



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Migration in Ancient Rome - 390007

Last update 14-09-2025

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: History

Academic year: 2026

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Matthias Schmidt

Coordinator Email: matthias.schmidt@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays - 12:00 - 13:30

Teaching Staff:

Course/Module description:

Migration is a fundamental and continuous aspect of ancient Roman history. In its mythical and historiographical traditions Rome considered itself from its beginnings as an inclusive city and society tracing its origins back to the demographic and cultural unification of indigenous people in Latium and refugees from the Trojan War in Asia. The city itself was thought to be founded as an asylum, "a sanctuary for refugees and foreigners". Historically the early Roman Republic was characterized by its territorial expansion on Italian soil, the affiliation of various Italian peoples and their assimilation as well as military integration into the Roman system. Roman immigration and citizenship laws during republican times for individual and collective inclusion of allies and foreigners were flexible in various components according to political necessities and contributed to the creation of an inclusive city population. Mutual contracts and cultural exchange between Rome and its Italian neighbors, the establishment of Roman colonies throughout Italy (and later throughout the whole empire) and granting Roman citizenship individually or collectively to Italians was one instrument towards the gradual incorporation of foreigners into the Roman state and finally the "unification" of the Italian peninsula under Roman hegemony. Towards the end of the 3rd century BCE Rome started to expand its political and military influence to territories beyond Italy starting the process of building an empire. Colonies of Roman citizens or army veterans were established in the provinces, political opponents were sent by the authorities into "exile" to the provinces, while foreign tribes were resettled throughout the empire to secure its borders. On the other hand, Rome witnessed an enormous migration of foreign (non-Italian) merchants, workers, intellectuals, teachers, artists and students into the city, due to its stability and wealth as city and empire, along with opportunities for trade, military service, promises of a better standard of living and access to the city's resources. In addition, the change of the demographic structure of the city was accelerated by the influx of enormous numbers of foreign slaves (prisoners of war) as a result of permanent warfare and occupation of foreign territories. Over the time huge number of these foreign slaves gained their freedom, and became Roman citizens who participated fully in the civic, political and economic life of the city. Integration of migrants from all parts of the growing empire by various legal proceedings into the urban society, a flexible handling of citizenship laws as well as religious and cultural tolerance of Roman authorities towards migrants resulted therefore in a cosmopolitan Roman society with diverse cultures, languages and religious practices. Migrants became a vital part of economy and intellectual infrastructure already in the late Republic, while at the same time - so it is believed by certain ancient and modern historians - the influx and influence of "new citizens" gradually eroded the old civic identity based on traditional Roman values. This process continued during the expansion of the empire - until all inhabitants of the empire were granted Roman citizenship by the "Constitution of Antoninus" of 212 CE. - The seminar will deal with relevant aspects and main developments of migration as described above. Ancient source texts as

well as modern research literature will be read and analysed to clarify concepts of political identity and community, of cultural and political integration and of social and economic participation of migrants. In addition, it will be shown how the connection between citizenship and migration laws, multiple identities of migrants and phenomena of xenophobia reveal the limits of integration and acculturation. It will be discussed how the personal status of migrants influenced their right to bodily integrity and fair trial, as well as issues of personal property, family and inheritance and even to a certain extent freedom of religion and cultural autonomy. - The seminar will NOT deal with external migration ("Barbarian Invasions") of various tribes in late antiquity seeking to enter Roman territories for collective permanent settlement and leading subsequently to the establishment of post-Roman kingdoms in the Western sphere of the empire.

Course/Module aims:

Students will read ancient Roman sources from different cultural-social-political spheres and contexts of Roman history in a comparative perspective on multiple levels of migration. Through the reading of these sources and relevant research literature students will learn about the different types of migration as well as about causes, advantages, impacts and consequences of migration on a collective and individual level. They will recognize the different nature and purposes of migration movements during Roman history. At the same time the seminar will describe Roman society on the one hand as hierarchic and closely regulated by moral codes, and on the other hand as an open society which from various reasons easily integrates and assimilates new members into all spheres of the community. Participants will understand the ideological, political, social and military necessities as well as the individual or collective advantages of different migration movements during Rome's growth from a small city state in Latium to the hegemonic power in Italy and the imperial ruler of the mediterranean world. They will recognize the validity of flexible concepts of Roman citizenship for the inclusion of migration movements and the participation of a multiethnic population in the communal activities shaping the empire's social and economic landscape. The seminar examines how a society, its conceptions of history and its historical consciousness are influenced and shaped by migration. Students will understand migration not as an deviation from the norm and a problem to be solved, but as an integral part of humanity and the history of human civilization.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- * recognize different types of migration;*
- * determine different causes, advantages, impacts and consequences of migration on a collective and individual level;*
- * identify social/political contexts for the creation and development of Roman*

Citizenship;

- * recognize the validity of flexible concepts of Roman Citizenship for the inclusion of migration movements;*
- * assess the participation of a multiethnic population in the communal, political, economic and culture activities of Rome;*
- * describe the development of Rome into a cosmopolitan city and society with diverse cultures, languages and religious practices;*
- * describe ancient Roman society as hierarchic and closely regulated while at the same time open for the inclusion of “new migrants”;*
- * evaluate the contributions of migrants to the economy and intellectual infrastructure of Rome;*
- * estimate the influence of migration to Rome on the old civic identity and electoral behaviour based on traditional Roman values;*
- * describe the structural elements of Roman Citizenship in different social and legal context of Roman society;*
- * recognize the general affiliation between citizenship and individual/collective rights;*
- * evaluate the importance of citizenship and social status in legal conflicts throughout history;*
- * notice the part of freedman (free slaves) for the shifting of political powers in Rome;*
- * describe transtemporal elements underlying Roman Citizenship as important factors for the transmission of human values across history;*
- * understand migration not as an deviation from the norm, but as an integral part of humanity and the history of human civilization.*
- * select and synthesize material from lectures and recommended primary and secondary sources as well as research literature to use in oral and written discussions of set topics.*

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Reading, analysis and interpretation of primary and secondary sources of different nature of historiography, philosophy, inscriptions, legislation and contracts as well as artifacts; presentation and discussion of research literature; preliminary readings for each session will be circulated and must be prepared in advance. In the seminar, lectures, power point presentations, class room discussions, group work and student presentations will alternate.

Course/Module Content:

The following work plan gives the main structure of the seminar. An extended work

plan with detailed source references will be published on moodle step by step during the term.

1. Introduction

1.1 Rome

1.1.1 *From the City State to a multi-ethnic Empire: The Geographical Development*

1.1.2 *From Republic to Monarchy: The Political and Cultural Development*

1.1.3 *Political Institutions and Social Stratification*

1.2 Migration

1.2.1 *Types of Migration and Human Mobility*

1.2.2 *Causes, Advantages, Impacts and Consequences of Migration and Mobility*

1.2.3 *A Preliminary Diachronic Example: Celtic Tribes moving south- and eastwards*

1.3 *Methodology, Sources, Approaches and Questions*

2. Migration in Ancient Rome

2.1 *Urbs Romana - The City as a melting Pot during the Republic*

2.1.2 *Roman Citizenship (Civitas Romana) as a Movers of Migration and Inclusion*

2.1.2.1 *The Fluidity of an Ideal - Historical Developments*

2.1.2.2 *Migrants without Migration: Settlements in Italy before the Social War*

2.1.2.3 *Two Fatherlands - Naturalization and Individual Identity*

2.1.2.3.1 *From the Lex Iulia de civitate Latinis et sociis danda (90 BCE) to the Constitutio Antoniniana de civitate peregrinis danda (212 CE) - A short survey*

2.1.2.3.1 *Two Cases Studies*

2.1.2.3.1.1 *The Accusation of having usurped the Roman Citizenship: Cicero, Pro Balbo*

2.1.2.3.1.2 *The Accusation of not being a Roman Citizen: Cicero, Pro Archia poeta*

2.2 *Pax Romana - The Empire as a Sphere of Law and Migration*

2.3 *Forced Migration - Exile, Banishment, Resettlement*

2.4 *Slaves and Freedmen*

2.5 *Military and Migration*

2.6 *Summary: General Characteristics of Migration in Ancient Rome*

3. *Conclusion: Migration as an Integral Part of Humanity and the History of Civilization*

Required Reading:

Required Reading:

The actual required reading (documents, articles, book chapters) will be determined in relation to the specific subjects of the course. All items of the required reading will be posted in due course on the moodle page for the seminar in chronological order according to the speed of our work capacity in the seminar.

1) Required Reading

1.1 Migration in Rome

- * Margherita Carucci, "The Dangers of Female Mobility in Roman Imperial Times", in: Elio Lo Cascio, Laurens Ernst Tacoma et al. (eds.), *The Impact of Mobility and Migration in the Roman Empire (Proceedings of the Twelfth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Rome, June 17-19, 2015)*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 174-190.

- * Luuk de Ligt, Laurens Ernst Tacoma (eds.), *Migration and mobility in the early Roman Empire*, Leiden: The Netherlands; Boston, MA: Brill, 2016. — anthology with a number of important contributions on the topic; online Mount Scopus Library.

- * Elena Isayev, "Polybius' global moment and human mobility through ancient Italy", in: Martin Pitts, Miguel John Versluys, *Globalisation and the Roman World: World History, Connectivity and Material Culture*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 123-140.

- * Ralph W. Mathisen, "Peregrini, Barbari, and Cives Romani: Concepts of Citizenship and the Legal Identity of Barbarians in the Later Roman Empire", in: *The American historical review*, Vol. 111 (4), pp.1011-1040. — <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr.111.4.1011>

- * David Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: citizens and strangers*, London: Duckworth, 2000; — fundamental work on foreigners in Rome based on inscriptions.

- * Elio Lo Cascio, Laurens Ernst Tacoma et al. (eds.), *The Impact of Mobility and Migration in the Roman Empire (Proceedings of the Twelfth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Rome, June 17-19, 2015)*, Leiden: Brill, 2017; — anthology with a number of important contributions on the topic; online Mount Scopus Library.

- * Elena Torregaray Pagola, "Diplomatic Mobility and Persuasion between Rome and the West (I-II AD)", in: Elio Lo Cascio, Laurens Ernst Tacoma et al. (eds.), *The Impact of Mobility and Migration in the Roman Empire (Proceedings of the Twelfth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Rome, June 17-19, 2015)*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 117-57.

- * Walter Scheidel, "Human Mobility in Roman Italy, I: The Free Population", in: *The Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 94 (2004), pp. 1-26; — online Mount Scopus Library.

- * Walter Scheidel, "Human Mobility in Roman Italy, II: The Slave Population", in: *The Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 95 (2005), pp. 64-79; — online Mount Scopus Library.

- * Laurens Ernst Tacoma, *Moving Romans: Migration to Rome in the principate*,

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016; — a migration-historical classification based on a broad source base, but only for the city of Rome as the center and destination of many migration movements; online Mount Scopus Library.

* Laurens Ernst Tacoma, "Bones, Stones, and Monica: Isola Sacra Revisited", in: Elio Lo Cascio, Laurens Ernst Tacoma et al. (eds.), *The Impact of Mobility and Migration in the Roman Empire (Proceedings of the Twelfth Workshop of the International Network Impcat of Empire, Rome, June17-19, 2015)*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 132-154.

* Greg Woolf, "Moving Peoples in the Early Roman Empire", in: Elio Lo Cascio, Laurens Ernst Tacoma et al. (eds.), *The Impact of Mobility and Migration in the Roman Empire (Proceedings of the Twelfth Workshop of the International Network Impcat of Empire, Rome, June17-19, 2015)*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 25-41.

1.2 Citizenship and Migration

* D. H. Berry, "Literature and Persuasion in Cicero's *Pro Archia*", in: Jonathan Powell, Jeremy Paterson (eds.), *Cicero The Advocate*, Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 291-312.

* Peter A. Brunt, "The Legal Issue in Cicero, *Pro Balbo*", in: *The Classical Quarterly* 32.1 (1982), pp. 136-147.

* Ralph W. Mathisen, "Peregrini, Barbari, and Cives Romani: Concepts of Citizenship and the Legal Identity of Barbarians in the Later Roman Empire", in: *American Historical Review* 111.4 (2006), pp. 1011-1040.

* Louise Revell, "Ideas of Roman Ethnicity", in: idem, *Ways of Being Roman. Discourses of Identity in the Roman West*, Oxford Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2016, pp. 19-39.

Adrian N. Sherwin-White, "The Roman Citizenship. Survey of its development into a world franchise", in: *ANRW I 2* (1972), pp. 23-58 - article based on> Adrian N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939 [19722].

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Civitas Romana: The Fluidity of an Ideal", in: *Al-Masāq* 32.1 (2020), p. 18-33 (online> <https://doi.org/10.1080/09503110.2019.1682854>).

Additional Reading Material:

The titles below are considered additional reading in the broadest sense. They include comprehensive introductions to Roman History, Society and Culture as mainly background information to our subject, as well as more general presentations of the theoretical debates, monographs on certain general aspects and problems and titles relevant for the overall topic.

2) Additional Reading

2.1 Migration

* Peter Bellwood, *First migrants: ancient migration in global perspective*, Chichester, UK, Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 20213. — Archaeology Library Prehistory Collection; PREH 1335.BEL

* Patrick Manning, *Migration in World History. A concise Survey of Processes of Migration in Human History from Early Hominids until today*, New York : Routledge, 2005 (2nd ed. London 2012) — Mount Scopus Library HB 1951 M26 2005.

Martin Pitts, Miguel John Versluys, *Globalisation and the Roman World: World History, Connectivity and Material Culture*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014; — anthology with a number of important contributions under aspects of globalisation.

2.1 Roman History, Society and Culture

* Mary Beard, *SPQR. A History of Ancient Rome*, London: Profile Books, 2015 - recommended for a good, enjoyable reading.

* Klaus Bringmann, *A History of the Roman Republic*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007 (dt. *Geschichte der römischen Republik: Von den Anfängen bis Augustus*, Beck: München, 2002.)

* Emilio Gabba, "Rome and Italy: The Social War", in: A. Crook, Andrew Lintott, Elizabeth Rawson (eds.), *The Last Age of the Roman Republic, 146-43BC (The Cambridge Ancient History Vol. 9)*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 (2nd edition), pp. 104-128; — online Mount Scopus Library.

* Andrew Lintott, *The Constitution of the Roman Republic*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.

* John F. Matthews (JFMa), Art. "Rome (history) = History of Rome" in: Simon Hornblower, Anthony Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014, 2nd edition, pp. 670-685 - good very densed presentation on Roman History.

* Paul J. du Plessis, Clifford Ando, Kaius Tuori (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Law and Society*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016 (selected chapters will be read in class - Law Library Mount Scopus: Upper Level Guzik; G 34(37)/OXF).

* Andrew M. Riggsby, "Roman History - The Brief Version", in: idem, *Roman Law and the Legal World of the Romans*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 11-24 (online - Mount Scopus Library).

2.2 Roman Law

* Michael C. Alexander, "Law in the Roman Republic", in: Nathan Rosenstein, Robert Morstein-Marx (eds.), *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, 237-255.

* José Luis Alonso, "The Constitutio Antoniniana and Private Legal Practice in the Eastern Empire", in: Kimberley Czajkowski (ed), *Law in the Roman Provinces*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020, p. 44-64 (on moodle).

* Peter Garnsey, 'Roman Citizenship and Roman Law in the Late Empire', in: Simon Swain, Mark Edwards (eds.), *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 133-155. — online Mount Scopus Library.

* Dennis P. Kehoe, "Law and Social Formation in the Roman Empire", in: Michael Peachin (ed.), *Social Relations in the Roman World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 144-163 (on moodle).

2.3 Diversa

* Hannah Arendt, "The Decline of the Nation State and the End of the Rights of Man", chapter 9 in: idem, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Cleveland-New York: The World Publishing Company, 2nd enlarged edition 1958 (7th Meridian Printing 1962), pp. 267-302 (on moodle).

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 100 %

Additional information:

In this seminar classical literature and sources are studied in English or Hebrew translations. Knowledge of Greek and Latin is not required.