

**CS 2350A (Fall 2014)**  
**Roman Conquest and Cultural Identities**  
Dr. Alexander Meyer  
Tues., Thurs.: 9:30-10:30am  
NCB 113



**Course Description**

This course will examine the expansion of the Roman Empire from its conquest of central Italy to the height of its power. We will investigate the people conquered by Rome and their treatment within the empire by surveying the history, literature and archaeology of the Roman Empire's frontiers and cosmopolitan cities from Rome's foundation to the rise of Christianity. We will read ancient texts and modern scholarship in order to understand the variety of cultural identities in the Roman Empire, how they were formed and perceived in antiquity, and how their interpretation reflects modern attitudes about multiculturalism and globalization.

### **Instructor**

My name is Alexander Meyer. I am an ancient historian with particular interest in the formation and perception of identity in the Roman world. I am also fascinated by issues of travel, migration and communication in the ancient world in general. Before coming to Western I studied at the University of Pennsylvania, Tufts University and Duke University. I've also taught at Duke and at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome. In the summer I am co-director of an archaeological field school at the Roman fort of Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall in northern England. Please feel free to introduce yourself to me at any time. I'm happy to talk about any aspect of the ancient world or just to get to know you.

### **Contact Information**

Alexander Meyer

Department of Classical Studies

Lawson Hall, Room 3224

Email: [ameyer26@uwo.ca](mailto:ameyer26@uwo.ca)

Telephone: (519) 661-2111 ext. 84522

Office Hours: Wed. 9:00-10:00am, Thurs. 10:30-11:30am

### **Required Texts (for purchase)**

Boatwright, Mary Taliaferro, Daniel J. Gargola, and Richard J. A. Talbert. *A brief history of the Romans*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. **(BGT)**

Boatwright, Mary Taliaferro. *Peoples of the Roman World*. Cambridge Introduction to Roman Civilization. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. **(BOATWRIGHT)**

**NOTE FROM THE DEAN OF ARTS and HUMANITIES:** You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

**PLAGIARISM:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

**POLICY ON ACCOMMODATION FOR MEDICAL ILLNESS:**

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)

[downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> [under the Medical Documentation heading]

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Office of the Dean of their home faculty and provide documentation.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION CANNOT BE GRANTED BY THE INSTRUCTOR OR DEPARTMENT.**

**WESTERN ACCESSIBILITY POLICY.** Western has many services and programs that support the personal, physical, social and academic needs of students with disabilities. For more information and links to these services: <http://accessibility.uwo.ca/>

**WESTERN SUPPORT SERVICES:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwoom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Course Objectives and Skills attained**

Upon successful completion of this course students are expected to have:

- broadened their understanding of issues of race, ethnicity, religion and social class in one of the world's great multicultural societies.
- Acquired the ability to identify and examine ways in which multiculturalism is reflected in Roman literature, art and archaeology.
- learned to analyze ancient sources critically.
- developed an understanding of the Roman attitudes toward foreign cultures and their own.
- considered this material as it relates to post-Roman societies and our own.

At the end of this course students should have acquired:

- a basic knowledge of the history of Rome.
- a familiarity with some of the most important literary sources from ancient Rome.
- an understanding of the potential and limitations of ancient sources (literary, archaeological and documentary).
- the ability to analyze and discuss the significance of these sources in a coherent manner and in their historical context.

## **Course Structure and Topics Covered**

This course has three basic components. In the first several weeks we will survey the history of Roman conquest and expansion from Rome's foundation to the fourth century CE. We will focus on the wars of expansion and the cultural influences that affected Roman society during this period. This portion of the course will provide a historical framework within which we can discuss more specific issues and events.

The following weeks will be dedicated to examination of specific peoples and their interaction with Rome before, during and after conquest. We will look at the ways cultural identities were formed, perceived and manipulated by conquered peoples and by Romans.

In the final weeks we will look at the art and architecture of the city of Rome and other locations in the empire. We will discuss the position and portrayal of subject peoples in Rome and how cultural identities were manipulated. We will also explore the extent to which the peoples of the empire interacted and how they were affected by distant people and events. Finally, we will discuss the concept of racism in the ancient world.

## **Additional Texts**

Further readings will be supplied electronically by the instructor through Web CT. These texts are every bit as important as the books listed above so be sure to allow yourself sufficient time to access them. Details will also be provided if you prefer to check these sources out of the library.

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation for this course will be based on one test, a final exam, three short quizzes and in-class participation. The first test will take an entire course period and will consist of 50 multiple choice questions. The final exam will take place in the time and place determined by the registrar's office during the final exam period. This exam will be two hours long and comprise 100 multiple choice questions. The content and date of quizzes will be announced at least one week in advance and will test students' knowledge of geography and chronology. Class participation grades will be determined by the quantity and quality of individual students' involvement in class discussion and group exercises.

First test: 30%

Final exam: 45%

Quizzes (3 total): 15%

Attendance and Participation: 10%