

CLCV/HIST 2901A

# HISTORY OF ANCIENT ROME

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Professor: Greg Fisher

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Lectures: WF 0835-0955 -- 1.0 credits

## Overview

This course will explore the emergence of the Roman state from its earliest origins to its position as one of the most powerful empires in the history of the world, whose influence spread from northern Britain to the deserts of Yemen, and whose political, religious, social, military and religious institutions have had a profound effect on world history. We will examine how Rome expanded from a small village in Italy and developed into a Republic and – then – an Empire, dominated by a single ruler. We will look at the role of famous individuals, such as Julius Caesar, or the 6<sup>th</sup> c. Empress Theodora, in shaping Rome’s development. We will see some of the literary, cultural, artistic and architectural highlights of the Republic and Empire. We will read substantial parts of two contemporary histories: the very different works of Livy, who died in 17 AD with the emergence of the Empire, and Ammianus Marcellinus, a military officer who wrote more than three hundred years later, to analyse how Romans, and others, understood the events around them. The course also traces the progressive shift in Roman interest to the East, which led to Rome’s devastating centuries-long conflict with the Empire of Sasanian Iran. The course will end with the Muslim invasions of the mid-seventh century which transformed the history of the “Roman” world in new directions.

## Main problems, questions and themes

*These are some of the questions and problems we will consider throughout this course. Keep them in mind for your tests and term papers.*

**Rome.** What did it mean to be Roman at various points in history? How did the Rome of 500AD differ from the Rome of 100BC? In what ways was the Empire different to the Republic? How did this affect peoples’ perceptions of themselves as “Romans”? What is the legacy – cultural, political, legal, etc. – of Rome to the world today?

**Historians and historiography.** This course places a certain amount of emphasis on the writing of history. How do we evaluate the testimonies, histories and accounts of the Roman Republic and Empire? What are some of the main problems? How have pictures of Rome been skewed by other concerns, in both modern and ancient historiography?

**Identity in a Roman world.** How Roman did the Mediterranean world become? What kind of impact did the spread of Roman culture, institutions, have? Was it significant, or only skin-deep?

**The unity of the Roman world.** Did Roman conquest bring any unity to the Mediterranean basin?

**East and West.** How are these two halves of the Roman world connected? Separated? How did the East, centered around the New Rome, Constantinople, become the centre of a new Roman Empire?

### Course objectives

1. To cover as many of the key events and themes in Roman history as is practical in a one year course. By the end of the year, you should have a good understanding of how and why Rome developed from a small village to a world Empire, and the internal and external pressures and forces which affected this development. You should also have a good perspective on how Rome fits into the more general schemes of world history.
2. To develop the tools of historical analysis, particularly balanced, critical thinking, as they concern the study of ancient history.
3. To apply these skills in class discussion and written analyses.
4. To encourage the student to use his or her reading of the ancient evidence to develop and argue a particular point of view with confidence.

### Readings

#### Primary Sources

Online; see WebCT.

We will discuss additional primary sources in class.

#### Secondary Sources

Boatwright, M.T. (and others). *The Romans: from Village to Empire* (2004).

Syme, R. *The Roman Revolution* (1960)

Cameron, A. *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity* (2011).

Note: this book will only be available after the end of October, but you will not need to read it until February.

**\*\*Weekly readings will be posted on WebCT by the first week of term.\*\***

## Course Calendar

Here is a list of the topics we will be covering, by month.

- September: Early Rome, 753-264: Rome and the Italians, consolidation of power in Italy, the Conflict of the Orders, and first encounters with foreign powers.
- October: The Republic, 264-31: The wars with Carthage, and the beginning of Roman overseas domination. During this section we will read Livy on the wars against the Carthaginians, to try and understand how the society, politics and world-view of Rome was changing and developing. From a historiographical standpoint, we will look at why Livy wrote the way he did, and assess his value as a historical source. Understanding the fallout from the Punic Wars lays the foundation for analyzing the Late Republic and Early Empire.
- November & December: The Fall of the Republic, and the rise of the Empire: Roman expansion east, and the difficulties at home which this brought. During this section we will read *The Roman Revolution* by Ronald Syme, a groundbreaking and influential work about the transition from Republic to Empire. This section and the book deal with Caesar, Antony, Crassus, Octavian, etc. Reading Syme provides us with a chance to assess (modern) historiographical issues, much as we did for Livy in October. We will end the term with a consideration of the reign of Augustus, Rome's first Emperor, and read his testament, the *Res Gestae* (copies provided via WebCT).
- January: The Empire: Augustus to the so-called "Five Good Emperors" (down to 180AD, death of Marcus Aurelius). This section will look at the Early Empire, and will include the reigns of well-known emperors such as Nero, Tiberius, Vespasian, Hadrian, Trajan, and Marcus Aurelius.
- February: Problems with the Empire; the Empire splits between East and West. The Severans, the Tetrarchs, and Constantine (d. 337AD). This will deal with financial and military problems in the Empire, enemies within and without, and the new and very dangerous problem posed by the emergence of Sasanian Iran, the most potent enemy of the Romans since Carthage. We will also look at the social changes brought by Christianity. In this section, we will begin to use Cameron's book.
- March & April: The Late Empire, and Late Antiquity: What did it mean to be Roman after 350? What happened to the Western Empire? Who were the "barbarians"? Could the Eastern Empire, centered around Constantinople, using Greek as its official language, really be "Roman"? In this section we will ponder these questions and others, reading the work of Ammianus Marcellinus, who covers the critical events of Adrianople in 378, sometimes seen as a definitive step towards the "end" of the Roman Empire in the west. We will briefly survey the events of the fifth century AD before finishing the year with two important sections: the events surrounding the reign of the Emperor Justinian (d. 565) and the Empress Theodora, and the emergence of a new and powerful force in Arabia which, in the early seventh century AD, dealt a mortal blow to Sasanian Iran and severely weakened the Roman Empire in the East.

## Course Evaluation/Important Dates

Note on plagiarism. I draw your attention to the University's regulations and guidelines on plagiarism, which can be found on the last page of this course outline.

### Dates:

|                         |  |     |
|-------------------------|--|-----|
| October 5, Wednesday:   | in-class test  | 15% |
| December 21, Wednesday: | take-home mid-term due (questions handed out on Dec 2, last day of class). | 20% |
| February 8, Wednesday:  | in-class test  | 15% |
| April 4, Wednesday:     | term paper due   | 30% |
| April 24, Tuesday:      | take-home final due (questions handed out on Apr 4, last day of class).    | 20% |

Note for students registered with PMC: please get in touch with me asap regarding the Oct 5 and Feb 8 in-class tests.

Pending the assignment of TA support, all evaluation in this course is via written work. Marks will be given for clearly-written, concise answers which address the question in a balanced, analytical and thoughtful way, and, particularly in the case of term papers and take-homes, support your arguments in a convincing fashion. I expect correct spelling and use of grammar!

There are two small closed-book in-class tests in this course, one in each term. These are designed to test your comprehension of the material covered in class and in your readings. They will consist of short answer questions. These will be marked and returned to you in class within about 10 days. Please note that University regulations concerning cheating apply to these tests. If in any doubt or if you have any questions about this, come and see me.

The development of research, writing and critical thinking and analytical skills constitutes a key component of this course. To develop these skills, there will be one term paper in this course. This is a research essay which should be approximately 10 pages long, excluding notes and bibliography. I will post a selection of topics through WebCT; you are of course free to choose any topic you like, if you prefer. I encourage students to get in touch with me or the TA(s) concerning their choice of topic. Styles of referencing, research skills, methodologies etc. will be discussed in class.

This paper can be handed in at any time during the year, but \*\*\*must\*\*\* be handed in on or before April 4, 2012. Late papers are NOT accepted without a medical note.

The take-home midterm and final exams are due at the end of the appropriate exam period (see list of dates, above). These are essay exams and the questions for these will be given out on the final day of teaching, as per University policy. You may use any sources you wish (i.e., this is an open-book exam) but I do not expect you to go beyond your assigned readings and class notes. Please note: all written work provided as part of the take-home exam must be the work of the individual writing the exam. Group work is not acceptable. Citations should be used where

appropriate, following the formats you have used for your term papers; if you are referencing from class notes, it is acceptable to cite as “class notes, date.”

Participation. There is no grade for participation, but I expect you all to become involved in class discussions, size of the class permitting. Also, if anything is unclear, or you have a question, don't hesitate to ask.

Please make sure you keep up with the readings and attend class regularly. Both are vital for success in this course.

Office hours. My office hours are posted at the top of this outline, or by appointment. Please e-mail me or talk to me after class to arrange a suitable time if you are not free during the posted office hours.

Class time. I would ask all of you to give your full attention in class. If you have to make a phone call, send a text, etc., please leave the class and return when you are finished. This is to avoid distracting your teacher and the students around you.

*Note: standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.*

#### Other Notes

1. Please see the final page, “Regulations common to all Humanities courses”, for information on plagiarism, requests for academic accommodation, etc.
  2. If you cannot complete an assignment due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, it is your responsibility to inform me so that alternative arrangements can be made. Documentary evidence of your reason for missing an assignment must be provided.
  3. It is your responsibility to come to class prepared. This includes doing the readings.
  4. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. There are NO exceptions, unless you have a compelling reason why you cannot submit your paper on time (illness, emergency etc.), in which case it is YOUR responsibility to inform me so alternative arrangements can be made.
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## REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

### COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

### PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

### GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

|                  |                |                 |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A+ = 90-100 (12) | B = 73-76 (8)  | C - = 60-62 (4) |
| A = 85-89 (11)   | B- = 70-72 (7) | D+ = 57-59 (3)  |
| A- = 80-84 (10)  | C+ = 67-69 (6) | D = 53-56 (2)   |
| B+ = 77-79 (9)   | C = 63-66 (5)  | D - = 50-52 (1) |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| F   | Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points   |
| ABS | Absent from final examination, equivalent to F   |
| DEF | Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)   |
| FND | Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline. |

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

### WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 5, 2011**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 5, 2012**.

### REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: [carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/)

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov.11, 2011 for the Fall term and March 7, 2012 for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/)

### PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please **contact** the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

### ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

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|---|-------------------------------|
| College of the Humanities 520-2809          | 300 Paterson                  |
| Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809     | 300 Paterson                  |
| Religion Office 520-2100                    | 2A39 Paterson                 |
| Registrar's Office 520-3500                 | 300 Tory                      |
| Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850    | 302 Tory                      |
| Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937    | 501 Uni-Centre                |
| Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125 | 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library |
| Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125  | 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library |