



THE RISE OF ROME

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Course Overview

For nearly five centuries the Romans waged continuous war against their neighbors and enemies, slowly conquering the Mediterranean from Spain to Syria and beyond. As they transformed the world around them, however, the Romans were themselves transformed: the institutions of their treasured Republic—checks and balances, mixed government, and citizen participation—were unable to cope with explosive expansion, and eventually they unraveled. Students in this course will trace the history of ancient Rome (c. 700 BC to 70 CE), from its beginnings as a second-rank Italian city-state ruled by kings, through the Roman Republic, to the reign of its first imperial dynasty. Using an interdisciplinary lens that draws on history, archaeology, and literature, students will examine the transformation of Roman society in this critical historical period. During the last weeks of the course, students will also take on the roles of Roman senators in *Senatus Romanus*, a Roman Senate simulation developed by Michael Nerdahl (Bowdoin College). In doing so, they will learn about Roman politics through firsthand experience. Key topics in the class include Roman imperialism, the social and cultural transformation of Rome during the period of overseas conquest, the political crises of the first century BC, and the ultimate replacement of Republican government with military autocracy.

Course Objectives

- ✓ Students will work towards mastery of historical methods, writing, and argumentation, ultimately approaching history as a form of analysis rather than chronology or narrative.
- ✓ Students will improve their ability to analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate interdisciplinary sources, including historical accounts, letters, literary works, and poetry, using the tools of historical investigation.
- ✓ Students will learn to summarize and critically evaluate debates between modern scholars, as well as offer their own support or challenges to scholarly arguments.
- ✓ Students will understand Roman expansion, specifically how and why the Roman Republic came to dominate Italy and then the wider Mediterranean world.
- ✓ Students will explore the ways that Roman culture, society, and politics were transformed by imperial expansion.
- ✓ Students will examine the failure and collapse of the Republican government and its replacement by the Principate.

Course Expectations

In class: When you arrive in class, please take a seat and get out your class materials, including (preferably) a pen and paper for taking notes and a physical copy of the relevant reading assignment. This class will be heavily discussion-based. In order to have the best possible discussions, everyone should have a chance to speak and be heard, and everyone should be able to hear what others are saying. To maintain this classroom environment, it is essential that students and the instructor are treated courteously, that we all listen attentively when others are speaking, and that we avoid interrupting, talking over (or under) one another, the distracting use of electronic devices, etc.

Homework: Before many class periods, I will assign readings from primary and/or secondary sources. These will provide the foundations for classroom activities, so it is important that you do the reading *before* coming to class. These readings will vary in length, however, and it is important that you monitor your reading time outside of class. If you feel like you are spending too much time reading, please let me know so we can discuss reading strategies.

In addition to regular class readings, all students will write short responses for each reading assignment. These are just short reflections (a meaty paragraph / about 150-250 words) in which you explain the thesis (or central argument) for secondary sources, and provide a short summary for primary sources. These allow me to see how you are interpreting class materials, to pinpoint areas of difficulty, and to see what topics interest you.

Finally, there will be several assessments throughout the semester, including three short essays, two “analysis” pieces (in which you examine interdisciplinary sources), and two identification quizzes.

Late work: Barring very exceptional circumstances, I will not accept late work a week after the original due date. You may rewrite one written assignment in conference with me. Rewrites must be completed within two weeks of the original due date (if you did not complete the work at all) or within two weeks of receiving feedback. Also, I do not offer last-minute extensions; however, if something comes up and you give me reasonable notice (at least one week), let me know so that we can discuss options. Please give me as much heads up as possible.

Grading

For every assignment, I will provide you with a rubric that assesses your mastery of several skills and content areas; these include (but are not limited to) Written Expression, Argument & Argumentation, and Knowledge of History. This rubric will be used to calculate your grade on each individual assignment. In turn, each assignment will be worth the following percentage of your grade:

Assignment	Weight of Overall Grade
Short Essays	45
Art & Archaeology Analyses	20
Quizzes	20
Participation	15

Texts

We will use two main texts in this course:

- Rosenstein, Nathan. 2012. *Rome and the Mediterranean 290 to 14 BC: The Imperial Republic*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Boatwright, Mary T., Daniel J. Gargola, Noel Lenski, and Richard J.A. Talbert. 2013. *A Brief History of the Romans*. Second edition. Oxford University Press.

The rest of our readings will be available on Canvas. Most are primary source selections specifically edited for this class. The rest are drawn from the following books:

- Bringmann, Klaus. 2007. *A History of the Roman Republic*. Polity Press.
- Dillon, Matthew and Linda Garland. 2015. *Ancient Rome: Social and Historical Documents from the Early Republic to the Death of Augustus*. Routledge.
- Erskine, Andrew. 2010. *Roman Imperialism*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Mouritsen, Henrik. 2017. *Politics in the Roman Republic*. Cambridge University Press.

Course Schedule

The following chart lays out the daily schedule. Below the daily schedule, you will find full descriptions of all the major assignments.

Readings marked “Canvas” will be available on our Canvas site.

Readings marked “Rosenstein” are in the Rosenstein text (*Rome and the Mediterranean*).

Readings marked “Boatwright” are in the Boatwright et al text (*A Brief History of the Romans*).

Week	Class	Topic	Reading/assignment to be done before class
1	1	Introduction / Mythic Origins	No assignment In class: “Literary Sources and Archaeology” handout
	2	Archaic Italy & Early Rome	Boatwright, 1-22 Canvas: Livy on the Kings; Lapis Niger Inscription
	3	Formation of the Roman Republic	Boatwright, 24-41 Canvas: The Twelve Tables; A Roman Calendar
2	1	The Classical Republic (1)	Rosenstein, 1-18 Canvas: Q. Cicero on Canvassing for Office; Livy on <i>Contiones</i>
	2	The Roman Aristocracy	Rosenstein, 18-35 Canvas: Pliny, Livy, Polybius, Quadrigarius on Aristocratic Culture
	3	The Classical Republic (2)	Quiz 1 in class today
3	1	Allies, Colonies, and Municipia	Boatwright, 41-49 Canvas: Plutarch, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Appian on the Pyrrhic War
	2	The First Punic War	Bringmann, 64-73 Canvas: Polybius, Diodorus, Appian on the First Punic War; Columna Rostrata Inscription
	3	The Legions	Rosenstein, 94-118 Canvas: Polybius on the Roman Army
4	1	Essay Workshop	You should come to class with <i>at least</i> a draft thesis statement and outline for your first short essay.
	2	The Interwar Period	Essay 1 Due
	3	Hannibal (1)	Rosenstein, 119-132 Canvas: Polybius, Livy on Hannibal’s Invasion
5	1	Hannibal (2)	Rosenstein, 132-152 Canvas: Polybius, Livy on Hannibal’s Plans; Livy on Roman Reactions to Cannae
	2	Hannibal (3)	Rosenstein, 152-166 Canvas: Livy on Roman Exhaustion

	3	Hannibal (4)	Rosenstein, 166-175 Canvas: Polybius on Scipio
6	1	Rome & the Mediterranean (1)	Rosenstein, 190-210 Canvas: Polybius, Livy, Appian on the Second Macedonian War; Roman Inscriptions from the Greek East
	2	Rome & the Mediterranean (2)	Quiz 2 in class today
	3	The New Harshness (1)	Rosenstein, 211-229 Canvas: Polybius, Livy on Diplomacy with Perseus of Macedon; Delphi Inscription on Roman "Charges" against Perseus
7	1	The New Harshness (2)	Rosenstein, 229-239 For this assignment, groups of students will be responsible for different Canvas readings, as follows: Group 1: Appian on the Lusitanian War Group 2: Polybius and Appian on the Third Punic War Group 3: Polybius and Pausanias on the Achaean War Each student must write down a short summary (c. 250-350 words) of their assigned reading, including a clear articulation of the author's perspective and tone with regards to the events they are describing. In conjunction with other members of your group, be prepared to teach other classmates about your material.
	2	Roman Imperialism: Debates & Problems	Canvas: Erskine, 33-49
	3	Essay Workshop	You should come to class with <i>at least</i> a draft thesis statement and outline for your second short essay, and ideally with a rough draft. You should also bring along your feedback from the previous essay.
8	1	The Social Impact of Empire	Essay 2 Due
	2	The Political Impact of Empire	Rosenstein, 240-258 Canvas: Polybius, Livy, Pliny, Plutarch on Second Century BCE Politics
	3	The Cultural Impact of Empire	Canvas: Hellenism and Roman Art Handout We will spend class time writing the Roman Art and Hellenism analysis.
9	1	Intro to Archaeology	Canvas: Introduction to Archaeology Handout; Explore Cerro de la Cruz in ThingLink We will spend class time writing the archaeological analysis of Cerro de la Cruz.
	2	New Politics	Art and Archaeology Analyses Due by 5 PM
	3	New Politics: The Gracchi	Boatwright, 82-92 Canvas: Plutarch on Ti. Gracchus; Fragments of C. Gracchus' Speeches; Excerpts from Acilian Law
10	1	New Politics: "Optimates" & "Populares"?	Boatwright, 94-106 Canvas: Sallust on Marius

	2	New Politics: Civil War, Sulla	Boatwright, 107-124 Canvas: Sallust on Moral Decline; Plutarch on Sulla
	3	The Rise of the Warlords	Boatwright, 125-135 Canvas: Dillon & Garland, sources 12.5, 12.9, 12.28
11	1	The “First Triumvirate”	Boatwright, 136-148 Canvas: Dillon & Garland, sources 12.41-45; Catullus’ Political Poems
	2	Caesar	Boatwright, 148-159 Canvas: Caesar on the Civil War; Caesar’s Letters; Cicero’s Letters
	3	Caesar’s Heir	Boatwright, 160-172 Canvas: For this assignment, groups of students will be responsible for different Canvas readings, as follows: Group 1: Dillon & Garland, sources 14.15-17, 14.21 Group 2: Dillon & Garland, sources 14.34, 14.42-45 Group 3: Dillon & Garland, sources 14.41, 14.48-49 Group 4: Dillon & Garland, sources 14.50-52, 14.58 Each student must write down a short summary (c. 250-350 words) of their assigned reading, including a clear articulation of the author’s perspective and tone with regards to the events they are describing. In conjunction with other members of your group, be prepared to teach other classmates about your material.
12	1	Augustus	Boatwright, 172-192 Canvas: Augustus’ <i>Res Gestae</i>
	2	The End of the Republic	Mouritsen, 164-172
	3	Essay Workshop	You should come to class with <i>at least</i> a draft thesis statement and outline for your third short essay, and ideally with a rough draft. You should also bring along your feedback from the previous essay.
13	1	The Principate	Essay 3 Due
	2	Rome’s Legacy	Canvas: M. Sellers, “Republican Influences on the French and American Revolutions”; Interview with historian Edward Watts (Professor of History, UC San Diego)
	3	Intro to <i>Senatus Romanus</i>	Canvas: <i>Senatus Romanus</i> Student Rules
14	1	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (190 BC)	Canvas: Argumentation & Rhetoric in the Roman Senate I (Livy, Cato the Elder)
	2	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (190 BC)	None
	3	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (190 BC)	None
15	1	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (189 BC)	Canvas: Argumentation & Rhetoric in the Roman Senate II (Livy, Sallust, C. Gracchus)
	2	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (189 BC)	None

	3	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (189 BC)	None
16	1	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> (188 BC)	<i>Senatus Romanus</i> Reflection Due

Assignments in Detail

Short Essay 1: Explaining Roman Military Success. In chapter 3 ("The imperium and the army"), Rosenstein outlines several factors contributing to Roman military success in the third century BC. He stresses manpower, a complex tactical system, financial resources, and good logistics.

Judging from our sources on the Pyrrhic War and the First Punic War, is he right? For this paper, explain what you think were the most important factors contributing to Roman victory in the wars of the early third century (specifically, the war with Pyrrhus and the first war with Carthage). Explicitly show where you agree or disagree with Rosenstein.

Requirements:

- To answer this question, please use evidence from your main texts, as well as at least three ancient sources (and note that this is a bare minimum).
- You will need to engage directly with Rosenstein's points—i.e. you should be making your own argument about why Rome was successful in the Pyrrhic War and First Punic War, then putting your argument in some sort of dialogue with Rosenstein.
- The paper will be at around 750-1000 words (and no less than 650 words)
- It must include an introduction with a thesis statement. You should aim for well-structured paragraphs with topic sentences, and minimal problems with grammar and syntax. Finally, you must cite all sources using either parenthetical references or footnotes. Please use a 12 pt font, Times New Roman or similarly sized, double-spaced with 1 inch margins.

Short Essay 2: Explaining Roman Imperialism. Scholars have long debated the nature of Roman imperialism in the late third / early second centuries BCE, though the arguments of W. Harris and A. Eckstein have been particularly influential. Harris argued that the Roman elite sought glory and economic gain from war and conquest; this created a dynamic in which Rome was exceptionally bellicose and expansionist, as the aristocracy repeatedly sought opportunities for gain and glory (and created opportunities when none existed). But recently, Eckstein argued that all ancient states were warlike and aggressive, and all forged cultures that rewarded successful war-making; this was simply a matter of survival in the anarchic Mediterranean, where any weakness could be utterly fatal. Thus Rome responded aggressively to any perceived threat (whether real or imagined) to maximize its strength, deter potential challenges, and ultimately preserve its own security.

Weigh in on this debate, agreeing with either (or neither) Eckstein or Harris. In your view—based on the evidence—what motivated Roman warfare and expansion in the late third and second centuries BCE? Was Roman war/expansion primarily an “aggressive” drive for gain and glory, or was it primarily a “defensive” drive for security? Or something else altogether?

Requirements:

- Your paper should include some consideration of counterargument(s); so if you argue that Roman imperialism was primarily driven by (e.g.) greed and glory, you should include a little discussion of the main counterclaim(s).

- You may use evidence from Erskine’s historiographical overview, but you must use evidence from at least six additional sources; of these, you must use at least 2 literary sources and 2 epigraphic sources to justify your answer. Remember that these are bare minimums. Use evidence carefully and be cognizant of authorship and chronology.
- The paper will be around 750-1000 words (minimum 650).
- The paper must include an introduction with a thesis statement. You should aim for well-structured paragraphs with topic sentences, and minimal problems with grammar and syntax. Please use a 12 pt font, Times New Roman or similarly sized, double-spaced with 1 inch margins. Finally, you must cite all sources using a formal citation style.

Short Essay 3: Explaining the End of the Republic. Mouritsen offers a particular explanation for the collapse of the Roman Republic. Make your own argument, explaining why you agree or disagree with him.

Requirements:

- Your paper may consider multiple factors that contributed to the fall of the Republic, but ultimately you need to show that one or two particular factors were most significant.
- Be sure to engage directly with Mouritsen. You should be making your own argument about why the Republic fell, then putting it in some sort of dialogue with Mouritsen.
- You must use a minimum of 6 sources. Of these, at least 4 must be primary sources. Use evidence carefully and be cognizant of authorship, the type of source, and chronology.
- The paper will be no less than 750 words. I’m not imposing an upper limit, but please try to stay under 1250 (about 5 double-spaced pages).
- The paper must include an introduction with a thesis statement. You should aim for well-structured paragraphs with topic sentences, and minimal problems with grammar and syntax. Please use a 12 pt font, Times New Roman or similarly sized, double-spaced with 1 inch margins.
- Finally, you must cite all sources using either parenthetical references or footnotes. Use a formal citation style.

Art Analysis. For this assignment, you will examine several pieces of Roman artwork (second and first centuries BC) and compare it to Classical and Hellenistic Greek art (c. fifth to first centuries BC). Then you will write responses (about 250-500 words each) to the following questions:

1. How did the Romans adopt and adapt Hellenistic art to express Roman values? (Be clear about which cultural values the Romans were expressing in their artwork.)
2. How does the Roman reception of Hellenistic art styles compare to their broader reactions to Greek culture (which you read about for today's homework)?

Archaeology Analysis. For this assignment, you will carefully explore the archaeological site Cerro de la Cruz (as digitally presented in ThingLink). Then you will write responses (about 250-500 words each) to the following questions:

1. Cornell says that archaeological evidence and written sources are “two bodies of data [that] represent different kinds of reality.” Furthermore, according to Cornell and Snodgrass, it is

problematic to use historical narratives to interpret archaeological sites. What do they mean, and how do their arguments play out at a site like Cerro de la Cruz?

2. Based on the archaeology, and your knowledge of Roman history, how would you interpret the remains at Cerro de la Cruz? (i.e. what do you think is a plausible explanation for what happened here?) Use specific evidence from Cerro de la Cruz and from Roman history to support your answer.

Quizzes. Students will be regularly exposed to unfamiliar names, places, and concepts in this class. Thus I will provide students with lists of key terms and map items that will help them grasp essential concepts and guide students toward the most important study materials. On quizzes, you will receive a list of ten identifications drawn directly from the key term lists, and you will be expected to write a short paragraph on five of them. Your answer should briefly define the term within its appropriate historical context, give a relevant date or timeframe (where applicable), and state why it is relevant or significant to Roman history. The quizzes will also include a map portion where you will identify several key places and events.

Participation. Classroom participation will be evaluated in a number of ways, including attendance and discussion, but also through regular reading responses (see above). Discussions in this class are essential to student success, since they provide opportunities to make and critique historical arguments in a low stakes environment. Student contributions to discussion should demonstrate familiarity with the material and preparedness for class. However, if you are particularly nervous about talking in class, please meet with me to discuss alternative modes of participation. Attendance is mandatory, though you will be allowed 2 unexcused absences. Absences are excused due to illness, mandatory religious obligations, certain extracurricular obligations, or other unavoidable circumstances. If you will be absent, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.