

HART 208: Art and Empire from Constantine to Justinian
Fall 2011, 12:10-1:25, Cohen Hall 308
Professor Robin Jensen, Cohen Hall 115
Office Hours: M/W 2:00-3:00 or by EMAIL: robin.jensen@vanderbilt.edu

Course Description:

This upper level seminar is an interdisciplinary study of the art and architecture in the Roman Empire of the fourth through sixth centuries CE in the context of political and religious transformations during that era. Particular focus is placed on development of Christian art, architecture, and urban design in first centuries after the conversion of Constantine when Christianity became the official religion of the Empire.

Each week's lectures, more or less chronologically organized, will take a broad look at specific art historical, religious, and political developments along with a more narrow consideration of key monuments from the period under discussion.

Course Books (other readings posted on OAK):

No single textbook exists for this course. Nor are most of the best readings in affordable or in print volumes. The reading assignments are drawn from a variety of sources and, therefore, even if available online, are posted on Oak. Those that are accessible online and are noted below. Students may wish to purchase some of the more frequently used volumes that are still in print or available through Amazon.com or other vendors in used versions (noted below). All volumes also will be on reserve in the Heard Library. They include:

Hartley, Elizabeth, et al., eds. *Constantine the Great: York's Roman Emperor* (York Museum, 2006). ON RESERVE and on OAK.

Krautheimer, Richard. *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (Univ. of California, 1983). ON GOOGLE BOOKS and AFFORDABLE, USED COPIES AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET.

Lenski, Noel, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine* (Cambridge, University Press, 2006). AVAILABLE ONLINE through ACORN.

Maas, Michael, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge University Press, 2005). AVAILABLE ONLINE through ACORN.

Safran, Linda, ed. *Heaven on Earth: Art and the Church in Byzantium* (Penn State, 2004). ON RESERVE and on OAK, AFFORDABLE COPIES AVAILABLE, both new and used.

Spier, Jeffrey, ed. *Picturing the Bible: The Earliest Christian Art* (Yale, 2007), ON RESERVE AND STILL IN PRINT.

Other readings are drawn from the following books that are also on reserve or available by WEBACCESS:

Bassett, Sarah. *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004).

Curran, John. *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century* (Clarendon Press, 2000). AVAILABLE ONLINE through OAK.

Harris, W.V. *The Transformation of Urbs Roma in Late Antiquity* (JRA, supplement 33, 1999).

Holloway, R. Ross. *Constantine and Rome* (Yale University Press, 2004).

McLynn, Neil. *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital* (Univ. of California, 1994). AVAILABLE ONLINE through OAK.

Morris, Colin. *The Sepulcher of Christ and the Medieval West* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

Spieser, Jean-Michel. *Urban and Religious Spaces in Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium* (Ashgate, 2001).

Tronzo, William, ed. *St. Peter's in the Vatican* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005).

Walker, P.W.L., *Holy City, Holy Places?* (Clarendon Press, 1990).

Wilkinson, John. *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades* (Aries and Phillips, 1977).

Slides from each lecture (power point) will also be posted on Oak just prior to each class period and will be available throughout the semester for study and reference.

Assignments and Grading (Undergraduates):

1. Two exams – one midterm (October 5), one final (not cumulative – Date TBA – see the registrar's schedule of final exams). Each exam will present ten images for identification (selected from the lectures – PowerPoint shows will be posted on Oak), followed by brief (leading) questions about the significance of the works in historical or religious context.

Each exam = 20% of final grade.

Note: Make up exams only permitted if arrangements are made in advance and a valid reason is given and approved by the Professor.

2. Object analysis – 5 pages, object selected by October 31 (to be approved by professor); written analysis due no later than December 9th. 35% of the final grade.

3. Class oral presentation of object – 15 minutes, beginning the week of November 29. Depending on course enrollment, three or four students will presentation per class session. 15% of the final grade.

In addition: Students are expected to keep up with weekly reading assignments and contribute to class discussion following lectures. No more than two unexcused absences from class will be permitted. After that, each absence will lower the final grade by ½ of a letter (e.g., from an A to an A-). 10% of the grade will reflect quality of class participation.

4. Graduate/Divinity Students (only) – A brief, topical research-oriented essay, approximately 8 pages in length. Topic, précis, and initial bibliography due November, paper due December 12. This will count for 30% of the final grade (recalculating – exams each = 15%, object analysis = 20%, presentation 10% and class participation 10%).

Schedule of readings and lecture:

Introduction – August 24, Introduction to the course

Week 1, August 29, 31. Theme: Imperial Rome at the beginning of the fourth century. Monument(s): The Aureus and Cameo of Constantius I.

Read: A.D. Lee, “Traditional Religions,” from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 159-79 (ONLINE).

Simon Corcoran, “Before Constantine,” from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 35-58 (ONLINE).

Simon Corcoran, “Emperor and Citizen in the Era of Constantine,” from *Constantine the Great*, 41-51 (OAK).

Martin Henig, “Art in the Age of Constantine,” from *Constantine the Great*, 65-76 (OAK).

Week 2, September 5, 7. Theme: The Constantinian religious revolution. Monument: The Arch of Constantine.

Read: Harold Drake, “The Impact of Constantine on Christianity,”

from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 111-36 (ONLINE).

Ross Holloway, "The Arches," from *Constantine and Rome*, 19-56 (OAK).

Elizabeth Marlow, "Framing the Sun: The Arch of Constantine and the Roman Cityscape." *Art Bulletin*, 88.2 (June, 2006), 223-242 (ONLINE).

Jas Elsner, "From the Culture of *Spolia* to the Cult of Relics," The Arch of Constantine and Late Antique Forms," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 69 (2000), 149-84 (OAK).

Week 3, September 12, 14: Religion and art in Constantine's Rome. Monument(s): The Lateran Basilica, St. Peter's Basilica.

Read: Richard Krautheimer, "Rome" from *Three Christian Capitals*, 7-40 (OAK).

Jas Elsner, "Perspectives in Art," from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 255-77 (ONLINE).

Mark Johnson, "Architecture of Empire," from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 278-97 (ONLINE).

G. W. Bowersock, "Peter and Constantine," from *St. Peter's in the Vatican*, 5-15 (OAK).

Ross Holloway, "The Tomb of St. Peter," from *Constantine and Rome*, 120-55 (OAK).

Week 4, September 19, 21. Theme: Constantine's New Rome (Constantinople). Monument: The Column of Constantine.

Read: Richard Krautheimer, "Constantinople," from *Three Christian Capitals*, 41-68 (OAK).

Joseph Alchermes, "Constantinople and the Empire of New Rome," from *Heaven on Earth*, 13-38 (OAK).

Excerpts from Eusebius' *Life of Constantine* and the *History of the Church* (OAK).

Sarah Bassett, "The Shape of the City," from *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople*, 17-36.

Week 5, September 26, 28. Theme: Constantine's Holy Land – Jerusalem. Monument: The Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Read: Colin Morris, *The Sepulcher of Christ* (OUP, 2008), 16-40 (OAK).

John Wilkinson, "Prayer in the Holy Places," from *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, 33-43 (OAK).

Excerpts from Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Socrates, *The History of the Church* (OAK).

P.W. L. Walker, "The Church of the Holy Sepulchre," from *Holy City, Holy Places?* 235-81 (OAK).

Week 6, October 3, 5. Review, object choices, and exam.

Review for exam, summary of the class to this point.

Object choice due and discussed: **October 3.**

Midterm Exam, **October 5.**

Week 7, October 10, 12. Theme: Imperial motifs in Christian art. Monument(s): Fourth- and Fifth-century Christian sarcophagi.

Read: Neils Hannestad, "The Ruler Image of the Fourth Century: Innovation or Tradition," from *Imperial Art as Christian Art*, 95-107 (OAK).

Sible de Blaauw, "Imperial Connotations in Roman Church Interiors," from *Imperial Art as Christian Art*, 137-46 (OAK).

Johannes Deckers, "Constantine the Great and Early Christian Art," from *Picturing the Bible*, 87-109 (OAK).

Robin Jensen, "The Emperor Cult and Christian Iconography" (OAK).

Week 8, October 17, 19. Theme: Milan in the age of Theodosius and Ambrose. Monument: The Sarcophagus of Stilicho.

Read: Richard Krautheimer, "Milan," from *Three Christian Capitals*, 69-92 (OAK).

Neil McLynn, "Ambrose's People, I," from *Ambrose of Milan*, 220-51 (OAK and available ONLINE).

Olaf Steen, "The Iconography of the Sarcophagus in S. Ambrogio," from *Imperial Art as Christian Art*, 283-94 (OAK).

Jean-Michel Spieser, "Ambrose's Foundations at Milan and the Question of Martyria," from *Urban and Religious Spaces in Late Antiquity and Byzantium*, 1-12.

Week 9, October 24, 26. Theme: Ravenna—Catholic, Visigothic, and Byzantine Capitol. Monument: The Basilicas of Sant’Apollinare Nuovo and Sant’ Apollinare in Classe.

Read: Robin Jensen, “Ravenna,” (OAK).

Mark Johnson, “Towards a History of Theodoric’s Building Program,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42 (1988), 73-96 (ONLINE).

Arthur Urbano, “Donation, Dedication, and Damnatio Memoriae: The Catholic Reconciliation of Ravenna and the Church of Sant’ Apollinare Nuovo,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13 (2005), 71-110 (OAK and ONLINE).

Robin Lane Fox, “Art and the Beholder: The Apse Mosaic of S. Apollinare in Classe,” *Byzantinische Forschungen* 21 (1995), 247-51 (OAK).

Week 10, October 31, November 2. Theme: Constantinople from Theodosius to Justinian. Monument: The Church of Hagia Sophia.

Read: Franz Alto Bauer, “Urban Space and Ritual: Constantinople in Late Antiquity,” from *Imperial Art as Christian Art*, 27-61 (OAK).

Brian Croke, “Justinian’s Constantinople,” from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, 60-86 (ONLINE).

Joseph Alchermes, “Art and Architecture in the Age of Justinian,” from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, 343-75 (ONLINE).

Albrecht Berger, “Streets and Public Spaces in Constantinople,” from *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000), 161-72 (ONLINE).

Week 11, November 7, 9. Theme: Rome of the Popes, in the Shadow of the Byzantine Empire. Monument(s): The Basilicas of Sant’Agnese and San Lorenzo.

Read: Richard Krautheimer, “Rome Again,” from *Three Christian Capitals*, 93-121 (OAK).

John Curran, “Christianizing the Topography,” from *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century*, 116-157 (OAK and AVAILABLE ONLINE).

Excerpts from the *Liber Pontificalis* (OAK).

Michele Salzman, “The Christianization of Time and Space,” from *The Transformation of Urbs Roma in Late Antiquity*, 123-34 (OAK).

Robin Jensen, "The Consecration of Churches and the Translation of Relics in the West" (OAK).

**Week 12, November 14, 16. Theme: Imperial Motifs in Theology and Liturgy.
Monument(s): Byzantine processional crosses.**

Read: Derek Kruger, "Christian Piety and Practice in the Sixth Century," from *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, 291-315 (ONLINE).
Robert Ousterhout, "The Holy Space: Architecture and the Liturgy," from *Heaven on Earth*, 81-120 (OAK).

Excerpts from the *Book of Ceremonies* (OAK).
John Cotsonis, *Byzantine Processional Crosses*, 8-54 (OAK).

Week 13, November 28, 30: Presentations.

Week 14, December 5, 7: Presentations (graduate students second paper due December 9).