



Women in Antiquity
Spring 2025

MEETING 14

The Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman Eras

- Hellenistic Women
- Cleopatra
- Advice to the Bride and Groom
- Women of Classical Antiquity
- The Greco-Roman Culture



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Upcoming dates

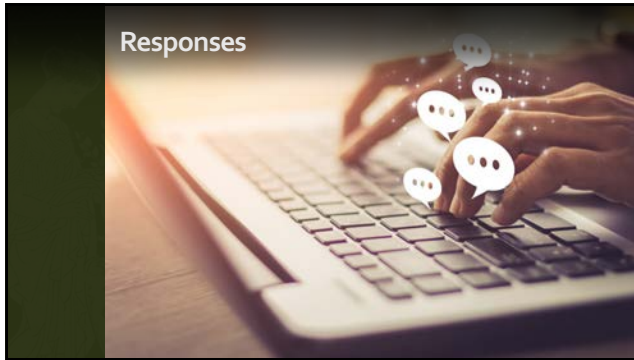
- Monday, May 12 Position Paper due via BlackBoard
- Tuesday, May 20 Final Exam, 6:15–8:15 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 27
 - Ultimate Deadline**
 - No late papers or resubmissions for reversible deductions after this date
 - No exceptions
 - Any incompletes owing to personal emergencies must be mutually agreed before this date
- Sunday, May 18 Post your Week 14 Responses

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Five things today

- 1 Hellenistic Women
- 2 Cleopatra
- 3 Advice to the Bride and Groom
- 4 Women of Classical Antiquity
- 5 The Greco-Roman Culture

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Priesthoods attributed to Numa

- Curiones *Sacrifices for the curiae (assemblies)*
- Flamines *Priests dedicated to a specific god*
- Celeres *Romulus's bodyguard*
- Augurs *Divination*
- Vestals *Tenders of the sacred fire*
- Salii *Twelve youths carrying Jupiter's shields*
- Fetiales *Sacred heralds*
- Pontiffs *Religious advisors to the state; public rituals*

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Secondary Source Reading

Gillian Clark

"Roman Women"

SOME TAKEAWAYS

- Fundamental summary of key elements of what we know about women in Roman life
- Not naturally inferior
 - Married Roman women did not have a vote and could not initiate their own wars
 - Despite Roman women's role in the Roman household, some women (strong and wealthy)
 - They have to be kept from exerting their power over men
- Men use their control over public sphere to maintain their position in society
 - Citizenship and control over public sphere
- Rather men recognized the power of women
 - Men used their power to control women by controlling their sexuality and reproduction

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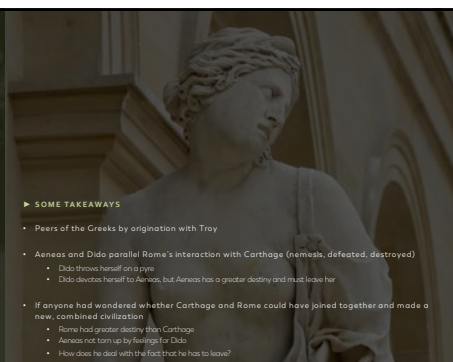
Secondary Source Reading

Christine Perkell

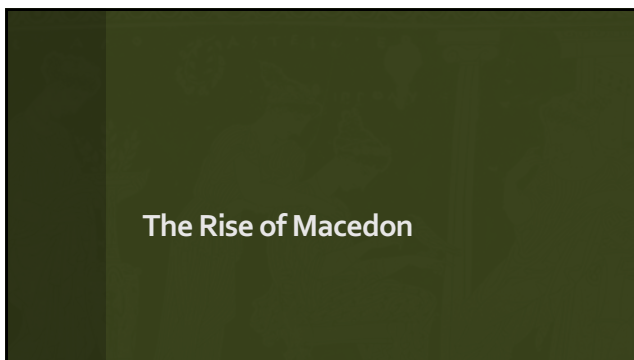
"On Creusa, Dido, and the Quality of Victory in Virgil's *Aeneid*"

► SOME TAKEAWAYS

- Peers of the Greeks by origination with Troy
- Aeneas and Dido parallel Rome's interaction with Carthage (nemesis, defeated, destroyed)
 - Dido throws herself on a pyre
 - Dido divides herself to Aeneas, but Aeneas has a greater destiny and must leave her
- If anyone had wondered whether Carthage and Rome could have joined together and made a new, combined civilization
 - Rome had greater destiny than Carthage
 - Aeneas not torn up by feelings for Dido
 - How does he deal with the fact that he has to leave?



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Macedon



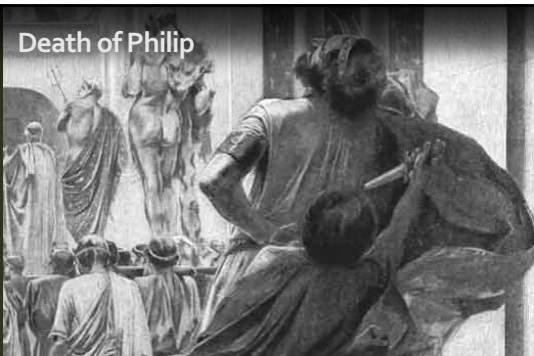
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Philip II

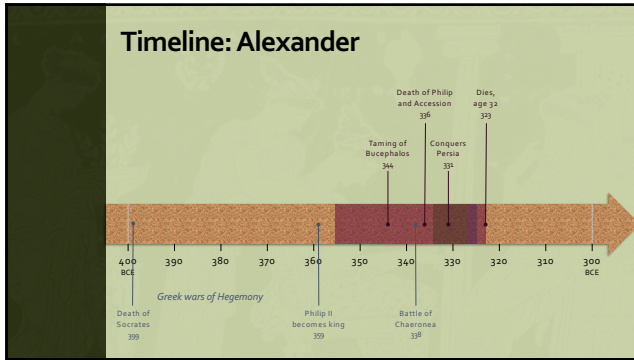


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Death of Philip



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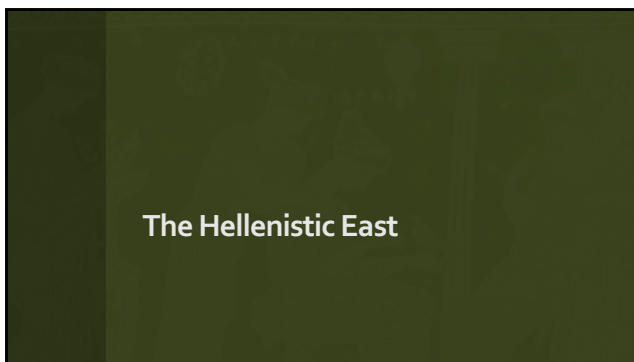
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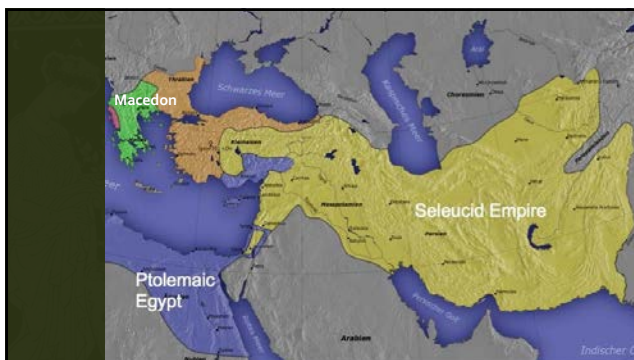
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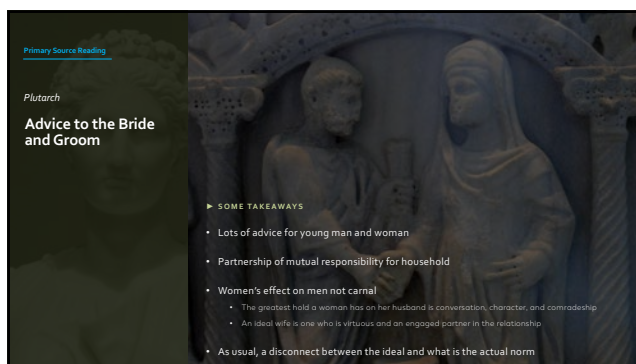
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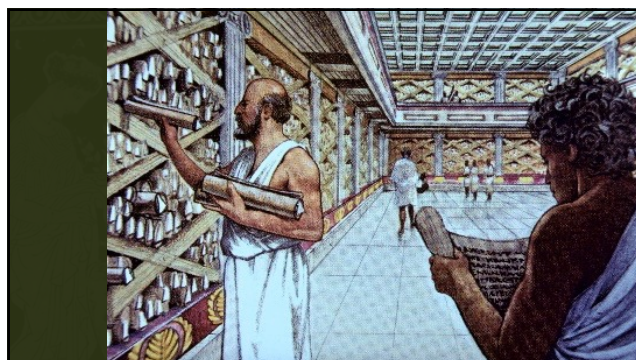
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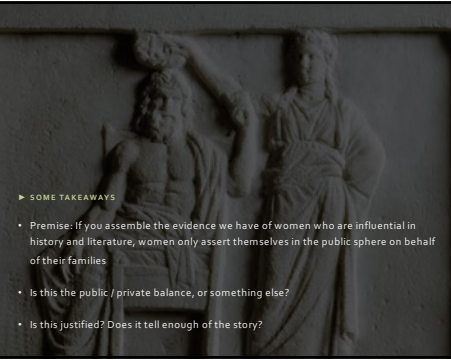
Secondary Source Reading

Mary R. Lefkowitz

"Influential Women"

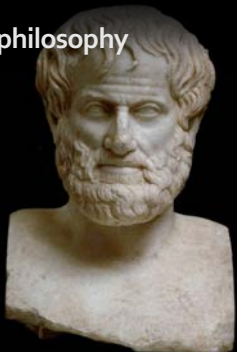
► SOME TAKEAWAYS

- Premise: If you assemble the evidence we have of women who are influential in history and literature, women only assert themselves in the public sphere on behalf of their families
- Is this the public / private balance, or something else?
- Is this justified? Does it tell enough of the story?



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Hellenistic philosophy



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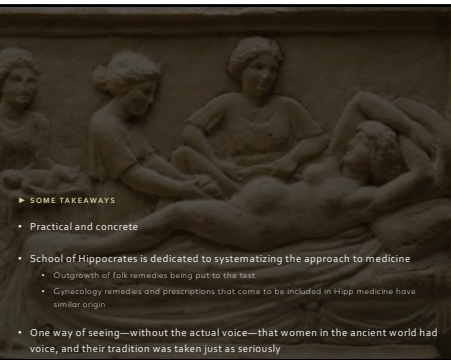
Secondary Source Reading

Helen King

"Self-Help, Self-Knowledge: In Search of the Patient in Hippocratic Gynaecology"

► SOME TAKEAWAYS

- Practical and concrete
- School of Hippocrates is dedicated to systematizing the approach to medicine
 - Outgrowth of folk remedies being put to the test
 - Gynecology remedies and prescriptions that come to be included in Hipp medicine have similar origin
- One way of seeing—without the actual voice—that women in the ancient world had voice, and their tradition was taken just as seriously



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Secondary Source Reading

Sarah Pomeroy

"Infanticide in Hellenistic Greece"

► SOME TAKEAWAYS

- Concrete approach to what we do know (which is very little)
 - Non-typical children of poor genders
 - Unknowable extent to which healthy children were exposed in a ratio that is at the expense of female children
 - Male children needed in labor, fighting, commerce = premium on male child
- Not killing the baby outright but exposing the child, leaving the child to the elements
 - Leaves child in the hands of the gods
 - Peasant, traveler, wandering tradesman, forlorn
- No records, little discussed in literature, philosophy, history

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Technology

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Secondary Source Reading

Sarah Pomeroy

"Spartan Women among the Romans: Adapting Models, Forging Identities"

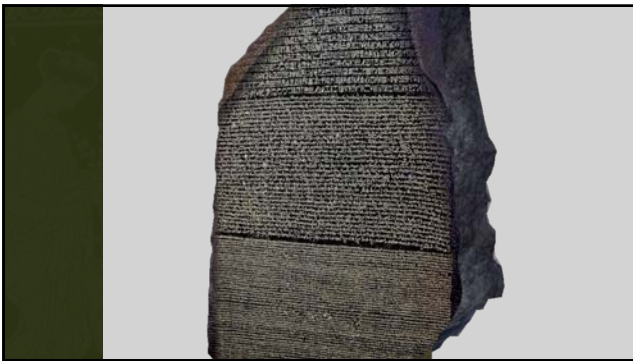
► **SOME TAKEAWAYS**

- **Similarities**
 - Spartans and Romans are both warrior societies that valued outerity
 - For Romans, the Greeks were the Other (Athens); for Athens, the Spartans were the Other
- **Limited comparison**
 - Spartans were not imperialistic, being obsessed with art of war to the exclusion of all else
- **Women in Sparta have an unusual situation**
 - Spartan women were unusually free because men were in the barracks
 - Roman men are in the forum; in the fields; side by side with their wife

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Secondary Source Reading

Peter Thanemann

"The Women of Akmonieia"



► SOME TAKEAWAYS

- Pillar (stela) dedicated by wives of this small community
- Liberality of Rome was widely known in the provinces
 - Rome was a place of *terrific* and progress - especially economically
 - Awareness of the prominence of women within Julio-Claudian
- Inhabitants thought Romans were more advanced in terms of gender
- Wanted to show they were keeping up with the progress made in the great capital

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Macedonian princesses



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Primary Source Reading

Plutarch

Roman Accounts of Cleopatra

SOME TAKEAWAYS

- We know Cleopatra almost entirely through stories of Roman men
- Effect on Julius Caesar and Mark Antony contrasted
- Complex reaction to her as pharaoh
 - Admired her as a strong and powerful woman
 - Feared her as a foreign threat and influence

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