Roman Art and Imperial Ritual

This course focuses on the main tools that the Roman emperors utilized to project their conceptions of universal rule: elaborate systems of ritual and the visual, architectural and urban environments. We will examine several important sites and recurring themes at different periods of Roman history from the age of Augustus to late antiquity including the refashioning of the city of Rome to create new experiences of Roman history, Roman chariot racing and the hippodrome, Roman triumph and triumphal art, the imperial palace and audience hall, accessions and punishment rituals, as well as the Christian liturgy. Topics will include Augustus' invention of a new imperial identity, Diocletian and the emergence of a system of sacral rulership, Constantine the Great and the Christianization of the Roman empire, and Justinian's creation of the great church of Hagia Sophia. We will mainly concentrate on the cities of Rome and Constantinople; however, we will also consider such sites as Diocletian's villa at Split, Galerius' Palace in Thessaloniki, the late antique city of Trier, and Egyptian sites such as Alexandria and the Tetrarchic cult room at the temple of Luxor. An important problem that this course investigates is the Christianization of Roman imperial art and ceremony and the reciprocal grafting of Christian rituals, especially the Divine Liturgy, onto well-established imperial ceremonies. In order to interrogate the ancient visual and ritual material we will read select theorists in art history, anthropology and religious studies who have written on this subject. The hope is that by putting these modern theoretical texts into dialogue with the ancient material students will gain access to the tools to develop a critical vocabulary with which to analyze this intriguing phenomenon of ritual-visual interaction.
Texts
Course readings will come from two sources: 1) readings available from the library’s electronic databases, electronic reserve, ebooks, or (more rarely) in hard copy from the circulation desk, 2) the required textbooks listed below and available at the bookstore:


In addition, there are two important texts that, I believe, are invaluable in preparing one to conduct research and write in Art History and the Humanities: Kate Turabian’s Manual for Writers and Wayne Booth et al. The Craft of Research. These are optional, but be sure to consult Turabian on proper footnote, bibliography formats for your papers.

Course Requirements, Evaluation and Disclaimers:
Students are responsible for reading and preparing to discuss the daily readings for every class meeting; a significant portion of the final grade will derive from students’ preparation and demonstrated engagement with the material in class. In addition to class discussion, students will be responsible for writing a number of short papers (2-3 pages) and presenting them to begin class discussion. There will be a midterm examination and final. The final component of the class is a research paper (10-15 pages) focused on a question that relates to one of the topics of the class.

Like any upper division art history class, any unexcused absence will adversely affect your grade through the class participation component and students with excessive absences will be dropped from the course. Excused absences from class include medical emergencies documented by a medical professional, a religious observance, or participation in an athletic events documented by a coach. Even if an absence is excused, you are still responsible for the material covered. If you anticipate such an absence, please contact the professor; however, turn to your colleagues for class notes.
Grades will be calculated as follows: class participation and attendance 10%, short papers 10%, exams 50%, research paper and its presentation 30%.

Grading Scale: 100-90=A; 89-86=B+; 85-80=B; 79-76=C+; 75-70=C; 69-60=D; 59 and below =F. Plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Student Resources:** Librarians at the Addlestone Library stand ready to help you gain familiarity with library resources and data networks. In addition, there are a number of free services available to students through the Center for Student Learning at the Addlestone Library. With regards to this course, students may find the services of the writing and study skills labs useful. http://www.cofc.edu/~csl, tel. 953-5635. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if there is something going on in your academic or personal life that is creating difficulties for your successful completion of this class before it becomes a major impediment. Finally, if you should become a victim of a crime you can contact the Crisis Assistance Response and Education (CARE) program for everything from help dealing with law enforcement to assistance in alerting professors (without reference to details). Emergency 724-3600, Non-Emergency 953-5522; located at 67 George St.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**SECTION I: EARLY EMPIRE TO THE THIRD CENTURY**

**January 10-12 Ritual Theory.**
Jan 10-12 No Class; Advance Reading.

**January 17-19. The Near Eastern, Hellenistic and Republican Legacy.**
Jan 17 The Hellenistic and Near Eastern background.
Ancient:
Sources on Alexander the Great and his Successors [available on webCT]
Modern:
Price, 1-47;

January 24-26 Augustus; the Imperial Cult
Jan. 24 Augustus and the Invention of the Roman Emperor.
Ancient: Res Gestae Divi Augusti http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html
Modern: Zanker, pp. 101-92; 227-38

Jan. 26 The development of the Imperial Cult.
Price, 133-206.
Zanker, 297-p316; 331-33.

Jan. 31 Imperial Cult, Imperial Image.
Elsner, 1-51. 53-63.


Feb. 2 The Emperor as Priest and temple founder.
February 7-9 Imperial Display and Commemoration: Triumph, Accession, Death.

Feb. 7. Architecture and Rituals of Triumph
McCormick, Ch. 1 “Invincible Empire under the Principate,” pp. 1-34.
Elsner, 63-87.

Feb 9 Imperial Monuments, Memory and Death

February 14-16 Games

Feb 14 Imperial Display: the Gladiatorial Games,
O. Hekster, “An Emperor on Display,” in Commodus Emperor at the Crossroads (Amsterdam: Gieben, 2002), 137-163. (on WebCT)

PART II: THE TETRARCHY TO THE END OF THE 4TH CENTURY

Feb. 1 Beginnings; the Tetrarchic system and corresponding rituals (Accession, imperial audience, clothing).
Elsner, pages 53-87.

February 21-23 The Dissolution of the Tetrarchy and Innovations in the Imperial Image: Maxentius, Licenius, Constantine,

Feb. 21 Maxentius, Constantine and Rome.

Feb. 23 Constantine the Great: New Imperial Images, Divine Sanction, Constantinople

February 28-March 2 Constantine and the New Imperial Image; Foundation of Constantinople; Beginning of Christianization of Imperial Rituals and vice versa; Last years and death of Constantine
Feb. 28 Midterm
Christianity as Imperial Religion
Elsner, 199-235
Holloway, “Basilicas, Baptistry and Burial,” “The Tomb of St. Peter,” excerpts from Eusebius

March 2 Constantinople
Sarah Bassett, The urban image of late antique Constantinople.
NB85 .B375 2004

March 7-9 Spring Break
Spring Break- no class.

PART III: IMPERIAL CONSTANTINOPLE TO JUSTINIAN’S LEGACY

March 14-16 Constantinople as Imperial City, Christian and Imperial Ritual (Hippodrome, Adventus, Liturgy, Accession) Victory
March 14 Adventus, Profectio
Amm. Marc.

N. McLynn, “The Transformatoin of Imperial Churchgoing in the Fourth Century”
→ Taft, Byzantine Rite

March 21-23 Constantinople as Imperial Stage
March 21 The Hippodrome
Imperial Acclamations, Michael Maas.
McCormick, 35-79
March 23 Accession, Deposition, Victory, Rebellion, Punishment.  
De Cer. Leo, Justin (My translations, given in class)  
McCormick, 80-130

March 28-30 The Age of Justinian and the Legacy of Hagia Sophia  
March 28 Hagia Sophia; Liturgy as Imperial Ritual  
Procopius, Buildings, 1.1.23  
Paul the Silentiary  
R. Taft, "Gynaikon,"

March 30 Augoustaion, Khalke.  San Vitale  
M. Maas, The Cambridge Companion To The Age Of Justinian  
Excerpts from Cyril Mango, The brazen house : a study of the vestibule of the imperial palace of Constantinople

April 4-6 The Great Palace and the Great Church (Receptions, Diplomacy.  
April 4 Chrysotriklinion  
Averil Cameron, “The Construction of Court Ritual" in Rituals of Royalty.

April 5 Banquet, Clothing  
Excerpts from the Book of Ceremonies on Christmas, Weddings, Easter (my translations).

April 11-13 Imperial Ceremony  
April 11. Readings from the Book of Ceremonies (my translation).

April 13 Byzantine Empresses

PART IV: THE MAKING OF MEDIEVAL BYZANTIUM

April 18-20 the Medieval Legacy  
April 18 Excerpts from C. Mango, The Brazen House.

April 20 A Sense of History.  A. Kazdhan, People and Power in Byzantium  
McCormick, Chs. 4 and 5.

Tuesday May 2  
Final Exam Day: 4:00-7:00 Room 307