This special issue, *Pax Boreo-Romana: Reflections on Roman Law with Icelandic and Global Legal Traditions*, emerges from an experiment in teaching and learning Roman law in Iceland, specifically at the University of Akureyri. What began as a conventional introductory course soon revealed a deeper ambition shared by the students to understand their own legal systems and expectations through the distant yet strangely familiar Roman jurisprudence. Roman law, often perceived as a classical foundation of Southern Europe, found an unexpected and vibrant second life in our Icelandic classroom. Icelandic, international students, and alumni from the Polar Law Programme discovered in Rome's categories and concepts not a fossilised tradition, but a living comparative tool, especially in constitutional development, citizenship, property law, and gender equality.

This issue collects the strongest student research papers on how Roman Law is reflected in different legal fields from different countries (Iceland, China, Germany, Soviet Union, Albania and Italy). For these reasons, this issue exemplifies how Roman law continues to travel adapting to new landscapes and legal imaginaries.

In order:

The first article, written by the issue editors Sara Fusco, Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Law at UNAK, and Elva Rún Sveinsdóttir, teaching assistant, illustrates what this *Pax Boreo-Romana* represents and where the Northern and Roman legal worlds intersect. Indeed, it compares the concept of the Roman "vendicta" (vengeance) with the Old Viking feud system in Iceland and Mediterranean traditions (namely, the Albanian *gjakmarrje,* and the Sardinian *Codice Barbaricino,* both examples of customary retaliation). The comparison highlights the universal struggle between the desire for retribution and the demand for public justice, a tension as present in Rome's transition from *vindicta privata* to *iudicium publicum* as it is in contemporary debates on reparative justice.

A further contribution, *Citizen or Not? Roman Status, EU Nationality and the Nordic Courts on Who Counts*, written by a UNAK law student collective, brings Roman ideas of *status civitatis* into conversation with contemporary EU and Nordic jurisprudence. Their analysis draws striking parallels between cives, Latins, peregrini, and today's layered citizenship regimes under EU and EEA law. Through case studies such as *Johansen v. Denmark* and *Genovese v. Malta*, the authors show how ancient distinctions between belonging and

exclusion quietly persist, even within legal systems grounded in human rights and non-discrimination.

From the students in exchange at the University of Akureyri:

Ke Zhang's study, *Women's Legal Capacity and the Decline of Tutela Muliebris*, offers a detailed analysis of women's autonomy in Late Republican and early Imperial Rome, tracing how economic and social realities eroded the formal guardianship system long before its doctrinal justification collapsed. Her argument shows that Roman gender norms were not static, and that practical female agency often ran ahead of formal law, a dynamic that resonates strongly with modern debates on equality and symbolic legal constraints.

Lara Broghammer's *Possession and Ownership – A Comparative Analysis of Roman Law and the BGB* examines how Roman categories of ownership and possession shaped, and still shape, the German Civil Code on its 125th anniversary. Her comparative methodology demonstrates that the BGB's core structure remains anchored in Roman thought, even as modern abstractions refine and adapt earlier doctrines.

Finally, from a former Polar Law student, Jonathan Wood's essay, *A Legal Paradox*, examines the unexpected persistence of Roman legal structures in Soviet jurisprudence, despite ideological hostility to Western "bourgeois" law. His work highlights how foundational Roman concepts of property, obligations, and legal personality survived revolutionary upheaval, demonstrating that legal systems may evolve politically while retaining an older conceptual grammar beneath their ideological surface.

The issue concludes with Sara Fusco's reflections on teaching Roman Law in the Icelandic classroom, where she discusses innovative pedagogical methodologies developed and applied throughout the course