

PhD Comprehensive Exam Reading List in GREEK and ROMAN ARCHAEOLOGY

For CLASSICS/HISTORY Stream PhD students

Updated: Nov. 2025

USING THIS READING LIST

You are expected to understand the major themes in the archaeology of the primary time periods represented here, from Bronze Age Greece to Imperial Rome. Under each time period is listed “Background Reading” followed by a specific “Topic” that represents a prominent or very current debate in the archaeology of that time period.

Background Reading: How much you need to consult these materials depends on the background you have in archaeological and historical subjects. For instance, if you feel very shaky about the timeline, events and material culture of the Greek Iron Age, you should review and understand the material presented in these chapters. If you have a strong background in Imperial Rome, perhaps you only need to skim those chapters to be sure you have everything covered. The sources listed here cover the important archaeological remains that you will want to understand, as well as chapters on the historical context that will be needed to understand the socio-political motivations for the construction of buildings, monuments and art left behind in the archaeological record.

Topic: For each time period a topic has been chosen that is a prominent or very current debate in the discipline about that time period. You are expected to understand the nature of that debate, the primary scholars who have contributed to it, and the major arguments about the subject. Please be prepared to answer questions about this debate specifically or to insert these ideas into a much broader question about Greek or Roman archaeology.

OVERVIEW TOPIC

What is Classical Archaeology?

Where are the borders of the discipline? How does this fit with other disciplines like Art History, Ancient History and Anthropological Archaeology?

1. A. Snodgrass. 2012. "What is Classical Archaeology? Greek Archaeology," in S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.) *Classical Archaeology* 2nd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell) 13-29.
2. M. Millett. 2012. "What is Classical Archaeology? Roman Archaeology," in S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.) *Classical Archaeology* 2nd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell) 30-47.
3. M. Squire. 2012. "Classical Archaeology and the Contexts of Art History," in S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.) *Classical Archaeology* 2nd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell) 468-500.
4. R. Laurence. 2012. *Roman Archaeology for Historians* (Routledge). Chapter 1: "Questions of Evidence"; Chapter 2: "Dialogues of Academic Difference" pp. 1-23.

Background Reading:

S. Dyson. 2006. *In Pursuit of Ancient Pasts: A History of Classical Archaeology in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Yale.

BRONZE AGE AND EARLY IRON AGE GREECE

Background Reading:

- Neer, R. 2012. *Greek Art and Archaeology*, Chapters 2 and 3.
- Preziosi, D. and L.A. Hitchcock. 1999. *Aegean Art and Architecture* (Oxford)
- Pomeroy, S. et al. 2012. "Early Greece and the Bronze Age," in *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (Oxford) Chapter 1.
- Pomeroy, S. et al. 2012. *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (Oxford): Chapter 2 "The 'Dark Age' of Greece and the Eight-century 'Renaissance' (ca. 1200-750/700),"
- Osborne, R.. 1996. *Greece in the Making 1200-479 BC* (London), chapters 1-5.

Topic: No special topic for Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Greece. Just know the background.

ARCHAIC GREECE

Background Reading:

- Neer, R. 2012. *Greek Art and Archaeology*, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8.
- Boardman, J.. 1991. *Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period* (Thames & Hudson).
- Osborne, R. 1996. *Greece in the Making 1200-479 BC* (London), chapters 6-9.

TOPIC: The Formation of the Polis and the Ethnos

When state-level societies began to reappear in Greece after the Bronze Age collapse, what forms did they take? Can a polis or an ethnos be identified archaeologically and what are the problems with attempting to do so? What criteria have various scholars (e.g. the Copenhagen Polis Centre) used to identify archaeological sites as poleis? Do these criteria aid or hinder the understanding of the polis?

1. Morgan, C.. 2004. *Early Greek States beyond the Polis* (Cambridge).
2. de Polignac., F. 1995. *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State* (Chicago).
 - a. If you are francophone, you may prefer to read de Polignac's *La naissance de la cité grecque*, which was the original version.
3. Hansen , M.H. and T.H. Nielsen. 2005. *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford), [Known colloquially as the "The Polis Bible"] Vol. 1, pp. 1-154; skim the catalogue in Vol. II, not for content but to familiarize yourself with its organization.
4. Vlassopoulos, K. 2007. *Unthinking the Greek Polis. Ancient Greek History beyond Eurocentrism* (Cambridge).
5. Davies, J.K. 1997. "The 'Origins' of the Greek Polis: Where should we be looking?" In L. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes, *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece* (Routledge), pp. 13-20.

CLASSICAL GREECE

Background Reading:

- Boardman, J. 1985. *Greek Sculpture: The Classical Period*; 1995. *Greek Sculpture: The Late Classical Period* (Thames & Hudson)
- Pomeroy, S. et al. 2012. *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (Oxford): Chapter 5 "The Growth of Athens and the Persian Wars,"; Chapter 6 "The Rivalries of the Greek City-States and the

Growth of Athenian Democracy,"; Chapter 7 "Greece on the Eve of the Peloponnesian War."

TOPIC: Problematizing Panhellenism—Athens in the 5th c. BC, the Panhellenic Sanctuaries at Delphi and Olympia,

When did the Greeks begin to identify as Greek and what socio-cultural and political factors led to the gradual consciousness of a wider Greek community? How and why did this process happen and what did it look like in the material culture? What role did panhellenic sanctuaries play in this process? Did "Panhellenism" manifest itself differently in different times/places and how?

1. Hall, J. 2002. *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago).
2. Mitchell, L. 2007. *Panhellenism and the Barbarian* (Swansea).
3. Scott, M. 2010. *Delphi and Olympia. The Spatial Politics of Panhellenism in the Archaic and Classical Periods* (Cambridge).
4. Yates, D. 2019. "Chapter 2: Panhellenism." In *States of Memory: The Polis, Panhellenism, and the Persian War* (Oxford), pp. 61-98.

HELLENISTIC GREECE

Background Reading:

Neer, R. 2012. *Greek Art and Archaeology*, Chapter 14: "The Hellenistic World, c. 323–c. 100 BCE."

Winter, F. 2006. *Studies in Hellenistic Architecture* (University of Toronto Press).

Gates, C. 2011. *Ancient Cities*. Chapter 18: Pergamon: A city in the Athenian tradition; Alexandria: Capital of a bicultural kingdom, pgs. 289-298.

Morris, I. and B. Powell. 2013. *The Greeks*. "The Greek Kingdoms In the Hellenistic Century, 323-220 B.C." pages 463-482. "Hellenistic Culture, 323-30 B.C." Pages 501-526.

Pomeroy, S. et al. 2012. *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (Oxford): Chapter 10 "Phillip II and the Rise of Macedon"; Chapter 11: Alexander the Great; Chapter 12: Alexander's Successors and the Cosmopolis.

TOPIC: The built environment and political 'propaganda'—Macedon, Pergamon, Alexandria

How do the Greeks master using the backdrop of the built environment (architecture, public art, etc.) to support a political agenda in an increasingly imperial, colonial, and international Greek world? What is and is not allowed in this process? What spaces are used for "propaganda" and what rules govern the use of space in different ways?

REQUIRED READINGS:

1. Seaman, K. 2016. "Pergamon and Pergamene Influence" in M. Miles (ed.), *A Companion to Greek Architecture* (Wiley), pp. 406-423.
2. Winter, F. 2006. "Chapter 10. Architecture, Landscape, and Seascape: The Role of Setting and Vista in Hellenistic Design." In *Studies in Hellenistic Architecture* (UofT Press), pp. 207-218.
3. Miller, S.G. 2016. "Hellenistic Royal Palaces." in Miles (ed.), *A Companion to Greek Architecture* (Wiley), pp. 288-299.
4. Stewart, A. 1993. "Chapter 6. Spear-Won Land", in *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics* (UC Press), pp. 158-190.
5. McKenzie, J. 2007. "Part Two: Ptolemaic Egypt" in *The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, 300 BC – AD 700* (Yale), pp. 36-146.

ARCHAIC and EARLY REPUBLICAN ROME

Background Preparation:

Ramage, N. and A. Ramage. 2015. *Roman Art*, 6th ed. (Pearson). Chapter 2 "The Roman Republic"

Holloway, R.R. 1994. *The Archaeology of Early Rome and Latium* (Routledge)

T.J. Cornell. 1995. *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000-264 BC)* (Routledge)

Boatwright-Gargola-Lenski-Talbert. 2011. *The Romans from Village to Empire* (Oxford) Second edition. Chapters 1-8.

Torelli, M., 1988. "Archaic Rome between Latium and Etruria," *The Cambridge Ancient History VII*, 2 (Cambridge).

TOPIC: State formation and the rise of Rome

What are the primary factors in the process of a small settlement becoming a large 'State'? What are the archaeological indicators of this growth and status? What factors came into play specifically in Rome and how did this dictate the organization of the city?

1. Motta, L. and N. Terrenato. 2006. "The Origins of the State *par excellence*: Power and Society in Iron Age Rome," In C. Haselgrove (ed.) *Celtes et Gaulois, l'Archéologie face à l'Histoire. Les mutations de la fin de l'âge du Fer. Actes de la table ronde de Cambridge (Cambridge, 7-8 juillet 2005)* (Gluxen-Glenne: Bibracte) 225-234.
2. Haggis, D. and N. Terrenato. 2011. "Introduction," in D. Haggis and N. Terrenato (eds.) *State Formation in Italy and Greece: Questioning the Neoevolutionist Paradigm* (Oxbow)
3. Ammerman. 2011. "Relocating the center: a comparative study," in D. Haggis and N. Terrenato (eds.) *State Formation in Italy and Greece: Questioning the Neoevolutionist Paradigm* (Oxbow) Ch. 14.
4. Ammerman, A.J. 1990. "On the Origins of the Forum Romanum," *American Journal of Archaeology* 94, 627-45.
5. Ammerman, A.J. 1996. "The Comitium in Rome from the Beginning," *American Journal of Archaeology* 100, 121-136.

LATE REPUBLIC and EARLY IMPERIAL ROME

Background Reading:

Ramage, N. and A. Ramage. 2015. *Roman Art*, 6th ed. (Pearson). Chapter 3 "Augustus and the Imperial Idea"; Chapter 4 "The Julio-Claudians."

Richardson, J.S. 2012. *Augustan Rome 44BC to AD 14: The Restoration of the Republic and the Establishment of the Empire* (Edinburgh)

Boatwright-Gargola-Lenski-Talbert. 2011. *The Romans from Village to Empire* (Oxford) Second edition. Chapters 9-10.

TOPIC: Images as power and visual language in Rome

How do Rome's politicians of the late Republic and early empire use images as propaganda? What are the most successful building programs? How do the overall messages of different individuals vary or agree? How does the Roman use of the built environment differ from that of 5th century Athens?

1. Hölscher, T. 2004. *The Language of Images in Roman Art* (Cambridge). "Introduction," "The Greek Paradigm" and "The Monuments: How the language works" pp. 1-22; "Conclusion: language of imagery and culture of empire." pp. 125-127.
2. Zanker, P. 1990. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Michigan). "Introduction" pp. 1-4; Chapter 1 "Conflict and Contradiction in the Imagery of the Dying Republic" pp. 5-31; Chapter 2 "Rival Images: Octavian, Antony, and the Struggle for Sole Power" pp. 33-77; Chapter 3 "The Great Turning Point: Intimations of a New Imperial Style" pp. 79-100. (Basically, read pages 1-100).

IMPERIAL ROME AND THE EMPIRE

Background Reading:

Ramage, N. and A. Ramage. 2015. *Roman Art*, 6th ed. (Pearson). Chapter 5 "The Flavians: Savior to Despot"; Chapter 6 "Trajan, *Optimus Princeps*"; Chapter 7 "Hadrian and the Classical Revival"; Chapter 8 "The Antonines"; Chapter 9 "The Severans."

Boatwright-Gargola-Lenski-Talbert. 2011. *The Romans from Village to Empire* (Oxford) Second edition. Chapters 11-12.

TOPIC: Romanization, Globalization, and the archaeology of identity in the Roman empire How did the incorporation of so many different cultural groups into the 'Roman' empire change what it meant to 'be Roman'? What are the barriers (historically and now) to our study and understanding cultural change in the provinces? How do we approach understanding individual or collective identity from the archaeological record?

1. Hingley, R. 1996. "The legacy of Rome: the Rise, Decline and Fall of the Theory of Romanization," in J. Webster and N. J. Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism: Post-Colonial Perspectives*. Leicester. 3548.R.
2. Laurence. 2012. "From Italy to the Provinces: Imperialism and Cultural Change," in *Roman Archaeology for Historians* (Routledge) 59-73.
3. Versluys, M.J. 2014. "Understanding Objects in Motion: An Archaeological Dialogue on Romanization," *Archaeological Dialogues* 20.1, 1-20. Read with all responses. *Archaeological Dialogues* 20.1.
4. Hodos, T. 2010. "Local and Global Perspectives in the Study of Social and Cultural Identities," in Hales, S. and T. Hodos (eds.), *Material Culture and Social Identities in the Ancient World* (Cambridge), pp. 3-31.
5. Hodos, T. 2014. "Global, Local and in Between: Connectivity and the Mediterranean," In M. Pitts and M.J. Versluys. *Globalisation and the Roman World: World History, Connectivity and Material Culture* (Cambridge), 240-53.
6. Witcher, R. 2017. "The Globalized Roman World." In T. Hodos (ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, (Routledge), pp. 634-651.