

# HIEU 161/261: THE LAST PAGAN GENERATION

## SYLLABUS

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the Eastern Roman Empire's last pagan generation (a group of individuals born between 310 and 320). It will cover the events of their lifetime and will try to recapture some of the assumptions, attitudes, and experiences that shaped their response to the social and religious changes of their lifetimes—particularly during the Theodosian period when their responses contrast markedly with those of their children and grandchildren. It will also examine the family, political, and civic concerns that consumed much of their time and took up much of their attention. Among the topics to be covered are the role of public religious celebrations in fourth century, the relationship between public positions and religious activity among the later Roman elite, and the limits of imperial policy in encouraging religious change.

### ASSIGNMENTS:

In addition to the weekly readings and regular class participation, there will be three assignments: students will need to complete two of the three assigned short papers (3-5 pages) and a 10-page final research paper. The final paper can be on any topic of your choice that is related to the course themes—a topic exploring Christianity in the fifth century Roman world is as appropriate as one examining classical rhetoric. The short papers are due during the third, fifth, and seventh weeks of the quarter. The due date for the final paper will be June 6.

### MATERIALS:

The following materials will be useful to possess:

- 1) Ammianus Marcellinus, *The Later Roman Empire* (Penguin) ISBN: 978-0-14-044406-3. NB: The LCL volumes are recommended for those with the means but will need to be purchased through somewhere other than the bookstore.
- 2) *Selected Letters of Libanius from the Age of Constantius and Julian*, trans. Bradbury (Liverpool U Press) ISBN: 9-780853-235095
- 3) Libanius, *Selected Letters and Autobiography*, trans. Norman, volumes 1-2, (Harvard U Press) ISBN: 9-780674-995277 (volume 1) and ISBN: 9-780674-995284 (volume 2)

- 4) Libanius, *Selected Works*, trans Norman, volumes 1-2, (Harvard U Press)  
ISBN: 9-780674-994966 (volume 1) and ISBN: 0-674-99497-3 (volume 2)

Other assigned readings will be placed on TED and will be available for general consultation under the resources tab. To make the scanning process easier, each book has been scanned once. If it is utilized on more than on occasion, please look back to the first time it appeared for the readings

Journal articles not on TED are available either through JSTOR or Muse. These articles are noted in the syllabus.

### Weekly Reading Schedule

#### April 4

##### **Introduction: The Roman World in the Fourth Century**

- a. The Last Pagan Generation—An Introduction
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 1

#### April 11

##### **Cities of the Gods**

- b. Background
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 2
- c. Temples
  - i. Ps. Libanius, *On the Tychaion* (read text of progymnasmata at the end of C. Gibson, “Alexander in the Tychaion: Ps. Libanius on the Statues,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 47 [2007], 431-54), see link at: <http://www.duke.edu/web/classics/grbs/online.html>
  - ii. P. M. Fraser, “A Syriac *Notitia Urbis Alexandrinae*.” *Journal of Egyptian Archeology* 37 (1951): 103-8. (find on JSTOR)
- d. Festivals
  - i. Libanius, *Oration 5*

#### April 18

##### **Childhood, Family Life, and Education**

##### ***FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE***

- e. Larger Context
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 3
- f. Personal Experiences
  - i. Childhood and Student Life
    - 1. Ausonius, *Ephemeris* (TED)
    - 2. Himerius, *Orations* 16, 65, 66 (on rioting); *Oration 44* (on student/professor relations) (TED)
    - 3. Libanius, *Oration 58* (TED)

4. Libanius, *Letters* 39, 77, 80, 126 (Bradbury)
5. Libanius, *Oration* 1.1-23

## April 25

### Establishing Oneself and Civic Role (337-c350)

- g. Larger Context
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 4
- h. Personal Experiences
  - i. Getting a Job
    1. Libanius, *Oration* 1.24-57, *Letters* 70, 92 (Bradbury)
    2. The case of Miccalus
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 9 (Bradbury); *Letters* 53, 61 (Norman)—compare *Letters* 61 his letter with *Letters* 8 (Bradbury), a much weaker letter of introduction
  - ii. Securing Inheritance
    1. From Living Relatives
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 87 (Norman)
    2. From Dead Relatives
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 56, 57 (Norman)
      - b. Themistius, *Oration* 20 (TED)
  - iii. Family and Personal Life
    1. Marriage
      - a. Libanius *Letters* 10, 17 (Bradbury); *Letters* 32 (Norman)
- i. Political Career
  - i. Civic Contributions
    1. The Syriarchy
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 1-4, 44, 49 (Bradbury); *Letters* 71, 108, 119 (Norman)
    2. Olympics
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 26, 142 (Bradbury); *Letters* 125 (Norman)
    3. Embassies
      - a. Domestic: Libanius, *Letters* 30, 31, 120 (Bradbury); *Letters* 22 (Norman)
      - b. Abroad: Libanius, *Letters* 6-7 (Bradbury); 35 (Norman)

## May 2

### Prime of Career (350-361)

#### *SHORT PAPER DUE*

- j. Larger Context
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 5

- k. Personal Experiences
  - i. Natural Disasters—The Destruction of Nicomedia
    - 1. Ammianus, 17.7
    - 2. Libanius, *Letters* 36-39, 77 (Norman)
    - 3. Libanius, *Oration* 61  
 ([http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/libanius\\_monody\\_on\\_nicomedia\\_02\\_text.htm](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/libanius_monody_on_nicomedia_02_text.htm))
  - ii. Family Life and Deaths
    - 1. Libanius, *Letters* 5, 64, 72, 165, 178 (Bradbury); 42 (Norman: note especially the Berlin scholium attached to this letter, which is Themistius' response to the letter)
    - 2. Himerius, *Orations* 7-8 (TED)
- l. Political Career
  - i. Imperial Offices
    - 1. Themistius and the Senate
      - a. Themistius, *Or.* 1 (TED)
      - b. *Demegoria Constantii* (TED--scanned along with Oration of Themistius)
      - c. Libanius, *Letters* 171 (Bradbury); *Letters* 12, 43, 48, 62 (Norman)

## May 9

### The Reign of Julian (361-364)

- m. Larger Context
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 6
- n. Personal Experiences
  - i. Property Disputes Caused by Julian's reforms
    - 1. Generally
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 182 (Bradbury); *Letters* 91, 103, 105 (Norman)
    - 2. Family of Thalassius
      - a. Ammianus, 14.1.10 (on his father); 22.9.16 (on the son)
      - b. Libanius, *Letters* 11-14 (Bradbury); *Letters* 1, 105 (Norman)
      - c. Libanius, *Letters* 15 (Bradbury)
    - 3. Case of Orion and Belaeus
      - a. Julian, *Letters* 114 (TED)
      - b. Libanius, *Letters* 130 (Bradbury); 103 (Norman)
- o. Political Career
  - 1. Libanius and Julian

- a. Libanius, *Letters* 23, 24, 43, 96, 129 (Bradbury); 30, 58, 64, 88, 93-95, 97, 98 (Norman)
- b. Julian, *Letters* 52, 53, 58 (TED)

**May 16**

**A Changing of the Guard (364-378)**

***SHORT PAPER DUE***

- p. Larger Context
  - i. Watts, Last Pagan Generation, Chapter 7
  - ii. Uncertainty at time of Succession
    - 1. Zosimus, Book 4.1-2 (TED)
    - 2. Libanius, *Letters* 126-28, 136 (Norman)
  - iii. Revolt of Procopius
    - a. Ammianus 26.5-10
    - 2. Case of Andronicus:
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 86 (Bradbury); *Letters* 121 (Norman)
    - 3. Case of Ausonius
      - a. John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, (Oxford, 1975), 56-87. (TED)
- q. Political Effects
  - i. Decline of Influence of Friends of Julian
    - 1. Diminution
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 119
    - 2. Persecution
      - a. Seleucus
        - i. Libanius, *Letters* 140, 142 (Norman); cf. *Letters* 92 (Norman)
      - b. Trials of 371-2
        - i. Ammianus, 29.1-2
- r. Religious Life
  - 1. Libanius, *Letters* 137, 143 (Norman)
  - 2. Case of Praetextatus:
    - a. *Theodosian Code* 9.16.7 (TED)
    - b. Zosimus, 4.3 (TED)

**May 23**

**Emeritus Status: The reign of Theodosius I (379-395)**

- s. Larger Context
  - i. Anti-Pagan Activity
    - 1. Legislation

- a. *Theodosian Code* 16.10.8-12 (TED)
  - 2. Events in Syria
    - a. Libanius, *Oration* 30 (in Syria)
  - 3. Attack on Serapeum
    - a. Rufinus, *Ecclesiastical History* 11.22-30 (TED)
    - b. Libanius, *Letters* 171 (Norman)
  - 4. Aftermath
    - a. Libanius, *Letters* 180.4 (Norman)
  - 5. Festivals and cults
    - a. Athens Panathenaia
      - i. *IG II/III<sup>2</sup>* 3818; 4224 (TED)
    - b. Antioch Olympics of 388
      - i. Libanius, *Letters* 147 (Norman)
- t. Personal Experiences
  - i. Old Age
    - 1. Libanius, *Letters* 171, 181, 182.6-9, 183, 184, 188 (Norman)
- u. Political Careers
  - i. Diminished Influence of Libanius
    - 1. Case of Sapores
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 168 (Norman; compare to *Letter* 142)
    - 2. Case of Cimon
      - a. Libanius, *Letters* 169, 175, 176, 179, 187 (Norman)

### May 30

#### Children of the Last Pagan Generation

- v. Pagan Militancy
  - i. Eunapius
    - 1. Photius, *Codex* 77 and 98 (TED)
  - ii. Serapeum Defenders
    - 1. Socrates, *HE* 5.16  
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202.ii.viii.xvii.html>
    - 2. Damascius, *Life of Isidore*, 42A-H (TED)
- w. Monks as Hippies
  - i. Watts, *Monks as Hippies* (TED)
  - ii. John Chrysostom
    - 1. Palladius, *Dialogue on John Chrysostom*, 5-6; see link at:  
[http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/palladius\\_dialogus\\_01\\_intro.htm](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/palladius_dialogus_01_intro.htm)
    - 2. Sozomen, *HE* 8.2  
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf202.iii.xiii.ii.html>
    - 3. Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, Book 1.1-6

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/19221.htm>

iii. Amphilochius

1. Libanius, *Letters* 144 (Norman)
2. Gregory Nazianzen, *Letters* 63 (TED)

**June 6**

**Conclusion--Final Paper Due**