

GENERAL INFORMATION and SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Classics/History Stream PhD students Comprehensive Exam in Classical Archaeology (Updated: March 2023)

GENERAL INFORMATION:

We do not want to prescribe the structure of answers or exactly what you might include in an answer on this comprehensive exam. The organization, approach, and material that you include is part of the exercise to demonstrate your knowledge in these fields. Different answers may require different lengths and structure, but here are a few details that you can use to think about how to structure your preparation and answers.

Length: Generally, a complete answer will be one to two typed pages (single-spaced, 12-point font, normal margins) and may go longer. The questions are written to allow you to bring in your strengths and that could be done in many different ways. Therefore, if you have only two short paragraphs, this probably has not answered the question fully and you will want to think about including more.

You want to be sure that the structure of your answer flows and ideas follow one to the other. You do not want to present a group of facts without any discussion. Where necessary, you must cite archaeological evidence (monuments, sculpture, objects, sites, etc.) that illustrates your answer and show that you understand the material culture of the Greek and Roman worlds. You will also want to show engagement with modern scholarship and the scholarly arguments about the subjects you discuss. Please include citations to these modern scholars and publications that you are leaning on for your discussion. These can come directly from the reading list, but you might also include other things you've read that inform your discussion.

There are three parts to the exam, as follows. This document includes the instructions for each part of the exam followed by just one sample question from each part.

EXAM DIRECTIONS and SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

EXAM DIRECTIONS

There are 8 questions presented on this exam and you will answer 5 questions in total from the prompts below. There are three different parts to the exam and you will need to answer questions from all 3 parts. You have choice in the questions that you would like to answer so please read the directions under each part to be sure you have chosen correctly. You will answer 1 question (from a choice of 2) from Part I about disciplinary boundaries; you will answer 2 questions (from a choice of 3) from Part II on Greek archaeology; and 2 questions (from a choice of 3) from Part III on Roman archaeology. You should have 5 answers total.

PART I: DISCIPLINARY BOUNDARIES

(Please answer 1 of the following 2 questions)

Sample Question:

What modern issues (last few centuries) have contributed to the disciplinary boundaries of Greek Archaeology, Roman Archaeology, Art History and Ancient History? How has the structure of academia in different countries contributed to the separation or proximity of these sub-fields of Classics?

PART II: GREEK ARCHAEOLOGY

(Choose 2 of the following 3 questions to answer on Greek Archaeology)

Sample Question:

Please discuss the economic role of palace centers in the Bronze Age in Greece. What role did palaces play in the socio-economic systems of Minoan and Mycenaean societies? What was the relationship between the palace and countryside? How have our ideas changed in the past few decades about the role of the palace economies?

PART III: ROMAN ARCHAEOLOGY

(Choose 2 of the following 3 questions to answer on Roman Archaeology)

Sample Question:

Identify both the images below as thoroughly as possible (original location, monument, scene depicted, date, anything else important for this discussion). How do these two monuments demonstrate the changing culture of political power in Rome? How does each monument speak in its own way to the shift in political organization and the expectations of who would hold power?

