

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

HISTORY 503.03

THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE, 180–476 C.E.

Call #: 11210-4
M W 12:30–2:18 p.m.
Scott Laboratory [SO], Rm. 0001

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TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT

UNDERGRADUATES: Select one of the following topics and write a term paper approximately 8 pages in length (double spaced, in 12 point Times New Roman or similar font). You will be graded on the organization, clarity, and elegance of your presentation as well as content. This paper will be due at the beginning of class on **WEDNESDAY, May 16, 2007.**

GRADUATE STUDENTS: If you have not done so already, see me about a paper topic.

1. The “terrible third century” was one of the most traumatic periods in all of Roman history, when the Empire nearly succumbed to external invasions, civil war, and economic collapse. Based on the *Augustan History* and other sources, what threat facing the Roman Empire at this time was the most dangerous to its survival? Why did it survive? Defend your answer.
2. Select one of the major Christian religious controversies of the late Roman period (such as Arianism, Donatism, Monophysitism, or Pelagianism) and, using the ecclesiastical histories and other sources, explain the controversy. Why was this particular issue so important to people living at this time? How did the common people understand this controversy and what difference could it possibly have meant in their daily lives?
3. Monasticism (and asceticism in general) was regarded in very positive way by most people in Late Antiquity. Using the *Life of Anthony*, by Athanasius, and other sources, discuss this phenomenon and attempt to explain it. What were the goals of asceticism (i.e., what were monks seeking to achieve?) and why was it so highly regarded, even by those who did not embrace the ascetic life?
4. Develop your own topic. Please come to see me during my office hours before you begin to discuss your topic and to secure my approval.