Course Description:
The ancient Americas loom large in the popular imagination as cultures filled with great riches of gold and silver, as well as traditions of ritual sacrifice. But what were these cultures really like? This course will explore the scope and complexity of what were some of the world’s greatest civilizations – civilizations that were in many ways far more “advanced” than Western counterparts at the time. These cultures were responsible for outstanding achievements in mathematics, engineering, and agriculture, but some of their most enduring contributions are manifested in the great art and architecture of Mesoamerica and the Andes.

In the early sixteenth century, Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro and their compatriots encountered two of the world’s largest and most spectacular empires, the Aztec and the Inca. Suddenly, the Western world became aware of a parallel group of cultures flourishing in what they called the New World. These two empires, however, grew out of millennia of complex political development that preceded them in their respective areas, Mesoamerica and the Andes. This course is a survey of the art, architecture, and archaeology of the diverse array of peoples and cultures in ancient Mesoamerica (a geographical area that encompasses much of present-day Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras) and those that lived between the Andean mountains and the Pacific coast of present-day South America (countries including Peru, Bolivia, and Chile). Through lectures, reading assignments, and discussions, students will be expected to gain a broad understanding of the urban planning, architecture, monumental sculpture, and portable arts of the ancient Americas, from the earliest times to the arrival of Europeans in the New World.
Course Objectives:
In what ways are the visual art traditions of these regions similar to what we know from other parts of the world? In what ways are they distinct? One of the objectives of the course is to learn how these commonalities and differences are reflective of ancient American societies, and cultures worldwide. In addition to gaining familiarity and an understanding of the art and architecture of the ancient Americas, students will be expected to become acquainted with the major theoretical and methodological issues inherent in the study of this material.

- Students will obtain general knowledge about cultural history and cosmology of Pre-Colombian Mesoamerican and South American cultures.
- Students will be able to identify basic elements of iconography and style in Mesoamerican, Andean and other South American Pre-Colombian traditions, as well as situate these works within their socio-political and religious contexts.
- Students will be able to discuss the application of the western concept of art to the study of material culture of traditional societies.
- Students will be encouraged to acknowledge and value cultural diversity and the heritage of native cultures in the Americas.

Office Location: 41 Wyllys, Room 304

Email and Telephone: brobertson@wesleyan.edu
(860) 685-2721

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00 - 2:00 pm, and by appointment

Field Trip:
There will be a mandatory field trip to the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, scheduled for Saturday afternoon, March 2nd.

Required textbooks:


Reserve Reading:
Additional readings for ARHA 275 are on reserve at the Art Library and available through Moodle or electronic reserves through the library’s website. Reserve readings are indicated by the letters RSRV, eRes, or PDF in parenthesis in the course outline section of this syllabus.

Moodle:
All course information including syllabus, research paper guidelines, electronic reserve readings, and research tips can be found on Moodle, which is accessible through moodle.wesleyan.edu. I will post announcements to Moodle; be sure to check the course site once a week.
Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>March 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum Response</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>April 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>April 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>May 16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coursework, Goals, and Expectations:

This course is organized around a central presentation of the major works of art and architecture of the ancient Americas, and how these works functioned in larger cultural, political and economic spheres. We will follow a largely chronological path, tied in with a specific theme or issue in each lecture. Attendance at each lecture and discussion section is essential to your success in the class. The lectures form the narrative backbone of the course—the textbooks and readings—serve to amplify the major points discussed in the lectures.

Exams:

There are two exams in this course. Each exam counts for 30% of your total grade. The midterm will cover the material from the first part of the course and will endeavor to test your mastery of key historical and visual concepts. For the midterm, students will be expected to identify a number of major monuments and other works of art, as well as draw upon their understanding of broader stylistic traits to identify “unknowns.” The mid-term will also assess a level of understanding beyond recognizing styles and cultures via short essays comparing and contrasting two works of art and architecture in order to analyze and illuminate fundamental cultural meanings.

The final exam in this class will follow a format similar to the mid-term exam, including slide identifications, matching, and brief essay questions. Although the final is not cumulative in terms of specific identifications, you will be expected to draw upon what you learned from the first part of the course in answering some questions, particularly the essay questions. Study guides, with the names of sites, definition of terms, sample exam questions, and other information will be available on Blackboard.

Papers:

The ability to clearly and concisely communicate your thoughts in writing is a key skill in the field of art history. The primary assignment will be cumulative in nature and will ask you to consider a key theme or concept as it pertains to a particular culture or group of cultures. In addition, you will be expected to analyze the formal/iconographic characteristics of portable works of art and to situate these objects within their distinct cultural contexts, which will require some outside research. A complete description of this assignment will be provided at a later date.

A second, short paper assignment will follow our class field trip to the Yale University Art Gallery. The field trip will take place on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon in March and will be mandatory for the successful completion of this assignment.

All ideas and words that are not your own must be cited in your term paper and in all other written assignments, whether you quote directly from sources or paraphrase the ideas of others.
We will review appropriate use of citations in class. If at any point you are unclear about appropriate use of citations or would like clarification regarding the honor code, please make an appointment to speak with me.

**Quizzes:**
You will have periodic quizzes and in-class writing assignments, which are designed to help you prepare for exams and to assess your progress in the course and your understanding of the material. These timed exercises will take a variety of formats—such as slide identifications, comparison essays, short answer questions, and vocabulary definitions. Assigned readings not in your textbook will be available through eRes and Moodle; this material will be covered on your quizzes.

**Class Attendance and Participation:**
Please come prepared to interact in a meaningful way with your classmates. Participation will include answering questions posed by the professor, offering opinions and ideas on the course material, and demonstrating that you have completed the readings. While attendance is not mandatory, you cannot participate if you are not in class.

**Course Policy:**
Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. More than two unexcused absences (i.e. over a week of class) will result in the lowering of your class attendance and participation grade by one full letter.

All papers must be submitted on time to receive a passing grade. No extensions will be granted. All papers must be printed double-spaced, with proper footnotes or endnotes and bibliography that follow The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed., available in the library and summarized in A Short Guide to Writing about Art. Papers must be e-mailed as PDF or Word (.doc or .docx) attachments and must be received by the time noted with the due date. Be sure to put your name and email address on your papers. When submitting papers electronically also be sure to:

- Save the file in Word with either the .doc or .docx extension
- Name the file clearly with your name—for example: GeorgeCLOONEY_ARHA174_Paper1.doc

Make-up exams will be scheduled if there are compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control (for example: illness, religious observance, car accident, death in the family). You must provide appropriate documentation (doctor’s note, police report, etc.) in order to take a make-up exam. Be advised that only one make-up exam will be scheduled within a week of the missed exam.

Please turn off all cell phones before coming to lecture. Please do not walk in front of the projectors once the lecture has begun.
University Policy:

A. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Wesleyan University has a recognized Honor Code, administered by the Honor Board. This code sets standards for academic integrity for all undergraduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For additional information on the Honor Code visit the Student Handbook web site: http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/studentconduct.html.

B. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
It is the policy of Wesleyan University to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with Disabilities Services, in addition to making requests known to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible [during the second week of the semester], so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/studentguide.html.

C. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES
University policy states that students should not be penalized in any way for participation in religious observances. Students shall be allowed, whenever practicable, to make up academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. It is the student's responsibility to contact the professor, and make arrangements for make-up work or examinations. The student is responsible for providing written notification to the professor within the first two weeks of the semester. The notification must identify the religious holiday(s) and date(s).
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 28 January</td>
<td>Introduction: Sources and Methodologies in Pre-Columbian Art History and Archaeology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 30 January</td>
<td>Introduction to Mesoamerica</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 4 February</td>
<td>The ‘Birth of Civilization’ in the Americas: The Formative Period and Olmec Culture</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 6 February</td>
<td>Urbanization on a Grand Scale: Teotihuacan</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 11 February</td>
<td>Other ‘Classicisms’: Monte Albán and Veracruz</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 13 February</td>
<td>Classic Maya: Writing and Calendars</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 18 February</td>
<td>Classic Maya: Art and Ritual Life</td>
<td>Miller 1999 (eRes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 20 February</td>
<td>The Late Classic Maya: Cultural Changes and the Toltecs</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 25 February</td>
<td>The Reach of Empire: The Aztecs</td>
<td><em>The Art of Mesoamerica</em>, chap. 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 27 February</td>
<td>The Aztecs: Politics of Conquest</td>
<td>Smith 1996 (eRes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 4 March</td>
<td>Aztec Art and the Creation of History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 6 March</td>
<td>MID-TERM EXAM</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(SPRING BREAK)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 25 March</td>
<td>Introduction to the Andes</td>
<td><em>Art of the Andes</em>, chap. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 27 March</td>
<td>NO LECTURE: Field trip to Yale University Art Gallery, March 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monday, 1 April  
The Chavín: New Cult and Sacred Architecture  
Reading: *Art of the Andes*, chap. 2

Wednesday, 3 April  
The Chavín: Art and Duality  
**MUSEUM PAPERS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**

Monday, 8 April  
Paracas: Mummies and Textiles  
Readings: *Art of the Andes*, chap. 3  
Paul & Turpin 1986 (eRes)

Wednesday, 10 April  
The Nazca: Life in the Desert and Landscape Art  
Reading: Proulx 2001 (eRes)

Monday, 15 April  
The Moche: Portraits, Monuments, and Politics of Power  
Reading: *Art of the Andes*, chap. 4

Wednesday, 17 April  
The Moche: Underworld Creatures and Narrative Art  
Reading: Donnan 2001 (eRes)

Monday, 22 April  
Huari: Giant Ceramics and Abstract Textiles  
Reading: *Art of the Andes*, chap. 5

Wednesday, 24 April  
Tiwanaku: Imperial Stonework  
**RESEARCH PAPERS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**

Monday, 29 April  
The Chimú Empire: Cities of Clay and Ancestor Worship  
Reading: *Art of the Andes*, chap. 6

Wednesday, 1 May  
Art of the Chimú: Cult of the Sea  
Reading: Conklin 1990 (eRes)

Monday, 6 May  
The Reach of Empire: The Inca Quipu Project  
Reading: *Art of the Andes*, chap. 7

Wednesday, 8 May  
The Inca: Sacred Stones and Imperial Art  
Reading: Murra 1962 (eRes)

Thursday, 16 May  
**FINAL EXAM** (2:00 – 5:00 pm)