

## ANCH 0102-920: Ancient Rome

Summer Session II  
June 30 – August 5, 2022  
MWF 12:00-2:30 PM (Online)

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### Course Description

From the Latin language and its modern descendants, to the foundations of our own political system here in the United States, to the sets of *Gladiator* or Netflix's *Barbarians*, the presence of Ancient Rome in our own society seems unwilling to fade into the past even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is difficult today to entirely avoid contact with some piece of it. But who were the Ancient Romans? And what do we mean when we say, "Ancient Rome"? This course will explore these questions while covering the transformation of the ancient Roman state from its humble beginnings as a small Italian village, to a Republic dominated by a heterogeneous, competitive aristocracy, to an Empire ruled, at least notionally, by one man. The Roman state developed complex legal and administrative structures, supported a sophisticated and highly successful military machine, and sustained elaborate systems of economic production and exchange. It was, above all, a society characterized both by a willingness to include newly conquered peoples in the project of empire, and by fundamental, deep-seated practices of social exclusion and domination. This course will focus on the history of this process over roughly one thousand years, from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE to the third century CE. While we chart this larger historical narrative of Ancient Rome, we will stop to investigate different topics in detail along the way as we attempt to understand Ancient Rome in its context as part of the larger ancient world.

This course will be taught entirely online and will be entirely synchronous. No prior knowledge is required to take this course.

### Course materials

Required: Boatwright, M. T., Gargola, D. J., Lenski, N. & Talbert, R. A. (2012), *The Romans: From Village to Empire*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., Oxford & New York.

Optional: Beard, Mary (2015), *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*, Liveright, London & New York.

Beyond the above texts, in this course we will be working with primary ancient sources (in English) as well as secondary sources, both of which will be provided for the class.

## **Grading Breakdown**

Attendance & Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 15% (5% each, worst grade of 4 quizzes dropped)

Midterm Exam: 20%

Annotated Bibliography: 20%

Final Paper: 25%

## **Grading & Assignment Details**

### Attendance & Participation (20%)

Attendance and Participation function as an essential aspect of this course. That being said, I am well aware of the challenges posed by a virtual course during an ongoing pandemic.

Attendance:

In a condensed summer course like this, each class session is equal to about one week of class during a regular semester. As such, absences are costly and difficult to make up. However, I am aware that sometimes unavoidable circumstances get in the way, particularly during a time like this. Any student may miss two class sessions without penalty, as long as they contact me about missing the class and coordinate make-up work. Each absence beyond this limit, unless due to a health or personal emergency verifiable with a doctor's note or letter from a university dean, will result in the student's grade being docked a full letter grade.

Participation:

Class discussion will be a crucial part of this course, helping us to generate insights and to strengthen our understanding of the material. My grading of this category will therefore measure both your willingness to contribute to discussion and the overall thoughtfulness of your contributions. However, I recognize that not everyone is equally comfortable talking out loud in a classroom setting, let alone a virtual classroom. I will therefore be posting discussion threads on Canvas for each class meeting. Here you may put any comments/questions/observations regarding the class lectures, the class discussions, or the assigned readings. You may also

respond to your classmates' posts on these threads. Such posts are not required, but they will be treated as equivalent to in-class participation. In my grading of your participation, I am not looking to hurt anyone's grade or to make you feel like you must say something simply for the sake of sharing to ensure you get that day's check for participation. Discussion in its various forms can and should be a rewarding and productive way to engage with our Ancient Roman material as we attempt to "do history" together. Genuine effort to participate in any or all of these various forms will be generously rewarded.

### Quizzes (15%)

The quizzes function as an accountability system for doing the readings and to help you retain some of the more basic and important content we've covered. These will be given on Mondays (see schedule) and will consist of multiple choice, term identification, and (very) short answer questions. These will be timed and submitted through Canvas and will be taken during class on Zoom (I will ask you to leave your cameras on if possible). The worst of your four quiz grades will be dropped (making the three counted quizzes worth 5% each). These will not be cumulative and will be solely comprised of material learned after the previous quiz.

### Midterm Exam (20%)

This will be an essay exam designed to test your ability to analyze ancient and modern sources and to form and articulate conclusions based on these sources and on the material we've covered thus far in the course. You will be given a 24-hour window to complete and submit this exam to Canvas, which will take the place of our class meeting on Wednesday, July 20th. The essay prompts will not be circulated ahead of time, but you will be given a choice between three options.

### Annotated Bibliography (20%)

The annotated bibliography is meant to serve two purposes in this course. Firstly, this will give you a sense of some of the major scholarly debates currently taking place in the field of Roman history and of what it's like to form an original argument as an ancient historian, using both ancient and modern evidence. Secondly, this will serve as the foundation for your Final Paper and should make the process of writing a term paper in this condensed summer course format less overwhelming.

You will be given a list of potential paper topics by me on Canvas from which you must select your final two choices by Friday, July 8<sup>th</sup>. If you'd like to choose a topic that I have not provided you are more than welcome to do so, but you need to speak with me first about this at least day before the topic selection deadline (Friday, July 8<sup>th</sup>). I will then meet with each of you individually to help you make a final decision on a topic. After you've chosen a topic, you will be required to submit one entry for each source to Canvas by 11:59:59 PM on the specified due date (see course Schedule). Each entry should consist of 2-3 sentences summarizing the source

and its content and 2-3 sentences detailing why and how this source will be useful for your paper. By the submission of the fourth and final source (Friday, July 29<sup>th</sup>), you will be familiar with the sources needed to write your final paper and you will have a complete bibliography to use for your paper. Each entry should be in a recognizable and consistent bibliographical style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). I will either approve or ask you to revise each week's submission, which will enable me to follow the progress of your research paper and to offer feedback. I will provide resources and guidance for finding reliable sources and I will provide examples of the types of bibliographical entries I will be looking for.

### Final Paper (25%)

The culmination of your work done throughout the course for the Annotated Bibliography. This is meant to test all that you've learned throughout the course, combining your knowledge of the Ancient Roman world with your ability to employ analytical and research skills as a practicing ancient historian. 6-8 pages double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. Submitted on Canvas by August 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:59:59 PM.

### **Course Policies**

#### Zoom

As far as possible, please keep your video on for our class discussion and for quiz periods, although I am aware that technical difficulties sometimes prevent this. Feel free to make use of the chat to add questions or comments at any time – the ability to add your thoughts during a lecture or discussion is a beneficial feature of Zoom and is always more than welcome.

Please do not hesitate, at any point during discussion or lectures, to speak up to ask any questions or to ask for further clarification on any of the material (either with your voice or with the chat function). In a condensed summer course like this, we will often be moving through a lot of material at a fast pace. Asking questions is not only an essential part of a course like this, but it also helps me to make sure I have everyone on the same page and comfortably following the material as we move through the Ancient Roman world.

#### Contacting Me:

I will be holding a standing weekly Zoom session on Tuesday mornings (10:00AM-12:00PM) as my open office hours. Please feel free to stop by with any questions or concerns about any aspects of the course. You may also send me an email ([benabb@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:benabb@sas.upenn.edu)) with any questions or concerns, which I will answer as soon as possible. Be aware that I will take longer to respond to emails sent outside of Monday-Friday 8:00AM-5:00PM. If my office hours do not work for you, please feel free to reach out to me via email and we can set up a virtual appointment.

## Academic Integrity

All students must abide by the university's Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found here: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>. Failure to do so constitutes theft of someone else's work, undermines their contribution to our shared intellectual enterprise, and detracts from your learning process, should you be tempted to copy someone else's work wholesale. There are, nevertheless, situations where the appropriate lines around this topic can become more difficult to discern. If you are unsure whether something relating to an assignment constitutes plagiarism, *please* consult myself and/or our Classics Studies librarian Rebecca Stuhr ([stuhrrreb@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:stuhrrreb@pobox.upenn.edu)) *before* submitting the final version to me. Plagiarism is easily preventable, and I do not want to have to penalize you for it.

Any student caught engaging in cheating or plagiarism will automatically fail the course. Further disciplinary action with the university may be pursued as well.

## **Class Sessions**

Class sessions will consist primarily of a discussion section followed by a lecture. Discussion will be focused on the readings assigned in the "To-do" section from the day before. For example, the first day of class has no work required for preparation but the "To-do" readings for that class (Livy Preface & Book 1, *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 1) are your work for the discussion of the *next* class (in this case, for Wednesday 7/6, "The Regal Period and Making Sense of Ancient Evidence"). Each class session will have a break sometime around the middle of the class.

## **Course Schedule\***

(\*This schedule is tentative and will be updated again well before the course begins)

Friday 7/1

Discussion: Syllabus Overview; What is "Ancient Rome"?

Lecture: Earliest Rome

To-do: Livy Preface & Book 1, *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 1

Monday 7/4

No Class – Independence Day

Wednesday 7/6

Discussion: The Regal Period and Making Sense of Ancient Evidence

Lecture: An Italian Rome

To-do: Livy 2, Polybius *Histories* Book 6, *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 2

Friday 7/8

**Final 2 Paper Topic Selections Due**

Discussion: The Republican Ideal

Lecture: The Roman Republic and its Institutions

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 3 (87-105), Livy 21-30 (excerpts), Polybius 3 (excerpts)

Monday 7/11

Quiz #1

Discussion: Punic Confrontations

Lecture: The Carthaginians

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 3 (109-123), Livy 31-45 (excerpts), Polybius (excerpts)

Wednesday 7/13

**First Bibliography Source Due**

Discussion: A Mediterranean Empire

Lecture: Rome in a Greek World, The Roman Army

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 4

Friday 7/15

Discussion: Status & Social Life in Republican Rome

Lecture: Elite Competition

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 5, Plutarch *Life of Marius*, *Life of Sulla*, *Lives of the Gracchi*

Monday 7/18

**Second Bibliography Source Due**

Quiz #2

Discussion: The Gracchi Brothers, "Great men" and the Republic

Lecture: Marius and Sulla, The Late Republic and the Rise of Caesar

To-do (for Friday): *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 6, 7, Suetonius *Life of the Divine Julius*, *Caesar Gallic War* (excerpts)

Wednesday 7/20

**No class, Midterm Essays Due on Canvas by 11:59:59 PM**

Friday 7/22

Discussion: The Realities and Victims of Roman Conquest

Lecture: End of the Republic, The Roman Army (again)

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 8, Augustus *Res Gestae*, Vergil *Aeneid* 1 and 6 (excerpts), Tacitus *Annals* 1.1-1.5

Monday 7/25

**Third Bibliography Source Due**

Quiz #3

Discussion: Was the End of the Republic Inevitable?

Lecture: The Rise and Reign of Augustus

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 9, Suetonius *Life of Nero*

Wednesday 7/27

Discussion: Daily Life & The Provinces

Lecture: The Julio-Claudians

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 10 (347-359), Josephus *Jewish War* (excerpts), *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani*

Friday 7/29

**Fourth and Final Source Due for Annotated Bibliography**

Discussion: Defining and Making a Dynasty

Lecture: The Flavians

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 10 (360-386)

Monday 8/1

Quiz #4

Discussion: Rome and Parthia

Lecture: The Antonines

To-do: *Boatwright et al.* Chap. 11 & 12

Wednesday 8/3

Discussion: Choosing an End

Lecture: The Severans & Rome in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century

To-do: Final Papers

Friday 8/5

**No Class, Final Papers Due on Canvas by 11:59:59 PM**