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Ancient History

Instructors:



Fresh off a European lecture tour, **DR. MARIE N. PAREJA** (her students call her Doc) is a Bronze Age Aegean archaeologist and art historian who focuses on iconography, exchange, and identity in prehistoric Afro-Eurasia. She currently works as an Assistant Professor of Classical Archaeology and Religious Studies at Marshall University and as a Consulting Scholar for the University of Pennsylvania. Some of her most recent work has been featured in Smithsonian magazine, and her up-and-coming projects on the interconnectivity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods were hosted by the University of Oxford in early December 2022. She is thrilled to be part of People's University and looks forward to speaking with you.



DR. LAURA MICHELE DIENER has taught ancient and medieval history at Marshall University since 2008, where she has won several awards for teaching. She received her PhD in history from The Ohio State University and has studied at Vassar College, Newham College, Cambridge, and most recently, Vermont College of Fine Arts. She enjoys teaching classes on fascinating peoples of the past, including Vikings, Romans, Ancient Egyptians, and Celts.

She runs the History Club at Marshall and enjoys organizing the yearly Viking Feast and Yuletide Celebration. If you google her, you will find some of her creative essays online. She has written about medieval spirituality, medieval embroidery, and medieval hair. She is currently writing a biography of the Norwegian Nobel-prize-winning writer, Sigrid Undset titled *A World Perilous and Beautiful*.



What is the People's University?

In keeping with the mission of public libraries as sanctuaries of free learning for all people, the Ohio County Public Library created The People's University, a *free* program for adults who wish to continue their education in the liberal arts. The People's University features courses—taught by experts in each subject—that enable patrons to pursue their goal of life-long learning in classic subjects such as history, philosophy, & literature.

Library-Sponsored Programs Policy

The purpose of Ohio County Public Library-sponsored programs is to provide education, information, and entertainment for library patrons. The Library reserves the right to exercise sole discretion in selecting and inviting presenters for its programs. In selecting presenters, the Library does not discriminate on account of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, religion, ancestry or national origin, and the views expressed by presenters of Library-sponsored programs, or by any person in attendance at the programs, do not necessarily reflect the views of the Library, its staff, and/or its representatives.



Ancient History

WINTER 2023



Ohio County Public Library

52 16th Street | Wheeling, WV

www.ohiocountylibrary.org



Attend as many classes as you wish.
There are no tests or other requirements.

Class Schedule:

CLASS 1: THURSDAY, JAN. 5 — 7PM **EGYPT PART 1 - GODS AND PYRAMIDS**

Egypt was a superpower in the Near East for over 3000 years. By the time Cleopatra came to the throne, the pyramids were thousands of years old, and she would have considered their builders to have been "ancient," much as we do. In this class, we will study the glory days of truly ancient Egypt, covering the emergence of royal power, exalted gods, and military might. And we will spend time considering the tale of the once lost Egyptian hieroglyphs and how they came to reveal their secrets to the modern world.

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CLASS 2: THURSDAY, JAN. 12 — 7PM **EGYPT PART 2 - THE PHARAOHS**

I have no doubt you have heard of Cleopatra, but what about Hatshepsut, the first Egyptian woman to rule in her own right, and the one who created the word, pharaoh? Or Rameses III, who was brutally assassinated by the denizens of his own harem? In this class, we will cover some of the most colorful of the New Kingdom rulers, examining their private lives, their public personas, and their legacy in tombs and temples.

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CLASS 3: THURSDAY, JAN. 19 — 7PM **GREECE PART 1 - MINOAN, MYCENAEAN, & HOMERIC**

The Bronze Age lasts for approximately 2,000 years — 3,000-1170 BCE. During this period, we see a shift from the settled and (some still maintain) isolated cultures from Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, and the broader Mediterranean, to a highly-integrated, multicultural, globalized system. In this class, we will focus primarily on the Bronze Age Aegean and what we see in the iconographic and archaeological record, including the most famous sites and artworks from each region and period. We will cover Early Cycladic hilltop structures and the many fakes and forgeries of Cycladic Folded Arm Figurines that can be seen in museums around the world (and you'll learn how to spot the authentic ones!); the site of Knossos on Crete, and some of its most important wall paintings and artifacts; The site of Akrotiri, on the island of Santorini, which survived by virtue of a cataclysmic volcanic eruption; and Mycenae, the great settlement from which the legendary Agamemnon and Menelaos sailed to Troy in Homer's Iliad.

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CLASS 4: THURSDAY, JAN. 26 — 7PM **GREECE PART 2-ARCHAIC & CLASSICAL**

With the collapse of the Bronze Age Aegean cultures in ca. 1170, Greece rested for a few hundred years in a relative dark age, neglecting and then forgetting the masterful heights of technological and artistic culture of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. They began the slow slog back to prominence, which we will trace through the art historical record, primarily through human statuary with a few forays into some architecture and even myth. It is through this lens that we will trace the rise of Greek culture from the Geometric

and Archaic Periods, through the Classical period and up to the rule of Alexander the Great, in the Hellenistic period. Be ready for conversation, as most of us have at least a passing familiarity with Classical Greek culture — even if it's reading Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson novels (or any of the others)! This is going to be a fun exploration of our collective pasts, with plenty of time for questions and discussion.

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CLASS 5: THURSDAY, FEB. 2 — 7PM

GREECE PART 3 - ALEXANDER THE GREAT & THE HELLENISTIC EGYPT

The history of Egypt changed during the fourth century BC, when the unstoppable Alexander the Great conquered the Near East and the Middle East from Greece to India, defeating the Persian Empire and uniting the most unlikely of kingdoms under his rule and those of his successors. Although Alexander's victory in Egypt ended its 3000-year supremacy, it also ushered in a new period of international involvement, foreign gods, city-building, and the Greek-speaking Ptolemaic dynasty. The Ptolemies, named for one Alexander's generals, were some of the most murderous, bloodthirsty, and back-stabbing rulers of the ancient world, of which the great Cleopatra (actually the seventh Queen Cleopatra) was the last and the most famous.

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CLASS 6: THURSDAY, FEB. 9 — 7PM

ROME PART 1-THE PERIOD OF THE KINGS THROUGH THE REPUBLIC

The Romans believed they were descended from a long line of gods and heroes. Their oldest stories celebrated the demise of tyrants, the value of shared power, and respect for family. We will consider how these founding myths helped shape their identity as they rose from a small collective of farmer-warriors to a massive empire within the space of about two hundred years.

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CLASS 7: THURSDAY, FEB. 16 — 7PM

Rome Part 2-RISE & FALL OF EMPIRE

By the time of Julius Caesar was murdered during the Ides of March, the Romans had been living through almost a century of civil wars marked by massacres, betrayal, and upheaval. During the first century BC, the Republic had begun to break down under the pressures of expansion and ambition. In this class, we will cover the cataclysmic end of the Republic and the formation of imperial rule under Emperor Augustus and his successors. Despite its blood-soaked beginnings, the Empire ushered in a golden age of Roman peace and prosperity known as the Pax Romana.

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CLASS 8: THURSDAY, FEB. 23 — 7PM

THE TRAGEDY OF POMPEII

Before Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD, Pompeii was a thriving, dynamic, and international city whose story intertwined with the key events of Roman history. In this course, we will consider the complex past of Pompeii before and after its cataclysmic destruction. Using unique archeological sources from graffiti to sewage, we will explore the very real people who lived, loved, and died in the most well-preserved of ancient cities.

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ALL CLASSES ARE HELD IN THE LIBRARY AUDITORIUM & BROADCAST LIVE ONLINE ON



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