

“From classicism to classic: a digest of ancient Greek art through its masterpieces”

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Dr. Maria Papadopoulou

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The word ‘classic’ means ‘a typical example’, but also ‘an unsurpassed example of refined style’, ‘something of outstanding quality, judged over a period of time to be exceptional in its kind’. ‘Classic’ is something with enduring value. What is referred to as the ‘classical period’ in the history of Ancient Greece is the 5th - 4th century BCE and reached its peak in the city of Athens during the age of Pericles (495-429 BCE). The art of this period represented the conquest of novel aesthetic and philosophical values which expressed balance, harmony, order and proportion fixed in canons that outlined an ideal of beauty and perfection of form, and exalted humans as the measure of all things.

The combination of the art from this period with this value judgement set up the idea that ‘classical’ is best. Interest in this style of art, in its broadest sense, led to the idea of ‘classicism’. In the context of Western art history, ‘classicism’ implies great admiration of the arts, literature and culture of the ‘classical period’ in the history of ancient Greece and Rome.

This talk will first define the concepts of ‘classic’ and ‘classicism’ in the context of Western art history. Second, it will provide an overview of the classical art of ancient Greece by means of a number of representative masterpieces in the fine arts executed in different media, mainly sculpture, architecture, pottery, metalwork. Finally, it aims to raise a discussion on the notion of ‘classical’ from an intercultural and comparative perspective.



Short Biography:

Dr Maria Papadopoulou was trained as a classical philologist and a linguist. Her research interests and publications include ancient Greek history, art and culture, linguistics, lexicography and terminology. Her research is interdisciplinary and draws on a wide range of sources and methodologies. She has earned several prestigious grants and awards including a two-year Marie Curie Fellowship at the University of Copenhagen. She is a member of Condillac-Listic at the University of Savoie Mont Blanc (<http://new.condillac.org/members/>) and of the Knowledge Engineering and Terminology Research Centre (KETRC) at the University of Liaocheng (<http://ketrc.com/>) researching topics related to digital humanities, ontology and terminology for cultural heritage.