

Papalexandrou Nassos

Application for a Curriculum Development Award, Summer 2021

Title of project:

Reconceptualizing and redesigning ARH 302: Survey of Art from Paleolithic to Gothic

Abstract: In the wake of the Black Lives Matter Movement and other recent sociopolitical events, it is imperative that ARH 302 is reconceptualized in order to introduce students to a non-western based introduction to material and visual culture from Paleolithic to Gothic. This reconceptualization will involve a) areas traditionally left outside discussions of art, e.g. Africa and Asia b) a critical perspective towards the alleged foundations of the Western Tradition.

Definition of the project:

I have been offering ARH 302 on a yearly basis since 2002, when I started teaching at UT. Over the years, I have introduced small changes in order to broaden the perspective taken in this course, for example, I have diminished emphasis on Greek art (one of my specializations) while including areas like Mesoamerica or South Asia as foils to a western oriented trajectory. In the wake of the Black Lives Matter Movement, this needs to change. I intend to abandon the linear chronological coverage of major periods or cultures in favor of a more thematic trajectory. For example, instead of covering Paleolithic art in terms of its chronological precedence, I will instead include thematic approaches such as that by David Lewis-Williams, who aligns cave art with art produced until recently all around the world by societies with strong shamanistic traditions. The point is to de-emphasize Europe as a center of developments in favor of a more global anthropological perspective. Another example includes a more sensitive appreciation of the ambivalent legacy of the Parthenon: a cornerstone of western ideology, aesthetics, and values but also a symbol, as it turns out, of White Supremacy in Jim Crow America. My intention is to turn ARH 302 into a global enterprise, giving up implicit and explicit western-centric agendas.

Plan and method of work:

My broadening of ARH 302 aims at rendering more inclusive, more critical, and global in its perspective and problematization of visual and material culture throughout the ages. In addition to reshuffling the chronological development, I will include areas such as South Asia (Buddhism, Hinduism and Indus Valley civilizations), Africa (the great empires), and the Pacific under relevant thematic angles (archeology of empires, religion, and commerce, ritual and religion, politics and visual culture, the built environment etc). This entails a significant amount of research, which I propose to undertake during the tenure of the CDA. I also plan to interview colleagues, both inside and outside UT, in various specializations in order to calibrate my understanding of phenomena versus those of specialists in various fields. I will have to cooperate with VRC and its personnel in order to come up with the visual materials that need to be included in the reconceptualization I propose (ppt, video, audio etc). My plan also includes the construction of interactive modules for facilitating students' more active engagement and learning in this course. This is an area I have yet to investigate further, especially regarding technologies and pedagogical interventions.

Impact for UT Students:

My aim is to alert diverse students to diverse approaches to the study of material and visual culture (art) by emphasizing appreciation of creative phenomena of social life in the past. While making them cognizant of western traditions and canons, I will sensitize them to their implicit agendas and how these are complicit in perpetuating views that perpetuate injustices and inequities such as those underlying the motivations for the Black Lives Matter movement.

Expected results:

I love offering ARH 302, but it needs to be one that addresses contemporary concerns while challenging students to critically appreciate world-wide artistic/archaeological heritage. In the format I envisage, students will have to confront their biases or ignorance in order to embrace a more interrogative stance towards humanity and its social life throughout the period covered in

this course. As I always emphasize in the classroom, we expect UT undergrads to be citizens of this world, but without proper knowledge and appreciation of how and why this world is the way it is, they will never imagine how to change it.

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I have included my previous UT awards in my CV. In 2019-2020, I was a recipient of a Provost's Author's Fellowship, which enabled me to finish a long book manuscript which has been long in the making. I am currently on a Dean's Fellowship to jump start a new research project and see my current book to press. Previous FRA's in the last ten years were dedicated to this book.

[Document title]

Papalexandrou vita as of June 2020

Nassos Papalexandrou

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Education

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey
PhD in Classical Art and Archaeology, October 1998
MA in Art and Archaeology, October 1993

Positions Held (most recent)

Associate Professor of Classical Art and Archaeology, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Art and Art History, 2008-present (tenured appointment); Center for Middle Eastern Studies (courtesy appointment); Classics: affiliated faculty

Assistant Professor of Classical Art and Archaeology, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Art and Art History, 2002-2008

NEH Fellow, Senior Associate Member, American School of Classical Studies at Athens 2017.

Paul Mellon Senior Visiting Fellowship, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery, Washington DC (Fall 2015)

Gertrude B. Smith Professor, American School of Classical Studies, Athens, Greece, Summer 2014, Summer Session II

Humanities Institute, The University of Texas at Austin, Senior Fellow (Fall 2009)

Awards (most recent)

COFA Dean's Fellowship (Fall 2020)

UT Provost's Authors Fellowship (May 2019-August 2020)

UT Faculty Research Leave (Spring 2015, Faculty Research Assignment)

UT COFA Creative Research Award, 2012-2013

UT Faculty Research Leave (Spring 2010, Faculty Research Assignment)

Areas of specialization/Research Interests:

Early Greek Visual Culture, Art and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, Interconnections between Greece and the Near East, Orientalizing phenomenon in the Mediterranean (8th-6th c BCE), Art and Archaeology of Cyprus, Art and Architecture of Greek Sanctuaries, Art as a Means of Communication in Pre-literate Societies,

Publications:

Books:

The Visual Poetics of Power: Warriors, Youths, and Tripods in Early Greece, Greek Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches, Ed. Greg Nagy (Lexington Books: Lanham 2005)
Brazen Monsters and the Cultures of Wonder: Griffin Cauldrons in the Preclassical Mediterranean (University of Texas Press, spring 2021)

Recent Publications:

Submitted or currently in press:

“Vision as Ecstatic Experience in the Ancient Mediterranean.” In *Ecstatic Experience in the Ancient World*, edited by Diana Stein, Sarah Kielt Costello and Karen Polinger Foster (Routledge Handbook Series, submitted September 15, 2020)

*“Caves as Sites of Sensory and Cognitive Enhancement.” In *Caves and Worship in Ancient Greece. New Approaches to Landscape and Ritual*, edited by Stella Katsarou and Alexander Nagel (Routledge, submitted Jan. 15, 2020).

*“Griffins in the Menil Collection. Architectural Revetments from Turkey in Light of Provenience, Provenance, and Presentation” In *Biographies of Objects | Antiquities in the Menil Collection. Proceedings of CAC Conference held at the Menil Collection, October 17-19, 2017*, ed. by John Hopkins, Sarah Costello and Paul Davis (in press).

*“Collecting Greek Antiquities in the '60s: A Group of Early Greek Bronzes in the Menil Collection.” In *Biographies of Objects | Antiquities in the Menil Collection. Proceedings of CAC Conference held at the Menil Collection, October 17-19, 2017*, ed. by John Hopkins, Sarah Costello and Paul Davis (in press).

*“The Role of Greek Sanctuaries as Nodes of Material and Artistic Interaction between Etruria and Anatolia.” In *Material Connections and Artistic Exchange. The Case of Etruria and Anatolia. Proceedings of the International Workshop, Rome, May 19-21, 2016*, edited by Elizabeth Baughan and Lisa Pieraccini (Cambridge UP, submitted January 2019).

Published:

“The Multi-Corporeality of Beings and Objects in the Mediterranean during the Orientalizing Period.” In *Hybrid and Extraordinary Beings. Deviations from 'Normality' in Ancient Greek Mythology and Modern Medicine. Proceedings of Conference at the University of Ioannina, Ioannina, May 26-27, 2017*, edited by Panayiotis Soucacos, Ariadne Gartzidou-Tatti and Minas Paschopoulos (Konstandaras Editions, Athens 2017) 41-54.

Translation in English from the original medieval Greek:

Theodoros of Balsamon (13th c.), “Study regarding the three summoning calls in the holy churches of monasteries.” Ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 138 (1865) cols. 1073-75. In *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls. Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*. Edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and Margaret Mullett, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Symposia and Colloquia (Washington D.C. 2017) 82-83.

Translation in English from the original medieval Greek:
Michael Psellos (11th c.), “On the *Hcheion* [echo-chamber] of Nikomedeia.” Ed.
J. M. Duffy, *Michaelis Pselli Philosophica Minora. Vol. 1. Opuscula logica,
physica, allegorica, alia.* Stuttgart and Leipzig, Teubner 1992, 106-109. In
Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls. Sense Perceptions in Byzantium. Edited by
Susan Ashbrook Harvey and Margaret Mullett, *Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine
Symposia and Colloquia* (Washington D.C. 2017) 84-85.

“From Lake Van to the Guadalquivir: Monsters and Vision in the Preclassical
Mediterranean.” In *Assyria to Iberia: Art and Culture in the Iron Age*, The
Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia, edited by Joan Aruz and Michael
Seymour (New York 2016) 263-272.

“Monsters, Fear, and the Uncanny in the Preclassical Mediterranean.” *Center 36*
(2016) 142-145 (Record of Activities and Research Reports, Center for Advanced Study
in the Visual Arts).

“The Old Acropolis Museum, Athens, Greece: An Overdue Necrology.” *Journal
of Modern Greek Studies* 34 (2016) 1-22.

“The Cognitive and Sensory Accessibility of Orientalizing Cauldrons in Pre-roman Italy.” In
*Nuovi studi sul bestiario fantastico di età orientalizzante nella penisola italiana.
Aristonothos: Scritti per il Mediterraneo antico, Quaderni, n. 5.* Edited by Maria Cristina
Biella and Enrico Giovanelli (Tangram, Edizioni Scientifiche: Trento 2016) 173-186.

“Messenian Tripods: A Boiotian Contribution to the Symbolic Construction of the
Messenian Past?” *Attitudes towards the past in Antiquity. Creating identities. Proceedings of
an International Conference held at Stockholm University, 15-17 May 2009* (Acta
Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Stockholm Studies in Classical Archaeology, 14), eds. B.
Alroth & C. Scheffer, Stockholm 2014, 127-137.

Catalog entries on East Greek pottery for exhibition catalog *City of Gold, The Archaeology
of Polis Chrysochous, Cyprus*, ed. W. A. P Childs et al., Princeton University, (Princeton
2012) pp. 82-83, 126-127.

“Vision and Visuality in the Study of Early Greek Religion,” in *Current Approaches
to Religion in Ancient Greece. Papers Presented at the Swedish Institute at Athens
17-19 April 2008*, eds. Matthew Haysom and Jenny Wallensten Acta Instituti
Atheniensis Regni Sueciae, Series in 8°, 21 (Stockholm 2011) 253-268.

“The Clazomenian Sarcophagus at the Princeton Art Museum” *Record of the Art
Museum Princeton University* 69 (2010) 5-21.

“Are there hybrid visual cultures? Reflections on the Orientalizing phenomena in the
Mediterranean of the early first millennium BCE,” *Ars Orientalis* 38 (2010) 31-48.
“Beyond the Acropolis: New Installations of Greek Antiquities in Athenian Museums”
American Journal of Archaeology 114.3 (2010) 549-556.

“Hala Sultan Tekke, Cyprus: An Elusive Landscape of Sacredness in a Liminal Context”

[Document title]

Papalexandrou vita as of June 2020

Journal of Modern Greek Studies 26.2 (2008) 251-281.

“Boiotian Tripods: The Tenacity of a Panhellenic Sacred Symbol in a Regional Context”
Hesperia 77 (2008) 251-282.