



School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies

Classics Programme



CLAS 404
Topic in History and Historiography:
LATE ANTIQUITY
CRN 867

Trimester 1 + 2 2012
5 March – 17 November
(Full Year)

Full-year dates

Teaching dates: 5 March - 19 October 2012

Mid-year break: 11 June – 15 July 2012

Study Week: 22 – 26 October 2012

Examination/ Assessment period: 26 October-17 November 2012

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Class Time and Room

Wednesday 1:10 – 3pm in OK526.

Course Coordinator

Prof Art Pomeroy (OK 509, ext. 6781) — generally available in OK 509 between 10.00 am and 7.00 pm, Monday-Friday, when not lecturing.

Course Prescription

This course will cover 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 and the social and political development of the Roman world in the face of external and internal threats.

Course delivery

The course will be delivered in a seminar format, with questions and discussion to follow each seminar.

Communication of additional Information

Information regarding the course will usually be distributed in class and on Blackboard; in special cases, notices will be posted on the Classics Programme 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).

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 13 February to 16 March 2012, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building. Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

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 the basis of 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 examination period is 27 October-17 November 2012.

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%.

Mandatory 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 means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, 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.

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

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.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class.

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!

Lecture Schedule

(Detailed outlines of individual topics will be provided separately)

(week of)

March 5	Introduction: the Roman empire and imperial system till the mid-3rd century – AJP
March 12	Diocletian's Reform of the Roman government: the Dominate – AJP
March 19	Economic crises and the Roman empire
March 26	Constantine and Constantinople
April 2	The Adoption of Christianity as Official Religion of the Empire
April 23	Ammianus and his History
April 30	Julian and the Pagan Revival
May 7	The World of the East: Antioch
May 14	The Rise of the Holy Man
May 21	From Theodosius to Justinian: the divergence of the two empires
May 28	The Development of the Orthodox Church
June 4	Augustine of Hippo: the attractions of Christianity
July 16	Augustine of Hippo: alternatives to Christianity (Neoplatonists, Manichaeans)
July 23	The Rise of Monasticism
July 30	Corruption in Antiquity
August 6	Urban Change: Continuity or Decline?
August 13	Barbarian Peoples and Kingdoms
August 20	Procopius and his Histories
Sept 10	The Justinianic Revival and Reconquest
Sept 15	Overview of Course – Omnes