

CLASSICS (SACR)



CLAS 404: LATE ANTIQUITY

(CRN 867)

COURSE ORGANIZATION – 2008 (Full Year)

The transition from the classical world to the world of the Middle Ages. Topics include the rise of Christianity as a world religion and competing views of the universe; the social and political development of the Roman world in the face of external and internal threats.

Class Time and Room

To be arranged.

Course Convenor

Prof Art Pomeroy (OK 515, ext. 6781) — generally available in OK 515 between 10.00 am and 7.00 pm, Monday-Friday, when not lecturing.

Course Information and Notices

Information regarding the course will usually be distributed in class and on Blackboard; in special cases, notices will be posted on the Classics Department Notice Board, opposite OK 504 and 505 (turn left by the foyer entrance).

Set Texts

A. Cameron, *The Mediterranean World of Late Antiquity* (Routledge pb.)
M. Maas, *Readings in Late Antiquity* (Routledge pb.)
D.S. Potter, *Roman Empire at Bay* (Routledge pb.)

Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Later Roman Empire* (Penguin pb.)
Augustine, *The Confessions* (Oxford World's Classics pb.)
Procopius, *The Secret History* (Penguin pb.)

Students should read David Potter (esp. 303ff.) as soon as possible, as general background to the course, then Averil Cameron's book. Get used to looking up sections in Maas, which offers a good selection of primary sources for this period.

The other ancient texts should be read when convenient, but certainly before the topic or period is covered in seminars. Augustine can be heavy going, so read this bit by bit. Procopius can be polished off in one session (and is fun, as is Ammianus).

This is not the only reading you should be doing. There has been a tremendous amount of work on this period within the last two decades and it will be helpful to dip into recent studies (e.g. G.W. Bowersock, P. Brown, O. Grabar, *Late Antiquity* (Harvard/Belknap), a 'dictionary' of topics plus extensive essays)

Course Aims

The course is intended to extend the students' understanding of historical studies by introducing them to a range of types of historical research (e.g. economic, political, social, cultural and religious history). Students will need to show a critical attitude to the evidence and be aware of theoretical models offered to explain major changes in late antiquity.

Course Objectives

By the completion of this course, students should have a general knowledge of:

- the organisation and disunity of the areas around the Mediterranean which formed the Roman empire;
- the major historical events of the period between Diocletian and the reign of Justinian;
- the organisation of the imperial system and its development;
- the organisation of civic administration and its problems;
- the organisation of the orthodox Christian church;
- the major religious movements in competition with Christianity and Christian heretical movements;
- the major theories offering explanations for the fall or transformation of the Roman empire;
- the historiographic methods of secular and religious writers of the period;
- the views of their world expressed in the writings of the contemporary authors studied in this course.

Relationship Between Course Objectives And Assessment

In the two seminar presentations, students will be given the opportunity to study the major topics listed above with reference to particular periods and specific authors. From this, they should develop skills in synthesising historical arguments and applying these to particular evidence, keeping in mind the nature of the material they will be using (that is, the historiographical features of the evidence).

Students not offering any particular presentation will have sufficient knowledge of the general problems to be able to assess how the topic presented contributes to the wider understanding of the development of the Roman world in the late empire and criticise possible explanations for historical change.

In the final examination, knowledge of the major themes of the period will be examined. There will be a general question relevant to the whole course, along with questions on topics divided into 2 sections: (1) governmental/historiographical material; (2) cultural/intellectual topics. [N.B.: students should bear this division in mind when choosing seminar topics.]

Course Assessment

Every week a different topic or pair of topics will be investigated. Frequently such topics can be broken down into smaller sub-topics. Each student will be required to present two seminar papers on a particular topic or sub-topic. This will be based on a ca. 2500 word essay. The paper will be presented in class, commented on by staff and students, and then the final draft will be due two weeks later. [Get in early with your choice of topics from the Course Outline!]

Well ahead of the time of presentation of the seminar, students in charge of the seminar should consult the course convenor regarding appropriate readings and methods of treating the topic. After presentation, students should also consult the course convenor for feedback on their seminar performance and adjustment or focussing of the topic for the written essay.

There will be a three hour final examination. Students will be required to write on three topics from a selection which will be organised by themes (i.e. it will not be possible to write only on constitutional history or only on religious history).

The two seminar papers as essays will count for 40% of the final grade (20% each), presentation of the seminars and discussion of topics for 10%, and the final exam will count for 50%.

Course Requirements

Attendance at 75% of classes; presentation of two seminars and handing in of the two seminar papers at due times.

(Extensions, if necessary, may be sought from the course convenor; late work may be penalised 10% of total marks available for every day or portion thereof overdue.)

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

Workload Guidelines

Overall, expect to spend 2 hours per week in class seminars and another 10 hours on preparation of background material, preparation of seminars, and presentation of essays. This workload will not be evenly distributed, so it is essential that students begin preparation for their seminars as early as possible and set aside sufficient time for completion of deadlines.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

BLACKBOARD

This course is part of the Victoria Blackboard — Online Learning system.

You can access it by the following URL:

<http://www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>

then login by putting your SCS username in the Username field and your student ID in the Password field. Under My Courses, choose this course.

Information on this handout, announcements, course material (including ohps for lectures), online chat sessions, and other goodies will be available.

Some Comments on Course Demands and Needs

CLAS 404 is an Honours Seminar course. That means that it is not a lecture course where the lecturer talks and students take notes. All students in the course are responsible for doing the reading for seminars, not just the student who will be presenting an overview of the topic.

LATE ANTIQUITY covers a wide range of topics, so no one book will satisfactorily deal with the problems. In particular, students will need to consider the nature of the primary evidence, that is, what sources of information we have and what the problems are with this evidence. Some material will be written, some archaeological or numismatic or otherwise object oriented. Until recently, much of the written material was only available in the original languages (mainly Greek and Latin, but also Persian, Coptic, and other eastern languages). There are now a number of source books which offer translations and sometimes commentary on the sources — for instance, for frontier conflicts or the spread of Christianity. Maas is a good starting point, but you may well want to look further.

A basic starting list of books on important topics will be provided, but students will need to hone their research skills. Starting points include the bibliographies in Potter, Cameron, and Maas; *L'Annee Philologique*; *Cambridge Ancient History* vols 12-14. There is much useful material to be found in the Periodicals holdings of the VUW Library. Don't simply rely on the set texts!

Course Outline

(Detailed outlines of individual topics will be provided separately)

(week of)

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|--------------|---|---------|
| February 25 | Introduction: the Roman empire and imperial system till the mid-3rd century | – AJP |
| March 3 | Diocletian's Reform of the Roman government: the Dominate | |
| March 10 | Economic crises and the Roman empire | |
| March 17 | Constantine and Constantinople | |
| March 31 | The Adoption of Christianity as Official Religion of the Empire | |
| April 7 | Ammianus and his History | |
| April 28 | Julian and the Pagan Revival | |
| May 5 | The World of the East: Antioch | |
| May 12 | The Rise of the Holy Man | |
| May 19 | From Theodosius to Justinian: the divergence of the two empires | |
| May 26 | The Development of the Orthodox Church | |
| July 7 | Augustine of Hippo: the attractions of Christianity | |
| July 14 | Augustine of Hippo: alternatives to Christianity (Neoplatonists, Manichaeans) | |
| July 21 | The Rise of Monasticism | |
| July 28 | Corruption in Antiquity | |
| August 4 | Urban Change: Continuity or Decline? | |
| August 11 | Barbarian Peoples and Kingdoms | |
| September 1 | Procopius and his Histories | |
| September 8 | The Justinianic Revival and Reconquest | |
| September 15 | Overview of Course | – Omnes |