

HPHP 4018 – Exploring the Humanities

Group 1 [Exploring the Past group] – Assignment 2

For this assignment you will individually select an ancient text or an image (of an object, statue, statuette, etc.) and then critically analyse it. This will involve considering the passage/image/object's context, content, and wider historical or socio-cultural significance. You do not need to try and be exhaustive and cover every conceivable theme of significance. Rather be selective, drawing upon themes or issues that you think are particularly interesting or of wider historical relevance. The focus of the discussion should be on the passage/image/object itself, but you can also bring in pertinent comparative evidence.

The word count is 1,000 words. You need to submit (via Turnitin on Moodle) by 12 noon on Monday 3rd October.

Pick one of the following:

1)



1. Mycenaean pot

2)



2. Cycladic Figurine

3)



3. Cypriot Chalcolithic figurine

4)



4. Babylonian cylinder seal

5)



5. Spearhead, Cyprus

6)



6.. Egyptian hippopotamus model

7) “Now tell me, my dear friend: you will erect a monument as I have directed? I beg you earnestly to put up round the feet of my statue my little dog, and some wreaths, and bottles of perfume, and all the fashions of Petraites, so that your kindness may bring me a life after death; and I want the monument to have a frontage of one hundred feet and to be two hundred feet in depth. For I should like to have all kinds of fruit growing round my ashes, and plenty of vines. It is quite wrong for a man to decorate his house while he is alive, and not to trouble about the house where he must make a longer stay. So above all things I want added to the inscription, ‘This monument does not descend to my heir.’ I shall certainly take care to provide in my will against any injury being done to me when I am dead. I am appointing one of the freedmen to be caretaker of the tomb and prevent the common people from running up and defiling it. I beg you to put ships in full sail ... of monument, and me sitting in official robes on my official seat, wearing five gold rings and distributing coin publicly out of a bag; you remember that I gave a free dinner worth two denarii a head. I should like you to make a representation of a dining-room set of couches, if you can arrange it. And represent also the whole people there enjoying themselves. On my right hand put a statue of dear Fortunata holding a dove, and let her be leading a little dog with a waistband on; and my dear little boy, and big jars sealed with gypsum, so that they may not let the wine run out. And have a broken urn carved with a boy weeping over it. And a sundial in the middle, so that anyone who looks at the time will read my name whether he likes it or not. And again, please think carefully whether this inscription seems to you quite appropriate: ‘Here lieth Gaius Pompeius Trimalchio, freedman of Maecenas. The degree of Priest of Augustus was conferred upon him in his absence. He might have been attendant on any magistrate in Rome, but refused it. God-fearing, gallant, constant, he grew from very little and left thirty millions. He never listened to a philosopher. Fare thee well, Trimalchio: and thou too, passer-by.’” (Petronius, *Satyricon* 71)

8) He seems to me to be equal to a god, he, if it may be, seems to surpass the very gods, who sitting opposite you again and again gazes at you and hears you sweetly laughing. Such a thing takes away all my senses, alas! for whenever I see you, Lesbia, at once no sound of voice remains within my mouth, but my tongue falters, a subtle flame steals down through my limbs, my ears ring with inward humming, my eyes are shrouded in twofold night.

Idleness, Catullus, does you harm, you riot in your idleness and wanton too much. Idleness ere now has ruined both kings and wealthy cities. (Catullus 51)

9)



Statue of the Emperor Claudius, Vatican Museum

10)



“The logos of the 2022 Beijing [Winter] Olympics are an ode to calligraphy”

[If picking this choice, students may wish to explain the function of a traditional artistic form in a contemporary context].