

Intermediate Latin — Augustus: The Man, the Myth, the Legend

ICCS – Rome, Fall 2009

Instructor: Stacey McGowen
stacey.mcgowen@juno.com

Open to students with one year of college Latin or equivalent.

Course Description

He found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble. Rome's first emperor, Augustus, had a profound impact on Rome in all its incarnations – the City itself, its society, and its governing institutions – and it is the life of this man that will provide the focus of our course.

First, we will read (most if not all of) his autobiography, the *Res Gestae*, passed down to us as an inscription on a temple to Augustus in Ankara, Asia Minor. This inscription once stood, however, outside the emperor's mausoleum in Rome, the resting place of the first emperor, his family, and successive emperors for more than a century and a half. Through it we will examine the ways Augustus changed not only the physical fabric of the City but also how he influenced Roman government and society, the effects of which would last for centuries. In addition, we will address the *Res Gestae* as a document presenting Augustus as he wanted the world to view him and what this world-view was. In addition to translating this valuable historical document, you will also be asked to commit to memory a section of the *Res Gestae*, which you will recite orally (in front of the Mausoleum of Augustus, perhaps) for the class.

In addition to the *Res Gestae*, we will read selections from the *Life of Augustus* written by the late first/early second century biographer Suetonius. In addition to the grammar and syntax issues raised by this prose text, we examine how the Augustus of the *Res Gestae* differs from the Augustus of Suetonius.

Finally, we will take a different approach to understanding Augustus by reading some poetry from the period. The poet Publius Ovidius Naso was born in 43 B.C., and so he grew up and wrote under the Augustan principate. We will read a few of his poems (a couple of the *Amores* and maybe some of the *Ars Amatoria*) not only appreciating his poetic style but also with an eye towards understanding Ovid's view of Rome around the turn of the millennia, of the first emperor, and of the emperor's policies.

Throughout the course, equal emphasis will be placed on the historical issues raised in the readings and on the grammatical/stylistic aspects of each of the authors. You will be expected to come to class prepared to translate and discuss the assigned texts, although you are asked NOT to bring any English translation into class with you. In class, emphasis will be placed on reading Latin NOT reading English.

Course Grade:

Class participation and quizzes	30%
Oral recitation	15%
Mid-term	25%
Final	30%

Books

- purchase and bring to Rome a copy of *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (Latin Edition) edited by Rex E. Wallace (Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2000; ISBN 978-0-86516-455-00, available new and used from amazon.com and elsewhere)
- a good Latin dictionary (paperback is fine but NOT a pocket dictionary)
- your introductory textbook for grammar reference (or something equivalent, e.g. *A Student's Latin Grammar* by R. M. Griffin and E. Phinney, Cambridge University Press, 1992; ISBN 0-521-38587-9)
- course pack (available in pdf format from me)