

Program in Early Cultures Graduate Courses – Fall 2021

ANTH 1031

Section S01, CRN 16192

Classic Mayan Civilization

Examines the history, culture, and society of the Classic Maya, with special emphasis on Preclassic precursors, dynasties, environmental adaptation, imagery, architecture, urban form, and the Maya Collapse.

TTh 2:30pm-3:50pm in [Rhode Island Hall 008](#)

Stephen Houston

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Dupee Family Professor of Social Science, Professor of Anthropology, Professor of History of Art and Architecture

ANTH 1236

Section S01, CRN 16194

Urban Life: Anthropology in and of the City

This course examines how anthropologists have worked in the city -- to understand dwelling and lived experience from the center to the margins of society; as well as how anthropologists have contributed to the study of the city -- conceptualizing the city itself in relation to its inhabitants, and working to understand how cities develop, decline, or are sustained. Anchored in key theory, classic texts, and contemporary ethnography, the course traces also the history, present, and possible futures of the discipline. Students learn the methods of urban ethnography, and gain hands-on experience through local field exercises and related writing assignments.

MWF 1pm-1:50pm in [Barus & Holley 158](#)

Instructors: TBD

ANTH 1622

Section S01, CRN 17067

Archaeology of Settler Colonialism

The course uses settler colonialism as a framework for understanding how European colonists attempted to displace and eliminate Indigenous peoples beginning in the 15th century and its historical implications for structural inequalities of race and gender. We will look at how settler colonialism is different from colonialism, and more importantly, at resistances challenging its ambitions. Case studies from North America mostly, but also Australia, South Africa, and other settler colonial societies will focus on historical archaeology's contributions to illuminating settler colonialist strategies for establishing and maintaining settler sovereignty in light of concerns for decolonizing archaeological practices. We will give special attention to the insights gained about the experiences of dispossessed, enslaved, and marginalized peoples and their descendants, and the many ways their actions critiqued settler colonialism and imagined different futures.

TTh 10:30am-11:50am in [Giddings House 212](#)

Patricia Rubertone

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Professor of Anthropology

ANTH 1820

Section S01, CRN 16196

Lost Languages: The Decipherment and Study of Ancient Writing Systems

Humans make many marks, but it is writing that records, in tangible form, the sounds and meanings of language. Creating scripts is momentous; writing facilitates complex society and is a crucial means of cultural expression. This course addresses the nature of writing in past times. Topics include: the technology of script; its precursors and parallel notations; its emergence, use, and "death"; its change over time, especially in moments of cultural contact and colonialism; writing as a physical object or thing; code-breaking and decipherment, including scripts not yet deciphered; and the nature of non-writing or pseudo- or crypto-scripts.

TTh 1pm-2:20pm in [Rhode Island Hall 108](#)

Stephen Houston

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Dupee Family Professor of Social Science, Professor of Anthropology, Professor of History of Art and Architecture

ARCH 1621

Section S01, CRN 15843

History of Egypt I (EGYT 1430)

A survey of the history and society of ancient Egypt from prehistoric times to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 5000-1300 BC). Readings include translations from the original documents that serve as primary sources for the reconstruction of ancient Egyptian history

MWF 2pm-2:50pm in [Rhode Island Hall 108](#)

Laurel Bestock

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Associate Professor of Archaeology and the Ancient World and Egyptology and Assyriology
Associate Professor of History of Art and Architecture

ASYR 1700

Section S01, CRN 16235

Astronomy, Divination and Politics in the Ancient World

This course will explore the relationship between astronomy, divination and politics in the ancient world. The sky provided ancient cultures with many possibilities for observing occurrences that could be interpreted as omens. In many cultures, celestial omens were directed towards the king and his government. As a result, interpreting and controlling celestial omens became an important political activity. In this course, we will explore how and why astronomical events were used politically in ancient Mesopotamia, the Greco-Roman world, and ancient and medieval China. No prior knowledge of astronomy is necessary for this course.

Time and Place: TBD

John Steele

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Professor of Egyptology and Assyriology

ASYR 2120

Section S01, CRN 16236

Historiography of Exact Sciences

Introduces graduate students to the sources, problems, and methodologies of the history of astronomy and mathematics from Babylon to Kepler. Prerequisite: [AWAS 0200](#). Open to graduate students only.

Time and Place: TBD

John Steele

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Professor of Egyptology and Assyriology

ASYR 2800

Section S01, CRN 16237

Archaeologies of Text

An interdisciplinary seminar that examines the interplay between ancient texts and archaeology in the study of the ancient world. Emphasis will be placed on articulating and analyzing the research methods and assumptions found in case studies set in the ancient Near East, Mediterranean, East Asia, and the Americas. Topics will include: canons of literature as/versus ancient inscriptions; materiality of text; texts on display, in deposits, in archives, in libraries, as refuse; literacy and education; practices of documentation and analysis; writing, language, and ethnicity; historical geography; fakes and forgeries; ancient texts and archaeological ethics. No prerequisites. Intended primarily for graduate students.

F 3pm-5:30pm in [Wilbour Hall 301](#)

Matthew Rutz

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Associate Professor of Egyptology and Assyriology

EGYT 2521

Section S01, CRN 16905

Problems in Amarna History

The Amarna Period of ancient Egypt (ca. 1350-1300 BC) is one of the most debated, and variously interpreted, in ancient Egyptian history, in terms of people, events, and intellectual movements. In this course, students will research both the evidence and interpretations, and discuss their findings in class, to try to reach a consensus about the most likely scenarios. The instructor will act as a resource for the problems and sources of evidence, and as moderator in class discussions. Grades will be based on the depth of a student's research and on a student's contribution to class discussions.

TTh 9am-10:20am in [Rockefeller Library B6](#)

James Allen

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Charles Edwin Wilbour Professor of Egyptology

Associate Professor of History of Art and Architecture

CLAS 1310

Section S01, CRN 17449

Roman History I: The Rise and Fall of an Imperial Republic

The social and political history of Ancient Rome from its origins to the death of Augustus in 14 CE. Focuses on the social conflicts of the early Republic; the conquest of the Mediterranean and its repercussions; the breakdown of the Republic and the establishment of monarchy. Readings emphasize ancient sources in translation.

MWF 10am-10:50am in [Salomon Center 003](#)

Amy Russell

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Visiting Associate Professor of Classics

CLAS 1120G

Section S01, CRN 17439

The Idea of Self

Literature gestures us toward a certain kind of knowledge not quite psychological, not quite philosophical. We read widely in the classical and medieval traditions in order to gauge the peculiar nature of what this knowledge tells us about experience and the ways in which expressions of selfhood abide or are changed over time. Authors include but are not limited to Sappho, Pindar, Catullus, Horace, Augustine, and Fortunatus.

MWF 11am-11:50am in [Salomon Center 003](#)

Joseph Pucci

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Professor of Classics

CLAS 1175

Section S01, CRN 17937

High Crimes and Misdemeanors: Impeachment trials and their Rhetoric

This course explores the history of impeachment trials in Athens, Britain, and the USA. We study some of the early deployments of impeachment (eisangelia in Greek) at Athens, its brief flourish in fourteenth century Britain, and its flowering in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Subsequently we turn to the impeachment of Warren Hastings in 1788-1795 and then to the earliest impeachments in the US. We keep in mind the different time periods and governmental structures (direct democracy, monarchy with parliament, representative democracy) and investigate how legal processes--and their rhetoric--function in each of them.

TTh 2:30pm-3:50pm in [Friedman Hall 003](#)

Adele Scafuro

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Professor of Classics

CLAS 1750H

Section S01, CRN 17435

Heroes and Heroism in Graeco - Roman Antiquity and Beyond

Examines the concept of hero, an ancient Greek word, which had a wide variety of meanings and was employed to designate a series of diverse characters of myth. We will trace the evolution of this idea through a detailed analysis of its uses in Greek and Roman texts, and also contrast its ancient sense with present day conceptions of the hero and heroism. All readings will be in English. The course is open to all undergraduates, but preference will be given to juniors and seniors

TTh 10:30am-11:50am in [Rockefeller Library 412](#)

Pura Nieto Hernandez

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Distinguished Senior Lecturer in Classics

CLAS 2110K

Section S01, CRN 17885

Vision and Visualization in Literature: The Rhetoric of Enargeia

How does writing make us see? We will study rhetorical concepts of “vivid description” (enargeia, phantasia, eidentia) from ancient Greek and Roman theory and literary practice and follow their reception in later periods and literary traditions, including modern evaluations of their significance (all readings in English). Taking texts from poetry, historiography, philosophy, and elsewhere, we will explore “vividness” particularly in terms of tropes of persona-fashioning (prosōpopoeia) and subject-positioning, with attention to the ethical and ideological implications that that may entail, and explore its relations with such topics as ecphrasis, narratology, and spectacularity.

Th 4pm-6:30pm in [Smith-Buonanno Hall G18](#)

Joseph Reed

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Professor of Classics

Professor of Comparative Literature

COLT 1430B

Section S01, CRN 16162

Art and Exemplarity in Medieval and Early Modern Literature

In this course we will cover a selection of Classical, Medieval and Early Modern works from various linguistic traditions (English, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish), which feature literary representations of art, especially via scenes that are ekphrastic in nature (the description of Achilles's shield in Homer's Iliad, for instance), and via textual moments that use exemplary ekphrastic scenes as a point of departure for larger commentaries on: the nature of art, the role of the artist, and the reception of works of art along with their attendant sociocultural impact. Taking moments of renegotiation, critique, and resistance towards dominant hierarchies as a helpful framework, along with texts that explicitly situate themselves against the exemplary model from which they are drawing, we will give special attention to race and gender by examining the artistic representation of marginalized bodies that are explicitly gendered or racialized in the literary texts in which they appear. We will also look at race and gender in select works from Medieval and Early Modern artists.

TTh 2:30pm-3:50pm in [Sayles Hall 205](#)

Alani Hicks-Bartlett

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Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature and French and Francophone Studies

COLT 2830B

Section S01, CRN 16504

Frameworks of Antiquity: Disciplines, Discourses, Politics

At least since decolonization, the study of antiquity has been a battleground for conflicting projects (imperial, colonial, national, indigenous, religious, feminist and queer, etc.). This seminar explores disciplinary formations that have supplied rival groups with cognitive maps, narratives of identity formation and transformation, and assets for real and symbolic capital. We will explore key disciplinary sites of debate—in archaeology, philology, philosophy, Scriptural and Classical studies, and history—concerning the distribution of groups (of people, languages, races), the establishment of spatial and temporal boundaries, and the limits of what can be argued, shown, possessed, and claimed to be true.

M 3pm-5:30pm in [Pembroke Hall 003](#)

Tamara Chin

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Associate Professor of Comparative Literature

Adi Ophir

adi_ophir@brown.edu

Visiting Professor of Humanities and Middle East Studies

HIAA 1307

Section S01, CRN 16664

Politics and Spectacle in the Arts of Ancient Rome

This seminar investigates the intersection of politics and spectacles in the artistic production of ancient Rome. We will explore a variety of public monuments to reveal how they codify essential aspects of Roman culture. Topics include the architecture of entertainment spaces such as theaters, amphitheaters, and circuses, as well as the social functions of spectacles such as gladiatorial games and triumphal processions. We will look at expressions of imperial propaganda in monuments such as tombs and honorific arches. The class also considers how these ideas entered the private realm in the form of domestic wall paintings, mosaics, and sculpture gardens.

M 3pm-5:30pm in [List Art Center 210](#)

Gretel Rodriguez

gretel_rodriguez@brown.edu

Assistant Professor of History of Art and Architecture

HIAA 1401

Section S01, CRN 18201

Objects of Devotion in the Middle Ages

How did people in the medieval world 'do' devotion? What role did objects and architectural spaces have in engaging with the divine? This seminar explores the liminal role objects and spaces had as mediators, as foci, and even the metaphysical embodiment of saints in the Middle Ages. We will study the legacy of attitudes toward icons, relics, and martyrdom in Late Antiquity in the early and high European Middle Ages. We examine the medieval approach to materials and the meditative and performative use of devotional art. Topics to be explored include relics and bodily remains, architecture, pilgrimage, gendered devotion art, iconoclasm, and modern museum practices exhibiting devotional art. Students will have the opportunity to engage in-depth with devotional from the Hay Library and the RISD Museum.

T 4pm-6:30pm in [List Art Center 210](#)

Erica Kinias

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HIAA 2301

Section S01, CRN 17945

Finding the Viewer: The Reception of Ancient Art and Architecture

This graduate seminar will explore the role of viewers in the creation of meanings for ancient art and architecture. We will be looking at a wide variety of artistic forms including architecture, sculpture, wall painting, and mosaics, asking, who were the viewers who encountered these works in ancient settings and how did they respond to their messages? In order to contextualize our case studies, we will engage with primary sources, archaeological data, and theories of ancient viewership and reception.

F 3pm-5:30pm in [List Art Center 210](#)

Gretel Rodriguez

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Assistant Professor of History of Art and Architecture

HIAA 2880

Section S01, CRN 16799

Race and Architecture

This graduate seminar will explore race--- a concept of human difference that established hierarchies of power and domination between Europe and Europe's 'others--and architecture from its earliest appearance to the present. Architecture has long reinforced the hierarchies embedded in western epistemology and present narrow visions of the world, reproducing cultural assumptions about space, place, city, comfort, etc., while assimilating race without acknowledging its impact. For its part, architectural history has largely uncritically conveyed the culture, norms, and values of architecture

M 3pm-5:30pm in [List Art Center 110](#)

Itohan Osayimwese

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Associate Professor of History of Art and Architecture

HIST 1202

Section S01, CRN 16141

Formation of the Classical Heritage: Greeks, Romans, Jews, Christians, and Muslims

Explores essential social, cultural, and religious foundation blocks of Western Civilization, 200 BCE to 800 CE. The main theme is the eternal struggle between universalism and particularism, including: Greek elitism vs. humanism; Roman imperialism vs. inclusion; Jewish assimilation vs. orthodoxy; Christian fellowship vs. exclusion, and Islamic transcendence vs. imminence. We will study how ancient Western individuals and societies confronted oppression and/or dramatic change and developed intellectual and spiritual strategies still in use today. Students should be prepared to examine religious thought from a secular point of view. There is no prerequisite or assumed knowledge of the period.

MW 3pm-4:20pm in [190 Hope Street 203](#)

Kenneth Sacks

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Professor of History

HIST 1205

Section S01, CRN 16119

The Long Fall of the Roman Empire

Once thought of as the "Dark Ages," this period of western European history should instead be seen as a fascinating time in which late Roman culture fused with that of the Germanic tribes, a mixture tempered by a new religion, Christianity. Issues of particular concern include the symbolic construction of political authority, the role of religion, the nature of social loyalties, and gender roles.

TTh 1pm-2:20pm in [Salomon Center 003](#)

Jonathan Conant

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Associate Professor of History

Associate Professor of Classics

HIST 1211A

Section S01, CRN 17976

From Imperial Diadem to Papal Tiara: Analyzing the Sources for the History of Europe, 476 to 1215

How do we know what happened in the past? Sure, you can flip open a book or read a Wikipedia page, but how, in this age of fake news, do you know who to trust? What makes a source of information reliable or unreliable, useless or useful? Looking at the history of western Europe from the aftermath of the fall of Rome, this course tackles these questions head-on through a deep, analytical engagement with a variety of different primary sources. From the spectacular miracles of saints to everyday lists of dry goods and property boundaries, true history resides in the text, if only one is clever enough to see it.

MWF 2pm-2:50pm in [Smith-Buonanno Hall 201](#)

Leland Grigoli

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HIST 1512

Section S01, CRN 16123

First Nations: The People and Cultures of Native North America to 1800

This course explores the history of North America through the eyes of the original inhabitants from pre-contact times up through 1800. Far from a simplistic story of European conquest, the histories of Euroamericans and Natives were and continue to be intertwined in surprising ways. Although disease, conquest, and death are all part of this history, this course also tells another story: the big and small ways in which these First Nations shaped their own destiny, controlled resources, utilized local court systems, and drew on millennia-old rituals and practices to sustain their communities despite the crushing weight of colonialism.

MWF 12pm-12:50pm in [85 Waterman Street 015](#)

Linford Fisher

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Associate Professor of History

HIST 1961N

Section S01, CRN 17671

Colonization and Ethnicity in East Asian History

East Asia is among the most culturally and linguistically homogeneous regions of the earth, the result of over two millennia of conquest and colonization. This course explores how the wide diversity of cultures, languages, and ecosystems that once existed across East Asia were transformed into a few dominant cultural groups. We will cover two main topics. One is the process whereby the people now known as the Chinese (or Han) were formed through imperial conquest and cultural mixing. The second focuses on the Ainu people of Northeast Asia and how they were forcibly incorporated into the Japanese nation. This course will teach students to think comparatively about processes of colonialism and ideas of ethnicity. While the colonial practices of Western Europeans have been studied in great depth, those of other civilizations have not received as much attention.

M 3pm-5:30pm in [Sayles Hall 205](#)

Brian Lander

brian_lander@brown.edu

Assistant Professor of History and Environment and Society

HIST 1969A

Section S01, CRN 16116

Israel-Palestine: Lands and Peoples I

This advanced undergraduate seminar seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the links between the region now known as Israel and Palestine and the peoples that have inhabited it or have made it into part of their mental, mythical, and religious landscape throughout history. The course will be interdisciplinary at its very core, engaging the perspectives of historians, geologists, geographers, sociologists, scholars of religion and the arts, politics and media. At the very heart of the seminar is the question: What makes for the bond between groups and place - real or imagined, tangible or ephemeral. No prerequisites required.

W 3pm-5:30pm in [Friedman Hall 003](#)

Omer Bartov

omer_bartov@brown.edu

John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of European History

HIST 1981L

Section S01, CRN 17501

Status, Power and Identity in Mid-Imperial China (EAST 1305)

This course explores the intersections of social status, political power, and ethnic identities in China from 220-1368. We examine what we mean by “China” when that region was ruled by multiple, often “non-Chinese” regimes; how foreign influences such as Buddhism changed indigenous Chinese thought and institutions; how economic prosperity undercut aristocratic power structures and created new social and moral ideals; and how foreign invasion affected the economy, institutions, and cultural identity of the region. Throughout the course, we consider how social and political change, as well as class and gender position, conditioned individuals’ views of themselves and their world.

W 3pm-5:30pm in [Rockefeller Library 205](#)

Beverly Bossler

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Professor of East Asian Studies

Professor of History

RELS 1050C

Section S01, CRN 16107

Prophets and Priests in Exile: Biblical Literature of the 6th Century BCE (JUDS 1690)

The exile of Judah's elite to Babylon elicited profound and conflicting literary responses. We will undertake a literary and historical analysis of a number of the most important works produced in response to the crisis of exile, including Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Second Isaiah, Lamentations, Psalm 137, the Priestly Writing, and the work of the exilic deuteronomists. Enrollment limited to 20.

W 3pm-5:30pm in [163 George Street 103](#)

Saul Olyan

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Samuel Ungerleider, Jr. Professor of Judaic Studies, Professor of Religious Studies

RELS 1325C

Section S01, CRN 16018

The Virgin Mary in Christian Tradition

Who was the Virgin Mary? How did she become important, when and to whom? What was inherited? What was new? How were Mary’s meanings demonstrated? A study in the developing theological and devotional traditions regarding Mary the Mother of Jesus, focused on the first thousand years of Christian history. Major theological positions; relationship to pre-existing religious practices and goddess traditions; the role of popular violence; Marian piety; Marian relics; Mary as cultural metaphor. Seminar format.

W 3pm-5:30pm in [Salomon Center 003](#)

Susan Harvey

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Willard Prescott and Annie McClelland Smith Professor of History and Religion