CLAS 145B – Art and Archaeology of the Roman Provinces

Spring 2019, M/W 5:00 – 6:20pm
Brandeis University
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Office Hours: M/W 3:00 – 4:30 pm
or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to familiarize students with the art, architecture, and archaeology of ancient the ancient Romans, from the 1st c. BCE through the 5th c. CE, across the entire extent of the Roman Empire, extending from Lusitania to Dura Europos and Leptis Magna to Britain. This course will focus on the Roman Provinces and their varies trajectories of development. We consider monumental, domestic, and military architecture; paintings mosaics, sculpture, coins and epigraphic evidence, as well as maps and ancient sources. We will seek to know how ancient Roman art and objects of daily life were used, viewed, and appreciated by their original patrons and owners, rather than viewing them through a modern lens, we strive how to interpret and date them. We will also ask a range of other questions. What makes an empire? How was this particular vast and diverse empire governed? Who or what did its inhabitants worship? How did they feel about their emperor? How were they entertained? Why did the Roman empire ‘decline and fall’ (or did it?)? Are there contemporary lessons to be learned from the Roman experience?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Individual success in this 4-credit hour class is based on students spending a minimum of 9 hours per week on preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, studying for exams, etc.).
- Class attendance will be taken on a regular basis by sign-in sheets. Please be sure you sign in at every class. Being in class is important, since the material presented will be in addition to course readings.
- You must complete all assigned readings from required texts and from material posted on LATTE. Your appreciation and understanding of lectures and discussions will be enhanced if you complete readings assignments by their due date.
- Participation is crucial for success in this class. While you will not be required to hand in weekly reading précis, you are expected to come prepared with notes on the readings. Participation in class discussion is not only required is it necessary for us to understand each other’s opinions to acquire a broad view and understanding of the topics.
- Quizzes – [Feb. 11th, March 11th, April 1st, April 29th] The quizzes may include Slide IDs, terms, fill in the blank, short answers (option to select from several topics). If you miss, or think you will miss, the midterm for medical reasons or another valid excuse, you should try to discuss it with Professor Ratzlaff in advance if possible, so that accommodations can be made for you and to reschedule.
- Article Review - You will write one position paper, essentially an article review, chosen from a selection of articles available on LATTE. More detailed instructions will be posted for the assignment (2-3 pages).
- Research Paper [Due April 29th] - The research paper is intended to get you absorbed in the scholarship of a topic of interest to you and to allow you a formal outlet for the
presentation of your own ideas. Generally, it should include summary and critical analysis of previous scholars’ ideas as well as archaeologically based arguments in support of your thesis. It will be important to define a manageable topic so that these elements can be presented fully but concisely.

- You are required to submit a paper prospectus on **Feb. 4th**, detailing your topic, a thesis statement/research questions, and a short bibliography. Your bibliography can only include a maximum of 3 internet sources (this does not include online museum catalogues/digital exhibitions). Your research should utilize the library collections as well as JSTOR and other digital resources.

- Research topics should focus on a particular artifact, monument, or building complex that exemplify and/or thoroughly explore ‘Roman’ culture. Your paper should include historical background – give context for the material culture you are discussing, an in-depth description of the object (material composition, construction type, decoration(s), style); when was it made, who constructed/commissioned it (if known), comparisons to other similar examples (from throughout the empire), and the significance of the topic to Roman culture.

- Undergraduate paper should be 9-10 pages/graduate 20-21 pages, double-spaced. You can use any style you prefer, intext citations or footnotes, whichever you select please be consistent throughout your paper. Please include at least one map and images with captions, these should be at the end of your paper and are not included in the final page count. Make sure you include a detailed bibliography.
  - Graduate students will present the topic of their research paper on the last day of class (15-20 min).

**GRADING:**
Class Participation: 10% (attendance, discussion, preparation)
Quizzes: 60% (4 @ 15% each)
Research Paper: 20%
Article Review: 10%

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**General** This course will contribute to student competence in:
- critical thinking skills, where critical thinking is defined as analyzing and engaging with the concepts that underlie an argument and in which the logic and evidence underlying an interpretation is evaluated in terms of the conclusions reached. Students will be able to analyze and evaluate abstract information; understand and analyze scholarly literature and arguments, and formulate a logical argument based on that analysis.

**Specific** By the end of this course, students should:
- have a specific understanding of how archaeologists, ancient historians, and others utilize the evidence we have for the past;
- understand how ethics and the law intersect with the responsibilities of the archaeologist/academic.

**REQUIRED BOOKS:**


*Additional readings will be posted on LATTE.*

**CLASS TOPICS**

Jan. 16th - Introduction to the course

Jan. 22nd - Theory, Terms, and Geography

Jan. 23rd - The Empire before Rome: Meeting the Neighbors:

Jan. 28th - Architecture & Building Techniques [West]

Jan. 30th - Architecture & Building Techniques [East]

Feb. 4th - Limes and The Roman Army: Architecture and Organization [West]

Feb. 6th - Limes and The Roman Army: Architecture and Organization [East]

Feb. 11th - The Roman Army: Daily Life [West]

Feb. 13th - The Roman Army: Daily Life [East]

Feb. 25th - Rivers, Roads, and Roman Infrastructure [West]

Feb. 27th - Rivers, Roads, and Roman Infrastructure [East]

March 4th - Write it Down: tablets, papyrus, and parchment [West]

March 6th - Write it Down: tablets, papyrus, and parchment [East]

March 11th - Roman Religion: Imperial, Local, and Mystery Cults [West]

March 13th - Roman Religion: Imperial, Local, and Mystery Cults [West]

March 18th - “Bring out your dead” – Death and Memory [West]

March 20th - “Bring out your dead” – Death and Memory [East]

March 25th - Victories, Monuments, and Symbols of Power [West]

March 27th - Victories, Monuments, and Symbols of Power [East]

April 1st - Entertaining the Masses: Theaters, Circuses, and Amphitheatres [West]

April 3rd - Entertaining the Masses: Theaters, Circuses, and Amphitheatres [East]
April 8th – Paintings, Portraits, Sculpture, and Reliefs: Art in the Provinces [West]

April 10th - Paintings, Portraits, Sculpture, and Reliefs: Art in the Provinces [East]

April 15th – The Tetrarchy/ Split: the site and the empire

April 17th - Transformation of an Empire: Constantinople

April 29th & May 1st – Course Review and Discussion & Graduate Presentations