

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

HISTORY 111:  
WESTERN CIVILIZATION FROM ANTIQUITY TO 1600

Call # 11061-A  
Lecture T Th 8:30–9:48 a.m. + Discussion Sections  
Campbell Hall [CM], Rm. 0200  
1787 Neil Avenue

Professor Daniel Sarefield  
E-mail: sarefield.2@osu.edu  
Office: 164 Dulles Hall  
Office Hours: W 2:30–4:00 p.m.  
Office Tel: 292-6747

**WEBSITE:** <http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/sarefield2/>

**HST 111 SP 2007 PAPER ASSIGNMENT**

Procopius, *The Secret History* (trans. G. A. Williamson) Penguin Classics, 1982.

Your assignment is to write a brief paper (approximately 5–6 pages in length) answering one of the following questions, making sure to address all parts of the question in your paper.

1. From the state of affairs presented in the *Secret History*, what problems or issues do you think Procopius felt most acutely affected Byzantine society during the reign of Justinian I? Do you think he believed that he was living in the “Golden Age of Early Byzantium”? Defend your answer.

**OR**

2. Although the *Secret History* is notorious for the outrageous behavior it ascribes to Justinian, Theodora, and others, many scholars argue that this work contains a great deal of factual and relevant information about Byzantine society, particularly concerning the social, religious, economic, and urban life of the Justinianic period. Pick 1 or 2 of these aspects of Byzantine society [its social, religious, economic, or urban life] and assess what the *Secret History* reveals about them? Is the *Secret History* a useful source for exploring life in early Byzantium? Defend your answer.

Your typed, double-spaced paper must be handed in to your DSL no later than the beginning of class, Tuesday, May 15, 2007. Submissions received after that time will be penalized ½ a letter grade for each day that they are late. No electronic submissions.

In completing this assignment, you must put forth your arguments in clear, grammatically correct prose, free from spelling errors and other simple mistakes caught by

proofreading your own work. Evidence in the form of quotes, direct references, and indirect references drawn from the texts must be cited properly. Material (i.e., ideas and evidence) drawn from any other source must also be properly cited in your paper. Citations are acceptable in any of the standard forms: parenthetical notes within the text, footnotes at the bottom of the page, or endnotes at the end of the paper. Just be consistent. Although it is not necessary to use any outside sources, if you choose to do so you must attach a bibliography page at the end of your paper (which does not count toward its total length) listing these sources. Electronic sources (material drawn from websites) are only permitted in consultation with your DSL or the instructor of this course. You should provide the following information for each source in your bibliography:

Author's name, *Title of the book*. Place of publication: publisher, and year of publication.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to speak to me or to your DSLs at class, during our regular office hours, or via E-mail.

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