

SURVEY OF COURSES RELATED TO BYZANTIUM IN CANADA

The idea of preparing some sort of list or directory of Byzantine courses arose at the BSC in Vancouver in November. This list is, of course, provisional: I am certain that some relevant courses have been omitted. I have tried to canvas as widely as possible in order to ensure that the list is complete, but I suspect it will only be in two or three years' time that we shall arrive at a more definitive compilation. Nonetheless, it is worth starting now, in order to have a clearer idea of the lie of the land. It is worth remembering also that we now have a prize for the best undergraduate essay in the field: see the announcement below in this bulletin. I am grateful to all those who sent in information for this list. I look forward to receiving corrections and additions over the coming year.

British ColumbiaSimon Fraser University (D. Krallis)

There are currently two survey courses, 'From Constantine to the End of the Dark Ages' and 'Reconstruction to Destruction: Byzantium from Iconoclasm to the fall of Constantinople', as well as two seminars a year. Under the Hist 460 (Themes in Byzantine History) rubric I have taught:

Dissent and Resistance in Byzantium and the Western Middle Ages

The Ancient and Byzantine Economy

From the 300 to the Immortals: War and Society from Antiquity to the Byzantine Middle Ages

Fantasy Empire (a seminar on Byzantine themed novels and their inspiration)

Byzantium before the Crusades (a seminar on the 11th century)

The Near East from Alexander to the Rise of Islam

I am in the process of cancelling my two survey courses and replacing them with two other courses to be titled:

From Alexander to the Caesars (a 200 level course on Hellenistic and Roman history to the rise of Islam)

Rome after Rome (a 300 level course on Byzantine History from Justinian to 1204)

University of Victoria (E. Baboula)

At UVic we do a survey of Byzantine art (HA 323) that is often taken after our Late Antique and Early Christian art course (HA 321).

I have run seminars on Byzantine painting, gender in Byzantine art, and a host of other courses that use Byzantine material. Some are about connections in the Medieval to early modern Mediterranean (e.g. the domestic environment in the medieval Mediterranean), while other courses are based on a theme, such as War and Art in the medieval Mediterranean, or Death in medieval cultures. We also have a course on the history of materials and the craft of artistic techniques in which we include icon painting, mosaics, and the 18/19th c Russian tradition of brass icons (we have a collection of the latter). Last year I taught a survey of ancient to medieval Jewish art (a challenging but extremely interesting topic) that included the large body of art and architecture we have from the Byzantine Middle East and ensuing issues of cultural encounters.

Our Islamic art specialists (M. Milwright and A. Welch) of course use Byzantine material in their classes. So, our Byzantine art courses often fit nicely with other courses on medieval art (Islamic and European) offered by colleagues. Lastly, we have the benefit of having Erica Dodd here, who shares her research enthusiastically and several medieval specialists who may not be teaching but are active members of the university community.

Manitoba

University of Winnipeg (A Caudano, C. Whately)

HIST 2215/3: History of the Byzantine Empire

This survey examines the history of the Byzantine Empire, from its origins in the reign of Constantine the Great to its end at the fall of Constantinople, in 1453. The course focuses on various aspects of political, religious, social and cultural life. Topics include the reign of Justinian, the iconoclastic crisis, the transmission of the orthodox faith to the Slavs, the Byzantine court and its relations with its neighbours, notably the crusaders, and the Ottoman conquest.

The following is not specifically focused on Byzantine history, but includes a lot of relevant material:

HIST 3208/3: Crusades and Crusaders in the Middle Ages

This lecture/seminar course traces the phenomenon of the crusades in the Mediterranean world, and to a lesser extent in Europe, between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries. We shall explore the roots, the forms and the consequences of crusading movements from the First Crusade to the Holy Land at the end of eleventh century, to the capture of Granada from the Moors at the end of the fifteenth century. Attention will be given to the political, cultural, religious and economic tensions and exchanges between Christianity and Islam. Along with an overview of the crusading campaigns as such, our lectures and seminars will also look at the participants of these movements; the organisation of crusaders states; and the consequences of the crusades on the Jewish population of Europe.

C. Whately adds: I teach a Fall of Rome seminar (twice now) occasionally. There are also opportunities for related subjects in more open courses: we have various directed readings for a student or two, and topics in ancient history at the 3rd and 4th year level that could fall into that category. This winter, for instance, I'll be teaching a Procopius course. None of these are regular, however. I would say every other year or so I get to teach a course on a late antique/early Byzantine topic, and more regularly I work things into other courses.

Ontario

University of Toronto (L. Safran)

There are no exclusively Byzantine courses at UofT, to the best of my knowledge. It's a sad situation indeed that the Centre for Medieval Studies ignores the Eastern Middle Ages. Faculty in the Art Department sometimes offer courses that have a Byzantine component (e.g., Pilgrimage, or the Medieval Mediterranean).

Queen's University, Kingston (R. Greenfield, G. Bevan)

Undergraduate and Graduate courses in History at Queen's with exclusive or major Byzantine content (UG 200-500; Grad 800):

HIST 218/3.0 Byzantium: An introduction to the fabled world of Byzantium. The course surveys key aspects of Byzantine political history, society and culture. It traces the transformation of the empire from its origins in third century Rome into the 'other' middle ages of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans ending with the fall of Constantinople in 1453. [Taught in Winter 2014 and again in Fall 2014 to a total of 320 students!]

HIST 301/6.0 Medieval Societies: Selected issues in the political, social and cultural history of Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean. Emphasis on scholarly debates and the interpretation of primary sources in translation. NOTE In Fall Term, HIST 301/6.0 meets in the same classroom with HIST 218/3.0 or HIST 296/3.0 depending on the year. [When taught by RG with HIST 218 this is an entirely Byzantine history core seminar in the second term.]

HIST 400/4.5 Topics in History: Upper year seminar on a selected topic in history. Topics change from year to year; course is either being offered for the first time or is being taught by visiting faculty. Taught as "**Medieval Greece**" in 2012 to ca 22 students: Objectives are to obtain a general overview of the political history of the region now thought of as Greece from the Late Roman to the Early Ottoman period (ca. 4th-15th centuries); to gain a broad understanding of some of the most notable features of the multiple societies, cultures and religious communities of Medieval Greece and their intersection with the peoples, powers, and religions of the regions that surrounded it; to study both persistent and changing identities in the region during the medieval period and their relationship to the construction of a Greek historical identity and nationality in the modern period.

HIST 417/9.0 Byzantine Society, 330-1261: An examination of the principal features of Byzantine society from its foundation in Late Antiquity down to the mid-13th century. The political history of the Byzantine state will be studied alongside many of the characteristic features of Byzantine life, belief and culture. [Upper year seminar offered to ca 22 students each time]

HIST 515/6.0 Independent Study Project: The project may be either a research paper involving the use of primary and secondary sources, or a more broadly conceived independent reading program. [Taught by RG on three occasions on a Byzantine topic in past six years]

HIST-801 [Full year] Religious Identity, dissidence and interaction in the pre-modern Mediterranean: This course examines the formation of religious identities and confessional cultures in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean world, including Muslim, Byzantine and Latin societies. It approaches these issues from two complementary vantages, examining intra and inter-religious difference. The course investigates the construction of religious orthodoxy and unorthodoxy, the nature of dissent, controversy and "heresy" in Muslim and Christian religious cultures. Likewise, it examines interreligious relations and experiences among Muslims, Christians and Jews and the treatment of religious minorities in the Mediterranean. It explores the possibility of an interplay between these two processes historically in the Mediterranean world in order to understand the consequences on religious and political cultures and identities. [Second term, taught by RG, is entirely Byzantine].

HIST-817 [Full Year] Byzantine Society, 330-1261: An examination of the principal features of Byzantine society from its foundation in Late Antiquity down to the mid-13th century. The political history of the Byzantine state will be studied alongside many of the characteristic features of Byzantine life, belief and culture. [MA seminar taught with HIST 417 to 3-5 students]

HIST-881* [Half Year] Topics in History: Religious Identity, Dissidence and Interaction in Byzantium: Beginning from the creation of a concept of religious identity, as such, in the early Christian and Late Antique context, this course looks at the subsequent construction of an orthodox religious identity, and, in parallel, the establishment of dissidence as unorthodoxy in the Byzantine and East Mediterranean world to the fifteenth century. We examine the formation and the contested nature of the boundaries by which the Byzantines sought to define and separate religious others including early 'heretical' groups, Islam, and the Latin West. We then move on to consider the perhaps surprisingly insubstantial 'mirage' of the resulting orthodox identity through an investigation of the practices surrounding and attitudes towards such elements as monks, holy men, miracles, relics, icons, amulets, divination and sorcery in Byzantine society. [One term version of RG's part of HIST 801]

HIST-895* [Half Year] Directed Reading: Individual directed reading/tutorials under the guidance of a faculty member in an area of the instructor's expertise. The course is one semester in length and is normally to be held in the fall. [Taught in 2013 as a seminar to 8 students (2PhD/5MA as "**Mirage and Construction in the History of Medieval Greece**". Examines the history of the region that has come to be understood as Greece in the period from the 4th – 15th centuries, although with a primary focus after the 7th century. While considering in some detail the extraordinarily complex political history of this region and, more generally, aspects of its society, religion and culture, attention falls on the fascinating and debated subject of the construction of identities for and within this region, both during the period itself and subsequently in the discourses of Ottoman Empire, Western Enlightenment thought, Romanticism and Orientalism, and Modern Greek Nationalism.]

There are also courses in Classics and Art History which also have some Byzantine content, e.g. **CLST 321/3.0 World of Late Antiquity:** Study of the rise of Christianity and the Christian reception of classical culture; also **CLST 343/3.0 The Later Roman Empire**, taught by George Bevan.

Courses in History at Queen's with some significant Byzantine content:

HIST 243/3.0 The Crusades: A general introduction to the history of the Crusades and holy war in the medieval period. Western, Muslim and Byzantine perspectives will be considered. [Taught every other year to 200 students]

HIST 250/6.0 The Middle Ages: An introduction to the main themes of Western history between the fall of the Roman Empire and the 15th century. [Taught most years to 150 students]

HIST 296/3.0 The Making of the Muslim Middle East (550-1350 C.E.): This course examines a formative period of Islamic society: the transformations of the late antique Near East to the Muslim Middle East. The course covers the period of the rise of Islam to the consequences of the Mongol conquests. It surveys the social, political, cultural and religious history of a civilization spanning Spain to Central Asia. [Taught every two or three years to ca 120 students]

HIST 430/9.0 The Crusades and the Latin Kingdoms: An exploration of key topics in the history and interpretation of the Crusades, the society and culture of the Latin Kingdoms, and their impact on the peoples of the eastern Mediterranean, Muslim and Christian. [Taught every year to ca 16 students]

HIST 449/4.5 Topics in Medieval Mediterranean History: Thematic topics in the history of the societies and cultures of the Mediterranean region during the medieval era. These can include comparative and cross-cultural studies of society, economy, religion and political formations across the Latin West, Byzantium, and the Islamic World.

HIST-828 [Full year] The Crusades and the Latin Kingdoms: An exploration of key topics in the history and interpretation of the medieval Crusades. The society and culture of the Latin kingdoms will be studied, as will the impact of the Crusades on the peoples of the eastern Mediterranean, both Muslim and Christian. [Offered jointly to ca 4-5 MA students with HIST-430.]

HIST-887 [Full year] Topics in Mediterranean History: This seminar approaches the history of the Mediterranean as a space of inter-religious and cross-cultural encounter in which to investigate religious, ethnic, linguistic and/or racial identity and diversity. It may also consider the economic, social, and political expressions and consequences of cosmopolitan interaction, conflict and coexistence on the societies of the Mediterranean zone. Topics and chronological framework change from year to year; consult history website for further details.

Carleton University

There are no specific courses relating to Byzantium, but several touch upon it:

CLCV 3202/ HIST 3101: From Stilicho to Charlemagne: Rome and the Barbarians

CLCV 4210 / HIST 4210: Rome, Persia, and Islam

CLCV 2906 and CLCV 3202 / HIST 3101: Rome and the Arabs, Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity

University of Ottawa

As at Carleton, there are no specific courses relating to Byzantium, but some are given in 'selected topics' courses, including the following:

CLA/HIS 3110: The Age of Justinian

CLA/HIS 3510: L'empire romain de Marcien à Héraclius (to be given in autumn 2015)

MDV 3110: The Byzantine Empire (to be given in winter 2016)

Quebec

McGill University

The Medieval City: Constantinople (Winter 2014, C. Hilsdale)

This course is dedicated to the visual histories, both real and imagined, of the medieval city of Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul. Founded by Constantine the Great in the fourth century and conquered by the Ottomans in the fifteenth century, Constantinople constituted the heart of the Byzantine

Empire. As the seat of imperial and patriarchal power, it embodied sacro-imperial authority like no other city. Throughout the semester, we will trace the architectural layers of this exceptional medieval city, beginning with its foundation as “New Rome” and its transformation into the capital of a vast late antique empire whose sway stretched from the Levant to the Adriatic. We will then consider the city’s later medieval history as the center of a fragmented political entity, before finally turning to its eventual demise as the Byzantine capital and transformation into the capital of the Ottoman Empire, with the final class sessions dedicated to the conversion of the city’s sacred churches to mosques. Throughout these different historical moments, we will trace the urban manifestations of secular spectacle and imperial memory, sacred celebrations and the sacrosanct performance of Orthodoxy. Readings will include primary sources, both Byzantine authors and foreign visitors to the city, and secondary readings by leading scholars in the field. We will consider not only the visual and architectural fabric of the city—its surviving and lost edifices and sculptures as well as cartographic textual and visual representations of the city—but also the critical ritual movements through the city, especially its lavish liturgies and imperial processions.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Memorial University, St John’s (M. Cassis)

These are the courses that usually include a strong Byzantine component when I teach them. I’ve also included a couple of other related courses:

Undergraduate:

- HIST 1009 Issues in Ancient and Medieval History (taught every year)
- HIST 2050 The Medieval Middle East (taught every 2-3 years)
- HIST/CLAS/REL 3270 Christianity and the Roman Empire (taught every year)
- HIST 3925 Pre-Islamic Empires of Iran (taught every 3-4 years)
- HIST 3930 Byzantine History to 1453 (taught every 2-3 years)
- HIST 3935 Islamic History to 1453 (taught every 2-3 years)
- HIST 4010 Cultural Interaction in the Medieval Middle East (taught every 1-2 years)

Graduate:

- HIST 6165: Topics in Byzantine History (taught as required)