

CLSt 277: The World of Late Antiquity

Fall 2022 Mondays/Wednesdays 10:30-11:45 AM Sala _____

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Office hours (Faculty Office): Mondays/Wednesdays 10:00-10:30 PM and by appointment

Course Description

This course surveys the transformation of the Roman world between the 3rd and 7th centuries AD, when the Classical heritage of Europe and the Mediterranean basin, carefully constructed over centuries by the Romans on Greek foundations, fragmented and evolved into the governmental, religious, socio-economic, and cultural framework characteristic of the Medieval world. This period has traditionally been undervalued and even ignored in historical studies and university curricula, considered either a debased epilogue of decline following on the lofty heights of Classical antiquity or a long and desultory prelude to the ignorance and stagnation of the Dark Ages. In reality, Late Antiquity was a complex, fascinating, and vibrant age, with a large and varied cast of characters, a rich and sophisticated culture, a huge theater of activity, and an endless series of exciting twists and turns on a par with the most significant periods of European history. The course considers all major aspects of the human experience in this broad period—internal administration, foreign policy, religion, economy, military activity, education, social and daily life, and art and architecture—as they played out across the Roman world, from Spain to Mesopotamia, from Britain to North Africa.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, the student should be able to:

- identify the key figures, institutions, events, accomplishments, locations, trends, questions, and concerns representing the history, culture, and social, economic, political, and religious organization of the Roman world between the late 3rd and early 7th centuries AD (see **examinations** below);
- determine and assess the role(s) that each of these had in, and their effect(s) on, the history and development of the Roman world during this period, both singly/individually and corporately, in both general and specific terms (see **examinations** below);
- develop critical thinking and communications skills (see **Assignments 1-3** below).

Required Textbooks and Materials

A. Cameron, *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity. AD 395-700*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge 2012. [Available for free online via LUC Libraries](#)

All other readings will be available as PDFs on Sakai, electronic resources in the LUC Libraries, and WWW links.

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

As this course meets twice a week, a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a 1% lowering of the final course grade for every absence after the “approved limit.”** The collective health of the JFRC is everyone’s responsibility. **DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IF YOU ARE ILL.**

Assessment Components and Schedule

Assessment	Date	%
Attendance and participation	N/A	10%
Mid-term exam	10/12	25%
Assignment 1	10/27	15%
Assignment 2	11/24	15%
Final exam	12/7	35%
TOTAL		100%

Assessment Descriptions

The mid-term examination will test the student’s understanding of the major historical events, figures, and trends covered up to that moment, based comprehensively on notes taken during class lectures and discussions, assignments, and the course readings. The final examination will concentrate on the major historical events, figures, and trends covered in the second half of the course while drawing on the student’s cumulative and synthesized understanding of Late Antiquity.

A. The **mid-term examination** will consist of

1. a series of terms (historical persons, places, concepts, events) to be identified briefly (2-4 sentences) in relation to their significance for Late Antiquity;
2. a blank map requiring labels, dates, and other significant information;
3. a timeline of events; and
4. a short (3+ pages) essay addressing a theme in Late Antiquity.

B. The **final examination** will consist of

1. a series of terms (historical persons, places, concepts, events) to be identified briefly (2-4 sentences) in relation to their significance for Late Antiquity;
2. a blank map requiring labels, dates, and other significant information;
3. a timeline of events; and
4. a long (5+ pages) essay addressing a theme in Late Antiquity.

The exact scope of each exam will be presented and discussed in the preceding week.

C. **Assignment 1** is a short (1-2 pages) paper reacting to the film *Agora* which will be shown in class. The assignment is available on Sakai, in the “Assignments” section.

D. **Assignment 2** will consist of a brief research projects relating the most important facts/details about, and the overall significance of, **a specific place or monument in Rome** (location, date of creation, creator, main building materials, notable events and personalities, etc.) in the context of Late Antique history, culture, economy, and society.

For the assignment the student will

1. compose a brief written summary (minimum 4 double-spaced typed pages of text) including graphical illustrations, to be submitted to the instructor via Sakai, and
2. make a brief (5-minute) presentation before the class with graphical illustrations and bulleted lists of the most important information.

The instructor will provide guidance on research sources. A detailed description of the assignment is available on Sakai, in the “Assignments” section.

The paper and presentation will be evaluated on

1. the quality and depth of the research and
2. the clarity of the delivery, both written and oral.

E. Active **student participation** is expected in class. Students will be required to ask questions and make observations in class based on the assigned readings, and they will be assigned to lead in-class discussion of specific sections of the readings.

Grading

The course grade scale is 94-100 = A, 90-93 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 84-86 = B, 80-83 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 74-76 = C, 70-73 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 60-66 = D, 59 and below = F.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards [here](#):

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

Students are responsible for complying with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center in the first week of classes.

How to do well in this course

- Take good notes in class. Detailed questions that require more time than can be addressed in class should be posed to the instructor at the beginning or end of class, or in office hours.
- Do the readings BEFORE the class in which they will be discussed. Some reading selections are longer than others, since it is impossible to divide them up equally in a course of this nature. The student should look over the week's assignments well in advance to budget study time appropriately.
- Jot down notes, observations, questions, and comments about each reading and bring them to class.
- Take all assignments seriously.
- See the instructor in office hours with any concerns about content, expectations, or performance.
- Participate. Contribute to the class and discussion in an informed way.

The importance of the readings and class attendance cannot be over-emphasized. In-class lectures explore specific themes, events, institutions and individuals; the readings provide a broader context for them within the broader picture of Late Antique civilization.

Class Policies

- As the material presented in the course is cumulative in nature, attendance in class is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class.
- Students will be given readings for each class meeting. Students are expected to be able to discuss the contents of the readings in class.
- Constructive participation in class discussions is essential. Students are encouraged make observations and ask questions.
- All work in class will be based on lectures, readings, assignments, and discussions. As history is by nature largely subjective and often touches sensitive subjects (race, gender, politics, religion, class, sexuality), there is a lot of room for debate, disagreement, and definition. Be curious and forthright, and always respectful.
- During class smartphones and other personal communication devices should be switched off or set to silent mode.
- Lectures may be recorded for study purposes, but only with the instructor's prior and express permission.
- Students are expected to do all of their assigned work independently, including the assignments and the homework.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

The classroom is a particular environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process will count significantly against the participation grade component and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, habitually:

- cross-talking or talking out of turn
- whispering or talking to classmates
- reading non-related materials on paper or digital media
- communicating with external parties in any format (phone, text message, VoIP, e-mail, etc.)
- working on any other coursework during class
- arriving to class late or leaving class early
- exiting and re-entering the classroom for bathroom breaks and other non-emergency uses
- sleeping
- eating

Subject to Change Statement

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to check for announcements made during his/her absence.

Weekly course schedule

All PDF files are available in the "Resources" section of the course Sakai page, organized by week.

Week 1 – Introduction and background

M 9/5: Introduction; the study of Late Antiquity

W 9/7: Brief history of Rome and the Roman Empire through the late 3rd century AD

Week 2 – The Tetrarchy and Constantine

M 9/12: Diocletian and the tetrarchy

Readings: N. Lenski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2006.

Ch. 2 S. Corcoran, "Before Constantine" (PDF)

Diocletian's Edict of Maximum Prices (trans. A. Kropff) (PDF)

- Read pp. 1-2 and 6-10, skim the rest

Lactantius, *On the Deaths of the Persecutors* – excerpts (PDF)

W 9/14: Constantine

Readings: J. Curran, "Constantine and the Ancient Cults of Rome: The Legal Evidence." *Greece & Rome* (2nd Ser.) 43.1 (1996), 68-80. (PDF)

G. L. Thompson, "From Sinner to Saint? Seeking a Consistent Constantine," in E. L.

Smither (ed.), *Rethinking Constantine. History, Theology and Legacy* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications 2014), 5-25. (PDF)

P. Weiss, "The Vision of Constantine," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 16 (2003), 237-259. (PDF)

Edict of Milan (PDF)

Week 3 – The Roman World in Late Antiquity

M 9/19: The big picture

Readings: Cameron Ch. 1 “Constantinople and the Eastern Empire”

P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 7 M. Humphries “The Shapes and Shaping of the Late Antique World: Global and Local Perspectives” (PDF)

Ch. 8 B. Leyerle “Mobility and the Traces of Empire” (PDF)

W 9/21: Mobility and identity

Readings: B. Salway, “The Nature and Genesis of the Peutinger Map.” *Imago Mundi* 57.2 (2005), 119-135. (PDF)

S. Price, “Religious Mobility in the Roman Empire.” *The Journal of Roman Studies* 102 (2012), 1-19. (PDF)

R. W. Mathisen, “*Peregrini, Barbari, and Cives Romani*: Concepts of Citizenship and the Legal Identity of Barbarians in the Later Roman Empire,” *American Historical Review* 111.4 (2006), 1011-1040. (PDF)

Week 4 – Christianization and Its Challenges

M 9/26: Internal issues

Readings: Cameron Ch. 3 “Christianization and Its Challenges”

P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 34 M. Gaddis “The Political Church: Religion and the State” (PDF)

W 9/28: External issues

Readings: P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 33 R. Lim “Christianization, Secularization, and the Transformation of Public Life” (PDF)

Ch. 38 N. McLynn “Pagans in a Christian Empire” (PDF)

L. H. Martin, “Roman Mithraism and Christianity,” *Numen* 36.1 (1989), 2-15 (PDF)

Week 5 – Barbarians at the Gates

M 10/3: Army and frontier life

Readings: N. Lenski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2006.

Ch. 14 H. Elton, “Warfare and the Military” (PDF)

P. Erdkamp (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Army*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2007.

Ch. 28 M. Whitby, “Army and Society in the Late Roman World: A Context for Decline?” (PDF)

W 10/5: Review for mid-term examination

Week 6

M 10/10: The "barbarians"

Readings: Cameron Ch. 2 "The Empire and the Barbarians"

Ammianus Marcellinus, [Roman History Book 31 Chs. 1-16](#)

W. Goffart, "Rome, Constantinople, and the Barbarians." *American Historical Review* 86.2 (1981), 275-306. (PDF)

W 10/12: Mid-term examination

Week 7 – Urban life in Late Antiquity

W 10/19: Society and economy

Readings: Cameron Ch. 4 "Late Roman Society and Economy"

P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 20 J. A. Francis "Visual and Verbal Representation: Image, Text, Person, and Power" (PDF)

F 10/21: Culture and private life

Readings: Cameron Ch. 6 "Late Antique Culture and Private Life"

P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 14 J. Evans-Grubbs "Marriage and Family Relationships in the Late Roman West" (PDF)

Ammianus Marcellinus, *Roman History Book 15 Ch. 6* (PDF)

Week 8 – Late Antiquity - The Movie: *Agora* (Assignment 1)

M 10/24: *Agora* part 1

W 10/26: *Agora* part 2

Th 10/27 Assignment 1 (*Agora*) due

Week 9 – Justinian and Reconquest

M 10/31: The reign of Justinian

Readings: Cameron Ch. 5 "Justinian and Reconquest"

portrait of Justinian: [Procopius, Secret History Ch. VIII, XII, XVIII](#)

the Nika riot of 532: [Procopius, Persian War 1.XXIV](#)

W 11/2: The wars of reconquest

Readings: D. M. Wagner et al., "Yersinia pestis and the Plague of Justinian 541–543 AD: A Genomic Analysis," *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 14 (2014), 319-326 (PDF)

L. B. Larsen et al., "New Ice Core Evidence for a Volcanic Cause of the A.D. 536 Dust Veil," *Geophysical Research Letters* 35 (2008) (PDF)

the great blight of 535-536: [Cassiodorus, *Variae \(Letters\)* XII.25-27](#)

the great plague of 541-543: [Procopius, *Persian War* 2.XXII-XXIII](#)

the devastation of Italy in the 530s:

[Cassiodorus, *Variae \(Letters\)* XII.5, 28](#)

Procopius, *Gothic War* 6.20 (PDF)

the sieges of Rome, 537-: [Procopius, *Gothic War* 5.XIX-XXV, 6.III-IX](#)

Week 10 – City and Countryside; East and West

M 11/7: City and countryside

Readings: Cameron Ch. 7 "Urban Change and the Late Antique Countryside"

K. Sessa, *Daily Life in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2018.

Ch. 1 "Rural Life" (PDF)

R. C. Griffin, "Urbanization, Economic Change, and Dental Health in Roman and Medieval Britain." *European Journal of Archaeology* 20.2 (2017): 346-367. (PDF)

W 11/9: The eastern and western Mediterranean

Readings: K. Sessa, *Daily Life in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2018.

Ch. 2 "Urban Life" (PDF)

K. M. D. Dunbabin, "Athletes, acclamations, and imagery from the end of antiquity." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 30 (2017): 151-174. (PDF)

Week 11 – From Eastern Roman to Byzantine Empire; Islam

M 11/14: The eastern Mediterranean

Readings: Cameron Ch. 8 "The Eastern Mediterranean – A Region in Ferment"

P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 29 J. W. Drijvers "Rome and the Sasanid Empire: Confrontation and Coexistence" (PDF)

W 11/16: Islam

Readings: Cameron Ch. 9 "A Changed World"

P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell 2009.

Ch. 32 A. Marsham "The Early Caliphate and the Inheritance of Late Antiquity" (PDF)

Week 12 – Late Antique Rome (Assignment 2)

M 11/21: Presentations – group 1

W 11/23: Presentations – group 2

Th 11/24 Assignment 3 paper due at midnight

Week 13

M 11/28 Looking back

W 11/30 Review for final exam

Week 14

W 12/7 9:00-11:00 Final examination