

ARCH 328 | Art and Archaeology of Greece in 40 Objects Fall 2026

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Course Description

From Deep Prehistory to The End of the Roman Empire

Art and Archaeology of Greece in 40 Objects is an immersive exploration of the art and archaeology of Greece through 40 carefully selected objects. This course will take students on a journey spanning from the Palaeolithic period to the end of the Roman Empire, using these objects as our guides. These artifacts, ranging from humble stone tools and cooking pots to royal golden chests and intricately painted vases, will be the foundation for our discussions and analyses.

These objects will not be analyzed in isolation, however! We will expand on their art historical, archaeological, socio-cultural, and contexts, gaining insights into the daily lives, beliefs, and practices of the ancient societies of Greece and the Aegean.

Along the way, we will discuss major artistic and cultural traditions, and themes as diverse as gender roles, political structures, social hierarchies, food consumption patterns, warfare, slavery, medical practice, and even drinking games. Through lectures and class discussions, students will develop a comprehensive, diachronic understanding of the art and archaeology of Greece and the Aegean.

Learning Goals

Through a combination of lectures, class discussions, and hands-on activities, students will:

- learn to interpret the significance of these *things* in relation to various aspects of ancient life;
- acquire a broad knowledge of the chronology, events, artistic traditions, and social phenomena that shaped the ancient societies of Greece and the Aegean;
- develop an in-depth perspective on human existence and progress (or the lack thereof), taking the long-term processes into account;
- be able to compare the civilizations of the past and their problems with today's society and its problems, and see the modern world through the lenses of many millennia of human experience.
- Equally important, it is also the instructor's sincere hope that you will also be able to:
 - Immediately identify pseudo-scientific remarks about the ancient world;
 - Make sophisticated comments on the social, economic, and cultural evolution of past societies, in case you find yourselves at a posh dinner party with people wearing bowties or turtleneck tops; if it really comes to that, utilizing terms like *longue durée* or *contrapposto*.

Course Requirements and Assessment

15% - Class Contribution

The class contribution grade is based on demonstrated reading knowledge, active participation in discussions, and *visual proof of personally going to museums* to see the objects covered in class. More than half of our objects permanently live in different museums of Athens. In three different installments you will need to submit museum entrance selfies and photos of the objects covered. Submission deadlines will be later announced in class.

20% - Memes/Haikus/Other Creative Work

Twenty times throughout the semester, i.e. after *every* class lecture starting with the Palaeolithic/Mesolithic class day, you will create a meme or write a haiku about one of the four most recent objects covered in class. If you feel inspired to write a song, create an illustration, design a forehead tattoo, or make a TikTok video, that will also work. As long as your work is about an aspect of the material from the preceding class day, everything is fair game. All works should be submitted on Moodle in the relevant folders if the medium allows, otherwise you may resort to email submission.

30% - Quizzes

Three take-home quizzes will assess students' knowledge of the course material over the course of the semester. Students will have to prepare informative F.A.Q.s and generate multiple-choice questions based on the topics covered by the quiz.

35% - Object Presentation

At the end of the semester, two class days and one video session will be devoted to an informal quasi-conference, during which the students will choose and verbally and visually present an ancient **object** of their choosing (not covered in class), together with its social, political, historical, and archaeological context. This assignment will be a progressively graded one:

*2 points: A list of potential **topics** of interest chosen by the student and discussed with the instructor (deadline: TBA)*

*3 points: An **object** associated with the student's topic of interest chosen. A reading list (both about the object **and** its broader context) is submitted (deadline: TBA).*

5 points: An annotated final bibliography about the object and its broader context is submitted (deadline: TBA).

*15 points: 15-minute long **Oral Presentation** in the auditorium in 40 Objects Pseudo-conference. Following the enigmatic tradition of academic conferences, mediocre-quality coffee, and nearly edible cookies will be provided by CYA.*

*10 points: **Academic Poster Presentation** summarizing the student's conference presentation research should be submitted on Moodle as a PDF. The posters will be printed in A1 size and then adorn the walls of the academic center until the end of the semester, for your peers to drink from your fountain of wisdom.*

Attendance Policy

Only **two** unexcused absences will be allowed. A third unexcused absence will lower your final course grade by one letter per *CYA Attendances and Absences Policy*. Further unexcused absences may lead to the placement of a student on academic probation. Students will need to make up missed work for any absence (excused or unexcused) by completing an additional assignment that the instructor will determine based on the topic of the missed class day. Failure to complete missed work will result in the reduction of minimum one letter grade. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately to the Student Affairs Office, via the form available in the Student Portal.

Policy on Original Work and AI

Plagiarism is literary theft. As such, it is a serious offense that will not be tolerated either at your home institution or at CYA. Plagiarism on a take home quiz or on the text of your oral presentation will result in an F for the course.

AI is not allowed in take home quizzes or in presentation research, including the annotated bibliography, the text of the oral delivery or the poster. If the instructor suspects that AI was used improperly in these assignments, he may ask the student to explain or discuss their work orally to confirm that the student has the knowledge their submitted work represents.

However, AI may be used in the generation of visuals (but not the text) for the daily creative work assignments, for poster design ideas and feedback, or in the brainstorming stage of the presentation research.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Phones

The use of laptops and other devices is permitted if it facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if they are not used for class-related work.

#	Topic	Readings & Other Sources
	Field Study Delphi and Ancient Olympia	
1	Introduction to Course Syllabus Chronological Overview	
2	1. The Neanderthal Skull from Apidima, Mani (not on display) Hominin Evolution Neanderthals and H. Sapiens Palaeolithic Archaeology 2. An Obsidian Stone Tool from Franchthi, Nafplio Museum Prehistoric seafarers Franchthi Cave Belief in Afterlife	Apidima Cave press release Bintliff 2012, p. 28-29, 35-36 Rutter, Lesson 1 (read the <i>Mesolithic</i> section)

3	<p>3. Grinding Stone – NAM Arrival of the Farmers Archaeobotany Neolithic Archaeology</p> <p>4. Dimini Vase – NAM <i>Weird Flex, but OK</i>: prestige objects in the archaeological record Social Hierarchy Handmade Pottery Techniques</p>	Hofmanová et al. 2016 (read the following sections: <i>abstract, significance, concluding remarks</i>) Runnels and Murray 2001, p. 41-64 Video: Wengrow 2022
4	<p>5. A Cycladic Figurine – Museum of Cycladic Art Early Cycladic Period Looting and Auction Houses Archaeological Ethics</p> <p>6. Early Helladic II Sealing– Nafplio Museum Early Helladic Period Central Administration: How and Why? Lerna</p>	Rutter, Lesson 4 (read <i>Comments on Early Cycladic Figurines</i>) Stansbury-O'Donnell 2015, p. 19-31
5	<p>7. The Bull-head Rhyton – Heraklion Museum Minoans & Knossos Role of Bulls in Minoan Culture Minoan religion</p> <p>8. The Minoan Weights, Akrotiri Gallery – NAM Thalassocracy Thera Eruption Akrotiri</p>	Stansbury-O'Donnell 2015, p. 32-39 Stansbury-O'Donnell, 2015, p. 39-43, 46 Rutter, Lesson 18 (Read sections 3, 6, and 7)
Field Study Crete		
6	<p>9. The Golden Death Costume of a Baby Girl – NAM <i>Ascribed status vs acquired status</i> Early Mycenaean culture Grave Circles</p> <p>10. Palatial Fresco Fragment from Mycenae – NAM Late Mycenaean palaces Mycenaean state structure</p>	Bintliff 2012, p. 141, 164-180 Novembre 2015 Stansbury-O'Donnell 2015, p. 43-45
7	<p>11. Copper Oxhide Ingot – NAM Bronze metallurgy Cyrus & Copper</p> <p>12. Canaanite Amphora – NAM Bronze Age Trade Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean</p>	Pieniasek et al. 2018 (read the conclusion) Stansbury-O'Donnell 2015, p. 48-67
8	<p>13. Tablet Tn 316 – NAM Linear B writing system and dialect Desperate measures – desperate times Bronze Age Collapse</p> <p>14. The Warrior Vase – NAM Post-palatial Mycenaean culture</p>	Video: Cline 2015 Deger-Jalkotzy 2008 Rutter, Lesson 28
9	<p>15. The Centaur of Lefkandi – Eretria Museum Early Iron Age Archaeology Heron & Lefkandi</p> <p>16. Dipylon Vase – NAM Geometric Vase Painting Figural Decoration and Narrative in Art Kerameikos Cemetery</p>	Neer 2012, p. 66-91 Pedley 2013, p. 138-145 Spivey 2013, p. 7-13, 111-113 Mee 2011, p. 22-28
10	<p>17. Inscription EM 5365 – Epigraphic Museum Alphabetic Writing Systems The 8th c. BC & Late Geometric Socio-politics</p> <p>18. Nikandre Kore – NAM Daedalic Style Kore statues Gender in Archaic Greece</p>	Pedley 2013, p. 138-145 Spivey 2013, p. 7-13, 111-113
11	<p>19. Aristodikos Kouros – NAM Kouros Statues The Egyptian Connection The Star as A Chronological Marker</p> <p>20. The Helmet of Miltiades – Olympia Museum The Battle of Marathon</p>	Barringer 2014, p. 159-174

	John Stuart Mill The Concept of "Western Civilization"	
12	<p>21. Zeus and Ganymede Sculptural Group – Olympia Pederasty in Ancient Greece Homosexuality</p> <p>22. Kritios Boy – Acropolis Museum Second Persian War Dating Controversy Contrapposto</p>	Neer 2012, p. 92-109 Spivey 2013, p. 127-133
13	<p>23. Athenian Silver Dekadrachm – Numismatic Museum Kingdom of Lydia & Coinage Economy in the Classical Period</p> <p>24. Delian League Tribute Lists – Epigraphic Museum From Delian League to Athenian Maritime Empire</p>	Hornblower 1986
14	<p>25. Horos Stone – Agora Museum The Notion of Public Space Socrates & Simon the Cobbler Agora in Ancient Greece</p> <p>26. Tripod Cooking Pot – Agora Museum Cooking Methods and Foodstuffs Ancient Culinary Traditions Food Consumption as A Social Event – Feasts and Symposia</p>	Camp 2016
15	<p>27. An Ostrakon – Agora Museum Athenian Democracy & Ostracism Athenian Political Aggression</p> <p>28. Spartan Shield – Agora Museum Spartan Militarism and The Enslavement of Helots Spartan Fanboys from Romans to Nazis Peloponnesian War</p>	Freeman 2014, p. 249-269
Field Study Abroad		
16	<p>29. A Surgical Tool from The Sanctuary of Asklepios – Epidauros Museum Ancient Medicine from Hippokrates to Galen The Four Humor system</p> <p>30. Remains of Myrtis: a Young Girl from the Kerameikos Mass Burial – (not on display) Plagues in Antiquity Thucydides & the Athenian Plague</p>	<i>TBD</i>
17	<p>31. Theatrical Masks Relief Plaque – Acropolis Museum Theatrical Tradition from Thespis to Timothée Chalamet</p> <p>32. Grave Stele of Hegeso – NAM Gender in the Classical Period <i>Your Attendant is A Slave: Whitewashing Ancient Slavery</i></p>	Garland 2009, p. 270-282 Hurwit 1999, p. 217-221
18	<p>33. Aphrodite of Syracuse – NAM Praxiteles and Female Nudity in Art Roman Copies of Greek Art</p> <p>34. Golden Chest from Tomb II – Museum of the Royal Tombs of Aigai The Arrival of Macedon Philip II, Alexander, and the Beautiful Dream of World Domination</p>	Barringer 2014, <i>Chapter 5</i>
Fall Break		
19	<p>35. Fighting Gaul – NAM Hellenistic Period Archaeology and History <i>All the Emotions: Pergamene School</i></p> <p>36. Bones from the Agora Bone Well – Agora Museum (not on display) Agora Bone Well and Dead Infants Zooarchaeology</p>	Spivey 2013, p. 235-246
20	<p>37. The Aemilius Paullus Monument – Delphi Museum Roman Republic Romans Militarism and Expansion Romans in Greece</p> <p>38. Bronze Augustus – NAM Roman Economy and Finance Sack of Corinth, Siege of Athens and The End of Greek Resistance</p>	Freeman 2014, pp. 394-395, 507, 533-543
21	39. Antinoos – Delphi Museum / NAM	Bintliff 2012, p. 310-313

	Roman Empire Hadrian Death on The Nile 40. Face of Martyr Onesiphoros from Rotunda – Thessaloniki Christianity Persecuted Christianity Vindicated The Eastern Roman Empire	
22	Student Presentations – Session I	
23	Student Presentations – Session II	
24	Student Presentations – Session III	

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