

## **The View From the Periphery: Life in the Provinces of the Roman Empire**

**Professor Jonathan Price**  
Departments of History and Classics

**Spring 2002**  
**Tuesdays, 14:00-16:00**  
**Gilman 282**

**Teaching assistant: Benjamin Birley**  
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This general course on the history of the Roman Empire takes the opposite view from the one normally adopted in courses, textbooks, TV shows, etc. on Ancient Rome: instead of viewing the world from Rome outwards, we see how the world looks and functions in the provinces, far from the capital. In the provinces we shall visit a few of the many peoples who actually made up the Empire.

The course will survey a wide variety of topics, including ethnicity, religion, local politics, commerce, entertainment and leisure. The course is intended as a stand-alone introductory view of the Roman Empire, an incentive to explore the history of Rome in other courses and venues, and a platform for thinking about some of the larger, overarching themes of human history, such as personal identity, the nature of empire and imperialism, the impact of the everyday experiences of human experience like language and social interactions on larger historical movements.

Each week, students will be required to attend the lecture and to prepare the assigned weekly reading, most of which will be in sources from the ancient period — the best way to study history!

### **Requirements:**

One short test 20%  
One short paper 20%  
Final exam 60%

The course will be conducted in English. All lectures, reading assignments, and written requirements will be in English.

## LECTURES AND READINGS

### 22 February: Introduction and Overview: A Tapestry of Peoples

#### 1 March: The View from Rome: The Gods Smile on Us

READING: Appian, Preface to *Roman History*

- Polybius, *History*, Book 1, 1-4
- Vergil, *Aeneid*, Book 1, 254-296; Book 6, 777-853
- Plutarch, *On the Fortune of the Romans* 1-2 (= *Moralia* 316E-317C)
- N. Lewis and M. Reinhold, *Roman Civilization II*, New York, etc. 1966, no. 40, pp. 156-166

#### 8 March: Who are you? Questions of Identity Outside of Rome

READING: Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11, 23-25 (Claudius' speech about foreigners)

- *Acts of the Apostles*, Chapters 21-22
- Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, Book 19, 5-7
- Mary Beard, *SPQR*, London 2015, 439-444
- B. Shaw, "Keti, Son of Maswalat: Ethnicity and Empire", in J.J. Price et al., eds., *Rome: An Empire of Many Nations*, Cambridge 2021, pp. 58-62, 81-83

#### 15 March: City and Countryside

READING: Lewis-Reinhold, nos. 82-85, 87, 90-92

- Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, Books 3 and 9

#### 22 March: The Other Ninety Percent: Women, Children, Slaves

READING: J-A. Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* Chapter VIII, pp. 163-185

- J. Toner, *The Roman Guide to Slave Management A Treatise by Nobleman Marcus Sidonius Falx*, Cambridge 2014, Chapter I: How to Buy a Slave

#### 29 March: Urban Pleasures: Roman Culture, Local Culture

READING: Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 337-358

- Graffiti and inscriptions about games from Pompey, excerpted from: A.E. Cooley and G.L. Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York 2004

#### In-class quiz (15 minutes)

#### 26 April: Religions

READING: Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, Book 11

- *Acts of the Apostles*, Chapters 1-2
- H.A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, Oxford 1972, no. 22
- Lucian, *The Syrian Goddess*

#### 3 May: Literature and Art in the Provinces (You'd Be Surprised!)

READING: Lucian, *True Story*

### **10 May: The Emperor in the Provinces**

READING: *Historia Augusta*, Life of Hadrian, Chapters 10-14

- Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 69, 9-16
- Naphtali Lewis, *Greek Historical Documents: The Roman Principate 27 B.C. - 285 A.D.*, Toronto 1974, nos. 7, 8, 15, 37

### **17 May: The Roman Army in the Provinces: Not Just Soldiers**

READING: Josephus, *The Jewish War*, Book 3, 70-109.

- Trajan's Column: scroll through images in links on course site
- Vindolanda "highlights": use link on course site

### **24 May: The Roman Peace**

READING: Aelius Aristides, "To Rome", 1-13, 25-38, 59-65, 92-3; 28-33; 80-81; 90-109

### **31 May: The Roman Peace?**

READING: Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 14, 31-37; *Agricola* 15-16

- Josephus, *The Jewish War*, Book 2, 55-65, 108-118, 169-177, 184-6, 192-203, 254-65, 271-410
- *Sibylline Oracles*, Oracle 4, 102-192; Oracle 5, lines 155-178, 238-285, 361-396

### **7 June: The Recurring Dream of the Roman Empire**

READING: C. Edwards, *Roman Presences: Receptions of Rome in European Culture, 1789-1945*, Cambridge 1999: read either "Comparativism and references to Rome in British imperial attitudes to India" by Javed Majeed, or "A flexible Rome: Fascism and the cult of romanità" by Marla Stone

**Short paper due.**