

Essay Questions for the First Exam: *The End of the Ancient World*

Wednesday **October 8, 2008** – in class (50 mins)

REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR BLUE BOOKS!!

For this exam answer ONE of TWO questions chosen from the possible FIVE listed below. As you prepare keep the following in mind:

- a.) Be sure that your essay has a clear thesis and follows a coherent line of argument.
- b.) End your essay with a conclusion that summarizes your argument.
- c.) Evidence for your answers should be drawn from the Making of the West textbook, lecture, discussion, and the outside texts and article assigned for the course thus far. Good essays will employ a variety of these sources.
- d.) Be sure to avoid sweeping generalizations. The best answers are those grounded in precise language and detail (yes that means dates!).

** You may bring to the exam outlines, notes, thoughts, quotations, dates, names, and whatever else you may need to compose your essay – but all of this information must fit on THIS SHEET OF PAPER (front and back). Because you have ample time to prepare your answers in advance I expect your essay to be well-organized and detailed. You must bring this piece of paper with you to the exam and turn it in with your blue book(s). Any exams without this page will not be graded. (A good answer will be at least 4 single-spaced pages in a blue book.) **

Possible Questions:

- 1) Discuss the topographical and geographical features of the ancient world that most profoundly influenced the growth and development of “civilization.” In answering this question compare and contrast the examples of *three* different civilizations.
- 2) What do historians mean by Radical Democracy? Account for the rise of this form of government in Classical Athens.
- 3) Define “Hellenism” and analyze its impact on the Mediterranean world following the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE).
- 4) When Octavian Augustus came to power in 31 BCE he put forward a new Imperial image. Briefly characterize what was new about what Augustus’s rule and analyze why he was successful. Be sure to consider how the extent of the Roman Empire at the time of his death reflects on his leadership.
- 5) Analyze why the early Christians were persecuted. How did persecution affect the creation of the early Christian Church? (*NB: A good answer will incorporate conclusions from Brent Shaw’s article*).