

COURSE SYLLABUS
TOPICS IN PRE-MODERN HISTORY: BYZANTIUM
HIS537.01—(CID 3965)—BY ARRANGEMENT ON THE INTERNET
(3 credit hours)

Instructor: Nicholas Pappas
Contact Information: Office, AB4 474; e-mail, HIS_NCP@shsu.edu; Office
phone, 936-294-3617; Home phone. 936-205-4986

REQUIRED READINGS:

*[N. Baynes and H. Moss, *Byzantium: An Introduction to East Roman Civilization*](#)
[in PDF Form]

[Dimitri Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe 500-1453*](#)

[Judith Herron, *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium \(Women in History\)*](#)

[Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Volume 2: The Spirit of Eastern Christendom \(600-1700\) \(The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Christian Doctrine\)*](#)

*Supplementary readings for the discussion forums are available on Blackboard in the Course Materials section.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To acquaint students with the political, social, economic and cultural history of the Byzantine Empire, as well as Eastern Europe and the Near East from the 4th to the 15th century through lectures, reading and discussion of primary and secondary sources.
- 2) To sharpen students' skills in a) extemporaneous discussion, b) historical interpretation; d) writing.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This web seminar will be topical study of the civilization of the Byzantine Empire, its place in the historical, cultural, and religious evolution of the Middle Ages, its role as a bridge between the Islamic world and western Christendom its significant legacy to the social, political and cultural development of the Near East, Russia, Eastern Europe, and Western Civilization.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD:

- 1) The class schedule will consist of one assignment every week. The format of each session will consist of: (a) reading of general book-length studies aspects of Byzantine Civilization; (b) reading of web secondary and primary web sources on specific problems and issues relating to assignments' discussion topics.
- 2) Lists of readings, discussion questions, and other supplementary materials will be distributed to students on Blackboard. Do not attempt to read all of the web readings. Peruse through them and read enough to answer the discussion forums on Blackboard.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

- **1) Reading assignments:** Students are expected to read text assignments and enough web assignments to answer two short essays effectively. Readings from the text and supplementary sources are given on a weekly basis. Each student is expected to read general assignments for their book reviews and specific assignments of primary and secondary on a particular topic. The students are expected to discuss assigned text readings in the scheduled chat rooms.
- **2) Discussion Forums:** Students are expected to participate in a discussion forum every week. Every week, the instructor will present two or more questions based upon the web and text readings. Within the first four, students are to address these questions in the discussion forum. Students should respond to the questions in one paragraph per question. They should briefly substantiate their answers and opinions with material culled from the web and text readings. In the subsequent three days, the instructor will comment on the response in the forum. In addition, students will react to one another's responses to the questions. They can also make comments and pose questions regarding other issues brought up in the forum. At the end of each discussion forum the instructor will close and archive the previous week's discussion forum and introduce the next week's forum. If all members of the seminar

agree, a discussion forum can be extended. Each student's participation will be evaluated in the following manner. A student can earn up to ten points for their answers to the week's questions and ten points for their other comments, questions, and reactions in the forum. (20 points per week; 200 points total for the semester).

- **3) Four book reviews (2000 to 2500 words each).** Each student will write one book review on each of the hard-copy books assigned for this course (MacFie and Fromkin). Each review will be worth 100 points for a total of 200 points.
- **4) Essay in Historiography.** Each student is required to write one historiography essay on one of the problems or issues brought up in the course. The essay will cover the historiography of a particular problem of the Byzantine Civilization. Each historiographical essay will include a 4000 to 5000 word text together with a bibliography. **The easiest way to do this assignment is to pick a topic or theme that is covered by two or more of the books that we have read, analyze how each of the books have dealt with the topic or theme, using web materials as additional evidence.**
- **6) Course evaluation and grades.** Evaluation of student performance will be based upon the following criteria:
 - a) Discussion Forums 200 points or 25 percent of the course grade)
 - b) Book reviews (400 points or 50 percent of the course grade).
 - c) Historiographical essay (200 points or 25 percent of the course grade)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: According to Academic Policy Statement 810213 of SHSU:

The university expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.

The university and its official representatives, acting in accordance with Subsection 5.32, may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

"Cheating" includes:

Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs.

Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.

Collaborating, without authorization, with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work.

Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test.

Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, to take a test.

Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.

Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of the rough and/or final versions of an assignment by a professional typist.

"Plagiarism" means the appropriation of another's work or idea and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work or idea into one's own work offered for credit.

"Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit.

"Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.

In accordance with Academic Policy Statement 810213, I may impose failure or reduction of a grade in an assignment or the course, and/or performing additional academic work not required of other students in the course. If I believe that additional disciplinary action is necessary, I may refer the offending student to the Dean of Student Life or his designated appointee for further action.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE. ([Introductory Notes on Byzantine Civilization](#); [Byzantium, Introduction](#))

Week 2: BYZANTIUM TO CONSTANTINOPLE TO ISTANBUL.

1) A SURVEY OF BYZANTINE HISTORY. ([Byzantium, ch. 1](#)).

2) THE CITY OF CONSTANTINOPOLE. ([Benjamin of Tudela](#) and [Ibn Battuta](#))
Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 1](#) and [ch. 1.ii](#).

Week 3: BYZANTINE GOVERNMENT. I.

- 1) THE EMPEROR. ([Kekaumenos-Intro.pdf](#); [Kekaumenos.pdf](#); and [Coronation.pdf](#)).
- 2) THE COURT AND CIVIL ADMINISTRATION. ([NotitiaDignatorum.pdf](#), and [promotionceremonies.pdf](#)).
- 3) THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION. ([ArabicByzantineThemes.pdf](#))

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 10](#).

Baynes and Moss Review Due

Week 4: BYZANTINE GOVERNMENT. II.

- 1) THE JUDICIARY AND SENATE. ([The Institutes of Justinian Introduction, Laws and Persons.pdf](#)).
- 2) THE ARMY AND NAVY. ([Excepts from the Tactica of Leo the Wise.pdf](#)).
- 3) THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. ([CereDiplo.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 10](#); [Oman-ByzantineArmy1.pdf](#); [Oman-ByzantineArmy2.pdf](#); [Oman-ByzantineArmy3.pdf](#); [Oman-ByzantineArmy4.pdf](#).

Week 5: THE BYZANTINE CHURCH. I.

- 1) THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY. ([Constantine the Great--Scholasticus.pdf](#)).
- 2) CHURCH AND STATE. ([John of Damascus- In Defense of Icons, c. 730.pdf](#); [Iconoclast Council 754.pdf](#); [Second Council of Nicaea 787.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 4](#)..

Week 6: THE BYZANTINE CHURCH. II.

- THE CLERGY. ([St. Theodore of Sykeon.pdf](#)).
- ASCETICISM AND MYSTICISM. ([Rodion Typikon.pdf](#); [Stoudios.pdf](#)).
- SCHISM BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. ([DonationConstantine.pdf](#) and [Nicholas I to the Bulgarians](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 4](#) and [Byzantium, ch. 5](#).

Obolensky Review Due

Week 7: BYZANTINE SOCIETY. I.

- 1) THE PEASANTRY. ([The Farmers Law.pdf](#)).
- 2) SOLDIER FARMERS AND GENTRY. ([PowerfuPoor.pdf](#)).
- 3) COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. ([Book of the Eparch.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 2](#).

Week 8: BYZANTINE SOCIETY. II.

- 1) URBAN LIFE. ([Procopius on Factions.pdf](#); [ProcopiusNika.pdf](#); [Theophanes on the Factions.pdf](#)).
- 2) HOME, FAMILY AND SOCIAL WELFARE. ([Byzantine Contract of Marriage, \(726\).pdf](#); [ComnenaEndowment.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 2](#); [Byzantium, ch. 3](#).

Week 9: BYZANTIUM AND THE WORLD. I.

- 1) THE ERA OF MIGRATIONS. ([An East Roman Embassy to the Court of Attila the Hun.pdf](#); [Ganas.pdf](#)).
- 2) BYZANTIUM AND THE EAST. ([A Byzantine-Persian War in the Sixth Century.pdf](#); [An Arab Ambassador in Constantinople.pdf](#)).
- 3) BYZANTIUM AND THE BALKANS. ([Theophanes on Bulgarians.pdf](#); [Krum.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium-11.pdf](#); [Byzantium-12.pdf](#).

Herrin Book Review Due

Week 10: BYZANTIUM AND THE WORLD. II.

- 1) BYZANTIUM'S IMPACT ON RUSSIA. ([A Byzantine-Russian Treaty of 911 A. D..pdf](#); [Grand Prince Vladimir and the Conversion of Russia..pdf](#)).

2) BYZANTIUM AND THE LATIN WEST. ([Liutprand of Cremona.pdf](#)).

3) BYZANTIUM AND THE TURKS. ([Theophyactes Simocatta.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium, ch. 11](#); [Byzantium, ch. 13](#); [Byzantium, ch. 14](#); .

Week 11: BYZANTINE CULTURE. I

EDUCATION AND THE CLASSICS. ([PsellusEd.pdf](#) and [ComnenaPreface.pdf](#)).

LITERATURE. ([The Great Fair at Thessalonica.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium-07.pdf](#); [Byzantium-08.pdf](#);

[Krumbacher, History of Byzantine Literature, pp. 3-28](#); [Byzantine Satire.pdf](#).

Week 12: BYZANTINE CULTURE II

1) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. ([Paul of Aegina.pdf](#)).

2) ART AND ARCHITECTURE. ([Procopius on the Great Church.pdf](#); [Paul the Silentiary.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: [Byzantium-06.pdf](#); [Byzantium, Plates 1-48](#); [Krumbacher, History of Byzantine Literature, pp. 28-59](#).

Pelikan Book Review Due

Week 13: BYZANTIUM'S LEGACY.

BYZANTIUM AND WESTERN EUROPE. ([Barbaro.pdf](#)).

BYZANTIUM AND EASTERN EUROPE. ([Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh's Instruction to His Children.pdf](#)).

BYZANTIUM AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE ([Gennadius.pdf](#), [Kritovoulos.pdf](#) and [Sphrantzes.pdf](#)).

Secondary Source Readings: : [Byzantium-11.pdf](#); [Byzantium-12.pdf](#); [Byzantium-13.pdf](#); [Byzantium-14.pdf](#).

Week 14: WORK ON THE ESSAY IN HISTORIOGRAPHY

Week 15: ESSAY IN HISTORIOGRAPHY DUE