (1) of these articles (details at the end of the syllabus): each article has its own due date (noted on the daily schedule and at the end of the 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 critique the major scholarly ideas presented in the article. 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).

Submissions should be uploaded through the appropriate portal in the 'Article Review Module' on Blackboard. See schedule for due dates. Late work will not be accepted.

Engagement Assignments

This will consist of two brief assignments over the course of the semester that you can have a little fun with while thinking about the works of art in the class from a different perspective.

You will receive these assignments randomly. They will be announced in class or through email and you will have several days to complete them.

Taken together, they will count half a letter grade (5% of your total grade).

A Note on Grading

On exams, your responses to questions will be graded against the information provided in the video lectures, our BCU meetings, and the readings. You must take notes in each of these situations so that you have the information to study and to refer to when appropriate. If you are not certain about some point that was covered in any of these settings, it is your responsibility to ask for clarification. If you do not ask, I can only move forward on the premise that you have full command of the material—meaning that I will grade based on the assumption that you have the correct information at your disposal.

On assignments, grading will be based on 1) how well you follow the directions, 2) how completely you accomplish the tasks, 3) how accurate your work is within each task. As with exams, if you do not understand a part of the assignment, please ask for clarification.

For both exams and assignments, I will be looking for specific, detailed information. Providing a vague, incomplete or general response will result in the loss of some (or all) points.

At any point during the semester, if you have a question or concern about grading policy, please communicate with me. I want to be transparent about how your grade is determined. I try to be clear by noting point values, percentages, etc. in the Course Documents, on exams, and in assignments. Again, however, if I do not know that you have a question about how the grading works, I cannot answer it for you. Rather than assuming that I will not discuss the topic, please make the effort and ask for clarification.

Office of Disability Studies Documentation

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

Send official documentation (Faculty Contact Sheet) to me as soon as possible; certainly well before the first quiz if you have accommodations for extra time. Accommodations can only be provided once I have documentation.

Honor Code and Student Conduct

Everyone should be familiar with the GMU Honor Code and expected behavior as covered in Student Code of Conduct, especially as regards digital/online etiquette. These are topics that were introduced to you at orientation, but the expectation is that you continue to live by them every semester that you are enrolled.

Some kinds of participation in online study sites violate the Mason Honor code: these include accessing previous course exam or quiz questions for this class; accessing exam, quiz, or assignment answers for this class; uploading of any of the instructor's materials or exams; and uploading any of your own answers or finished work. Always consult your syllabus and your professor before using these sites.

If you need a refresher on the Academic Honor Code, consult the appropriate website below.

University Honor Code:

<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>

University Student Code of Conduct:

<https://studentconduct.gmu.edu/university-policies/code-of-student-conduct/>

Important Notes

- The university is a professional environment. You should treat your interactions with fellow students, faculty and staff as you would interactions in your professional life.
- If you miss an exam, you must contact me within 24 hours if at all possible to schedule the re-take with valid documentation. Make up exams must be taken within ten academic days unless cleared with me in advance. Exception will be made for serious illness, but medical documentation may be required.
- The use of inappropriate, belligerent or profane language towards the instructor or fellow students is not acceptable in the university setting, including on exams. I reserve the right not to grade an offensive exam, which means the grade would be a '0'. The situation would also be referred to the Student Conduct Office.
- 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.

Schedule (Note: readings for a particular date should be read before class on that day. So, if the assignment is indented under M 24 January, it should be read before class on Monday, January 24th)

January

Week 1

M 24 Introduction: Course Basics and the Alexander Sarcophagus

Reading:

Smith: 190-192, 226 (for this text, italicized numbers are image numbers, not page numbers)

Pollitt: 38-41

W 26 Archaic and Classical Art: How is the Hellenistic Style Different?/Transition to Hellenistic

Before our class meeting this Wednesday, view these Video Lectures in the Week 1 Module on our Blackboard page.

Style and the Archaic period

Style and the Classical period

Temple Architecture, the Orders and Architectural Sculpture

We will spend the first 15-20 minutes of this Wednesday class reviewing important information from the lecture videos before turning to new material, but I will not 're-lecture' the material from the videos so watch them carefully and take notes on important ideas, terms, etc. Be prepared to ask questions on material that you want clarification on.

Reading (throughout the syllabus, assignments under this heading are required):

Pollitt pp. 1-18

Optional Reading:

Blackboard, Week 1 Module: Sections on Archaic/Classical style and temple design from Woodford's *Greek & Roman Art* pp. 4-37.

I strongly encourage everyone to read this—if not for class this day, then during the first week or two of the semester. It will introduce you to a number of terms and concepts that we will be addressing as the class progresses.

Week 2

W 31 Precepts, Styles and Themes in Hellenistic Art

Reading:

Smith: Bronze Boxer (Terme Boxer) 54, 62

Blackboard, Week 2 Module: Lucilla Burn, "Themes in Hellenistic Art", Chapter 5, pp. 138-154

February

W 2 Macedonia in the 4th century BCE: Rise of the Argeads and The Royal Tombs at Vergina

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 2 Module: Manolis Andronicos, *Vergina: The Royal Tombs*

Week 3

M 7 Alexander: History, Myth and Image

Reading:

Pollitt pp. 31-45; 59-78

Blackboard, Week 3 Module: Waldemar Heckel, *The Wars of Alexander the Great*, 13-34, 81-89

W 9 Lysippos and the Court Artists: Image-makers

Reading:

Pollitt pp. 47-58

Week 4

M 14 Pergamon: Attalids, Gauls and the Pergamene "School"

Reading:

Pollitt, pp. 79-97

W 16 Pergamon: The Altar of Zeus

Reading:

Pollitt, pp. 97-110; 230-235

Review 1: Whitaker article review due before class begins at 1:30pm EST. Upload through Blackboard Portal in the Article Review Module.

Week 5

M 21 Pergamon: The City and the Lesser Attalid Monument in Athens

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 5 Module: John Freely, "Pergamum" in *Classical Turkey*, 27-40

W 23 Hellenistic City Planning and Sanctuaries: Priene

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 5 Module:

Lucilla Burn, "Hellenistic Cities" from *Hellenistic Art*, Chapter 3, pp. 79-88; 94-99

John Freely, "Priene" in *Classical Turkey*, 62

Pollitt, pp. 230-249

Week 6

M 28 Exam I (from the start of the semester through all Pergamon material)

March

W 2 Hellenistic Sanctuaries: Didyma and Kos

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 5 Module: J. Freely, 73-77, Temple of Apollo at Didyma
in *Classical Turkey*
(Review Pollitt reading from previous class)

Week 7

M 7 Flipped Classroom: view the following Lecture Videos on Blackboard, the documentary and complete the worksheet in the Week 7 Module. We will not meet this Monday, but we will meet on Wednesday to discuss the material

Lecture Videos on Blackboard:

Hellenistic Jewelry, part 1
Hellenistic Jewelry, part 2

On youtube.com, watch the documentary on Heron of Alexandria:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7alrcb>

Worksheet: The Derveni Krater and Lynx Rhyton

There are links to a video and a museum website that will provide the information for you to fill out the worksheet. This worksheet is not for a grade; you will not turn it in. However, it will be a concise place to take specific notes that you can then use on the exam.

W 9 Discussion: Hellenistic Luxury Arts and Technology

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 7 Module: Dyfri Williams and Jack Ogden, *Greek Gold: Jewelry of the Classical World*

Review Article 2: Villianatos article review due before class begins at 1:30pm EST. Upload through Blackboard Portal in Article Review Module.

Week 8

March 14-20

Spring Break: No classes

Week 9

M 21 To Be Announced

W 23 Hellenistic Painting and Mosaics

Lectures videos:

Hellenistic Painting
Hellenistic Pebble Mosaics

Reading:

Pollitt, pp. 185-229

Week 10

M 28 Hellenistic Sculpture: New and Evolving Physical Forms

Reading:

Smith (italicized numbers are image numbers; regular font is page number):
Belvedere Torso, 133, 165

Old Fisherman, 138-139, *178-9*
Sleeping Hermaphrodite, 133-4, *169.1-2*
Barberini Faun, 135, *168*

Pollitt

Mahdia Dwarf, 138
Archaizing Athena, 183-4

Metropolitan Dancing youth

<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/130015912?rpp=20&pg=1&ft=hellenistic+dancing+youth&pos=3>

W 30 Hellenistic Sculpture: Images of Women and Children

Reading:

Smith:

Aphrodite of Melos, 79-83, *305*
Aphrodite and Pan Group ("Slipper Slapper"), *314*
"Old Women", 137-8, *174, 175*
Boy with Goose, 136, *170*
Bronze Eros, 66, *84*
Artemision Horse and Jockey, 54, *58*

Pollitt:

Baker Dancer, 270

Week 11

April

M 4 Hellenistic Sculpture, playing with scale: Tanagra Figurines and Groups

Lecture video:

Tanagra Figurines

Reading:

Tanagra Figurines:

Web resource: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tafg/hd_tafg.htm

Smith:

Hanging Marsyas Group, 106-7, *135*
Nike of Samothrace, 77-9, *97*

W 6 **Exam 2 (Hellenistic City Planning and Sanctuaries through Women & Children Sculpture)**

Week 12

M 11 **Flipped Classroom:** we will not meet this Monday, but you must watch and take notes on the following lecture videos, which we will discuss on Wednesday.

Lecture Video:

Alexandria, pt. 1
Alexandria, pt. 2
Alexandria, pt. 3

Reading:

Pollitt, pp. 250-263

W 13 Discussion: Alexandria and the Ptolemies

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 12 Module: “Cleopatra” and “Ptolemaic Egypt” excerpts from
Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt edited by Zahi Hawass and
Franck
Goddio.

Week 13

M 18 The Ptolemaic Dynasty and Cleopatra in Egypt

Reading:

Pollitt 257-259 (“Tazza Farnese”)

Review Hawass and Goddio selections (Blackboard, Week 12 Module)

Review Article 3: Draycott article review due before class begins at 1:30pm EST. Upload through
Blackboard Portal in Article Review Module.

W 20 To be announced

Week 14

M 25 Gandharan Art and the Fringes of Hellenistic Style in the East

Reading:

Blackboard, Week 14 Module: Kurt Berhendt, *The Art of Gandhara*, (“Gandhara and
Diffusion” pdf file)

<http://www.nemrud.nl>

Under “Tourist Information” tab, Look at “Photos”; “History Kommagene” King
Mithridates Kallinikos, King Antiochus Theos, and Art; and “Nemrud Tour”

Pollitt pp. 274-275 (“Nemrud Dagh”)

W 27 Rome and Hellenistic Style in the West

Lecture Video:

Roman Art Collecting and Portraiture

Reading:

Smith:

Terme Ruler, 19-20, 3

Laocoon, 108-110, 143

Sanctuary at Palestrina (<http://australis.www2.50megs.com/Fortuna/1.html>)

Smith

Sperlonga, 110-111, 144-147

Farnese Bull Group, 108, 142

Week 15

May

M 2 Rome and Hellenistic Style in the West

Review readings from previous class

W 4 Exam 3

Exam 3 is not comprehensive: like the previous tests, it will cover a set amount of material from the end of
the course.

It is my intention that exam 3 happen on the last day of class. However, because of weather cancellations, illness, etc. that often happen during Spring semester, we may have to hold the exam during exam week; do not make travel plans that will interfere with this possibility until a final date has been confirmed.

If you wish to know when the exam would be scheduled, consult Final Exam Schedule for date/time of Exam 3 and make travel plans accordingly.

<https://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Spring-2022-Final-Exam-Schedule.pdf>

Be aware that spring semester exam schedules frequently have to be modified before the end of term, so even the date given on the GMU website is subject to change.

Article Review Instructions

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: poor writing will affect your grade.

Proofread: typos and other avoidable errors will negatively impact your grade.

Important! Avoid direct quotes in this assignment: one of the goals of this review is that you put into your own words the ideas that you derive from the article. Relying on quotes rather than explaining the information yourself will result in a lower grade on this assignment because you are not demonstrating your own, individual command of the material.

Footnotes are also not necessary. If you do want to cite a particular point, use a parenthetical reference within the text, e.g., (Whitaker, p. 169), (Draycott, p. 52), (Pollit, p. 214)

You should read any material in the textbook directly related to each article (use the index to locate a subject in the book—not everything will be covered in the text) 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? In other words, what central idea is the author trying to convince the reader of? 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 evidence used in the article? 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.

Is there new evidence or a re-interpretation of existing evidence? Is the evidence *primary* (ancient text, material from the archaeological or art historical record) or *secondary* (based on interpretations and theoretical data from other scholars)? Be specific and identify the evidence as primary or secondary in your discussion. Ancient textual sources are an important aspect of scholarship in this field. Does the author use textual sources effectively to support his/her idea? Why or why not?

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). Offer your assessment on these questions: is the evidence sufficient to support the author’s thesis? 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?

Each article is available as a pdf in the ‘Article Review Module’ on our Blackboard page.

1. Richard Whitaker, “Art and Ideology: The Case of the Pergamon Gigantomachy,” *Acta Classica* 48 (2005): 163-174. **Due Wednesday, February 16th by 1:30 pm EST**

2. Evaggelos Vallianatos, “Deciphering and Appeasing the Heavens: The History and Fate of an

Ancient Greek Computer,” *Leonardo* 45.3 (2012): 250-257. **Due Wednesday, March 9th by 1:30 pm EST**

3. Jane Draycott, “Dynastic Politics, Defeat, Decadence, and Dining: Cleopatra Selene on the So-Called ‘Africa Dish’ from the Villa della Pisanella at Boscoreale,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* Vol. 80 (2012), pp. 45-64). **Due Monday, April 18th by 1:30 pm EST**

A note on proper formatting of titles:

- Journal articles and chapter titles are often bracketed by quotation marks as I have done above; in some styles they receive no distinguishing marks, but I feel the addition of quotation marks is appropriate
- The titles of longer works (the journals themselves, books, magazines) are italicized in this system, as I have done in the citations above
- For your paper, follow these stylistic conventions if you cite a source, including the article you are reviewing.

Include word count at the end of your submission. Failure to do so will result in a grade penalty.

You will upload your submission through a portal on our Blackboard page. All submissions must be uploaded before class begins on the due date. The Bb timestamp will determine whether your article is on time. Since we will be discussing the articles in class, turning the review in after discussion will not satisfactorily demonstrate your assessment of the article. Reviews submitted after class discussion will receive a ‘0’.

Remember: the date given is a deadline. You can submit before the deadline. Technical difficulties (internet connectivity, etc.) are not a valid excuse for late work that you have had weeks to complete.