

HSRE 330: The Roman Empire

Credits: 3

Schedule: MW, 9:45am-12:30pm, 1:30-4:00pm

Instructor: Jens Khoeler, Ph.D.

Course/Lab Fee: 75 euros for field trips and museum visits

Cross-Listing: History and Classical Studies

Prerequisite: None



Description

The course provides an overview of the political, social, economic and cultural history of Rome and its empire: a travel through more than 1200 years, from the foundation of the “Eternal City” (C. 8th BCE) to the fall of the Empire in the fifth century AD. We will follow the story of a small village built on the Tiber’s bank that first managed to unify the Italian peninsula under its military and political leadership, then became one of the leading cities in the Mediterranean basin and eventually the capital of the Ancient World, whose dominion, at its heyday, stretched from the Hercules’ Columns in the West to Mesopotamia in the East. Then we’re going to understand how

Rome finally lost control of its empire, which broke apart into what was to become the modern layout of Europe. We will also examine several aspects of Roman Civilization through a study of ancient evidence, both textual and material, and its relationships with other contemporary peoples. We will analyse the way that Roman culture was born, the first influence of the Etruscans and the most important contribution of the Hellenistic world. The understanding of the process of romanization of the populations dominated by the Romans will play a significant role in the course, in order to understand how the Roman Culture spread all over the Mediterranean Sea and gave birth to a new form of civilization that was to become one of the pillars of our modern culture. Thus, we will focus on some of its more characteristic features: ranging from religion to art, from society to politics, as well as daily life in order to “look at the Romans through the eyes of the Romans.” Tours to cities with remains of ancient monuments and museums with major archaeological collections will help students to enliven their picture of this culture and get a correct understanding of the phenomena.

Texts

Amanda Claridge, Rome. Oxford Archeological Guide (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). L. Adkins , R. A. Adkins, Handbook to Life in ancient Rome (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).