

**Dr Paul Newson**

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Office hours: Tuesday, 11:00-12:30; Thursday 11:00-12:30

**AROL 225  
The Roman and Byzantine Near East  
Fall Semester 2009/2010**

**1. Course learning Outcomes**

This course introduces students to the material culture of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine between the first century BC (the involvement of Rome) and the mid-seventh century AD (the Muslim conquest). Students are also expected to develop an understanding of the historical framework for this period: the progression of Rome's annexation of the Near East. In addition other topics covered include: a brief geographical survey and the development of the Roman provinces created in the region; political and economic relations with Parthia/Persia; the social and political consequences of Rome's adoption of Christianity.

The course ends with a look at the transformation of the Roman East in Late Antiquity, but also considers fundamental continuities from the Late Roman/Byzantine and Ummayyad empires. Students are expected to apply the knowledge acquired from the lectures to solve problems and synthesize material: identifying and commenting on the significance of artifacts; and making connections between different classes of material and textual evidence.

**2. Some suggested readings**

General

*The Cambridge Ancient History*. Vol. 11, pages 613-48.

Ball, W., 2001. *Rome in the East. The Transformation of an Empire*. London and New York.

Boethius A., and Ward-Perkins, J.B. 1978. *Etruscan and Roman Architecture*. Harmondsworth. Chapter 18.

Bowersock, G. 1983. *Roman Arabia*. Cambridge, Ma.

Butcher, K., 2003. *Roman Syria and the Near East*. London.

Isaac, B., 1990. *The Limits of Empire. The Roman Army in the East*. Oxford.

Kennedy, D. 1996. *The Roman Army in the East*. Ann Arbor. Pages 9-24, 135-51.

Millar, F., 1993. *The Roman Near East*. Cambridge, Ma.

Sartre, M. 2005. *The Middle East Under Rome*. Cambridge, Ma.

Young, G. K., 2001. *Rome's Eastern Trade. International Commerce and Imperial Policy*. London.

Sites

Browning, I. 1979. *Palmyra*. London.

Browning, I. 1980. *Petra*. London.

Browning, I. 1982. *Jerash and the Decapolis*. London.

Jidejian, N. 1969. *Tyre through the Ages*. Beirut.

Jidejian, N. 1973. *Beirut through the Ages*. Beirut.

Perkins, A.L. 1973. *The Art of Dura-Europas*. Oxford.

Ragette, F. 1980. *Baalbek*. London.

Stoneman, S. 1992. *Palmyra and its Empire: Zenobia's Revolt Against Rome*. Ann Arbor.

### 3. Grading Criteria

Students are encouraged to think for themselves and apply knowledge learned to a unique problem. To undertake this objective, occasionally texts will be provided which the students are expected to read and which will form the basis for detailed classwork and discussion. The mid-term exam will be comprised of two sections: the first section will be a number of short answer questions, the second will be an essay chosen from a number of essay questions. The final exam covers all the material in the course, but with emphasis on the latter part of the course.

The weighting is: mid-term 35%; attendance, participation in class and day trips 20%; final 45%.

### 4. Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Subject</i>
<b>Week 1</b>	06-Oct	Tues	1	Introduction: course aims	
	08-Oct	Thur	2	The Roman annexation	Background to Rome's Annexation of the Near East
<b>Week 2</b>	13-Oct	Tues	3	Space and time	Geography and communications
	15-Oct	Thur	4	Provinces and principalities: Client Kingdoms I	Phoenicia & Seleucia;
<b>Week 3</b>	20-Oct	Tues	5	Client Kingdoms II	Commagene & Emesa Nemrut Dag
	22-Oct	Thur	6	Client Kingdoms III	The Kingdom of Judaea and Herodian Palaces; The Nabataeans
<b>Week 4</b>	27-Oct	Tues	7	Rome and Parthia	Aggression and accord, and the 'caravan trade'
	29-Oct	Thur	8	Rome and Persia	The new balance of power
<b>Week 5</b>	03-Nov	Tues	9	The company of soldiers	The Roman army
	05-Nov	Thur	10		
<b>Week 6</b>	10-Nov	Tues	11	City and country	The 'consumer city' and alternative models
	12-Nov	Thur	12		
<b>Week 7</b>	17-Nov	Tues	13	Resources	Agriculture and materials
	19-Nov	Thur	14	<b>Mid-term Examination</b>	
<b>Week 8</b>	24-Nov	Tues	15	Trade, taxes and money	Pottery, the marble trade, coinage
	26-Nov	Thur	16		
<b>Week 9</b>	01-Dec	Tues	17	The public city	Motives for public buildings, types of public building
	03-Dec	Thur	18		

<b>Week 10</b>	08-Dec	Tues	19	Identities	Languages and material culture as markers of difference: tombs, domestic architecture
	12-Dec	Thur	20		
<b>Week 11</b>	15-Dec	Tues	21	The arts	Sculpture, mosaic, painting costume
	17-Dec	Thur	22		
<b>Week 12</b>	22-Dec	Tues	23		
<b>Week 13</b>	05-Jan	Tues	24	The pious world	Polytheism, monotheism, the consequences of imperial Christianity
	07-Jan	Thur	25		
<b>Week 14</b>	12-Jan	Tues	26	Continuity and Change	The Late Roman Byzantine - Early Islamic transition
	14-Jan	Thur	27		
<b>Week 15</b>	19-Jan	Tues	28		
	21-Jan	Thur	29	Revision	

**It is expected that at least 1 day trip will be undertaken to a significant site of the Roman period during the course of the Semester on a Saturday.**

### **5. Course Policy**

Students are expected to be on time for class. Latecomers will be counted as absent. Regular class attendance is required and repeated absence may lead to the expulsion of the student from the course. Make-up exams will only be given to students with a valid excuse. Any signs of plagiarism or the breaking of the Student Code of Conduct will have consequences. All AUB academic regulations will be followed, as in the Appendix of the Student Handbook 2008-2009.