

## **ARCH 1100**

### **Archaeology of the Age of Augustus**

*Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30-11:50*

*Location: Smith-Buonanno, Room 206*

#### **Instructor: Michelle Berenfeld**

Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

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Office hours: Tuesdays 12-2, or by appointment

Class wiki page: <http://proteus.brown.edu/ageofaugustus/Home>

Although arguably one of the most powerful and influential people to ever live, Augustus is less of a household name today than many of his contemporaries—among them Julius Caesar, Marc Antony, Cleopatra, and Jesus Christ. Although he wasn't written about by Shakespeare or immortalized in the Bible, the legacy of Augustus was strongly felt for centuries and continues today, informing our own society's ideas about power and empire, fairness and good government, even morality and beauty.

From the bloody mess of late Republican Rome to the shockingly peaceful and enormous empire that he left behind, this course will explore the world that Augustus both inhabited and created. Much of what we know about Augustus comes from written sources—poets, historians, even Augustus himself—but his legacy lies as much in the physical world as in politics and poetry. In this course we will ask how archaeology can help us create a fuller picture of the Augustan age and how the study of the physical remains of that world does or doesn't allow us to separate truth from fiction as we reconstruct its history.

We will look closely at the transformation of the Roman Republic into an Empire and the impact of that transformation on both Romans and non-Romans, asking a number of questions as we go. Was this transformation a birth or a death? Or both? How did it happen? How can we see this transformation in the things that are left behind? Is it visible in the city of Rome that Augustus says he found in brick and left clothed in marble? In the changed faces of portraits? The living rooms of houses? We will also examine the man himself, his friends, and his family—was he a wise elder statesman or a power-grabbing murderer? A puppet for a scheming wife? A visionary? A king?

While students will be reading work by modern scholars throughout the course, our emphasis will be on direct interaction with the primary sources—objects as well as writing (in translation) from the period. Students will be encouraged to formulate and discuss their own ideas and interpretations of that material.

**Prerequisites:** None, but additional background material can be provided for students with no prior background in Roman art or archaeology if requested.

#### **Course requirements:**

Midterm examination (**in class, Oct. 16**) = 20%

Final examination (**Dec. 17, 9am**) = 30%

Writing assignments (Three short writing assignments, 15% each) Total = 45%

Assignment 1, due in class, Sept. 25

Assignment 2, due in class, Nov. 6

Assignment 3, due in class, Nov. 25

Class participation = 5%

#### **Required texts (available at Brown Bookstore):**

- Zanker, P. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*.
- Favro, D. *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*.
- Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*.

**Additional readings are listed below and will be available at:** <http://proteus.brown.edu/ageofaugustus/Home>

## COURSE CALENDAR

### Introduction

#### Week 1 (Sept. 4)

*Who was Augustus, how do we know, and why do we care?*

#### Week 2 (Sept. 9)

*The world that made Augustus. Who was there, what they did, what they said they did, and why...*

Read for Sept 9: Zanker, Introduction; Augustus, *Res Gestae*.

### The Beginning of the End: The Late Republic

#### Week 2, cont. (Sept. 11)

*Friends and Enemies: The wars at home*

Read for Sept 11: Zanker, Chapter 1

#### Week 3 (Sept. 16, 18)

*Uncle Julius: The rise and fall of Caesar*

Read for Sept. 16: Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, Sections 1-44. Favro, Chapter 2.

Read for Sept. 18: Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, Sections 45-end. Favro, Chapter 3.

### Octavian to Augustus

#### Week 4 (Sept. 23, 25)

*The heir, the cad, and the queen: Octavian and Antony take on the world*

Read for Sept. 23 (Augustus's birthday—there will be cake!): Zanker, Chapter 2. Suetonius, *Augustus*, Sections 1-19. Horace, Odes 1.37 "Suicide of Cleopatra."

### Assignment 1 due in class Sept. 25: Modern interpretations of Augustus and friends.

#### Week 5 (Sept 30, Oct. 2)

*Alone at the Top: The world after Actium and becoming Augustus*

Read for Sept. 30: Suetonius, *Augustus*, Sections 20-60. Zanker, Chapter 3. Favro, Chapter 4 (up to "Phase III").

Read for Oct. 2: Elsner, "Reflections on a Roman Revolution: A Transformation in the Image and Conception of the Emperor." In *Art and the Roman Viewer*, p. 159-172.

### Augustus in Rome, Augustus at Home

#### Week 6 (Oct. 7, 9)

*The city of brick: Augustus and friends spiff up the capital*

Read for Oct. 7: Favro, Chapter 4 (finish). Zanker, Ch. 4, p. 101-118; 135-166.

Read for Oct. 9: Favro, "Making Rome a World City," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*.

#### Week 7 (Oct. 14, 16)

*The city of marble: The Rome we always wanted*

Read for Oct. 14: Elsner, "Inventing Imperium: texts and the propaganda of monuments in Augustan Rome," in *Art and Text in Roman Culture*, p. 32-53.

### Midterm Exam, Thursday, Oct. 16 in class (on material through week 6)

Week 8 (Oct. 21, 23)

*Augustus the man, the myth, the message.*

Read for Oct. 21: Zanker, Chapter 5, p. 192-215 (From "Myth in Past and Present"); Favro, Chapter 6.

Read for Oct. 23: Suetonius, *Augustus*, Sections 61-end. Aeneid 1.257-296 (in Coolley, "Jupiter's Prophecy," p. 135-137).

Week 9 (Oct. 28, 30)

*Behind Every Great Man... Women and family values for a new age*

Read for Oct. 28: Coolley, M.G.L., ed. "The Social Legislation of Augustus," in *The Age of Augustus*, p. 353-367. Treggiari, S. "Women in the Time of Augustus," *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, p. 130-147; Lenaghan, J. "Aspects of Portraiture: Women and the Statue Tradition," in *Ancient Portraits and Production at Aphrodisias*.

Prepare for Oct. 30: Comfortable shoes, supplies to be discussed. Class meets at RISD Museum.

**The Augustan World**

Week 10 (Nov. 4, 6)

*Rome for the Romans: Life in the center of the universe*

Read for Nov. 4: Zanker, Chapter 7; Milnor, K. Chapter 1 ("Reading and Writing Gender on the Augustan Palatine") in *Gender, Domesticity, and the Age of Augustus*.

**Assignment 2 due in class Nov. 6: Word, image, and object in the Augustan age.**

Week 11 (Nov. 11, 13)

*Rome for the Rest: The empire abroad*

Read for Nov. 11: Zanker, Chapter 8, p. 307-333 (starting with "The Imperial Cult in the West").

Read for Nov. 13: Catch up day...

Week 12 (Nov. 18, 20)

*"You shouldn't have!" The art of kissing up in the East*

Read for Nov. 18: Zanker, Chapter 8, p. 297-306.

Read for Nov. 20: Smith, R.R.R. *The Monument of C. Julius Zoilos*, p.1-23.

**Assignment 3 due in class Nov. 20: Augustus and the Others.**

**Succession and Legacy**

Week 13 (Nov. 25)

*Passing the Torch: Turning it over to Tiberius*

Read for Nov. 25: Zanker, Chapter 5, p. 215-end (starting with "The Assimilation of Augustus's Successors into the National Mythology"). Suetonius, *Tiberius*; Cassius Dio, Books 55-57, on line at:

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius\\_Dio/home.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/home.html)

**NOV. 27. THANKSGIVING. NO CLASS.**

Week 14 (Dec. 2, 4)

*The Legacy of Augustus*

Read for Dec. 2: Selected readings provided by instructor and students on wiki page.

Read for Dec. 4: News of Rome (also on wiki, as above).

**Final Exam, December 17, 9am.**

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

### 1. Modern interpretations of Augustus and friends. (Due in class Sept. 25)

Find a contemporary (20-21st century) media source—a movie, TV show, website, advertising campaign, etc.—that portrays Julius Caesar, Marc Antony, Cleopatra, and/or Octavian/Augustus in their ancient environment (this can be Rome or another part of the ancient world). Describe and discuss the physical components of that environment. What do their clothes look like? What does the world around them look like? Do you recognize any real monuments? Are there buildings, statues, or other objects that look Roman to you (even if they are not necessarily identifiable)? If so, why do you think so? Are there things that look out of place? Why? Examine how Caesar and the gang are portrayed as *people*. Are they depicted as “good” or “bad”? Virtuous? Noble? Conniving? Greedy? What characteristics are used to convey these ideas?

Additional, optional question: See if you can find a contemporary media source that is set in the modern world, but *refers to* (or represents) Julius Caesar and/or the others mentioned above. Discuss the nature and context of this reference and why or how it was used (i.e. to compare a modern person or character favorably with Caesar or others, to serve as a warning, etc.).

This assignment should result in approximately 1200-2000 words of writing. Please also provide links and/or other citations of your media sources to share with the class.

### 2) Word, Image, Object. (Due in class Nov. 6)

Select a building, statue, or other object from the Augustan period that still exists—physically—today and is also documented in a literary source (options will be provided in class). Describe the object as it is preserved. Be sure to include your assessment of what is missing or altered (parts broken, color lost, etc.). If the original context for the object is known, describe how the object may have fitted into it and how that may have affected its meaning. Discuss the literary evidence for this object/building and its relationship to the real thing. Does the literary source seem “accurate”? Does it emphasize or play down any aspects of the object? If you selected an image of a person, how does or doesn’t the image relate to the description of that person in the text? What was the context of the literary source? What was its purpose? What does the literary source add to your understanding of the object? Would you have pictured this object accurately if you had only the literary source to go on? What would have been different in your imagination?

This assignment should result in approximately 1200-2000 words of writing. Please be prepared to discuss your work in class.

### 3) Augustus and the Others. (Due in class Nov. 25)

Long before Augustus became Augustus and long after, the influence of Rome was felt from modern-day England to North Africa to the Middle East. In this assignment you will look at Rome from the point of view of those whom the Romans would have thought of as “others” (residents of distant provinces, Jews, Christians, foreigners like the Parthians, etc.). Examine a piece of the archaeological record that illustrates the reception, interpretation, adoption, adaptation, or rejection of Roman culture by non-Romans. You may choose something from a period after the death of Augustus, if you discuss it with me first, and if it directly refers to him or Julius Caesar. Some options will be offered in class, but you are welcome to seek out your own.

This assignment should result in approximately approximately 1200-2000 words of writing. Please be prepared to discuss your work in class.