



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

Ancient History II

Course Code	L_GOBAGES103
Credits	3
Period	P2
Course Level	100
Language Of Tuition	Dutch / English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Course Coordinator	dr. K. Staat
Examiner	dr. K. Staat
Teaching Staff	prof. dr. R.B. ter Haar Romeny, dr. K. Staat, dr. A.E. Vermeulen
Teaching method(s)	Seminar, Lecture

Course Objective

Acquiring knowledge of the history of Rome, Roman Italy, and the Roman Empire.

Course Content

In Ancient History 2, we deal with the history of Rome. We will begin with the origins of Rome as a major city state in central Italy, initially ruled by kings, but a Republic since the late sixth century BCE. We study the internal developments in the Early Republic (fifth to third centuries BCE), especially the so-called Struggle of the Orders (Patricians and Plebeians), resulting in a compromise and a curious oligarchic constitutional system. We will see how Rome, from the fourth century BCE onwards, first became the ruling power of Italy, subsequently to conquer the Mediterranean in a series of wars against Carthage and the kingdoms founded by the successors of Alexander the Great. We will also see that Roman expansion had devastating effects on internal stability: in the first century BCE the Republic crumbled in a series of civil wars, and by the turn of the Common Era a monarchic system had been established. The holders of monarchic power in this system are nowadays usually (at least in English) labelled 'emperors' (from Latin imperator, meaning something like 'commander-in-chief').

The first and second centuries CE were for the Roman Empire, now encompassing the Mediterranean and a considerable part of north-western Europe, a period of stability guaranteed by military superiority and accompanied by progressive integration of the population of the provinces in the Roman citizenry. This stability was shaken in the third century, when the Empire was confronted with a severe crisis which it survived, although not without considerable adaptations in the administrative, military, and ideological sphere.

In Late Antiquity (from the fourth century onwards), the Roman Empire in north-western Europe and the western Mediterranean was superseded by Germanic kingdoms. In the Eastern Mediterranean, however, it survived as what we call the Byzantine Empire. In addition to the events and developments here sketched, we will also go into more structural aspects of Roman history: social relations, economic developments, class conflict, political institutions, law, warfare, and last but not least changes in the religious sphere. The dominant position of Christianity in European history is, after all, a legacy of the Roman Empire.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

Lectures, seminars.

Method of Assessment

Written examination (100%).

Literature

For students of the BA track History and International Studies:

L. de Blois, R.J. van der Spek, An Introduction to the Ancient World. Third edition, London & New York 2019.

For students of the BA track Geschiedenis:

L. de Blois & R.J. van der Spek, Een kennismaking met de oude wereld, Bussum: Coutinho 2017.

Additional Information Target Audience

Obligatory for first year students of History/ History and International Studies. Recommended for other students with a serious interest in ancient history.

Additional Information

This course is part of the regular first year bachelor programme Geschiedenis/ History and International Studies. Lectures are in English, seminars either in English (for students of the track History and International Studies) or in Dutch (for students of the track Geschiedenis).