

ANCH 0101-910: Ancient Greece

Summer Session I

May 22 – June 28, 2023

MWF 12:00-2:30 PM (Online)

Instructor: Ben Abbott

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Course Description

From the origins of modern medicine, architecture, philosophy, and mathematics to the foundations of our own political system here in the United States, to the sets of *Troy* or *300*, to the virtual worlds of *Assassin's Creed* or *Hades*, the presence of Ancient Greece in our own society seems unwilling to fade into the past even in the 21st century. On any given day it is difficult to entirely avoid contact with some piece of it. But who were the Ancient Greeks? And what do we mean when we say, "Ancient Greece"? While we may regularly interact with the impacts of Ancient Greece in our everyday lives, when we study the ancient world of the Greeks, we encounter a world that is at the same time both shockingly familiar and utterly alien.

In the same society that was developing atomic theory, competing in the Olympics, performing political satire, and debating animal rights, immigration, and imperialism, we also see a society that struggled to imagine a world without slavery, for which warfare was a seasonal activity, which believed its violent gods and heroes had living descendants, and to which much of the world's landmasses were unknown. In this class we will engage with a variety of different sources as we try to gain an understanding of who the Ancient Greeks were, how they lived, and what they believed.

This course will cover the period from the Late Bronze Age, ca. 1500 BCE, down to the time of Alexander the Great and the world his conquests shaped, ca. 300 BCE, concentrating in most detail on the two-hundred-year period from 600-400 BCE. While we chronographically chart this larger historical narrative of Ancient Greece, we will stop to investigate different topics in detail along the way as we attempt to understand Ancient Greece in its context as part of the larger ancient world. Throughout this course, we will learn how to bring very different types of evidence into dialogue with one another, how to critically analyze their historical content, and how to synthesize them into a coherent and persuasive narrative about the past. We will read and discuss a wide range of canonical ancient texts of various genres, such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Euripides's *Bacchae*, Herodotus' *Histories*, and Plato's *Apology*. We will read and analyze these ancient texts alongside and in conversation with both modern scholarship and archaeological evidence as we endeavor to understand the Greeks in their own setting and the ways in which their both familiar and alien world still affects us today.

This course will be taught entirely online and will be entirely synchronous. No prior knowledge is required to take this course.

Course materials

Required:

McInerney, Jeremy. *Ancient Greece: A New History*. New York: Thames and Hudson. 2018.

Beyond the above text, in this course we will be working with primary ancient sources (in English) as well as modern secondary sources. All of these will be provided by the instructor on Canvas.

Access to the Canvas course page is essential for this course. Please have your notifications on!

Grading Breakdown

Attendance & Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 30% (10% each, worst grade of 4 quizzes dropped)

Presentation: 15%

Annotated Bibliography: 35%

Grading & Assignment Details

Attendance & Participation (20%)

Attendance and Participation function as an essential aspect of this course. That being said, I am well aware of the challenges posed by a virtual course during an ongoing pandemic.

Attendance:

In a condensed summer course like this, each class session is equal to about one week of class during a regular semester. As such, absences are costly and difficult to make up. However, I am aware that sometimes unavoidable circumstances get in the way, particularly during a time like this. Any student may miss two class sessions without penalty, as long as they contact me **before that class** and to coordinate make-up work. Each absence beyond this limit, unless due to a health or personal emergency verifiable with a doctor's note or letter from a university dean, will result in the student's grade being docked a full letter grade.

Participation:

Class discussion will be a crucial part of this course, helping us to generate insights and to strengthen our understanding of the material. My grading of this category will therefore measure both your willingness to contribute to discussion and the overall thoughtfulness of your contributions. However, I recognize that not everyone is equally comfortable talking out loud in a classroom setting, let alone a virtual classroom. I will therefore be posting discussion threads on Canvas for each class meeting. Here you may put any comments/questions/observations regarding the class lectures, the class discussions, or the assigned readings. You may also respond to your classmates' posts on these threads. Such posts are not required, but they will be treated as equivalent to in-class participation. In my grading of your participation, I am not looking to hurt anyone's grade or to make you feel like you must say something simply for the sake of sharing to ensure you get that day's check for participation. Discussion in its various forms can and should be a rewarding and productive way to engage with our Ancient Greek material as we attempt to "do history" together. Genuine effort to participate in any or all of these various forms will be generously rewarded.

Quizzes (30%)

The quizzes function essentially as an accountability system for doing the readings and listening to the lectures and (more importantly) to help you retain some of the more important information we've covered as we move quickly through the history of Ancient Greece. These will be given on Mondays and will consist of 5 multiple choice questions. These quizzes will not be cumulative and will be based entirely on material from **both** the lectures and the readings. These will be timed and submitted through Canvas and will be taken during class on Zoom (I will ask you to leave your cameras on). The worst of your four quiz grades will be dropped (making the four counted quizzes each worth 10% of your grade).

Presentation (15%)

Everyone will give one presentation at some point in the course of the class. These presentations will be 10 minutes and will be given on one of the topics listed in the "Presentations Sign-Up Sheet" document found under the Files tab on Canvas. While your list of potential "paper" topics consists of some of the bigger-picture and more prominent questions regarding Greek history, these presentation topics are aimed to introduce you to important, more detailed information that we might not otherwise come across in the larger historical narrative of this course. These presentations are also meant to give you an idea of how ancient history is done (like your annotated bibliography), as well as how to present this type of work in a concise and clear way. **On Canvas, on the "Presentations Sign-Up Sheet," please write your name next to the topic and date on which you would like to present.** If you would like to present on a topic not listed, please send me an email describing your topic to receive approval. The topics listed each day are meant to roughly coincide with the reading and overall topics for each class – if you would like to suggest your own topic, keep this goal of topical relevance in mind.

In order to give everyone a chance to get settled into the class and to have a paper topic selected and an argument formed for your Annotated Bibliography, **these presentations will not begin until Wednesday 5/31.**

****You must make your topic selection (simply claim a topic by writing your name next to it on the Sign-Up Sheet on Canvas) by Sunday, May 28th at 11:59:59 PM**

Your 10-minute presentation must complete three main goals:

- 1) You will give a general summary of your topic.
- 2) You will find and select one ancient material object (links to museum collection lists are available under Modules on Canvas) that you think relates to your topic. In your presentation, you will describe how you think this object relates to your topic and how this object contributes to our understanding of your topic. **You must provide at least one image of your material object for the class. You can either do this by making a PowerPoint to display this one image, or you can send this image to me and I will share my screen displaying the image for the class while you speak. Beyond providing this image, PowerPoints are optional for your presentation, though you may find that using a visual component while you speak to be helpful, both for yourself and the audience.**
- 3) You will provide **1 discussion question** for the class, which you will ask verbally at the end of your presentation. These prepared questions do not need to be submitted beforehand and can be asked verbally to the class after the presentation. These are meant to serve as a catalyst for class discussion.

The Presentation Topics List & Sign-up Sheet will be available on Canvas.

Annotated Bibliography (35%)

The annotated bibliography is meant to serve two purposes in this course. Firstly, this will give you a sense of some of the major scholarly debates currently taking place in the field of Greek history. Secondly, this will serve as firsthand experience of what it's like to form an original argument as an ancient historian, using both ancient and modern evidence. While you will not be actually writing a paper from this bibliography, you should feel at the completion of the bibliography that you could (if you wanted) write a paper based on the work you've done.

You will be given a list of potential paper topics by me on Canvas from which **you must select your choice by Sunday, May 28th at 11:59:59 PM. You must email me your paper topic selection (you can just tell which number you've chosen).** If you'd like to choose a topic that I

have not provided you are more than welcome to do so, but you need to speak with me first about this at least one day before the topic selection deadline (Sunday, May 28th). After you've chosen a topic, you will be required to submit one primary source entry and one secondary source entry Canvas by 11:59:59 PM on the specified due date (see course schedule). This is meant to help you get started on your bibliography and to allow me to check in on how you're doing with the entries (in order to avoid crises at the end of the course).

After you've selected a topic, the other main component of the Annotated Bibliography is your argument – or thesis – question. Once you've selected a topic, you will select sources relevant to that topic. As you do so, you should be thinking about what argument you'd like to “make” in your “paper.” This argument will be the lens through which you analyze your sources. Your explanation of how these sources will contribute to your argument is half of each entry, as stated below. **You must make your argument selection by Friday, June 2nd at 11:59:59 PM.** You can email these to me just like you'll have already done for the “paper” topic selection.

Each entry should consist of 4-5 sentences summarizing the source and its content and 4-5 sentences detailing why and how this source will be useful for your paper and your argument. For your **eight** entries you must use **4** secondary sources, and **4** primary sources – **one of these primary sources must be an object (or group of objects) from the Penn Museum or British Museum collections.** If you have a different object or museum collection in mind, just ask me. Each entry should be in a recognizable and consistent bibliographical style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). I will provide resources and guidance for finding reliable sources. I will also provide examples of the types of bibliographical entries I will be looking for.

Notes:

For Sources like Plutarch (etc.), each “life” counts as a separate source. However, this **can't be the only written primary source you use. You may have 2 entries maximum from the same “source.”**

Work not divided by “lives,” such as Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, Polybius' *Histories* (etc.) count as one source in their entirety.

Regarding secondary sources, **you may not use secondary sources that were published before 1950.** If you have strong feelings about using older sources than this, please reach out to me.

Course Policies

Zoom

You must keep your video on for our class discussion and for quiz periods. I am, however, aware that technical difficulties sometimes prevent this. If for whatever reason you are unable to keep

your video on during a class, please contact me as soon as possible and we can get things sorted out. Also, please be mindful and courteous of the fact that we can all see you.

Please make use of the chat to add questions or comments at any time during lectures or discussion – the ability to add your thoughts during a lecture or discussion is a beneficial feature of Zoom and is always more than welcome.

Please do not hesitate, at any point during discussion or lectures, to speak up to ask any questions or to ask for further clarification on any of the material (either with your voice or with the chat function). In a condensed summer course like this, we will often be moving through a lot of material at a fast pace. Asking questions is not only an essential part of a course like this, but it also helps me to make sure I have everyone on the same page and comfortably following the material as we move through the Ancient Greek world. You will never be alone in needing clarification on something at some point – bringing up any questions that arise always benefits everyone (including me).

Contacting Me:

I will be holding a standing weekly Zoom session on Tuesday mornings (10:00AM-12:00PM) as my open office hours (accessible through Canvas), beginning Tuesday, May 23rd. Please feel free to stop by with any questions or concerns about any aspects of the course. You may also send me an email (benabb@sas.upenn.edu) with any questions or concerns, which I will answer as soon as possible. Be aware that I will take longer to respond to emails sent outside of Monday-Friday 8:00AM-5:00PM. If my office hours do not work for you, please feel free to reach out to me via email and we can set up a virtual appointment.

Academic Integrity

All students must abide by the university's Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found here: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>. Failure to do so constitutes theft of someone else's work, undermines their contribution to our shared intellectual enterprise, and detracts from your learning process, should you be tempted to copy someone else's work wholesale. There are, nevertheless, situations where the appropriate lines around this topic can become more difficult to discern. If you are unsure whether something relating to an assignment constitutes plagiarism, *please* consult myself and/or our Classics Studies librarian Rebecca Stuhr (stuhrrreb@pobox.upenn.edu) *before* submitting the final version to me. Plagiarism is easily preventable, and I do not want to have to penalize you for it.

Any student caught engaging in cheating or plagiarism will automatically fail the course. Further disciplinary action with the university may be pursued as well.

Class Sessions

Class sessions will be divided primarily between lecture sections and periods for discussion and presentation. Discussion will largely be focused on the readings assigned in the “To-do” section from the day before and on new material introduced during the lectures. For example, the first day of class has no work required for preparation but the “To-do” readings for that class (*McInerney* Ch. 1-3; selections from Homer, *Iliad* 18 and 24; *Odyssey* 3 and 4) are your work for the discussion of the next class (in this case, for Wednesday 5/24, “Heroes, Gods, and the Trojan War – Making Sense of Ancient Evidence”). Each class session will have a short break sometime around the middle of the class.

Course Schedule*

*This schedule will be subject to changes throughout the course and will be updated accordingly on Canvas.

Monday 5/22

Lecture: Introduction, The Sources, Syllabus Overview, What/Why/How?

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 1-3; selections from Homer, *Iliad* 18 and 24; *Odyssey* 3 and 4
Look over Paper Topics and Presentation Topics!

Wednesday 5/24

Lecture: Heroes, Gods, and the Trojan War – Making Sense of Ancient Evidence

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 3-4; Homer, *Odyssey* 9 and 10; selections from Hesiod, *Works and Days*

Get ready to Choose Paper Topics and Presentation Topics!

Friday 5/26

Lecture: The “Dark” Ages and the 8th Century “Renaissance” – Understanding and Dismantling Historical Narratives

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 5-6, selections from Hesiod, *Theogony*; selections from Herodotus, *Histories*

Paper And Presentation Topic Selections Due by Sunday 5/28 at 11:59:59 PM

Monday 5/29

No Class – Memorial Day

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 5, selections from Hesiod, *Theogony*; selections from Herodotus, *Histories*

Wednesday 5/31

Quiz #1

Lecture: Violence and the *Polis* – Sparta and the Archaic Tyrants

Presentations begin

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 6; Herodotus, *Histories* Book 3; selections from Solon, *Poems*
Argument Selections!

Friday 6/2

Argument Selection Due Today by 11:59:59 PM

Lecture: Athens Between Tyranny, Oligarchy, and Democracy

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 7; Herodotus, *Histories* 7.8-19 (Xerxes' Dreams), 7.206-239
(Thermopylae), 8.1-23 (Artemision); Thucydides *History* 1.89-117; Inscriptions
(selections)

Monday 6/5

Lecture: The Achaemenid Empire and the Persian Wars

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 8; Aristophanes, *Birds*; selections from Aristotle, *Athenian*
Constitution, Inscriptions (selections)

Wednesday 6/7

Quiz #2

Lecture: Triumphalism, Imperialism, and the Delian League

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 9; Lysias, *On the Murder of Eratosthenes*; selections from
Sappho; Inscriptions (selections)

Friday 6/9

One Primary Source Entry Due Today by 11:59:59 PM

Lecture: The Voiceless – Studying the Marginalized in Greek Society

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 10; Euripides, *Bacchae*; *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*; Inscriptions
(Selections)

Monday 6/12

Lecture: The Sacred – Studying Belief, Ritual, and Religion in Greek Society

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 11 (first half); Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*; Thucydides, 2.34-54
(Pericles' Funeral Oration & the Plague) & 5.84-116 (the Melian Dialogue)

Wednesday 6/14

Quiz #3

Lecture: Greece on Fire – The Peloponnesian War

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 11 (second half); selections from Lysias, *Against Eratosthenes*; selections from Plato, *Apology*; selections from Plato, *Republic*; selections from Aristotle, *Politics* selections from Xenophon, *Apology*; Aristophanes, *Assemblywomen*

Friday 6/16

One Secondary Source Entry Due Today by 11:59:59 PM

Lecture: Democracy in Crisis: Plato, Aristotle, and “Philosopher Kings”

To-do: Aristoteles Decree; *The Constitution of the Boeotians*; other Inscriptions (selections); Secondary Sources (selections)

Monday 6/19

No Class – Juneteenth

To-do: Secondary Sources (selections); Inscriptions (Selections)

Wednesday 6/21

Quiz #4

Lecture: Resurgent Athens & Rising Thebes, “Death” of the Polis – Assessing Classical Greece

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 12; Isocrates, *Letters to Philip II*; Demosthenes, *On the Crown*

Friday 6/23

Lecture: Philip II and the Rise of Macedon

To-do: *McInerney* Ch. 13; Alexander and the Gordian Knot (selections); Arrian (selections); Diodorus Siculus (selection); Annotated Bibliographies

Monday 6/26

Lecture: Alexander the Great & the Hellenistic World

To-do: Annotated Bibliographies

Wednesday 6/28

First Half Lecture & Discussion: Daily Greek Life in the City

Second half of final class meeting to answer any final questions about the Annotated Bibliography, about the class in general, or about anything else to do with Ancient Greece. The usefulness and length of this second half of class will be primarily determined by you.

Completed Annotated Bibliographies Due on Canvas by 11:59:59 PM