CS 9552:
Burial and Identity in the Roman Provinces
Graduate Seminar
Fall 2023

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes a close look at the different and varied traditions across the Roman provinces of burial and commemoration of individuals and groups. The provinces provide rich case studies to look at this subject because of the different processes of change, continuity, and creation that took place in the wake of conquest and subjugation by the Roman empire. The varied traditions that existed before conquest provide a rich backdrop for exploring responses to imperial rule. Burial practice is often a place in which groups and individuals solidified their status in society and across regions, and in many places became an important locus of individual and collective identity. We will look across the empire (not necessarily every single province) to understand the physical monuments and, where possible, the motivations behind burial traditions, both before and after incorporation into the broader Roman world. We will also use this context to explore theoretical approaches to processes of cultural change and to look beyond basic binaries of continuity vs. change in provincial contexts.

ASSIGNMENTS and COURSE BREAKDOWN

Grades are dependent upon participation in the class and the independent research that you will do for the course, as follows:

In-class Participation:	25%
Article presentation #1:	15%
Article presentation #2:	15%
Research presentation:	10%
Research Paper:	35%

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

In-class Participation: 25%
This course is a discussion-based course that holds the expectations of graduate level debate and engagement. I expect that you will come to class having read the material assigned and with questions and discussion points to pose to our group. Graduate seminars are what you make of them, and they are not for me to talk and you to listen. Graduate school moves you beyond that mode of learning. There will be very few occasions that I will give an outright lecture, except to provide background on themes and topics and the sites that we will discuss in the second half of the course. I am here to facilitate and also participate myself, but I do not carry the full three

hours of the seminar. Productive participation in a graduate course includes bringing both thoughtful ideas and observations, as well as questions that provoke further discussion and debate. Simple observations, critiques of whether or not you "liked" an article (or criticism of writing style, organization of an article, etc.) or attacks on authors is not considered productive debate and does not further fruitful conversation. A few minutes of that is fine at the start of a discussion, and sometimes it is relevant for a more in-depth analysis of work, but remember that this is not sophisticated participation and shouldn't be the only type of contribution you make to the class. *If you have any further questions or want to discuss class participation further, please don't hesitate to come chat with me.*

Article Presentation #1: 15%
Article Presentation #2: 15%
These assignments will be fairly traditional and will include the presentation of articles that are on the syllabus. You will do a presentation for the class so they understand its contents, the main arguments and conclusions of the author. This type of assignment is done for two reasons: 1) It will give you the opportunity to get to know an important body of work in depth and the experience to summarize this work for another group of people (your classmates). This is an important exercise to master as you move into your graduate careers and will be expected to perform analysis and communication such as this on a regular basis; 2) It will cut down the reading for everyone else to a more manageable amount. So, on the week you present you will feel like you have some extra work but on the other weeks you will have one fewer article to read and you can sit back and listen to one of your classmates tell you what it's all about.

Research Presentation: 10%
This will be somewhat informal but I would like everyone to take seriously sharing your research with the class and learning how to convey to others the importance of your research and the conclusions you are reaching. Practically speaking, this will force you to think pretty seriously about this research paper well before the end of the term. We will spend the last class meeting sharing our research (more if the class is large) and getting peer feedback on your work to that point.

Research Paper: 35%
This will be a research project that will probably take the form of a traditional written research essay. We can talk about other formats but only if they involve serious scholarly approaches and outcomes (this is not undergrad anymore, so no blogs, podcasts, etc.). I understand, however, that research can go in different directions using emerging technologies, so if there is something interesting you'd like to do, come talk to me.

Given the subject matter, I assume most people will do a research essay. I understand that this subject will be new to many of you, so you should use part of this research project to explore new topics and approaches. I have never taught this class before, so really we're exploring things together here and I have no set notion of how this will go. Let's figure out what is most interesting to you and how that can be explored in the most useful and fruitful way.

GETTING DISCUSSION GOING

It can sometimes be tough to get going on discussion, especially if you're new to the program or not comfortable with your surroundings in a graduate seminar yet. Let's make this easier with a few approaches that may seem a bit childish at first, but I promise will help to get your thoughts going. Every week we'll start with you answering and bringing a few questions to the class. This is a very easy-going space and we are not in competition with each other, so let's keep this productive and helpful always. So, every class bring this information with you:

1. What is one entirely new thing that you learned this week?
2. What surprised or intrigued you the most from the readings this week?
3. What did you think you knew, but the readings told you something different or changed your mind about?
4. What did you learn this week that shocked you the most?
5. What would you like to know more about?

Feel free to add your own elements to this list. What other questions do you find useful to guide your reading? Remember to take notes as you read. Don't rely on remembering everything you thought or wanted to say. Often with several articles per week on the agenda, ideas that seemed so clear two days ago can get jumbled as you read more articles on the same subject. Whatever else works for you to think critically about our subject matter is great. Bring ideas and share with the class!

COURSE MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this course nor anything you are expected to buy. Much of what we will read is already online and we will crowdsource the rest as we go through the semester. Let's just keep the lines of communication open on this front and we'll all have what we need for the course. I will drop everything I already have into a folder so it's available. We'll discuss this further on the first day of class.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1 (Sept. 11): Introductory stuff
Content: Burial in the Roman World (who? what? where?); The context and meaning of the empire and the provinces

Reading:
To get a good overview of burial practices in the Roman world read: Wikipedia, "Roman funerary practices": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_funerary_practices
(weirdly, this is a really good and in-depth article with all the basics for understanding Roman burial practices broadly)

Please skim (just to get an idea of topics surrounding burial, read what really interests you):

Toynbee, J.M.C. 1996 (1971). *Death and Burial in the Roman World*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Carroll, M. 2006. *Spirits of the dead: Roman funerary commemoration in Western Europe*. Oxford University Press.

WEEK 2 (Sept. 18): Tool Kit #1—The Relationship between Archaeology and Identity

Content: Burial and commemoration in Rome and Italy (Elite burials in Rome, Isola Sacra at Ostia, Pompeii "streets of tombs", Caere necropoleis, etc.)
Discussion: Identity and Archaeology
Reading:
1. Hope, V.M. 1997. "Constructing Roman identity: Funerary Monuments and Social Structure in the Roman World." *Mortality* 2.2: 103-21.
2. Carroll, M. 2011. "Memoria and Damnatio Memoriae. Preserving and erasing identities in Roman funerary commemoration." In *Living Through the Dead: Burial and Commemoration in the Classical World*, edited by M. Carroll and J. Rempell, 65-90. Oxbow. (this volume should be on JSTOR)
3. Pitts, M. 2007. "The Emperor's New Clothes? The Utility of Identity in Roman Archaeology." *AJA* 111: 693–713. https://doi.org/10.3764/aja.111.4.693
4. Wallace-Hadrill, A. 2012. "The Creation and Expression of Identity: The Roman World." In *Classical Archaeology* (2nd edition) edited by S. Alcock and R. Osborne, 368-. Wiley-Blackwell (online at Weldon)

Presentations:
Corrado, C., A. Prieto and M.L. Goldman. 2023. "Aedicula Tombs and Statues in Rome: Reconsidering the Monument of Eurysaces," *AJA* 127: 365-96.

Dexheimer, D. 2000. "Portrait figures on sepulchral altars of Roman *liberti*: evidence of Romanization or assimilation of attributes characterizing higher social strata?" in J. Pearce, M. Millett and M. Struck (eds.), *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World*. Oxbow. 78-84.

WEEK 3 (Sept. 25—in person): Tool Kit #2—Thinking about 'change' in the Provinces

Content: The landscape of burial in the Roman provinces and sources of investigation
Discussion: Continuity, Change and Creation
Reading:
1. Pearce, J. 2011. "Marking the Dead: Tombs and Topography in the Roman Provinces." In *Living Through the Dead: Burial and Commemoration in the Classical World*, edited by M. Carroll and J. Rempell, 134-158. Oxbow. (this volume should be on JSTOR)

2. Ghisleni, L. 2018. "Contingent Persistence: Continuity, Change, and Identity in the Romanization debate." *Current Anthropology* 59.2: 138-66.
3. Jiménez, A. 2008. "A Critical Approach to the Concept of Resistance: New 'Traditional' Rituals and Objects in Funerary Contexts of Roman Baetica." In *TRAC 2007: Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, London 2007*, edited by C. Fenwick, M. Wiggins, and D. Wythe, 15-30. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
4. Riggs, C. 2010. "Tradition and Innovation in the Burial Practices of Roman Egypt," in K. Lembke, M. Minas-Nerpel and S. Pfeiffer (eds.), *Tradition and Transformation: Egypt under Roman Rule.* Brill. 343-56.

WEEK 4 (Oct. 2—class online): The Funeral and Mortuary Rituals

Content: Thinking about the construction of death for the living; Consider burial goods in Halstatt and La Tene burials in Europe

Reading:
1. Pearce, J. 2017. "Introduction: Death as a Process in Roman funerary archaeology," in J. Pearce and J. Weekes (eds.), *Death as a Process: The Archaeology of the Roman Funeral.* Oxbow. 1-26.
2. Aarts, J. and S. Heeren. 2017. "Buried Batavians: Mortuary rituals of a rural frontier community," in J. Pearce and J. Weekes (eds.), *Death as a Process: The Archaeology of the Roman Funeral.* Oxbow. 123-154.
3. Lepetz, S. 2017. "Animals in funerary practices: Sacrifices, offerings and meals at Rome and in the Provinces," in J. Pearce and J. Weekes (eds.), *Death as a Process: The Archaeology of the Roman Funeral.* Oxbow. 226-256.
4. Perry, M.A. 2017. "Sensing the Dead: Mortuary Ritual and Tomb Visitation at Nabataean Petra," *Syria* 94: 99-106.
5. Polfer, M. 2000. "Reconstructing funerary rituals: the evidence of *ustrina* and related archaeological structures," in J. Pearce, M. Millett and M. Struck (eds.), *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World.* Oxbow. 30-37.

Presentations:
de Jong, L. 2010. "Performing Death in Tyre: The Life and Afterlife of a Roman Cemetery in the Province of Syria," *American Journal of Archaeology* 114.4: 597-630.

Graham, E.-J., C.L. Sulosky Weaver and A.T. Chamberlain. 2018. "Pars Pro Toto" and Personhood in Roman Cremation Ritual: New Bioarchaeological Evidence for the Rite of "Os Resectum" *Bioarchaeology International* 2.4.

OCTOBER 9—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

WEEK 5 (Oct. 16—in person): Reading Burial and Commemoration: How do we interpret burials in the provinces?

Content: Philopappos in Athens; Igel monument in Germany; Pannonian reliefs.

Reading:
1. Miles, R. 2000. "Communicating culture, identity and power," in J. Huskinson (ed.), *Experiencing Rome: Culture, Identity and Power in the Roman Empire.* Routledge. 29-62.
2. Heyn, M. 2010. "Gesture and Identity in the Funerary Art of Palmyra." *American Journal of Archaeology* 114.4: 631–61.
3. Hope, V.M. 1997. "Words and Pictures: The Interpretation of Romano-British Tombstones," *Britannia* 28: 245-58.
4. de Jong, L. 2017. "The Dead: Bones, Portraits, and Epitaphs," Chapter 4 in *The Archaeology of Death in Roman Syria: Burial, Commemoration, and Empire*. Cambridge Univ. Press. 102-45.
5. Jovanović, A. 2000. "Romanization and ethnic elements in burial practice in the southern part of Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior," in J. Pearce, M. Millett and M. Struck (eds.), *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World.* Oxbow. 204-14.

Presentations:
Slawisch, A. 2016. "Reading the Image? Ambiguities in the Interpretation of Banquet Scenes on Grave Stelai from Roman Thrace," in in C.M. Draycott and M. Stamatopoulou (eds.), *Dining and Death: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the 'Funerary Banquet' in Ancient Art, Burial and Belief.* Peeters. 591-626.

Sokolowski, L. 2017. "Portrait as a Medium? Interpreting Funerary Portrait Reliefs from Palmyra as a Means of Communication," *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Journal* 2016: 17–35.

WEEK 6 (Oct. 23—online): Fayum Mummy Portraits in Egypt

Reading:
1. Background on Fayum portraits: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fayum_mummy_portraits
2. Riggs, C. 2002. "Facing the Dead: Recent Research on the Funerary Art of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt," *American Journal of Archaeology* 106.1: 85-101.
3. Walker, S. 1997. "Mummy Portraits in their Roman Context," in M.L. Bierbrier (ed.), *Portraits and Masks: Burial Customs in Roman Egypt*. 1-6 (Weldon: N7588.P67)
4. Walker, S. 1997. "Mummy Portraits and Roman portraiture," in S. Walker and M. Bierbrier (eds.) *Ancient Faces: Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt* (London) 14-17 (Weldon N7582.B75)

5. Borg, B. 1995. "Problems in the Dating of the Mummy Portraits," in E. Doxiadis (ed.), *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits. Faces from Ancient Egypt.* London. 229-33 (PDF online)
6. Brier, B. and C. Wilkinson. 2005. "A Preliminary Study on the Accuracy of Mummy Portraits," *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 132.2: 107-111 (ordered this from ILL: 9/10)

Presentations:
Montserrat, D. 1993. "The Representation of Young Males in 'Fayum Portraits'" *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 79.1: 215-25.

Prag, A.J.N.W. 2002. "Proportion and personality in the Fayum Portraits," *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 3: 55-63.

OCTOBER 30—READING WEEK BREAK

WEEK 7 (Nov. 6): Research and meetings week
(No group class meeting; schedule with me to discuss research ideas)

WEEK 8 (Nov. 13—class online): Hybridity in Burial Practices
Content: Rock cut tombs at Petra; Sabratha and North African monuments.

Reading:
1. Annan, B. 2022. "A multifaceted death: Funerary portraiture in Roman Jordan," *Studies in the history and archaeology of Jordan* 14: 415-445. https://cnrs.hal.science/hal-04087490/document
2. Dirven, L. 2018. "Palmyrene Sculpture in Context: Between Hybridity and Heterogeneity," in J. Aruz (ed.), *Palmyra: Mirage in the Desert*. Metropolitan Museum of Art. 120-129.

3. Raja, R. 2015. "Palmyrene Funerary Portraits in Context: Portrait Habit between Local Traditions and Imperial Trends," in J. Fejfer, M. Moltesen and A. Rathke (eds.), *Tradition: Transmission of Culture in the Ancient World*. Museum Tusculanum Press. 329–62.
4. Wadeson, L. 2012. "The funerary landscape of Petra: results from a new study," *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 42, Supplement: *The Nabataeans in Focus: Current Archaeological Research at Petra*. Archaeopress. 99-125 (JSTOR)

Presentations:
de Jong, L. 2001-2. "Aspects of Roman Burial Practices in Beirut: On Romanization and Cultural Exchange," *ARAM* 13-14: 293-312.

Perry, M.A. 2002. "Life and Death in Nabataea: The North Ridge Tombs and Nabataean Burial Practices," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 65.4: 265-70.

WEEK 9 (Nov. 20—in person): Palmyran Tombs and Stele

Reading:
1. Kropp, A.J.M. and R. Raja. 2014. "The Palmyra Portrait Project." *Syria* 91, 2014: 393–408. https://journals.openedition.org/syria/2146
2. Raja, R. 2018. "Palmyrene Funerary Portraits: Collection Histories and Current Research," in J. Aruz (ed.), *Palmyra: Mirage in the Desert*. Metropolitan Museum of Art. 100-109.
3. Heyn, M. 2018. "Embodied Identities in the Funerary Portraiture of Palmyra," in J. Aruz (ed.), *Palmyra: Mirage in the Desert*. Metropolitan Museum of Art. 110-119.
4. Schmidt-Colinet, A. 2018. "The Tombs at Palmyra and Their Decoration," in C. Eger and M. Mackensen (eds.), *Death and Burial in the Near East from Roman to Islamic Times*. Reichert Verlag. 29–48.

Presentations:
de Jong, L. 2019. "Monuments, Landscape and Memory: The Emergence of Tower-tombs in Tadmor-Palmyra," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 62.1: 30–52.

Sokolowski, Lukasz. 2014. "Portraying the Literacy of Palmyra: The Evidence of Funerary Sculpture and its Interpretation," *Institut des Cultures Méditerranéennes et Orientales de l'académie Polonaise des Sciences* 27: 376–403.

Brøns, C. J. Stenger, J. Bredal-Jørgensen, F. Di Gianvincenzo and L. Ørsted Brandt. 2022. "Palmyrene Polychromy: Investigations of Funerary Portraits from Palmyra in the Collections of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen," *Heritage* 5(2): 1199-1239. https://doi.org/10.3390/heritage5020063

WEEK 10 (Nov. 27—in person): Military Burials in the Roman Empire

Reading:
1. Hope, V.M. 2003. "Trophies and Tombstones: Commemorating the Roman Soldier," *World Archaeology* 35.1: 79-97.
2. Feucht, B. 2011. "Uniformity up to the grave? Funerary inscriptions of Roman legionaries in western Europe," *Ancient Society* 41: 147-183.
3. Hope, V. 2000. "Inscription and Sculpture: The Construction of Identity in the Military Tombstones of Roman Mainz," in G.J. Oliver (ed.), *The Epigraphy of Death: Studies in the History and Society of Greece and Rome*. Liverpool University Press. 155-86.

4. Bull, S. 2007. *Triumphant Rider: The Lancaster Roman Cavalry Tombstone*. Lancashire Museums.
5. Speidel, M.A. 2019. "Roman Soldiers' Gravestones in Greater Syria: Thoughts on Designs, Imports, and Impact," in M. Blömer and R. Raja (eds.), *Funerary Portraiture in Greater Roman Syria.* Brepols. 83-93.

Presentations:
Dimitrova, N. 2002. "Inscriptions and Iconography in the Monuments of the Thracian Rider," *Hesperia* 71.2: 209-229.

WEEK 11 (Dec. 4—in person): Research Presentations

INTERESTING RECENT WORK BUT COULDN'T FIT IN:

Baughan, E.P. 2016. "Burial *Klinai* and *Totenmahl*?" in C.M. Draycott and M. Stamatopoulou (eds.), *Dining and Death: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the 'Funerary Banquet' in Ancient Art, Burial and Belief.* Peeters. 195-218.

Salisbury, H. 2022. "Inscribing the artistic space: Blurred boundaries on Romano-British Tombstones," in E.H. Cousins (ed.), *Dynamic Epigraphy: New Approaches to Inscriptions*. Oxbow. 121-42.

Wardle, K.A. and D. Wardle. 2004. "Glimpses of private life: Roman rock cut tombs of the first and second centuries AD at Knossos," British School at Athens Studies 12, Knossos: Palace, City, State. 473-480.

Dickenson, C. 2016. "Contested bones: The politics of public burial in Roman Greece (c. 200 BC – 200 AD)," *Ancient Society* 46: 95-163.

Emmerson, A.L.C. 2017. "Beyond Continuity and Change: The *Columelle* of Southern Campania," *American Journal of Archaeology* 121.3: 345-68.

Turner, B. 2013. "War losses and worldview: Re-viewing the roman funerary altar at Adamclisi," *American Journal of Philology* 134.2: 277-304.

Dal Fovo, A., M. Fedi, G. Federico, L. Liccioli, S. Barone and R. Fontana. 2021. "Multi-Analytical Characterization and Radiocarbon Dating of a Roman Egyptian Mummy Portrait," *Molecules* 26, 5268. https://doi.org/10.3390/molecules26175268

Filer, J. 1997. "If the face fits … : A comparison of mummies and their accompanying portraits using computerised axial tomography," in M. Bierbrier (ed.), *Portraits and Masks: Burial Customs in Roman Egypt* (London) 121–6.

Ikram, S. 2003. "Barbering the beardless: a possible explanation for the tufted hairstyle depicted in the
'Fayum' portrait of a young boy (J. P. Getty 78.AP.262)," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 2003: 247-51.

Nerlich, A.G., L. Fischer, S. Panzer, R. Bicker, T. Helmberger and S. Schoske. 2020. "The infant mummy's face—Paleoradiological investigation and comparison between facial reconstruction and mummy portrait of a Roman-period Egyptian child," *PLOS ONE* 15(9): e0238427.
https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0238427

De Bernardin, M. 2021. "Palmyrene Funerary Portraits: A 'Conflict Antiquities' Case," *The Journal of cultural Heritage Crime* http://doi.org/10.30687/978-88-6969-517-9/004

Baird, J.A. and Z. Kamash. 2019. "Remembering Roman Syria: valuing
Tadmor-Palmyra from 'Discovery' to destruction," Bulletin of the Institute of
Classical Studies 62.1: 1-29.
https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/25401/1/01_Baird_Kamash_Ed1c.pdf

Magnani, S. and P. Mior. 2017. "Palmyrene Elites: Aspects of Self-Representation and Integration in Hadrian's Age," in V. Rada and V. Rusu-Bolindet (eds.), *Official Power and Local Elites in the Roman Provinces*. Routledge. 116–35.