

History 313: Byzantine History Spring 2011

MWF 8:50-9:40 HUMANITIES 1651

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Course Goals:

History 313 will present the history of the medieval Roman Empire (the Byzantine Empire) from the fourth through the thirteenth centuries. Major issues for discussion include: continuity with classical Roman culture, development of eastern Christianity, Byzantine missionary activity, military and political history, cultural interactions with Byzantium's neighbors.

Goals for Student Learning:

Students will improve their knowledge, understanding and abilities regarding the following:

Historical Content:

- The basic outline of the events of the medieval Byzantine empire
- Major cultural and political figures and events

Historical Method:

- What sources of information survive from the Byzantine Empire
- How the agendas of the medieval writers affected the texts they left for us
- How we can use their texts to figure out what happened
- Different methods contemporary historians use to analyze medieval data
- How the agendas of modern historians affect their presentation of the past

Practical Skills:

- Analytical reading
- Analytical writing
- Expository writing

Assessment

3% Attendance

10% Discussion Participation

24% Three Quizzes: 8% each February 11, March 25, April 29th

30% **Two Historical Argument Papers** based on primary source readings: 15% each.

You chose any 2 of 5 possible Historical Argument Papers due 2/4, 2/18, 3/11, 4/1, 4/15

8% Wikipedia Article Review Essay: due February 25

15% Wikipedia Paragraph Draft 1 4/22

10% Wikipedia Paragraph Final Version 5/6

Assignments in Brief:

Attendance: Just show up on time. Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class. Perfect attendance earns a grade of 100. Each absence without a documented excuse deducts 4 points. Coming late deducts 2 points.

Participation: Come to discussion section prepared to discuss the assigned readings and participate in class discussion in a helpful manner. See participation assessment criteria below.

Three Quizzes: Brief multiple choice or matching exercises based on factual information.

Two Historical Argument Papers: These 4-5 page essays respond to questions about the primary source readings. Assignments are given for all five primary source readings; however **you may choose to complete any TWO of these five assignments.** This is an exercise in persuasive historical argumentation.

Wikipedia Article Review Essay: A 2-3 page review of an article in Wikipedia on a Byzantine topic chosen from the list provided.

Wikipedia Article Paragraph: One well-researched, entirely substantiated and accurate paragraph pertaining to a Byzantine topic to be posted on Wikipedia. This is an exercise in objective narrative exposition.

Books:

Readings are to be done prior to the class of which they are listed.

Textbook: *History of Byzantium*, by Timothy Gregory

Primary Sources:

Prokopios: Secret History with Related Texts trans. Anthony Kaldellis

Chronicle of Theophanes: trans. Harry Turtledove

Constantine Porphyrogenitos De Administrado Imperio, trans. Romily Jenkins

Digenis Akritas: Two-Blood Border Lord, Denison Hull

Alexiad Anna Komnene, trans. Peter Frankopan

| | Lectures & Sections | Readings | Assignment Due Dates |
|--------|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Week 1 | 1/19 Roman Origins | Gregory Chapter 1 | |
| | 1/21 Romans in the Eastern Mediterranean | | |
| | Section | | |
| Week 2 | 1/24 Ancient Religion & Politics | Gregory Chapter 2 | |
| | 1/26 Constantine | Gregory Chapter 3-4 | |
| | 1/28 Trouble in the Western Empire | | |
| | Section | | |
| Week 3 | 1/31 Justinian, Empire, & Christian Community | Gregory Chapter 5-6 | |
| | 2/2 Theodora | | |
| | 2/4 Roman Law | | |
| | Section | Procopius's Secret History | Argument Paper on Procopius's |
| Week 4 | 2/7 Slavs & Ethnogenesis | Gregory Chapter 7 | |
| | 2/9 Persians & Heraclius | Gregory Chapter 8 | |
| | 2/11 QUIZ ONE | | Quiz One |
| | Section | | |
| Week 5 | 2/14 Muhammad & Arab Conquests | | |
| | 2/16 The Virgin on the Walls | | |
| | 2/18 Iconoclasm | | |
| | Section | Theophanes's Chronicle | Argument Paper on Theophanes |
| Week 6 | 2/21 Irene & recovery | Gregory Chapter 9 | |
| | 2/23 Village Community | | |
| | 2/25 Amorion | | |
| | Section | | Wikipedia Review |
| Week 7 | 2/28 Perfection of Theology | | |
| | 3/2 Basil I & King David | Gregory Chapter 10 | |
| | 3/4 Missions & Alphabets | | |
| | Section | | |
| Week 8 | 3/7 The Imperial Database of History | | |
| | 3/9 Empresses, Family & Imperial Power | | |
| | 3/11 Byzantine Math | | |

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| | Section | Constantine VII | Argument Paper Constantine VII |
| Week 9 | 3/21 Nikephoros Phokas -conquests & foundations | Gregory Chapter 11 | |
| | 3/23 Macedonian land legislation | | |
| | 3/25 QUIZ TWO | | QUIZ 2 |
| | Section | | |
| Week 10 | 3/28 Basil II East & West | | |
| | 3/30 Byzantine Monasticism | | |
| | 4/1 Glykeria & Arts of Persuasion | | |
| | Section | Digenis Akritas | Argument Paper on Digenis |
| Week 11 | 4/4 St. Constantine the Jew | Gregory Chapter 12 | |
| | 4/6 Turks, Normans & Civil War | | |
| | 4/8 Alexios Komnenos & Imperial Recovery | | |
| | Section | | |
| Week 12 | 4/11 Change in Political Culture | | |
| | 4/13 Crusaders | | |
| | 4/15 Nikephoros & Roman heritage | | |
| | Section | Alexiad | Argument Paper on Alexiad |
| Week 13 | 4/18 Byzantine family politics | | |
| | 4/20 Manuel Komnenos & Kingdom of Jerusalem | | |
| | 4/22 Center & Periphery, Money & Power | | |
| | Section | | Wikipedia Paragraph first version |
| Week 14 | 4/25 Fourth Crusade | Gregory Chapter 13 | |
| | 4/27 Western conquest of the eastern Mediterranean | Gregory Chapter 14 | |
| | 4/29 QUIZ THREE | | Quiz Three |
| | Section | | |
| Week 15 | 5/2 Changes in Roman Identity | Gregory Chapter 15 | |
| | 5/4 Ottoman Empire | Gregory Chapter 16 | |
| | 5/6 15th Century Mediterranean | | |
| | Section | | Wikipedia Paragraph final version |

Grading Criteria

Historical Argument Paper Grading Criteria

Characteristics of an **A** paper:

- It has a clear, well-articulated thesis in the first paragraph.
- The argument of the paper supports the thesis well and thoroughly.
- It amply fulfills the instructions of the paper assignment.
- It displays careful reading of the source material.
- It displays considered thought about the material.
- All claims are supported by citations and explanations of the textual evidence.
- It has excellent English grammar and usage
- It has a well-organized structure.
- It has no proofreading errors.
- It has correct citations for all sources.

Characteristics of a **B** paper:

- It has a thesis
- It follows the instructions of the paper assignment.
- It indicates reading of the source material.
- It displays thought about the material.
- Claims are supported by textual evidence.
- It uses correct English grammar and usage.
- It has good paragraph structure.
- It has adequate citations for all sources.
- It may have some errors in proof-reading.

Characteristics of a **C** paper:

- The thesis is unclear.
- It does not have clear paragraphs.
- It does not follow the instructions.
- It displays cursory reading or misunderstanding of the material.
- It does not display significant thought about the material.
- It contains unnecessary digressions or vacuous generalizations.
- Claims are not supported by the textual evidence cited.
- The thesis is not supported by the argument of the paper.
- It has not been proofread.
- It contains errors in grammar or usage.
- The citations of sources are inadequate.

Characteristics of a **D** paper:

- It does not fulfill the assignment.
- It does not have a thesis.
- It does not have paragraphs.
- It shows that the source material has not been read.
- It contains errors in grammar or usage or inadequate proofreading.
- It does not indicate quotations.
- Claims are unsubstantiated.

Characteristics of an **F** paper:

- It was submitted late.
- It has worse examples of the D paper problems.
- It is gobbledygook.

Objective Narrative Grading Criteria (Wikipedia Paragraph)

Characteristics of an **A** paragraph:

- It is completely accurate
- It is completely objective
- All statements are verifiable and verified
- All statements are supported by citations to recent scholarship
- All pertinent primary sources are referenced
- It has perfect English grammar and usage
- It has a well-organized structure
- It is elegantly written and interesting
- It has no proofreading errors.
- It has correct format for citations for all sources.

Characteristics of a **B** paragraph:

- It is accurate
- It is objective
- Statements are verifiable
- Statements are supported by citations to scholarship.
- It uses correct English grammar and usage.
- It has an organized structure
- It has adequate citations for all sources.
- It has been proof-read.

Characteristics of a **C** paragraph:

- It contains some factual errors

- It shows opinion or bias
- It contains unverifiable statements
- Claims are not supported
- It contains errors in grammar or usage.
- It is disorganized
- The citations of sources are inadequate.
- It has proofreading errors.

Characteristics of a **D** paragraph:

- It contains factual errors
- It shows opinion or bias
- It contains subjective judgments
- Claims are unsubstantiated
- It contains errors in grammar or usage
- It is very disorganized
- It has not been proof-read
- It does not indicate quotations

Characteristics of an **F** paragraph:

- It was submitted late.
- It has worse examples of the D paper problems.
- It is gobbledygook.

Discussion Participation Grading Criteria

Characteristics of **A** participation:

These students always have read and understood all of the assignment. They always make interesting comments about the readings that help the class understand the material better. Their comments are clearly presented, to the point, and based on careful reading of the material.

Characteristics of **A-** participation:

These students have always read all of the assignment; except for very occasional lapses due to midterms or other life-trauma. Even then they have read part of the assignment. They make comments that are to the point and move the discussion forward.

Characteristics of **B+** participation:

These students have always read the assignment, although they may have had difficulty understanding it. They occasionally make comments that are to the point and move the discussion forward.

Characteristics of **B** participation:

These students have usually read most of the assignment. They say things in class, from time to time, that are pertinent to the discussion.

Characteristics of **B-** participation:

These students have usually read at least some of the assignment. They rarely volunteer comments in class but can speak sensibly about the reading when called upon.

Characteristics of **C** participation:

There is no evidence that these students have read the assignment. Either they cannot participate in the discussion, or their comments are not based on the assigned readings. These students can participate when they have been given the opportunity to read in class and think about a specific question.

Characteristics of **D** participation:

These students will not say anything in class and cannot answer simple questions about the readings.

Characteristics of **F** participation:

These students do not come to class regularly. They do not bring the book or say anything when they do show up.

Class Policies

Practice Graciousness -- Act Honorably

NO CHEATING

When you lie or cheat for any reason you turn yourself into a liar and a cheater. Cheaters are bad and dishonorable people. They are placed in the tenth ditch of the eighth circle of hell in Dante's Inferno. There they are afflicted with loathsome and disgusting diseases. If you hand in someone else's work or copy someone else's work you are cheating and turning yourself into a lousy person. No grade in any class is worth becoming a bad person.

Those who are not dissuaded by moral exhortation but are caught cheating in any way **will fail this class.**

Dr. Neville's Patent-Pending Draconian Late Paper Policy

Writing assignments are due at the beginning of class. No extensions will be given. Taking extra time with your papers is unfair. As with all tasks in life, do the best job you can with the time you have. Do not hand in your assignments late. Do not even think about handing in your assignments late.

As the flesh is weak, the following procedures are in place in order to deal with the unlikely event of a late paper. No assignment handed in late will receive a grade higher than C. The following scale applies:

1 Day late: A becomes C, A- = C-, B+ = D+, B = D, B- = D-, C = F

2 Days Late: A becomes C-, A- = D+, B+ = D, B = D-, B- = F

3 Days Late: A becomes D+, A- = D, B+ = D-, B = F

4 Days Late: A becomes D, A- = D-, B+ = F

5 Days Late: A becomes D-, A- = F

No papers more than five days late will be read.