

HIST 40403 Late Antiquity & the Early Middle Ages
Paper 2 (3200-3600 words)
Due May 2 by 5 pm

Gregory of Tours's history is commonly known as the *History of the Franks*, but it actually encompasses human history, as Gregory understands it, from the Creation down to his own time. However, this is often overlooked in favor of Gregory's detailed account of the Merovingians of the late 6th century in Gaul (Francia). For this paper, you will examine how Gregory's first book, covering the first 5600 years of human history, establishes the tone and themes with which the rest of his history, especially the books covering the late 6th century, deals. We have already read a lot of Gregory, including the whole first book, for class, but feel free to go beyond that selection if you wish.

Some aspects of Gregory's work that you might want to consider:

- What historical processes are established in the first book that are reflected in the later books?
- What larger themes, whether religious or secular, does the first book establish that come up in the later books?
- How do the secular and religious worlds connect or contrast in the first book, and how does that compare to the later books?
- What traits and characteristics of the leaders, both secular and religious, in the first book reappear in later books?
- Do any of the leaders, whether secular or religious, in the first book seem to foreshadow or lay the groundwork for any of the figures in the later books?
- What does Gregory's presentation of the Roman Empire mean for the Frankish kingdoms?
- How does Gregory's presentation of Judaism and the early Christians in the first book relate to the church and its leaders in the late sixth century?
- Does Gregory ever refer back to or allude to figures or events in the first book? Why?

Based on these and any other issues you find relevant, explain how Gregory uses the first book to lay the foundations of, and explain, history, especially of the Frankish kingdoms and their world in the late 6th century. There is no one right answer and there are many different approaches you can take, but you should try to have a single overarching thesis to tie your paper together.

Make sure to support your arguments with citations and analysis of specific passages of the History. Use direct quotes sparingly and when they will specifically illustrate the point you are trying to make. Paraphrase when you need to, but try to avoid excessive summary. Whenever you quote or paraphrase, be sure to cite the passage in Gregory. Cite Gregory parenthetically by page number in your translation, e.g. (86-87). Don't forget to put a page number at the bottom of each page, and your name and a title at the top of the first page. Use 1" margins all around and Times New Roman or a similar typeface, double-spaced.

You are to limit yourself to the text of Gregory's *History*—do not look at any other sources or scholarship. Doing so will result in an automatic F. Papers are due on May 2 by 5 pm. Upload papers to BlackBoard. Late papers will not be accepted except in cases of documented emergencies.