

01 - HELLENISM

The phrase «Hellenism» and the concept behind it, formulated by the 19th century historian Johann Gustav Droysen most commonly encapsulate the period between Alexander the Great's conquest of the Achaemenid empire (334-323 BC) and Octavian's victory over Mark Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in 31 BC. This workshop will accept these basic boundaries in seeking to examine this subject but will not restrain itself of the implication of the period as merely transitional between the eras of classical Greece and imperial Rome. Modern scholarly approach to this subject requires the period to be studied with all respect to its complex historical, social, political and cultural topics.

PAPERS/CASE STUDIES:

- 1) **Cultural coexistence between the East and West.** What must be with due caution summarized under the denomination of Eastern and Greek cultural spheres, both complex in themselves, interacted widely much earlier than Alexander's conquest. However, this topic in its analysis of the phenomena of the sociocultural impact they had on each other will concentrate on the relatively short timespan mentioned in the introduction.
- 2) **Architecture in Hellenism.** Public buildings tended to architectural gigantism, as a lasting embodiment of the comprehensive self-promotion of Hellenistic monarchs. A few of what was later to be named world wonders seem well to illustrate this tendency.
- 3) **The technological achievements of Hellenism.** Scholars gathered by early Ptolemies in the great new Alexandrian Museum and Library were in a way supposed to represent a «new Athens» for the purpose of legitimizing Ptolemy rule in cultural links to Hellas. Research in most branches of learning from history to astronomy, medicine to mathematics was therefore richly funded.
- 4) **Hellenistic literature.** The Hellenistic age in Athens produced a kind of shift from poetry to prose, from drama and lyric to philosophy, science and rhetoric –from creativity and innovation to a sort of intellectual conservatism. Focusing on the golden age of the 5th century BC, this topic explores this shift and its sources and consequences. A command of Greek is not required but would be welcome if possessed.
- 5) **Warfare in the Hellenistic period.** This topic takes as its basic point the wars of the Diadochoi (the Successors) considering their sociocultural, political and military impact on the territories they claimed. The participants are encouraged to focus on particular wars, and examine their military or political side.