

Dr. Winfried Held

AROL 302A
Graduate Seminar: Cultural exchange in the multiethnic empires of the
Achaemenids & Seleucids
Spring Semester 2007/2008

TR 2:00–3:15
Post Hall 207

1. Course Learning Outcomes

The Achaemenid (Persian) and the Seleucid (Makedonian) Dynasties ruled two successive empires covering roughly the same area, including Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia and Baktria. Both were large, multi-ethnic empires, and quite naturally these various cultures were influencing each other within the empire. Yet this happened in a rather different way: In the Persian Empire we see largely a continuity of the local cultures, while the kings themselves developed a specific art and architecture which they applied to their various palaces and to official items like seals and coins. Yet, also some satraps (province governours) adapted this court art as a whole or partially for themselves.

The Seleucid Empire of the Hellenistic Period has a deeper influence, which, despite the widespread view of a "Hellenization of the East", shows features of a cultural exchange in various directions within the empire. The Seminar aims to understand and compare these different cultural features of the successive empires.

2. Suggested readings

- Briant, P. 2002 From Cyrus to Akexander. A History of the Persian Empire (Winona Lake)
Root, M. C. 1979 The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art (Leiden)
Wiesehöfer, J. 1996 Ancient Persia (London)
 Achaemenid History series I-XIII
Kuhrt, A. & Sherwin-White, S. 1987 Hellenism in the East (London)
Kuhrt, A. & Sherwin-White, S. 1993 From Samarkand to Sardis (Berkeley)

3. Grading criteria

Grades in the course will be calculated based on:

- two presentation, and two essays on the same subjects as the presentations (each 25%)

There will be no other exams.

4. Course policy

Students are expected to be on time for class. Latecomers will be counted as absent. Class attendance is required and repeated absence may lead to dropping a student from the course. Make-up exams will only be given to students with a valid excuse. For definitions of cheating and plagiarism as well as the consequences for such see the AUB "Student Code of Conduct" in the Student Handbook (pp. 49-50).

5. Course Syllabus

	Topic of the class	Reading Assignment
Week 1	Tu 12.02.08: The Achaemenid Empire Th 14.02.08: The Achaemenid Empire	
Week 2	Tu 19.02.08: Persepolis Th 21.02.08: Susa, Pasargadae	
Week 3	Tu 26.02.08: The Persian Satraps of Karia I Th 28.02.08: The Persian Satraps of Karia II	
Week 4	Tu 04.03.08: The Persian Satraps of Sardeis Th 06.03.08: The Persian Satraps of Daskyleion	
Week 5	Tu 11.03.08: The Persian Period in Lykia Th 13.03.08 : The Persian Period in Phoenicia I	
Week 6	Tu 18.03.08: The Persian Period in Phoenicia II	
Week 7	Tu 25.03.08: Achaemenid Seals Th 27.03.08: Achaemenid Coinage	
Week 8	Tu 01.04.08: Presentation Th 03.04.08: Presentation	
Week 9	Tu 08.04.08: The Seleucid Empire	
Week 10	Tu 15.04.08: Seleucid Cities I Th 17.04.08: Seleucid Cities II	
Week 11	Tu 22.04.08: Seleucid Temples I Th 24.04.08: Seleucid Temples II	
Week 12	Tu 30.04.08: Seleucid Temples III	
Week 13	Tu 06.05.08: Seleucid Temples IV Th 08.05.08: Seleucid Seals	
Week 14	Tu 13.05.08: Seleucid Sculpture Th 15.05.08: Seleucid Rule in Phoenicia	
Week 15	Tu 20.05.08: Presentation Th 22.05.08: Presentation	
Week 16	Tu 27.05.08 : Revision	