

## CLAS 691

### Kings and Emperors as Gods:

### Political, Religious, and Cultural Aspects of the Ruler-Cult in the Classical World

This course aims at conveying to graduate students a deeper understanding of the sacred and frequently divinised ruler in the Graeco-Roman world. Initially, modern terminology and possible biases of the individual students will have to be reflected upon. Then ancient topics shall be approached in a mainly chronological order, though with paying due respect to systematic questions on the political, religious, and social functions of the cults. Subjects include the Greek, Macedonian, Egyptian, and Persian roots of the sacred or divine ruler; the complex paths that led to the divinisation of Alexander the Great; the spread of ruler and dynastic cults in the Hellenistic kingdoms; the integration of Republican Rome into the Hellenistic pantheon; the cult of Augustus in the Greek East, in Italy, and in the Western provinces; later developments of the emperor cults and their conflict with and impact on early Christian communities; the transformation of the pagan ruler into the sacred Christian emperor. In the later part of the course, students will have the opportunity to focus on a topic close to their own area of research, such as on the iconographic representation of the divine ruler or the influence of the ancient ruler cult on Christology.

<b>Instructor</b>	Professor Altay Coşkun ML 228, ext. 38903 <a href="mailto:acoskun@uwaterloo.ca">acoskun@uwaterloo.ca</a> Office hours: 2:40-3:30, MW and by appointment
<b>Term/Time/Location</b>	Fall 2009 / 9:30-12:20, Fr / Room: AL 210
<b>Required Texts</b>	No comprehensive textbook on the topic exists. The instructor will provide the students with selected articles, book chapters, and source materials, the choice of which partly depends on their language skills.
<b>Course Requirements</b>	30% active participation in the discussions 35% oral presentation (including a handout) 35% essay/research paper
<b>Course Website</b>	In ACE
<b>Special Notes</b>	Hard copies of the essay are to be submitted to the course instructor by the end of term. Essays submitted late will be penalized up to 10% per week. <i>All</i> components of the course requirements must be completed in order to obtain a passing grade.

### Learning Outcomes and Course Objectives

The ancient ruler cult was highly relevant to politics, society, and religion especially in the Hellenistic World and the Roman Empire. Moreover, its roots can be followed up far backwards, whereas its influence is still detectable today. The latter is mainly through its direct impact on the Bible and the role of the Christian ruler since Constantine. Graduate students will therefore have the opportunity to broadly touch upon world history, but at the same time to acquire some knowledge specific to the area of their own research. Moreover, as the phenomenon left its traces on a variety of sources (such as inscriptions, coins, temples, historiography, poetry, etc.), students will learn to appreciate the benefits of interdisciplinary approaches, and find attractive opportunities for deepening the methodological skills they need for their own research agenda. In addition, the subject has a high potential to illustrate the risk that personal religious beliefs or ideological convictions may pose to achieving objectivity, if they remain subconscious, but likewise to exemplify that the personal experience of ritual may be helpful to understand important aspects of ancient societies. Beyond this, communication skills will be trained in the discussions and the oral presentations as well as in the composition of the essay.

## Expectations in the classroom

Everyone in the classroom is expected to do his/her best so that we enjoy an atmosphere of mutual respect and are able to concentrate on our academic issues. If for any good reason a student thinks s/he has to enter late, leave early, or cannot attend the class at all, s/he has to seek the instructor's permission in advance (or, if inevitable, to excuse himself/herself thereafter as soon as possible). Where appropriate, the instructor may suggest an additional assignment to make sure that the course objectives will be reached. To raise questions or give relevant comments during the class are not only permitted but strongly encouraged.

## A Note on Emailing

Whenever you **email your instructor**, do not forget to mention the **subject "Ruler Cult"**. In times in which junk mails abound, emails without recognizable subject (and potentially unknown sender) may well be deleted without reading them.

## University Policies on Academic Integrity and Student Discipline and Grievance

**Academic Integrity:** in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information].

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)], to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about 'rules' for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

Students are encouraged to check the website "Avoiding Academic Offences". It is important for students to be aware that one may commit plagiarism inadvertently, through ignorance of appropriate citation methods, so checking this website prior to submitting a paper in any course is to the student's advantage: [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

**Note for Students with Disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

## Tentative Class Schedule & Readings, Fall 2009

Week	Main subjects covered	A few suggested readings*
(1) Sept 18	General Introduction: traces of sacred rulership in modern times; possible biases to the subject; rough overview over the program; work assignments and technicalities	none
(2) Sept 25	Godlike men in Archaic, Classical, and Postclassical Greece	tba in ACE
(3) Sept Oct 2	The Divine Aspirations of Alexander the Great <b>Decision on subjects of oral presentations due</b>	tba in ACE
(4) Oct 9	The Cult of Alexander and the Ptolemies in Egypt	tba in ACE
(5) Oct 16	Ruler Cults in the Seleukid Empire	tba in ACE
(6) Oct 23	Divine Romans in the Hellenistic World and the Cults of the Living Augustus	tba in ACE
(7) Oct 30	The Consecration of Augustus and the Developments of the Roman Emperor Cult down to the Early Fourth Century AD	tba in ACE
(8) Nov 6	Constantine and the Christian Emperor of Late Antiquity	tba in ACE
(9) Nov 13	<b>Oral Presentations</b> , discussions, and related readings on subjects chosen by the students (see list of suggestions)	tba in ACE
(10) Nov 20		tba in ACE
(11) Nov 27		tba in ACE
(12) Dec 4		tba in ACE

**Note** \*: See below for the complete bibliographical details. Further readings will be assigned partly to the whole group, partly to individual students (depending on language skills and research interests)

### Guidelines for the Preparation of the Oral Presentation, the Handout, and the Essay

The **oral presentations** are due in **November**, the essays, which normally deal with the same or at least with a closely related issue, are due by **Friday, December 4**. However, the topic should be decided on no later than week 3 and the bibliography be substantial already by week 7. Students are advised to be in touch with their instructor and to ask for assistance, in case help is needed to find appropriate sources or scholarly literature, to organize the work efficiently, or to overcome difficulties. Ideally, the main argument of the oral presentation will be discussed with the instructor in a timely fashion, preferably on the basis of a draft of the handout. The final version of the handout will be issued to the other students a week in advance, though circulating the latter as a pdf 4 days in advance would also be sufficient.

The consultation of a **variety of relevant scholarly literature** is expected, normally some **10 to 15** books, book chapters, or journal articles, with a few of them **in one or two languages other than English**. A select bibliography is given below, and further titles will be made accessible to you in due course. Besides, also the relevant chapters of the **companion literature** such as the *Cambridge Ancient History* (CAH) is worth consulting. **Encyclopaedias** specializing in the ancient world and/or religious matters, particularly the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* (RAC), the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (LIMC), and the *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (TRE), should also be looked up. Long articles of such reference works are counted on par with journal articles, but perhaps a few minor articles relevant to the topic also deserve to be quoted.

One has to make sure to have access to scholarly literature in time; it might be necessary to order an inter-library-loan or to make an arrangement with other students. The library staff is very happy to give any assistance you need to get hold of the literature you want to use.

All scholarly works used with some profit (or commented on even negatively in the presentation or

essay) have to be quoted appropriately in the **bibliography** as well as in the footnotes of the essay. A variety of citation styles is admissible, as long as they are clear and consistent.

You will also have to study some **primary material** and reflect this in your presentation and essay. Ideally, you will base your main argument on one or an appropriate selection of them. The source editions, translations, and commentaries used are gathered in a separate part of the bibliography. In the text and the notes, the usual abbreviations may be used.

The **hand-out** should include the name and email address of the student, the title (and if applicable subtitle) of the paper, the structure of the presentation, a summary of the argument, perhaps some additional names and dates which are key to follow the argument, then the text(s) of the most important source(s) (original + English translation) and/or pictures or drawings of iconographic or material sources, where relevant for the argument, and finally the bipartite bibliography. One or two maps may be included or simply shown with a beamer or overhead projector. The latter also refers to additional material that may be presented, but exceeds the scope of the handout of **2 to 3 pages**.

The **oral presentation** shall be around **30 mins.**, start with an introduction, provide the audience with all information necessary to follow the argument, integrate the sources in your argument, end with a clear conclusion. A very good presentation might also attempt at putting the results into a broader context, e.g., pointing at later developments, contrasting with the situation elsewhere, linking the findings with topics already discussed or yet to be dealt with in other sessions etc. Every participant is then to give a feed-back. The discussion gives room to clarify factual details, to address strengths and weaknesses of the methodological approach and the conclusions reached. There will further be plenty of time to have a closer look at the source material on the handout or some additional material that the speaker or instructor will adduce. The discussion will be a substantial feed-back as to the quality of the form and content of the presentation and will help shape or modify the argument for the essay.

The **essay** should be about **15-20 pages** long (typed, letter size 12 points, double-spaced, with standard margins; about 4000-5000 words), draw on the material of the handout and either follow the lines of a very successful paper or consider the criticism and suggestions of the discussion. The essay itself (excluding table of contents, preface, bibliography, longer source quotations, pictures) must not be less than 12 pp.; the whole dossier submitted must not exceed 25 pp. A serious deviation from the theme and argument of the oral presentation should be discussed with the instructor in advance.

**Before embarking on your research, students are urged to consult the essay guide for Classical Studies** composed by Professor Sheila Ager. This sets out the expectations in more detail and offers a lot of helpful examples: <http://www.classics.uwaterloo.ca/essays.htm>.

## Suggested Topics

- 1) The iconography of the divine and of the secular ruler in period x
- 2) Competing strategies of sacralisation in the representation of king y or emperor z
- 3) The Hellenistic ruler cult between political pressure and free choice: the example of the city of x
- 4) The sacrality of the Roman kings
- 5) Divine aspirations of Julius Caesar
- 6) The Graeco-Roman ruler cult in conflict with Jewish and/or Christian beliefs
- 7) The sacrality of the ruler in Old and/or New Testament
- 8) The political, social, and religious functions of the temple cult for *Theos Sebastos* and *Thea Rhome* in Ancyra
- 9) The Graeco-Roman ruler cult and the interpretation of the nature of Jesus Christ
- 10) Imperial priests in East and West
- 11) The sacrality of the Later Roman emperor
- 12) The *Neocoria* in imperial Asia Minor

Alternative suggestions are welcome.

A Select Bibliography is in preparation and will be issued in week 1.