CLASSICS 9533B – WINTER 2019

ART & NATIONALISM IN 5th C. ATHENS

INSTRUCTOR:    David Wilson

CLASS HOURS:  Friday   1:30 – 4:30   LwH 3220

OFFICE HOURS:  M/W/F 12:30 – 1:15   LwH 3212
(or by appointment dwilson@uwo.ca)

COURSE GRADE ASSESSMENT:

Midterm Test      30%
Seminar Presentation     10%
Seminar Research Paper   60%

Seminar Papers Due:

UWO Policies

Plagiarism
Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

UWO Accessibility Policy
Western has many services and programs that support the personal, physical, social and academic needs of students with disabilities. For more information and links to these services: http://accessibility.uwo.ca/

Mental Health
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accommodation Policy
Staying healthy – physically and mentally – is an essential part of achieving your academic goals. There are many resources on campus available to help you maintain your health and
wellness (start here: http://wec.uwo.ca/ and https://www.uwo.ca/health/). Please contact the 
Graduate Chair if you have any concerns about health or wellness interfering with your studies.

If academic accommodation should become necessary at any point, students should contact 
their course instructor(s) and/or supervisor, as appropriate. Students should also contact the 
Graduate Chair in most cases, and especially if accommodation is needed for:

- more than one course 
- more than one week 
- any tests, exams, and/or assignments worth 10% or more of a final grade 
- any program milestone (comprehensive exams, thesis, etc.)

In these cases, the Graduate Chair may request that a student work with Student Accessibility 
Services (http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/) to arrange a plan for accommodation (see SGPS 
Regulation 14: http://www.grad.uwo.ca/current_students/regulations/14.html).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS**

This seminar examines a pivotal period of Athens’ history in the 5th Century BCE with the 
primary emphasis on the archaeological evidence for the rise and fall of Athenian nationalism 
and empire as it played out within the urban centre. It begins in the early 5th C. at the time of the 
young democracy and the turbulent years of the Persian Wars, and the transformative effect that 
the victory at Marathon had on Athens’ self-image as a ‘world’ power.

In the decades immediately following the Persian Wars in the Early Classical period during the 
leadership of the statesman/admiral Kimon, a number of key public monuments in the Agora 
were erected: the Tyrannicides sculpture group, the Stoa Poikile, and the Theseion. Together 
they established the principal thematic programme of publicly commissioned 
monuments/buildings in the city, and had a fundamental influence on the iconography and 
symbolism of all subsequent building, sculpture and painting in the second half of the 5th 
Century. The military victories won by Athens against the Persians are repeatedly referenced in 
these monuments, both explicitly and allegorically through the prominence of Theseus and his 
role in the Amazonomachy and Centauromachy myths.

The ensuing Periklean building programme on the Acropolis begun just after 450 BCE with the 
Parthenon as its ‘crown jewel’ marks the high point and most overt of Athens’ public visual 
displays of national pride, and its perceived sense of pre-eminence in the Greek world. The 
moral content, visual language and meaning of the Pheidian sculptures that decorated the 
Parthenon are explored against the backdrop of Athens’ imperial aspirations abroad and to 
many non-Athenians, Greek and non-Greek alike, her increasingly hubristic behavior. We track 
the fall of Athens’ fortunes during the later 5th Century with the onset of the Peloponnesian War 
and the devastating plagues of 429 and 427/6 BCE, looking at how such catastrophic events for 
the city were or were not reflected in the painting and sculpture of the period.

Finally we end appropriately with death and burial in Classical Athens, focusing on the 
Demosion Sema, the public burial ground of Athens’ fallen war dead, and the private burials
elsewhere in the Kerameikos to question how Athenians dealt with death, defeat, and loss of empire in such a public and nationally charged forum.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

On successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

- identify and date the major buildings and monuments of 5th C. Athens; the significance of their location/setting; and discuss the political/historical context in which they were built;

- identify the iconography and subject matter of sculpture and panel/vase painting of 5th C. Athens in terms of the setting, and the individual characters and their possible narrative role (mythological or historical);

- address the possible symbolism and meaning of content/subject matter within its specific and larger social/historical context;

- understand the important contribution archaeological evidence makes in examining and reconstructing the political and social history of 5th C. Athens.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES / TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**

Students completing this course are expected to have acquired:

- an advanced understanding of the importance of historical perspective, and how social norms and customs and the construction and consumption of material culture (e.g. architecture, sculpture and painting) are a product of time, events and context;

- an understanding of how iconography/symbolism in any historical period may be used *inter alia* to signify cultural identity, political power, state nationalism, and historical memorial;

- the ability of critical visual analysis of archaeological evidence, and the results of such analysis, to formulate, develop, and argue an hypothesis/thesis based on this primary evidence;

- a developed understanding of the limits of archaeological evidence in the reconstruction of ancient societies and the restrictions the material record places on our ability to formulate hypotheses and interpretations;

- advanced oral communication skills through the oral *seminar presentation* of a scholarly argument/hypothesis using the archaeological and written evidence, and the appropriate and effective use of visual aids (publications, power point, etc.); the ability to lead and direct class discussion, and meet the challenge of questions/criticisms of seminar content;

- to have advanced written communication skills in the clear and organized presentation of an argument/hypothesis within the prescribed limits of the *research paper*; among the basic research skills acquired are the ability to collect relevant bibliography on a prescribed topic,
critically engage with the scholarly literature with an assessment of the relative merits of an argument, and write a thesis in a format that includes a clear introductory statement of intent, a well-constructed and logical presentation of the argument including the relative merits of various scholarly opinions, and a conclusion that gives an assessment of the evidence and the author’s own evaluation of the evidence.

SEMINAR PRESENTATION

Every seminar should have a handout including:

- outline of presentation with key points
- principal bibliography (1-2 pages in length) with an oral critical commentary on the scholarly sources at the start of the presentation
- list of primary sources relevant to topic
- other useful information, e.g. dates, buildings, mythological content etc. to be covered

ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE PRESENTATION THE CLASS SHOULD BE GIVEN A VERY SELECTIVE READING LIST TO HELP FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH YOUR TOPIC.

SEMINAR PAPER

The final written paper should be approximately 4000 - 5000 words in length.

The required referencing style is the Chicago Style format (in-text citations):
e.g. cite author, date, page references in parentheses: e.g. (Wilson 1985, pp. 45-50).
https://www.lib.uwo.ca/files/styleguides/ChicagoStyleAuthorDate.pdf

Illustrations (figures/plates) are encouraged; include a list at the end of the paper with bibliographic source: e.g. FIG. 1 or PLATE 1 – Ling 1991, fig. 48, pl. X.

SEMINAR TOPICS

1. The Athenian soros at Marathon: the archaeological and epigraphic evidence.

2. The Theseion, Kimon, and empire in Early Classical Athens.

3. The Stoa Poikile: Marathon and Athenian Nationalism in the 5th C.


5. The Amazonomachy in later 6th through 5th Cs. Athens: evolution, representation, and meaning (from the Athenian Treasury at Delphi to the Athena Parthenos shield).
6. The Centauromachy in later 6th through 5th Cs. Athens: evolution, representation, and meaning (cf. the Temple of Zeus at Olympia).

7. The Parthenon and the archaios naos in 5th C. Athens: their functions & meaning.

8. Athens during the Peloponnesian War: collapse of an empire and the artistic response (Temple of Athena Nike and late 5th C. red figure vase painting).


10. Private grave stelai and cenotaphs in Classical Athens (late 5th through 4th Cs.)