



AT/CL/AH 230 GREEK ARCHAEOLOGY: THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF ANCIENT GREECE
IES Abroad Athens

DESCRIPTION:

This course intends to introduce students to the archaeology of the Greek Aegean through a chronological survey of ancient Greek material culture from the Bronze Age until the end of the Classical Period (ca. 3000-300 B.C.). The course leverages monuments and museums in Athens and throughout Greece through a series of field studies and trips that will allow students to engage directly with archaeological materials and topics. Particular attention will be given to the development of ancient Greek monumental architecture. The course includes a ten-day trip across Greece visiting archaeological sites such as Delphi, Olympia, Mycenae, and Epidaurus.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

COURSE FREQUENCY: 3x per week

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

INSTRUCTOR: Dott. Giani Ponti

PREREQUISITES: none

ADDITIONAL COST: none

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures, PowerPoints, class discussions, field studies, and course-related trips to sites and museums. Students will be in Athens for the first 4.5 weeks, followed by a 10-day study tour to important archaeological sites in Greece.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Class participation - 10%
- Presentations - 25%
- Research paper - 30%
- Final exam - 35%

Description of the course element

Participation

Students are expected to complete assigned readings before class in order to actively participate in class discussions, answer questions posed by the instructor, and comment on relevant topics. A rubric for participation will be shared on Moodle.

Presentation

Students will select a topic with the instructor and present in class or on-site, submitting a research report to the instructor and a detailed handout to the class.

Research Paper

A 10-page research paper on a topic selected with the instructor.

Final Exam

Consists of slide identifications, multiple choice, short answers, and short essays. The exam covers class lectures, site visits, and assigned readings.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:



By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify different types of monuments and works of art
- Trace the chronological development of ancient Greek art and architecture
- Recognize the design and structural characteristics of architectural orders
- Reconstruct ancient landscapes of key historical sites in Greece
- Critically analyze archaeological data
- Examine issues related to ownership and management of antiquities and cultural heritage

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad Athens classes, including field studies and academic trips to select archaeological sites in Greece. If a student misses more than two classes, two percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Please note: four percentage points will be deducted from the final grade in case of an absence on a scheduled academic day trip. Not attending the mandatory course-related trips will result in a default grade. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. IES Abroad Athens will only consider extreme emergency cases and will strictly adhere to this policy.

CONTENT:

The course meets three times a week in two-hour sessions. Most weeks have in-class sessions and a session meeting on site for a relevant field study. The course also includes an academic study tour during the last four sessions of class.

Week 1	The Bronze Age	
Session 1	Geography and chronology of ancient Greece • The Minoan civilization in Crete and the Aegean - Art and architecture of the Great Palace Civilization Excavations at Knossos • Cycladic art • Thera and the great eruption of Santorini	• Biers, pp. 22-59 (37 pages) • Lawrence, pp. 42-70 (28 pages)
Session 2	Mycenae and the Age of Heroes • The warrior city states of mainland Greece • Excavations at Troy and Mycenae	• Biers, pp.60-93 (33 pages) • Lawrence, pp. 87-109 (22 pages)
Session 3	Course-related trip: Athens National Archaeological Museum	• https://www.namuseum.gr/en/collections/
Week 2	The Geometric to the Archaic Period	
Session 4	The Geometric and Protoarchaic Periods	• Biers, pp. 94-125; pp. 126-147 (52 pages)

	• A new beginning: the birth of Hellenic art and architecture • The Daedalic style in sculpture • Corinthian vase painting • Eastern influences in the arts	• Lawrence, pp.110-122 (12 pages)
Session 5	The Archaic Period • The architectural orders: Doric, Ionic and Corinthian • The development of the human figure in sculpture: kouroi and korai	• Biers, pp.148-159 (11 pages) • Lawrence, pp. 139-159; pp. 160-173 (33 pages)
Session 6	Course-related trip: Athens Acropolis Museum 1 Art, sculpture and vase painting in the Archaic period	• Biers, pp.159-182 (23 pages)
Week 3	The Classical Period	
Session 7	5 th and 4 th century sculpture: from the Severe Style to Lysippus	• Biers, pp. 188-229 (41 pages)
Session 8	The great building projects of the Classical Period Olympia, Athens, Bassae, Epidauros, Halicarnassus, Priene, Ephesus	• Lawrence, pp. 174-185 (11 pages)
Session 9	Field study: The Athenian Acropolis The Golden Age of Athenian architecture: Parthenon, Propylaea and Erechtheion	• Lawrence, pp.187-227 (40 pages)
Week 4		
Session 10	Course-related trip: Stoa of Attalus – Museum of the Ancient Agora	

	Public life in the heart of the Athenian democracy	The Athenian Agora: a guide to the excavation and Museum, American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Athens 1976
Session 11	Course-related trip: Athens Acropolis Museum 2 The Parthenon's Panathenaic frieze, pedimental sculpture and metopes	Biers, pp. 218-229 (11 pages)
Session 12	Academic Field trip: the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion	Lawrence, pp. 234-235 (1 page)
Week 5	Course related travel	
Session 13	Delphi Sanctuary of Apollo and Delphi Museum	https://delphi.culture.gr/archaeological-site/monuments/ https://delphi.culture.gr/museum/selected-exhibits/
Session 14	Olympia - The Sanctuary of Zeus and the Olympic games - The pedimental sculpture of the Temple of Zeus and the origins of the Atreid dynasty	- Biers, pp.190-191; pp. 210-215 (6 pages) https://ancientolympiamuseum.com/index.php/workshop-3/ https://ancientolympiamuseum.com/index.php/elementor-423-2/
Week 6	Course related Travel	
Session 15	Mycenae The kingdom of Agamemnon: citadel and Lion Gate; Megaron; Grave Circles; Tholos tombs and the "Treasury of Atreus"	- Biers, pp.75-93 (18 pages) - Lawrence, pp. 77-86 (9 pages)
Session 16	Epidauros The architecture of Greek theatres	Lawrence, pp. 363-373 (10 pages)

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

Students are expected to take full advantage of their stay in Athens by completing the course program also through independent visits to monuments and sites not included in the course field studies program (galleries and museums, monuments, urban sites).

- **Cape Sunion** – famous for its 5th century Doric temple dedicated to the god Poseidon, overlooking the Aegean sea from the southernmost promontory of Attica.
- **Athens National Archaeological Museum** – materials and art work from Cycladic, Minoan and Mycenaean sites, including wall paintings from Thera and finds from the Grave Circles at Mycenae. The Museum houses one of the most significant collections of sculpture of Greek antiquity, dating from the 7th century BC to the 5th century AD, including an array of Archaic kouros, such as the Anavysos kouros and exquisite examples of Classical bronze sculpture, such as the Zeus from Cape Artemision and the hero from the Antikythera wreck.
- **Athenian Acropolis** – The fortified citadel of ancient Athens where the mythological foundation of the city, its patron deities and the supremacy of the Athenian empire were celebrated through the greatest building program of Classical Greece with the construction of the Propylea, the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, the Theater of Dionysus and the Herodion.
- **Acropolis Museum** – Houses a unique collection of finds from the Acropolis excavations which allows to trace the development of Greek sculpture from the archaic to the Severe and Classical style, culminating in the Parthenon's Panathenaic frieze.
- **Athenian Agora and Stoa of Attalus** – the heart of Athenian public life dominated by the Temple of Hephaestus. The museum is housed in the Stoa of Attalus, fully reconstructed in the 1960 by the American School of Classical Studies and displays important finds from the Agora excavations.
- **Delphi** – the most important oracular shrine in ancient Greece, housed in the Temple of Apollo. The site is significant also for the many votive buildings donated by the Greek cities throughout the centuries to honor or thank the oracle, such as the Siphnian Treasury and the Treasury of the Athenians, the Temple of Athena Pronaia. The Museum houses many votive bronze tripods, figurines and statues gifted in gratitude to the sanctuary, including the bronze statue of the Charioteer.
- **Olympia** - Olympia was the most important panhellenic religious center in Greece where the Olympic games in honor of Zeus were first established and then celebrated every four years. The Archaeological Museum presents the historical development of the Sanctuary of Zeus including the pedimental sculpture from the Temple of Zeus, masterpieces by the sculptor Praxiteles and a vast collection of vases and bronze objects.
- **Mycenae** – In the heart of the Peloponnesus, the city of the Atreid dynasty and of king Agamemnon features all the components of a fortified bronze age city with its polygonal city walls, the famed Lion Gate, the king's palace (megaron), and the royal burial grounds (tholoi and grave circles).
- **Epidaurus** - the best-preserved theater in the Greek world.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Required reading materials are accessible either in the course textbook, on the reserve shelf at the ACH library or as PDF copies on the course Moodle page.

- Biers, W., The Archaeology of Greece, an introduction, London, 1980 ed.
- Lawrence, A.W., Greek Architecture, New York, 1983 ed.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

Besides the required readings, some further readings will help the comprehension of some of the topics discussed during the course, while others provide a more in-depth analysis of the material. These works are available in the ACG library.

- The Athenian Agora : a guide to the excavation and Museum, [American](#) School of Classical Studies at Athens, Athens 1976.
- Barringer, J.M., The Art and Archaeology of Ancient Greece, Cambridge, 2014.
- Boardman, J., Greek Sculpture, the Archaic Period, London, 1978 ed.
- Camp, J. M., The Archaeology of Athens, New Haven, 2001.
- Dinsmoor, W.B., The Architecture of Ancient Greece, New York, 1976 ed.
- Korres, M., From Pentelicon to the Parthenon, Athens, 1995.
- Kaltsas, N., National Archaeological Museum, Guide, Athens 2010.
- Kaltsas, N., Sculpture in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Los Angeles, 2002.
- Pandermalis, D., Eleftheratou, S., Vlassopoulou, C., Acropolis Museum, Guide, Athens, 2013.
- Valavanis, P., Delphi and its Museum, Athens, 2018.
- <https://delphi.culture.gr/archaeological-site/monuments/>
- <https://delphi.culture.gr/museum/selected-exhibits/>
- <https://www.namuseum.gr/en/collections/>
- <https://ancientolympiamuseum.com/index.php/elementor-423-2/>

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY:

Gianni Ponti is an archaeologist specializing in Imperial Roman architecture. His studies and research have focused on the use of marble in Roman construction. After earning a BA in Classics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Prof. Ponti obtained a Laurea degree in Archaeology from the University of Rome. He has worked on several archeological excavations in Italy and in the Mediterranean, including the Imperial Fora in Rome, Troy, and Aphrodisias. He is currently conducting architectural studies on Roman buildings at Leptis Magna, Libya. Prof. Ponti has published several articles on Roman marble quarries and construction techniques. He has been teaching at IES since 2004.