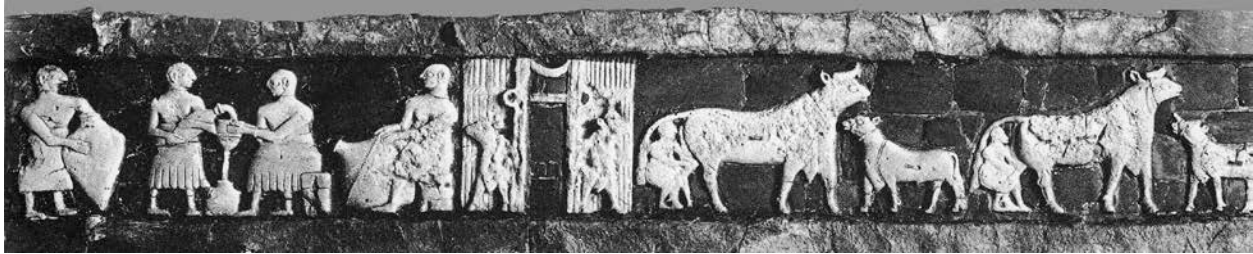

AWAS 2750 and ARCH 2313

ART & VISUAL CULTURE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

[CRN: 25769]

Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies and
Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World
Spring 2013

Syllabus



Meets Thursdays 4:00-6:20 pm (Q-hour) Rhode Island Hall Seminar Room 008
Instructor: Ömür Harmansah (Assistant Professor of Archaeology and Egyptology and
Ancient Western Asian Studies)
Office Hours: Wednesday 1-3 pm. (and by appointment-please e-mail Ömür)
Office: Rhode Island Hall (60 George St.) Room 102
E-mail: Omur_Harmansah@brown.edu Tel: 401-863-6411

Course Description

Peoples of the Ancient Near East produced a unique corpus of artifacts and monuments, using a remarkable variety of raw materials and technologies of making, and created a diverse culture of visuality and materiality from prehistory onwards. This graduate seminar investigates the art, architecture, and visual cultures from Anatolia to the Iraqi southern alluvium, from the Levant to Iran and the Caucasus shared this common pictorial language in a variety of ways. We will explore not only how modern scholars make sense of pictorial, sculptural and architectural forms of Near Eastern art, but will also investigate various technologies of production. Selected bodies of archaeological, architectural and pictorial evidence from the Near East will be scrutinized while also debating relevant art- and architecture-historical methodologies and discourses in direct relationship to that material. Conceptual issues such as narrative, representation, perspective, agency, materiality, facture, technology, style, iconography, symbolism, landscape, space, and power will be explored.

The main objective of the seminar is *not* to provide students a comprehensive and thorough survey of art in Near Eastern history, therefore the readings do not concentrate on canonical textbook level works such as Henri Frankfort's *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Orient* (1954), Anton Moortgat's *Art of Ancient Mesopotamia* (1969), W. Orthmann's *Propyläen Kunstgeschichte. Band 14: Der alte Orient* (1975), Pierre Amiet's *Art of the Ancient Near East* (1977), Dominique Collon's *Ancient Near Eastern Art* (1995). All of these volumes are extraordinary efforts to make sense of Near Eastern art as a stream of tradition from prehistory to the Hellenistic Period, yet most of them remain out of date and fail to cover the central disciplinary debates in the field. The main objective here is first of all to understand where art historical approaches to ancient Near Eastern cultures stand, and obtain the best representative cross-section of the ongoing debates, its historiographic methodologies, and its epistemological trends (those pertaining to knowledge production). This involves engaging with the central thinkers of the discipline today such as Irene J. Winter, Holly Pittman, Zainab Bahrani, John M. Russell, Ann Gunter, Marian Feldman and others, understanding the evolution of the discipline in recent decades with impact from broader disciplinary fields of Near Eastern Studies, art history, architectural history, archaeology, visual culture studies, material culture studies and cultural studies. What are the intellectual foundations of the discipline and what cross-disciplinary currents of debate is it impacted by today?

Books available at Brown Bookstore

- Ataç, Mehmet-Ali; 2010. *Mythology of Kingship in Neo-Assyrian Art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bahrani, Zainab; 2003. *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Benzel, Kim; Art of the Ancient Near East: A Resource for Educators. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Also exists online at: <http://www.metmuseum.org/learn/for-educators/publications-for-educators/the-art-of-the-ancient-near-east>)
- Feldman, Marian; 2006. *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400-1200 BCE*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Nelson, Robert S. and Richard Shiff; 2003. *Critical terms for art history*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Gell, Alfred; 1998. *Art and Agency: an Anthropological Theory*. Clarendon Press.

Course wiki

A wiki is created for this course and we will use this site actively throughout the semester. Weekly reading materials, powerpoints, announcements, assignments and discussions will be posted on the wiki. Students registered or auditing the course will have access to contribute to the pages of the course wiki which facilitates collaborative work. At the end of the semester, the accumulated work within the frame of this seminar will be archived in the wiki. Please familiarize yourself with the page, and make sure to check the site regularly.

Readings and reserves

All readings will be posted on the course wiki in pdf format except for the readings from books that are available at Brown Bookstore (see the list above). Copies of those books will be available at Rock Reserve Desk. I will also create a mini reserve library that will include a set of reference books. These will be kept on a specific shelf in the Joukowsky Institute library (2nd floor corridor). Please use those books at the Institute and leave a note with your e-mail address if you have to remove it from the building for any extended period of time.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to do weekly readings comprehensively, and contribute to seminar discussions as much as possible. A graduate seminar is only successful if all participants collaborate effectively with critical debate and collegial responsibility.

1. Presentations and leading discussion

All students will be asked to volunteer for short presentations in class on selected articles or a specific body of archaeological/textual material, and to lead class discussion around those materials. This will allow us to cover a larger body of literature collaboratively. The presentations should cover the gist of the argument in the article, raise relevant and provocative discussion questions, and should last somewhere between 8-10 minutes at most.

2. Response Papers

In the first half of the semester (Weeks 2-6), the written tasks will involve a series of brief response papers (5 in total) in response to our discussions during the seminars (to be posted on the wiki one week after each discussion). These response papers will be brief, creative and dynamic essays that are inspired by some aspects of your weekly reading and the discussion that ensues it.

3. Research project

In the second half, students will focus on their research project. There will be no exams. Students will choose a research topic in collaboration with Ömür and turn it into a project. The project should involve an analytical and critical discussion of a relevant art historical problem, or body of material or monument relevant to our seminar discussions (drawing comparisons from outside the Near East are always welcome when relevant). It would be very beneficial for the whole group if topics are elected from areas that are not comprehensively covered during the regular gatherings, such as iconoclasm, connoisseurship, issues of heritage and museum exhibition, wall paintings, etc.

The research project's presentations will include

- a project proposal of 250-300 words with preliminary bibliography (Due March 15th)
- a 15-20 min class presentation (To be scheduled for April 18th and 25th)
- a 6-8 page paper draft, due on the day of your presentation. Feedback will follow.
- 14-20 page final paper (12-font, double spaced, excluding images and bibliography) (Due May 13th)

Grading will be based on class participation (20%), oral presentations (10%), response papers (20%), research project (50%). Class participation includes regular attendance and contribution to seminar discussions. Since this is a seminar meeting only once per week, missing a class means missing a large quantity of material. Apart from sicknesses and family emergencies, please try not to miss any of the meetings. If you do have to miss the a seminar, arrange with Ömür for ways to make this up. Please note that an extra amount of writing assignment may be required from the students who miss seminar meetings.

Resources

In this class, we will not be reading Some reference books that you can consult if you need background reading canonical text book type of material but we will be focusing on close reading of specific bodies of material or specific art historical problems to get a good crosssection of the disciplinary debates.

Ömür's research bibliography on JIAAW wiki is always helpful (although not updated in recent years):

<http://proteus.brown.edu/harmansah/4971>

You have access to several study collections on ArtSTOR, a massive image database that Brown Libraries are subscribed to:

<http://www.artstor.org/index.shtml>

Karen A. Bouchard, the Scholarly Resources Librarian for Art and Architecture has kindly offered to help Art in Antiquity students, and she is accessible:

Address: Rockefeller Library, Box A, 10 Prospect Street

Phone: (401) 863-3218 E-mail: Karen.Bouchard@Brown.edu

Brown Image Collection Resources:

<http://libguides.brown.edu/profile.php?uid=56435>

Reference Collection: (located in Joukowsky Institute Library Reserve Shelf, Rhode Island Hall 2nd Floor corridor)

- Akkermans, Peter and Glenn M. Schwartz, *The Archaeology of Syria: from Complex Hunter Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (c. 16,000-300 BC)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Amiet, Pierre, *Art of the Ancient Near East* (translated from the French by John Shepley and Claude Choquet). New York: H. N. Abrams, 1980.
- Aruz, John; 2003. *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium BC from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. Joan Aruz (ed.) New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 84-88.
- Aruz, Joan, Kim Benzel, and Jean M. Evans; 2008. *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium BC*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Kuhrt, Amélie; 1995. *The Ancient Near East: c. 3000-330 B.C.* 2 Vols. Routledge: London and New York.
- Moorey, Peter Roger Stuart; 1994. *Ancient Mesopotamian materials and industries: The archaeological evidence*. Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Moortgat, Anton, *The Art of Ancient Mesopotamia: The Classical Art of the Near East*. London: Phaidon, 1969.
- Orthmann, Winfried, *Der alte Orient* (mit Beiträgen von Pierre Amiet et. al.). Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1975.
- Postgate, J. N., *Early Mesopotamia : Society and Economy at the Dawn of History*. London, New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Roaf, Michael; 1996. *Cultural atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East*. Oxfordshire.
- Van de Mieroop, Marc; 2004. *A history of the ancient Near East. ca 3000-323 BC*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1. January 24. Introduction. Discussion of goals, objectives, and format of the seminar.

Week 2. January 31. What is art, art history, visual culture, visibility. The canon of Mesopotamian art history, and its critiques.

Summers, David; 2003. "Introduction" *Real Spaces: World Art History and Rise of Western Modernism*. London: Phaidon, 15-60.

Herbet, James D.; 2003. "Visual culture/visual studies" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 452-464.

Owens, Craig; 1994. "Representation, appropriation and power," in *Beyond recognition: representation, power, and culture*. S. Bryson et. al. (eds.) Berkeley: University of California Press, 88-113.

Groenewegen-Frankfort, H.A.; 1987. "Mesopotamian art" in *Arrest and Movement: Space and Time in the Art of the Ancient Near East*. Harvard University Press, 145-181.

Bahrani, Zainab; 2003. "The Aesthetic and the Epistemic: Race, Culture and Antiquity," in *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 13-49.

Winter, Irene J.; 2002. "Defining 'Aesthetics' for Non-Western Studies: the case of ancient Mesopotamia," in *Art History, Aesthetics, Visual Studies*. M.A.Holly and K.Moxey (eds). Clark Art Institute and Yale University Press, 3-28.

Week 3. February 7. Rock art, Symbolism and the Neolithic: architectural enchantments, animal narratives in Göbeklitepe and Catalhöyük.

Hodder, Ian and Lynn Meskell; 2011. "A 'curious and sometimes trifle macabre artistry': some aspects of symbolism in Neolithic Turkey" *Current Anthropology* 52.2: 235-263.

Banning, E. B.; 2011. "So Fair a House: Göbekli Tepe and the Identification of Temples in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic of the Near East" *Current Anthropology* 52. 5: 619-660.

Peters, Joris and Klaus Schmidt; 2004. "Animals in the symbolic world of pre-pottery Neolithic Göbekli Tepe, southeastern Turkey: a preliminary assessment," *Anthropozoologica* 39: 179-218.

Oliver Dietrich, Manfred Heun, Jens Notroff, Klaus Schmidt and Martin Zarnkow; 2012. "The role of cult and feasting in the emergence of Neolithic communities. New evidence from Göbekli Tepe, south-eastern Turkey," *Antiquity* 86 .333: 674-695.

Lewis-Williams, David; 2004. "Constructing a cosmos: architecture, power and domestication at Çatalhöyük," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 4: 28-60.

Blier, Suzanne P.; 2003. "Ritual" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 296-305.

Week 4. February 14. Powerful objects, powerful vision: Technology, agency and new perspectives on material culture.

Gell, Alfred; 1998. *Art and Agency: an Anthropological Theory*. Clarendon Press, 1-30.

Gell, Alfred; 1992. "The technology of enchantment and the enchantment of technology," in *Anthropology, art and aesthetics*. Jeremy Coote and Anthony Shelton (eds.). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 40-63.

Winter, Irene J.; 2007. "Agency marked, agency ascribed: the effective object in ancient Mesopotamia" in *Art's agency and art history*. R Osborne and J Tanner (eds.) Malden MA: Blackwell, 42-69.

Winter, Irene J. 2000. "The Eyes Have It: votive statuary, Gilgamesh's axe, and cathected viewing in the ancient Near East," in *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance*. R. Nelson (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 22-44.

Bahrani, Zainab; 1995. "Assault and Abduction: the fate of the royal image in the Ancient Near East," *Art History* 18.3: 363-383.

Pietz, William; 2003. "Fetish" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 306-317.

Week 5. February 21. Mesopotamian Prehistory of the Image, the Text and the Narrative: Event, Ritual and Violence

Mitchell, W.J.T; 1986. "What is an image?" in *Iconology: Image, text, ideology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 7-46.

Kemp, Wolfgang; 2003. "Narrative" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 62-74.

Bahrani, Z.; 2002. "Performativity and the image: narrative, representation and the Uruk vase," in *Leaving no stones unturned: essays on the Ancient Near East and Egypt in honor of Donald P. Hansen*. E. Ehrenberg (ed.). Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2002: pages 15-22.

Winter, Irene J.; 1985. "After the battle is over: the stele of the vultures and the beginning of historical narrative in the art of the ancient Near East", *Studies in the History of Art*. 16:11-32.

Bahrani, Z.; 2008. "Death and the Ruler" in *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia*. Zone Books, 101-130.

Pittman, Holly; 1994. "Towards an understanding of the role of glyptic imagery in the administrative systems of the Proto-literate greater Mesopotamia" in *Archives before writing: Proceedings of the International Colloquium Oriolo Romano, October 23-25, 1991*. P. Ferioli et al (eds), Scriptorium: 177-204.

Costello, Sarah Kielt; 2011. "Image, Memory and Ritual: Re-viewing the Antecedents of Writing" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 21.2: 247-62

Week 6. February 28. In Small Things Forgotten, or The Cultural Life of Figurines: Representation of Gender, Sexuality and Corporeality

Bahrani, Zainab; 2001. *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia*. Selected Chapters.

Bailey, Douglas W.; 2005. *Prehistoric Figurines: Representation and Corporeality in the Neolithic*. New York and London; Routledge. Selected Chapters.

Tringham, Ruth and Margaret Conkey; 1998. "Rethinking Figurines: a critical analysis of archaeology, feminism and popular culture" in *Ancient Goddesses: The Myths and the Evidence*. C. Morris and C Goodison, ed.. London: British Museum Press.

Jones, Amelia; 2003. "Body" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 251-266.

Davis, Whitney; 2003. "Gender" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 330-344.

Week 7. March 7. Monument and Memory: Kudurru, Stele, and Obelisk

Bahrani, Zainab; 2003. "Salmu: Representation in the Real," in *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 121-148.

Bahrani, Zainab; 2007. "The Babylonian visual image" in *The Babylonian World*. G. Leick (ed.). New York and London: Routledge, 155-170.

Feldman, Marian; 2010. "Object Agency? Spatial Perspective, Social Relations, and the Stele of Hammurabi." Pp. 149-165 in *Agency and Identity in the Ancient Near East: New Paths Forward*, ed. S. Steadman and J. Ross. London: Equinox, 149-165.

Feldman, Marian; 2009. "Knowledge as Cultural Biography: Lives of Mesopotamian Monuments" in *Dialogues in Art History, from Mesopotamia to Modern: Readings for a New Century*, ed. Elizabeth Cropper. Studies in the History of Art Series 74, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, Symposium Papers LI, National Gallery of Art, Washington. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 40-55

Young, James; 2003. "Memory/Monument" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 434-247.

Week 8. March 14. Diplomacy by Design: Late Bronze Age Koine in the Eastern Mediterranean

- Feldman, Marian; 2006. *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400-1200 BCE*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. Excerpts
- Feldman, Marian; 2007. "Frescoes, Exotica, and the Reinvention of the Northern Levantine Kingdoms during the Second Millennium BCE" in *Representations of Political Power: Case Histories from Times of Change and Dissolving Order in the Ancient Near East*. M. Heinz and M.H. Feldman (eds.). Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, 39-65.
- Aruz, Joan, Kim Benzel, and Jean M. Evans; 2008. *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium BC*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Elsner, Jas; 2003. "Style" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 98-109.

March 15: Final Project Proposals Due

Week 9. March 21. Rock Reliefs and Spring Monuments in Hittite Anatolia, the Assyrian West and Achaemenid/Sasanian Iran

- Bonatz, Dominik; 2007. "The divine image of the king: religious representation of political power in the Hittite Empire," in *Representations of Political Power: Case Histories from Times of Change and Dissolving Order in the Ancient Near East*. M. Heinz and M.H. Feldman (eds.). Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, 111-136.
- Glatz, C. and Plourde, A.M.; 2011. "Landscape monuments and political competition in late Bronze Age Anatolia: an investigation of costly signaling theory," *Bulletin of the Schools of Oriental Research* 361: 33-66.
- Glatz, Claudia; 2009. "Empire as network: spheres of material interaction in Late Bronze Age Anatolia." *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 28: 127-141.
- Van den Hout, T.; 2002. "Tombs and memorials: The (Divine) Stone-House and Hegur reconsidered. Reconsidered," in *Recent developments in Hittite archaeology and history: Papers in memory of Hans G. Güterbock*. K. Aslıhan Yener and Harry A. Hoffner Jr. (eds.), Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 73-92.
- Volk, Lucia; 2008. "When memory repeats itself: the politics of heritage in post civil war Lebanon", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40: 291-314.
- Canepa, Matthew P.; 2010. "Technologies of memory in early Sasanian Iran: Achaemenid sites and Sasanian identity," *American Journal of Archaeology* 114: 563-596.
- Shafer, Ann; 2007. "Assyrian royal monuments on the periphery: ritual and making of imperial space" in *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East*. Jack Cheng and Marian H. Feldman (eds.). Leiden: Brill Publishers, 133-160.
- Nelson, Robert; 2003. "Appropriation" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 160-173.

March 23-31 Spring Recess

Week 10. April 4. Wall Reliefs, Wall Paintings and Ivories: Official Discourse, State Performance and the Imaging of Empire in the Iron Age

- Stiles, Kristine; 2003. "Performance" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 75-97.
- Winter, Irene J.; 1982. "Art as evidence for interaction: relations between the Assyrian Empire and North Syria," in *Mesopotamien und Seine Nachbarn*. H.-J. Nissen and J. Renger (eds.). Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 355-382.
- Gilibert, Alessandra; 2011. *Syro-Hittite Monumental Art and the Archaeology of Performance*. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 97-134.
- Pittman, Holly; 1996b. "The White Obelisk and the problem of historical narrative in the art of Assyria," *Art Bulletin* 78: 334-355.
- Russell, John Malcolm; 1987. "Bulls for the palace and order in the empire: The sculptural program of Sennacherib's Court VI at Nineveh," *Art Bulletin* 69: 520-539.
- Ataç, Mehmet Ali; 2006. "Visual formula and meaning in Neo-Assyrian relief sculpture," *The Art Bulletin* 88.1: 69-101.
- Nadali, David; "Interpretation and translations, performativity and embodied simulation. Reflections on Assyrian images." In *Leggo! Studies Presented to Frederick Mario Fales*. G.B Lanfranchi, D.M. Bonacossi, C. Pappi, and S. Ponchia (eds.). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 583-595.
- Root, Margaret Cool; "Circles of artistic programming: strategies for studying creative process at Persepolis," in *Investigating artistic environments in the ancient Near East*. A. Gunter (ed). Washington DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 115-139.

Week 11. April 11. Museum Studies: Grasping Ancient Near Eastern World in Modernity

- Preziosi, D.; 2003. "Collecting/Museums" in *Critical terms for art history*. R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) Chicago: Chicago University Press, 407-418.
- Bohrer, Frederick N.; 1998. "Inventing Assyria: Exoticism and Reception in Nineteenth-Century England and France," *Art Bulletin* 80.2:336-356.
- Bahrani, Zainab; 1998. "Conjuring Mesopotamia: imaginative geography and a world past," in *Archaeology under fire: Nationalism, politics and heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East*. L. Meskell (ed.), Routledge: London and New York, 159-174.

Çelik, Zeynep; "Defining Empire's Patrimony: Late Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities" in *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*. Z. Bahrani, Z. Çelik and Edhem Eldem (eds.). Istanbul: SALT, 443-477.

Aruz, Joan (ed.); 2003. *Art of the First Cities: Third Millennium BC from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Aruz, Joan, Kim Benzel, and Jean M. Evans; 2008. *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium BC*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Week 12. April 18. Presentation of Research Projects

Week 13. April 25. Presentation of Research Projects and Final discussion

Reading Period April 26-May 7

Final Papers due May 13, 2013 Monday 5 pm.