HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF ATHENS

Instructor: Dr. Vasko Demou (vasdemou@msn.com**)**

*All but two class sessions take place within archaeological sites and museums.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class surveys Greek history and art from the Classical period to the modern era. All sessions, save two, which are indoor lectures, take place within archaeological sites and museums in Athens and beyond, including four day trips (Mycenae-Argos-Nafplion, Sounion, Eleusis, and Olympia/Delphi). We will familiarize ourselves with the main periods, key figures and events in Athenian history, and we will also explore topics in Greek religion, art, and culture.

Students are expected to prepare 1-page outlines of all assigned readings in advance of our visits to the archaeological sites, and to participate actively in discussion during these visits.

BOOKS

Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens.* New Haven & London: Yale University Press.
or
Plantzos, D. 2011. *Greek Art and Archaeology (c. 1200 – 30 BC).* Athens: Kapon.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

The final grade for this course will be based on class participation, written assignments, oral reports, a self-directed student project, and mid-term and final exams.

- Oral report topics will be offered on the basis of students' interests at the end of each class, a week ahead presentation; the presentations must be accompanied by a handout;
- Outlines of readings should include all the essential information included in the readings in summary form, and should not exceed one page;
- Self-directed student projects may be taken up at any point during the course but need to be handed in or otherwise presented by Week 12.

Attendance and participation: 20%
Oral Report: 10%
Written Outlines of Readings: 10%
Student Project: 30%
Mid-term and final exams (including term- and passage IDs): 30%

Daily attendance is expected. If you have to miss class for a good reason, please notify me **ahead of time**. Even if you have to miss class, you should still turn in your work on time. In extreme circumstances arrangements can be made, but generally speaking late work will receive no credit.

Unexcused absences negatively affect students' final grade for the course. If excessive absences will make continuation of the course unprofitable*, the student may be required to drop the course with the grade of F.*

Students with disabilities:

To insure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning, students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class are asked to see me as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity:

Please familiarize yourselves with the university's academic integrity policies discussed on this page:

http://www.library.illinois.edu/learn/research/academicintegrity.html

It is your responsibility to know and abide by these policies.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: The archaeology of Greece: from Prehistory to the present

Trip to Mycenae (site), Argos (Theatre and Larissa), Nafplion (walking tour)

Description:

(i) Introduction to the history of Greece and problematization of the tripartite (Ancient – Byzantine – Modern) narrative;

(ii) introduction to the discipline of archaeology, its methods, techniques, and significance, and

(iii) guided tour of the archaeological site of Mycenae, the Castle of Argos, and the town of Nafplion.

Discussion topics:

Mycenaens as 'the first Greeks', their social and political organization, their language, and their legacy; archaeological sites as palimpsests and identity referents; the emergence of the modern nation-state, its first capital and governor

Required Reading:

* Clogg, R. 2021. *A concise history of Greece* [Fourth edition]. Cambridge, CUP. (Chapters 1. *Introduction* & 2. *Ottoman rule and the emergence of the Greek state 1770–1831*)[1]

Plantzos, D. 2016.*Greek Art and Archaeology* [Second edition]. Athens, Kapon Editions [Chapter 1, *Classical Archaeology; methods and sources*]

[1] Written outlines, which count toward your final grade, are required only for asterisk-marked readings.

WEEK 2: The way to Democracy

Picnic class at the Pnyx, and brief visit to the Areopagus

Description:

(i) Overview of the transition from Mycenaean kingship to democracy as evidenced by archaeological finds and the literary sources;

(ii) overview of the development of a legal system, and

(iii) guided tour of the archaeological sites of the Pnyx and the Areopagus.

Discussion topics:

Democracy; law-courts; orators; the sophistic movement

Required Reading:

Adkins, L. & R.A. Adkins. 1998. *Ancient Greece. A Handbook*. Stroud: Sutton Publishing [pp. 27-37]

* Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens.* New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 3, *Early and Archaic Athens* (pp. 21-47)]

Plantzos, D. 2016.*Greek Art and Archaeology* [Second edition]. Athens, Kapon Editions [Chapter 2, *The Early Iron Age, 1100-700 BCE*]

The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, The Agora Excavations (Agathe) webpage: http://www.agathe.gr/democracy

WEEK 3: The City

Agora

Description:

Guided tour of the political, religious, cultural, and commercial heart of the ancient city of Athens and its museum.

Discussion topics:

Democratic institutions; politics; cultural and religious events; everyday life

Required Reading:

* The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, The Agora Excavations (Agathe) webpage: http://www.agathe.gr/guide/introduction.html

WEEK 4: From Mycenae to Mycale; recap

Indoor Class

Description:

(i) Recap: the Mycenaean world, the 8th century BCE, Greeks abroad (colonization and migration), political transformations (from kingship to democracy), the organization of the city-state, the end of the Archaic Period];

(ii) Lecture: the Persian Wars [the Achaemenian Empire, Persians abroad, the Ionian Revolt, the main battles (Marathon, Thermopylae & Artemision, Salamis, Plataea & Mycale), the Delian League, the Egyptian Revolt and the Peace of Callias)].

Discussion topics:

War in Greek society; Greeks and Persians; Herodotus

Required Reading:

* Herodotus, *The Histories* [Book VI]

Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 3, Early and Archaic Athens (pp. 47-58)]

Plantzos, D. 2016. *Greek Art and Archaeology* [Second edition]. Athens, Kapon Editions (Chapter 3, The Archaic Period [700 – 480 BCE])

WEEK 5: The Athenian Empire

Piraeus (Archaeological Museum and Zea harbor)

Description:

(i) Guided tour of the Archaeological Museum of Piraeus (galleries and theater)

(ii) Walking to the harbor of Zea, one of the two smaller military harbors of Athens, and Kantharos, the bigger commercial harbor used by both commercial and military vessels in antiquity – today, the main harbor of Piraeus.

Discussion topics:

Trade and war; the long walls; the naval fleet of Athens; the evolution of funerary monuments

Required Reading:

* Thucydides, *The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians* [Book I]

Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 4, Classical Athens (pp. 59-72)]

WEEK 6: Silver

Trip to Sounio & Lavrio

Description:

(i) Guided tour of the archaeological site of the Sanctuary of Poseidon in Sounio

(ii) Guided tour of the archaeological museum of Lavrio.

Discussion topics:

The Lavrion mines; the sanctuary of Poseidon; the Periclean building program

Required Reading:

*Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 4, Classical Athens (pp. 72-74 & 102-117)]

WEEK 7: The 'Golden Age'

Athenian Acropolis & Theater of Dionysus

Description:

Guided tour of the archaeological site of the Acropolis and the theater of Dionysus.

Discussion topics:

The sanctuary of Athena and its monuments; the foundational myths of Athens; religion in Greek society and the Panathenaea; the reflection of democracy on the arts; dramatic festivals; the 'Golden Age' and its diachronic (inter)national impact

Required Reading:

* Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 4, Classical Athens (pp. 74-101)]

* Plantzos, D. 2016. *Greek Art and Archaeology* [Second edition]. Athens, Kapon Editions [Chapter 4, The Classical Period, 480-336 BCE (pp. 141-149, 155-164 & 177-178)]

WEEK 8: Classical Athens; recap

Indoor Class & Mid-Term Exam

Description:

(i) Recap: the rebuilding of Athens, the mines of Lavrion, the Athenian navy, the Athenian Empire, Athenian culture (architecture, art, theatre, philosophy), the Peloponnesian War;

(ii) Lecture: the Peloponnesian War [The Spartans, the 30-year treaty, the alliances, the first period (Thebes vs. Plataea, the plague, the Lesbian Revolt, the Battle of Amphipolis), the Peace of Nicias, the second period (Athenians vs. Magna Grecia, democracy overthrown, the Battle at Aegospotami), famine, surrender, the Thirty Tyrants, the restoration of democracy];

(iii) Mid-term exam.

Discussion topics:

Civil war; dying for the city; Athenians, Spartans, and Macedonians; Pericles and Thucydides

Required Reading:

* Thucydides, *The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians* [Book II] (Pericles' Funeral Oration)

* Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 4, Classical Athens & Chapter 5, Hellenistic Athens (pp. 117-160)]

WEEK 9: Religion and afterlife

Trip to Kerameikos & Eleusis

Description:

(i) Guided tour of the archaeological site of Kerameikos;

(ii) brief stops along the Sacred Way;

(iii) guided tour of the archaeological site of Eleusis.

Discussion topics:

The city walls; the Thriasian Gates, the Sacred Way, the Dromos; the cemeteries on the sides of the road; the Demosion Sema; burial customs and monuments; the road to Eleusis; mystery religion; panhellenic worship; afterlife beliefs

Required Reading:

* Foley, H. P. 1994. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* [Introduction, Hymn & Background (pp. 2-75]

* Plantzos, D. 2016. *Greek Art and Archaeology* [Second edition]. Athens, Kapon Editions [Chapter 4, The Classical Period, 480-336 BCE (pp. 141-149, 155-164 & 178-182 & 208-209)]

WEEK 10: Roman Athens

Walking tour: Panathenaic Stadium; Temple of Olympian Zeus; Hadrian's Gate; Odeon of Herodes Atticus; Philopappos monument; Roman Agora; Library of Hadrian

Description:

Walking tour of the Roman monuments of Athens, with particular reference to the palimpsestic nature of the city and the fact that many of the archaeological sites visited thus far during the course also have a Hellenistic and Roman period.

Discussion topics:

Athens under Rome; benefactors; Herodes Atticus; Hadrian; the philosophical schools

Required Reading:

* Camp, J. M. 2001. *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press [Chapter 5, Hellenistic Athens & 6, Roman Athens]

WEEK 11: Re-visiting antiquity

National Archaeological Museum

Description:

(i) Overview of the development of sculpture from the Archaic to the Roman period;

(ii) Mycenaean domestic and funerary material culture and art, and

(iii) recapitulation of the history of Athens through the museum exhibits.

Discussion topics:

Evolution of art; art reflecting its socio-cultural context; recap

Required Homework:

Watch Ian Jenkins' talk titled 'The human body in ancient Greek art and thought' on YouTube (URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfWd9QZfils)
Deadline for the submission of student projects

WEEK 12: Panhellenic identity

Trip to Delphi

Description:

Guided tour of a panhellenic sanctuary and its museum

Discussion topics:

Panhellenic festivals; athleticism; the body

Required Reading:

*Miller, S. G. 2006. *Ancient Greek Athletics*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press [pp. 1-61]

WEEK 13: Byzantine Athens

Byzantine and Christian Museum

Description:

Guided tour of the Byzantine and Christian Museum with particular emphasis on artifacts related to Athens.

Discussion topics:

Athens as a pilgrimage site; the unknown Christian Athens

Required Reading:

Bouras, C. 2017. *Byzantine Athens, 10th-12th c.* London, Routledge [pp. 1-10 & 297-316]

Kaldellis, A. 2009. *The Christian Parthenon. Classicism and Pilgrimage in Byzantine Athens*. London, Routledge [pp. 1-59]

WEEK 14: Ottoman and Neoclassical Athens

Walking tour: Mosques; National Garden and Zappeion, Parliament Building, House of Schliemann, Academy, University, National Library
& Final Exam

Description:

(i) Walking tour of Athens with particular reference to Ottoman and Neoclassical buildings

(ii) Final exam.

***Discussion topics**:*

Athens under the Ottomans; War of Independence; nation-building; planning the new capital of Greece; the classical past

Required Reading:

* Clogg, R. 2021. *A Concise History of Greece* [Fourth edition]. Cambridge, CUP. [Chapter 3, Nation building, the 'Great Idea' and national schism (1831-1922)]

* Fowden, E. D. 2019. "The Parthenon Mosque, King Solomon, and the Greek Sages", in M. Georgopoulou & K. Thanasakis (eds.) *Ottoman Athens: archaeology, topography, history.* Athens, The Gennadius Library, pp. 67-95